2. The next step is to form an image that connects the key word and the English equivalent.

   For Example:

   We might imagine a horse kicking a giant eye.

   To recall the meaning of caballo, you would first retrieve "eye" and then the stored image that links it to "horse." This may sound complicated, but research has shown that the key-word method does make learning a foreign language easier. The table below will serve to illustrate this method even further.

Spanish	Key Word	English
caballo	eye	horse
charco	charcoal	puddle
muleta	mule	crutch
clavo	claw	nail
lagartija	log	lizard
cebolla	boy	onion
payaso	pie	clown
hiio	eel	thread
tenaza	tennis	pliers
jabon	bone	soap
carpa	carp	tent
pato	pot	duck

Depth of Encoding

We have already seen that the more deeply and elaborately we encode material, the better we remember it. The practical implications of these findings are straightforward. **If you want to remember something, expand on its meaning**.

For Example:

Suppose that you read a newspaper article about a mysterious epidemic in London that health officials are trying to contain. To expand on this, you could ask yourself questions about how officials could contain an epidemic:

- Would they just quarantine families with a diseased member, or would they go as far as to try to stop outsiders from visiting London?

TUTOR TALK: Similarly, if someone tells you a story that you want to remember, you might look for gaps in the plot and ask the narrator to fill them in. To the extent that you do so, your memory for the essential story should improve.

Context and Retrieval

Since context is a powerful retrieval cue, we can improve and enhance our memory by restoring the context in which the learning took place.

For Example:

If you attend for workshops or seminars linked to this course and appreciate that they are always held in the same building and in the same room, your memory for the subject matter will be best when you are in that room, for then the context of the room is a retrieval cue for the subject matter.

FACT FILE: This has direct educational implications. Students will fair better in examinations when they are tested in their habitual classroom and when the examiner is their tutor than when these factors are changed.

Most often, though, when we remember something, we cannot physically go back to the context in which we learned it.

For Example:

If you want to remember the name of your childhood doctor and it does not come immediately to mind, you are not about to go back to your home town just to recall the name.

In these situations, however, you can try to re-create the context mentally. To retrieve a long-forgotten doctor's name, you might think of your home town and try to visualise your doctor's office or try to recall a particularly significant incident that occurred involving that doctor.

Another illustration of mentally re-creating context is this example.

Suppose someone asked you "What were you doing at 1 P.M. on the third Monday of October two years ago?" "Ridiculous," you might say. "No one can remember things like that." But re-creating the context can lead to surprising results.

"Well, two years ago I was at University; let me see, October that is just after we went back for the new term. Now what courses did I take that term. That is it, I had chemistry every afternoon and that is where I would have been at that time on that date – in the chemistry laboratory."

TUTOR TALK: In the above, mentally restoring the context might have seemed to done the trick, but we cannot be sure that you actually remembered being in the chemistry lab. Perhaps you inferred that you must have been there. Either way, though, you may have come up with the right answer.

What is known as the **Oriental Practice** is not by any means a new method of improving the memory. In the Oriental Practice as it was employed in the Far East for centuries, the student would simply take a step to an open door leading to an adjoining room; give one quick glance at the contents of that room and then withdraw. While out of the range of vision of those contents, you would mention one article that is in the room. This is the first unit. The same article may or may not be included in the next glance.

You would then go again to the door, look into the room, and withdraw, mentioning two articles in the room.

Repeat by taking a third glance, which must be done as quickly as the eye can look.

Again repeat by taking a fourth glance, always going out of the room, and name aloud the four articles that are seen in the fraction of a second.

Try now to name five articles that are seen at a fifth glance after retiring from the sight of the contents. The six, and so on until you are unable to add anymore.

After reaching the limit in the number of articles that can be seen in a fraction of a second, rest for any length of time that you may choose. Progress and development take place during periods of rest, but following periods of activity of the mind. When you feel again an interest in resuming the practice, start off with one unit; not with the number following where you left off.

TUTOR TALK: There are two kinds of mistakes that the student can make at this stage.

1. The first mistake is to try to see how many articles you can take in at a glance, instead of beginning with one, and adding one at each trial.

2. The second mistake is in not going back over the same ground after taking a rest.

A room in an ordinary house would not contain enough articles to reach a real test. The memory by the cumulative process will soon be able to include 50 to 100 items in less than one second of time.

TUTOR TALK: It is an established fact that women, without being aware of it, train themselves to see in one very brief look everything that another woman has on that is visible. One woman who attended Ascot regularly, listed twenty-five items worn by another woman, although she stated that she was passing at the time and did not stop to take any real notice.

The Chinese employ the **Shop Window System** but do not make it cumulative except in the early stages of the training. The plan is to walk along the street past a shop window and to note only one item at first. They then walk past the window and note two items.

Then three; four, etc., and by actual test it was proved that the experimenter, in less than no time at all could see more than 500 details and could describe them accurately.

Claims have been made that one person reached more than 5,000 items; we are willing to settle for a much smaller number, although what the human memory is really capable of when trained is possibly quite unbelievable.

TUTOR TALK: Universities have for years been testing the ability of their students in quick observation. Instead of showing them in what way this acquisition might be developed, they have merely taken them as they found them, and sought to learn how much they have been educated by nature and past habits of association. The vast majority of people are contented with having a memory that is developed only far enough to carry on the necessary processes of living and of the chosen avocations of life. But there are vast new fields to be explored.

We shall bring this assignment to a close with an exercise for the student to engage in private and over a period of time. The following chart is self-explanatory and will assist in improving the memory through the use of retrieval cues. We would suggest that regular use of this (and other charts that you might care to make up following the same format) can only prove to be advantageous in assisting retrieval and improving memory.

Always bear in mind the fact that a list of names or words is much easier to recall when we can sort the words into categories and then recall the words on a category by category basis.

List To Be Memorised		
dog	cotton	oil
cat	wood	gas
horse	silk	coal
cow	rayon	wood
apple	blue	doctor
orange	red	lawyer
pear	green	teacher
banana	yellow	dentist
chair	knife	football
table	spoon	cricket
bed	fork	basketball
sofa	pan	tennis
knife	hammer	shirt
gun	saw	socks
rifle	nail	pants
bomb	screwdriver	shoes
Retrieval Cues		
animals	cloth	fuels
fruit	colour	professions
furniture	utensils	sports
weapons	tools	clothing