

Series Memory Techniques

Used in the ScriptureOne.com "Preach My Gospel" video

For instructions on associating single chapters / verses, please watch the "Lesson 1-3" videos, or see the "The 10 Methods of Number Associations" on the website.

Before using Series Associations – The subject matter we intend to associate must be visual in nature, otherwise we can't associate it. Many Gospel subjects are intangible, i.e., God's love, perfection, faith, ability, deceit, unalterable, etc. We need to look at each item on our list and come up with a tangible substitute for any intangible topics. In Lesson One of Preach My Gospel, for the topic "Heavenly Father Reveals His Gospel in Every Dispensation", we can use a Prophet. This makes sense since it was through Prophets that the Gospel was revealed in every Dispensation, and for this specific topic our substitute word will trigger in our mind the full topic title. Once we have created tangible substitutes for any intangible themes, then we can proceed with the associations.

Series Association –With the Series method, the first item on the list triggers the second, the second triggers the third and so forth. The first item WILL NOT trigger anything but the second, and so we can use this method to faithfully reconstruct the original list in the original order. After coming up with a concrete image for any intangibles, we picture the first item together with the second, then the second with the third, and so forth to the end. Make sure you figure out a way to trigger the first item on the list from your title. Once you trigger the first association, each sequential association will automatically be recalled in their original order. In Preach My Gospel – Lesson Four on the Commandments we have this list (words in black):

Obedience [bowing down](#)
Pray Often [kneeling](#)
Study the Scriptures [a book of scriptures](#)
Keep the Sabbath Day Holy [a church](#)
Baptism and Confirmation [baptismal font](#)
Follow the Prophet [literally following the living prophet](#)
Keep the Ten Commandments [stone tablets](#)
Live the Law of Chastity [a person dressed in white](#)
Obey the Word of Wisdom [whisky glass](#)
Keep the Law of Tithing [coins](#)
Observe the Law of the Fast [open mouth](#)
Obey and Honor the Law [Billy club](#)

The words in blue are substitute images which are easy to visualize but which accurately represent the original topic. Here's the association: A person in Obedience bows down; while bowing they kneel to pray; the praying person kneels on a book of scripture; the book of scripture is carried into a church; inside the church is a giant baptismal font; from the font, the convert follows the Prophet out of the font and to a mountain where the 10 Commandments are cut into the stone face; the tablets are being polished by a person dressed in white; the person in white is handed a whisky glass; the glass is poured out but coins fall out instead; the coins fall into a person's open mouth; to clear the mouth of coins, they use a Billy club (a night stick) to pry them out. Cover the list above and practice recalling each item

starting with a person “bowing down”. This is a Series Association where the first triggers the second, the second triggers the third and so forth.

There are two variations of a Series Association which work on the same principle but use a different triggering device: Logical Progression and the Thread Method.

Logical Progression – Look for anything which helps the order of the subject matter make sense. Size order, historical (chronological) order; theological order, progression from easy to hard, hard to easy, large concepts to small or small to large, serious to minor, innocent to sinister, natural consequence (one act leads to an inexorable conclusion), etc. This particular technique only works if the material contains something that makes sense to you from a logical perspective. For example, in Preach My Gospel, Lesson Three – The Gospel of Jesus Christ:

The Divine Mission of Jesus Christ
The Gospel of Christ and Doctrine of Christ
Faith in Jesus Christ
Repentance through the Atonement of Jesus Christ
Baptism, Our First Covenant with God
The Gift of the Holy Ghost
Endure to the End

Notice that items 3-7 are faith, repentance, baptism, Holy Ghost, and endure to the end. These are obvious, logical, and well-known. We simply need to add 1 and 2 to complete the list. From a logical perspective, we can't start 3-7 (faith, repentance, ...) until we learn of Christ (#1) and learn His Gospel/Doctrine (#2). If it makes sense in your mind, that is usually sufficient to recall the material later. Always review the material later to make sure it sticks in your mind.

Thread Method – The only difference between the Thread Method and a traditional Series Association is that instead of using the first image to trigger the second, and the second to trigger the third, we instead use a single, common image that runs through every association and which creates a storyline that is easy to remember. We still need to create our substitute list for any intangible topics, but we also choose an arbitrary image or symbol (one that makes sense for our subject matter) which is then “thread” through each of our associations. If we have a list of 20 items we need to learn, our common image will show up in each one of our mental associations of those 20 items, and it is the common image that will carry us from one item to the next.

For example, in Preach My Gospel, Lesson One – The Message of the Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we have this list (words in black):

God Is Our Loving Heavenly Father **Father**
The Gospel Blesses Individuals and Families **House**
Heavenly Father Reveals His Gospel in Every Dispensation **a Prophet**
The Savior's Earthly Ministry and Atonement **the Savior**
The Great Apostasy
The Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through Joseph Smith
The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ **2nd bag**
Pray to Know the Truth through the Holy Ghost

Our substitute images are in blue, and as it turns out, we only needed a substitute for the first four items on the list. We're going to use a "bag of pearls" as our arbitrary image which represents the Gospel (from the parable on the "Pearl of Great Price"). The bag will be used to tie everything together: We start this association by picturing ourselves in a loving embrace with Father (representing His love for us) with the bag in the way between us. The bag was passed from the Father to a homeowner; a prophet is standing at the back window and the homeowner walks to the back and hands the bag to the Prophet; the Prophet turns around and hands the bag to the Savior; following His earthly ministry, the bag was lost (the Great Apostasy), was found (the Restoration), a second bag was found (the Book of Mormon), and the two bags were returned to the Father (representing praying to know the truth). Notice that it was the bag which was the common element in every association, and it was the bag which led us from one association to the next via the storyline it created. In other associations, you can many times use yourself as the common element, picturing yourself walking through the events of the storyline.