

Wait...What?! When Memory and Reality Don't Match

Memory and the Mandela Effect

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	95 minutes
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	2-3 class periods
Course	Psychology		

Essential Question

How do our brains trick us into creating false memories?

Summary

In this high school psychology lesson, students investigate how memory works and how it can lead to shared false memories known as the Mandela Effect. Through engaging, hands-on activities, students explore the processes of memory encoding, storage, and retrieval. This multi-day lesson develops critical thinking as students examine the psychological factors that contribute to memory errors, such as misinformation and reconstructive memory.

Snapshot

Engage

Students participate in a Walking Vote activity.

Explore

Students participate in a memory exercise activity.

Explain

Students use the Annotating Text strategy paired with a reading and complete a Honeycomb Harvest activity.

Extend

Students create their own Mandela Effect and present it to the class.

Evaluate

Students evaluate their learning by completing a Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER).

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

CLR401: Locate important details in somewhat challenging passages
CLR402: Draw logical conclusions in somewhat challenging passages

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies: Psychology (9th through 12th grade))

PS.5.2: Describe the process, organization, and factors that influence memory and recall.

Attachments

- CER-ER—Wait...What - Spanish.docx
- CER-ER—Wait...What - Spanish.pdf
- CER-ER—Wait...What.docx
- CER-ER—Wait...What.pdf
- Honeycomb Harvest Memory—Wait...What - Spanish.docx
- Honeycomb Harvest Memory—Wait...What - Spanish.pdf
- Honeycomb Harvest Memory—Wait...What.docx
- Honeycomb Harvest Memory—Wait...What.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Wait...What.pptx
- Memory, Misinformation, and the Mandela Effect—Wait...What - Spanish.docx
- Memory, Misinformation, and the Mandela Effect—Wait...What - Spanish.pdf
- Memory, Misinformation, and the Mandela Effect—Wait...What.docx
- Memory, Misinformation, and the Mandela Effect—Wait...What.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Memory, Misinformation, and the Mandela Effect Reading (attached; one copy per student)
- Honeycomb Harvest Memory Cards (attached; one per pair of students)
- CER Organizer (attached; one copy per student)
- Pencil/Pen
- Device with internet access
- Paper
- Color pencils/markers (optional)

Preparation

Before teaching this lesson, print and prepare the attached handouts. The Honeycomb Harvest Memory Cards will need to be printed out in the number of sets needed for your class size. The cards are hexagon-shaped and require more time to cut than other kinds of cards.

10 minutes

Engage

Use the **Lesson Slides** to guide the lesson. Display **slide 2** and explain to students that they will be participating in a Walking Vote where they will view two options and decide which one is correct. Display **slide 3** with the first two images. Instruct students to move to the side that aligns with their choice. Once students have moved to the side they most agree with, invite the class to share out why they think that is the correct answer. Following the discussion, display **slide 4** with the correct answer.

Repeat this step for **slides 5-16**.

Once all images have been discussed, pose the following questions on **slide 17** to the class:

- What do you think is happening here?
- Why do so many people remember the same 'wrong' thing?

Invite a few students to share their responses.

Following this activity and discussion, introduce the essential question and the lesson objectives on **slides 18-19**.

15 minutes

Explore

Display **slide 20**. Let students know they are going to be doing a memory exercise.

Move to **slide 21** with the first set of words and read the words to the students. Then move to **slide 22** and have students take out a scratch piece of paper and pen/pencil. Now have the students write down as many words as they can that were on the previous slide. Display **slide 23** with words again. Pose the following questions to the class:

- How many words did you get correct?
- Who got the most correct?
- What was easy or difficult about this task?

Ask the students to put their paper and pens away. Use **slides 24-26** to repeat the process. Have students share out how many they got correct from this round.

Transition to **slide 27** and discuss the following questions as a class:

- Which set of words was easier to remember?
- What connections or techniques did you use in order to remember more of the words?
- Were there patterns you noticed that helped you remember the words?

30 minutes

Explain

Move to **slide 28**. Distribute a copy of the **Memory, Misinformation, and the Mandela Effect** reading (attached) to each student. Explain to students that they will be using the Annotating Text strategy. Display **slide 29** and explain that they should underline or highlight the following as they read through the text:

- Unknown words or phrases
- Words that summarize the reading
- Phrases from the reading that seem important

Allow students time to complete this task. Once students have completed their annotations, clarify any misconceptions. Once clarifications have been made to the class, invite a few to share their summaries.

Display **slide 30.** Introduce students to the Honeycomb Harvest strategy. Group students in pairs and distribute the **Honeycomb Harvest Memory Cards** to them. If students need scaffolded instructions, use **slides 31-32** to share an example.

Allow 10-15 minutes for the activity. Use **slide 33** to display a 15-minute timer.

Invite groups to share one of their Honeycombs and the rationale behind their “harvests.”

30 minutes

Extend

Move to **slide 34** and divide the class into small groups of two or three. Explain to students that with their group, they will create their own imagined Mandela Effect using the One-Pager strategy.

Students will use a familiar brand, quote, or image and craft a backstory for its "misremembered" version. Students can use Canva, Google Draw, Google Slides, or make one by hand using paper or a poster. Students should then put their images in a PowerPoint or Google Slides with the answer on a separate slide—similar to the teacher's slides at the beginning of the lesson, so they can present their "effects" to the class.

Have students submit their two versions and combine them into one slide deck using **slide 35** as a cover slide. Then have student groups present their effects to the class and challenge others to guess the "true" version. Have students replicate the Walking Vote strategy as in the Engage of the lesson.

10 minutes

Evaluate

Pass out a copy of the attached **Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER) Organizer** handout to each student. Display **slide 36** and introduce students to the Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER) strategy. Explain to students that they will use the CER-ER strategy to answer a prompt. As a class, review the following:

- "C" stands for claim
- "E" stands for evidence
- "R" stands for reasoning.

The CER-ER instructional strategy assists students in identifying a claim along with evidence to support the claim and reasoning for the evidence. For this modified version, students will need two examples of evidence and two reasons.

As a class, review the following prompt: How can memory explain the Mandela Effect? Do you think the Mandela Effect is real? Why or why not?

Once students understand how to use CER-ER statements, they can begin brainstorming and organizing their ideas using the graphic organizer in the CER-ER Organizer. Remind students that the evidence they use must be from the resources or (if they have one) their textbooks. Students will work individually on their CER-ER and turn these in to evaluate their learning.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). 15-minute timer [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3zT2IxZQaw&list=PL-aUhEQeaZXLMF3fltNDxiuSkEr0pq0c2&index=13
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Annotating text. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/114
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Claim, evidence, reasoning (CER). Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/156
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Honeycomb harvest. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/61
- K20 Center. (n.d.). One-pager. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/72
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Walking Vote. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/4126
- Quinn, K. (2019, September 13). *40 Mandela Effect examples that will blow your mind*. Good Housekeeping. https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/entertainment/g28438966/mandela-effect-examples/