Summary of Current Findings About Underachievement

- First, it appears that underachievement often begins in elementary school, perhaps due to an unchallenging curriculum. There appears to be a relationship between inappropriate or too-easy content in elementary school and underachievement in middle or high school.
- Second, underachievement appears to be periodic and episodic, occurring in some years and not others, and in some classes but not others. However, increasing episodes of underachievement may produce a more chronic pattern.
- Third, parental issues interact with the behaviors of some underachievers, yet no clear pattern exists about the types of parental behaviors that may influence underachievement.

Summary of Current Findings About Underachievement

- Fourth, peers can play a major role in keeping underachievement from occurring in their closest friends, making peer groups an important part of preventing and reversing underachievement.
- Fifth, adolescents who are involved in clubs, extracurricular activities, sports, and religious activities tend to be effective learners in school.
- Sixth, helping gifted students develop regular patterns of work and practice seems to be very beneficial. Music, dance, and art lessons, combined with regular time for homework and reading, can be helpful for developing positive self-regulation strategies.

Summary of Current Findings About Underachievement

- Seventh, a caring adult in school can help reverse the process of underachievement. This adult may be a counselor, a coach, or an academic teacher.
- Eighth, some students may underachieve as a direct result of an inappropriate and unmotivating curriculum. Before we try to "fix" these students or punish them for their behavior, perhaps we need to try drastic curriculum changes. If the curriculum can't be changed, we may want to reconsider our attitudes toward students who make conscious decisions *not* to put their best efforts into school work that fails to motivate, engage, or challenge them.

Summary of Current Findings About Underachievement

- Finally, too few interventions have been tried to reverse underachievement, and some interventions do not match the reasons for underachievement and school personnel should consider implementing interventions for gifted students who are underachieving. These young people are too precious a resource to squander.

Slide 1

Stemming Underachievement
Provisions
that Make a Difference

Del Siegle

**The National Research Center
on the Gifted and Talented**

University of Connecticut

del.siegle@uconn.edu
http://www.delsiegle.info

Slide 2

The Material in This Presentation is the Foundation of

*A Study to Increase
Academic Achievement
for*
Underachieving
GIFTED STUDENTS

from The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented

Principal Investigators: Del Siegle and Sally M. Reis
Study Development Team: Principal Investigators and D. Betsy McCoach
Intervention Development Team: Principal Investigators and Meredith Greene, D. Betsy McCoach, and Ric Schreiber
Field Test Team: D. Betsy McCoach and Del Siegle
Study Implementation Team: Principal Investigators and Becky Mann, Scott Davie, and Michele Moore

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Slide 3

What is Underachievement?

…high IQ score and low achievement test scores

…high IQ score and low grades

…high achievement test scores and low grades

…high indicators of intellectual, creative potential and low creative productivity

…high indicators of potential and limited presence of appropriate opportunity for intellectual and creative development

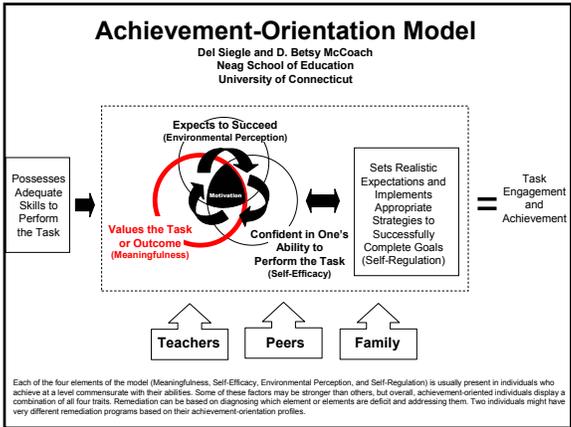Linda Emerick, 1990

Slide 4

SOME POSSIBLE
Causes of Underachievement

- *Initiating Situation*
- *Excessive Power*
- *Inconsistency and Opposition*
- *Inappropriate Classroom Environment*
- *Competition*
- *Value Conflict*
- *Unrealistic Expectations*

Tara/Casey Matt/Kevin Brad Clay/Steve Josh/Candi Tye

Slide 5

Achievement-Orientation Model
Del Siegle and D. Betsy McCoach
Neag School of Education
University of Connecticut

Possesses Adequate Skills to Perform the Task

Expects to Succeed
(Environmental Perception)

Motivation

Values the Task or Outcome
(Meaningfulness)

Confident in One's Ability to Perform the Task
(Self-Efficacy)

Sets Realistic Expectations and Implements Appropriate Strategies to Successfully Complete Goals
(Self-Regulation)

= Task Engagement and Achievement

Teachers Peers Family

Each of the four elements of the model (Meaningfulness, Self-Efficacy, Environmental Perception, and Self-Regulation) is usually present in individuals who achieve at a level commensurate with their abilities. Some of these factors may be stronger than others, but overall, achievement-oriented individuals display a combination of all four traits. Remediation can be based on diagnosing which element or elements are deficit and addressing them. Two individuals might have very different remediation programs based on their achievement-orientation profiles.

Slide 6

Personally Meaningful

- **Tied to Student's Identity**
- **Personally Interesting to the Student**
- **Integral to Student's Vision of the Future**
- **Viewed as Useful**

Eccles and Wigfield

12
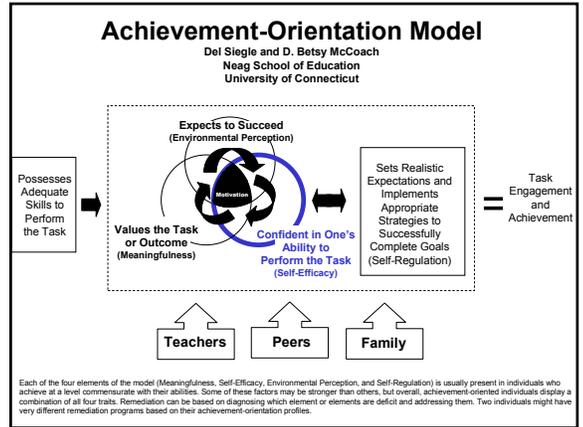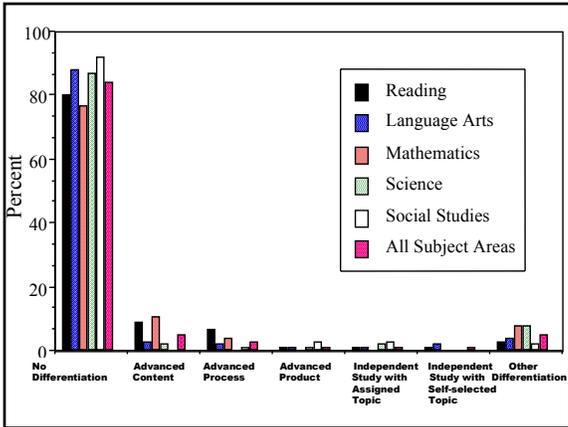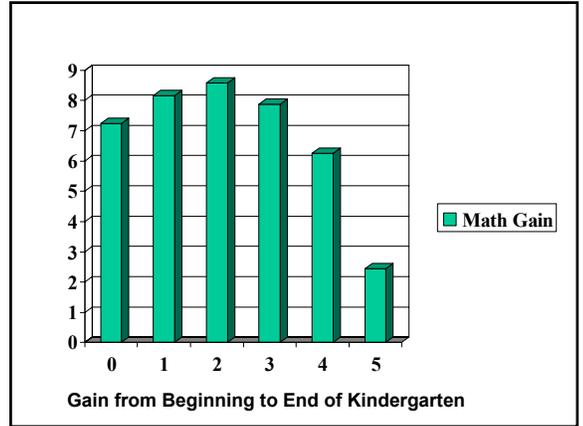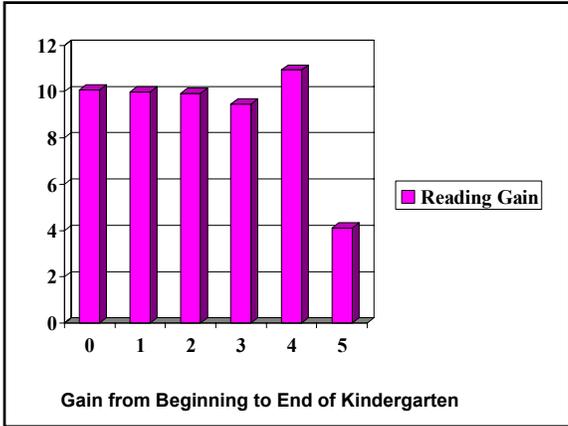**10**
8
6   ■ Reading Gain
4
2
0
0   1   2   3   4   5
Gain from Beginning to End of Kindergarten

9
8
7
6
5   ■ Math Gain
4
3
2
1
0
0   1   2   3   4   5
Gain from Beginning to End of Kindergarten

Percent
100
80   ■ Reading
■ Language Arts
60   ■ Mathematics
■ Science
40   □ Social Studies
■ All Subject Areas
20
0
No Differentiation | Advanced Content | Advanced Process | Advanced Product | Independent Study with Assigned Topic | Independent Study with Self-selected Topic | Other Differentiation

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What is self-efficacy?

Self-efficacy is one's judgment of one's capability to perform given activities.

Self-efficacy influences

1. **What activities we select**
2. **How much effort we put forth**
3. **How persistent we are in the face of difficulties**
4. **The difficulty of goals we set**

People with low self-efficacy toward a task are more likely to avoid it, while those with high self-efficacy are not only more likely to attempt the task, they also work harder and persist longer in the face of difficulties.

Slide 1

Self-efficacy is based on
1) **past performance**
2) **vicarious experiences**
3) **verbal persuasion**
4) **physiological cues**

Slide 2

g*performance*oals

g*learning*oals

Carol Dweck

Slide 3

Teacher Rating of Students

Quality of Work — $R^2 = .66$ — Ability

Quality of Work — $R^2 = .63$ — Effort

Student Self-Rating

Quality of Work — $R^2 = .52$ — Ability

Quality of Work — Effort — $R^2 = .11$

Slide 4

Big Bird
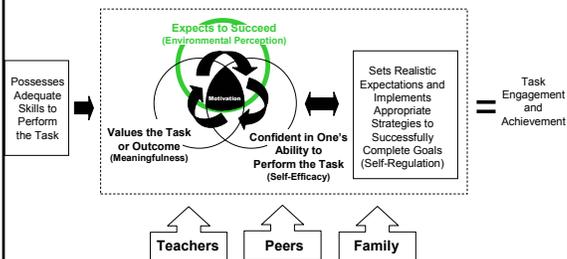
The wisdom of Big Bird (and the dark genius of Oscar the Grouch): Lessons from life in feathers.

by Caroll Spinney with Jason Milligan

Slide 5

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## Slide 6

Perceived Environmental Friendliness

Claude Steele tells us that some students may have difficulty trusting the environment and their achievement may be less about their abilities than their perception of the **fairness of the environment.**

"When capable black college students fail to perform as well as their white counterparts, the explanation often has less to do with preparation or ability than with the threat of stereotypes about their capacity to succeed."
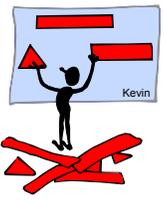
Perceived Environmental Friendliness
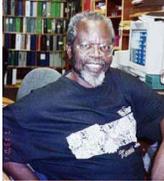
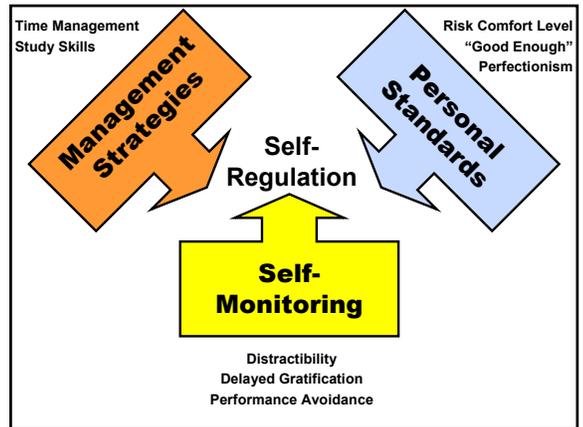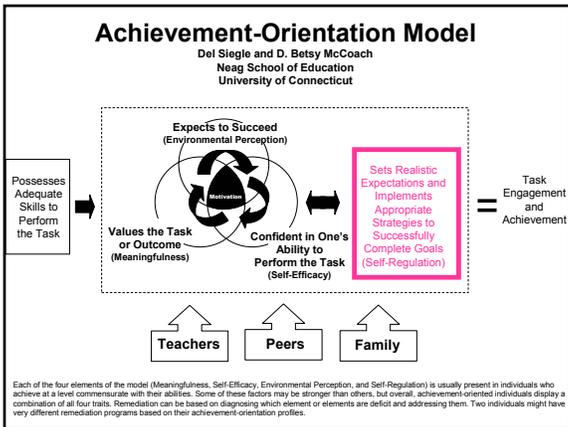Students put effort where their **chances of success are better** according to John Ogbu.

When faced with a difficult situation, three options present themselves

Robert Sternberg

1) Modifying one's behavior to be successful in that environment
2) Changing the environment
3) Abandoning the situation.

Kevin

Gifted children who underachieve in school may fail to select options that maximize their likelihood for success. They may cling tenaciously to a strategy that has served them well in the past or in a different situation.

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Time Management
Study Skills

Management Strategies

Risk Comfort Level
"Good Enough"
Perfectionism

Personal Standards

Self-Regulation

Self-Monitoring

Distractibility
Delayed Gratification
Performance Avoidance

GAMES UNHEALTHY PERFECTIONISTS PLAY

- Numbers Game
- Focusing on the Future
- Telescopic Thinking
- Pining Over the Past
- Getting it Right
- All or Nothing
- Mood Swinging

Why People Sometimes Become Perfectionists

- Birth Order
- Messages of the Media
- Generational Inheritance
- Pressure from School and Peers
- Superkid Syndrome
- MA > CA
- Dysfunctional Family

TIPS

To Reduce

Unhealthy Perfectionism

Creative Visualization

Bibliotherapy

"Debugging"

"Swiss Cheese"

Creative Outlets

Perfectionism
What's Bad About Being Too Good?

Miriam Adderholdt-Elliott and Jan Goldberg

Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper editor because "he had no good ideas." He went on to create Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, the Disney Studios, Disneyland; his greatest dream, EPCOT Center opened in 1982.

Thomas Edison's teachers called him "too stupid to learn." He made 3,000 mistakes on his way to inventing the light bulb. Eventually he held 1,093 patents.

Louisa May Alcott was told by an editor that she would never write anything popular. More than a century later, her novels are still being read, and the Children's Literature Association (an international group of librarians, teachers, authors, and publishers) considers *Little Women* on the the best American children's books of the past 200 years.

CHAPTER I
PLAYING PILGRIMS

Charles Goodyear had many business failures and was even sent to debtor's prison before accidentally discovering the vulcanization process that revolutionized the rubber industry.

A journey of one thousand miles begins with a single step.

Lee Iacocca was fired from Ford Motor Company by Henry Ford II. He later became chairman of the board at Chrysler and headed the campaign to restore the Statue of Liberty. (He even bought Henry Ford's old house and moved in.)

Babe Ruth hit 714 home runs—but he also struck out 1,330 times.

R.H. Macy failed seven times before making it big with his New York store.

macy's
NEW YORK

Abraham Lincoln started out as a captain at the beginning of the Blackhawk War; by the end of the war, he had been demoted to private.

Failed in business in 1831.

Defeated for Legislature in 1832.

Second failure in business in 1833.

Suffered nervous breakdown in 1836.

Defeated for Speaker in 1838.

Defeated for Elector in 1840.

Defeated for Congress in 1848.

Defeated for Vice President in 1856.

Defeated for Senate in 1858.

Elected President in 1860.

Test-taking Strategies

Being well prepared for a test involves time management, high-quality note-taking, and regular reviews of material. There are three types of reviews that can better prepare you for test-taking: regular, weekly reviews; reviews just before the test; and posttest reviews of your test performance. Doing well on a test involves test anticipation, preparation, and analysis of performance.

Test Anticipation:

- What format will the test be? Multiple choice, short answer, essay, or a combination?
- How much is the test worth?
- How much time will you have to write the test?
- Are you allowed to use notes or text?
- What materials will be needed? A calculator, ruler, or a pencil?
- Have you regularly reviewed the notes for the test?
- How much study time will you need? When will you study and for how long each time?
- Were previous tests similar to this one? Were there quizzes on this material?

Test Preparation:

- Spread your study time over several days and take regular short breaks
- Study difficult or "boring" subjects first
- Schedule study time during your best time of day
- Study where you'll be alert (not in bed or in easy chairs or sofas where you can get too comfortable).
- Revise class and text notes
- Concentrate on remembering the main ideas and most important information
- Ask questions of yourself; provide yourself with elaborate explanations
- Study with a partner to compare notes and test each other
- Review main topics and subtopics

Posttest Analysis:

- Did you receive the grade you expected?
- Analyze the missing answers: Were they in your notes? In your text? On a quiz? Did you not provide enough detail?
- Analyze the type of questions: Did you perform better on a certain type of question?
- Did you have enough time to finish the test and to review your answers?

Note-taking Tips

The very act of writing something down may improve your retention of that information. Note taking also increases concentration. Here are some tips for better note-taking:

- Write titles and headings on the page correctly.

- Label all notes in notebook with date, topic and page.

- Leave a wide margin so you can add questions, comments, or new information to it later; make a wide left margin as the recall column.

- Skip lines between subtopics.

- Circle, underline, or highlight key phrases in notebook when studying.

- Interact with the notes soon after taking them; review them, transcribe them into a different form, recite them.

To take notes from a textbook:
Use the chapter format to guide you (headings, text boxes, chapter summaries, questions).
Skim the whole section before beginning your note-taking.

- Write in your own word what you read.

- Describe a sequence of events, steps, or ideas.

- List main topics and subtopics in outline form.

- List details for each main idea and subtopic.

- Make semantic map (graphic organizer) for main ideas and subtopics.

- Categorize details.

- Write a summary for each section.

To take notes from a classroom discussion:
Use the tips above.

- Write in your own words what is said. Don't try to write down every word.

- Invent a personal form of shorthand of symbols and abbreviations for common words or phrases.

- Use arrows, stars, or asterisks to indicate most important points

- Practice good listening techniques such as: look directly at the speaker;
  do not talk when the speaker is talking; think along with the speaker.

- Listen for key words such as:
  There are 3 reasons . . . ; In conclusion. ; An important point is. . .

Active Study Checklist

RECITE

- [ ] I describe or explain the topic out loud, in my own words.
- [ ] I record into a tape recorder.
- [ ] I teach or explain the information to someone else.
- [ ] I role play a part.
- [ ] I simulate the lesson.
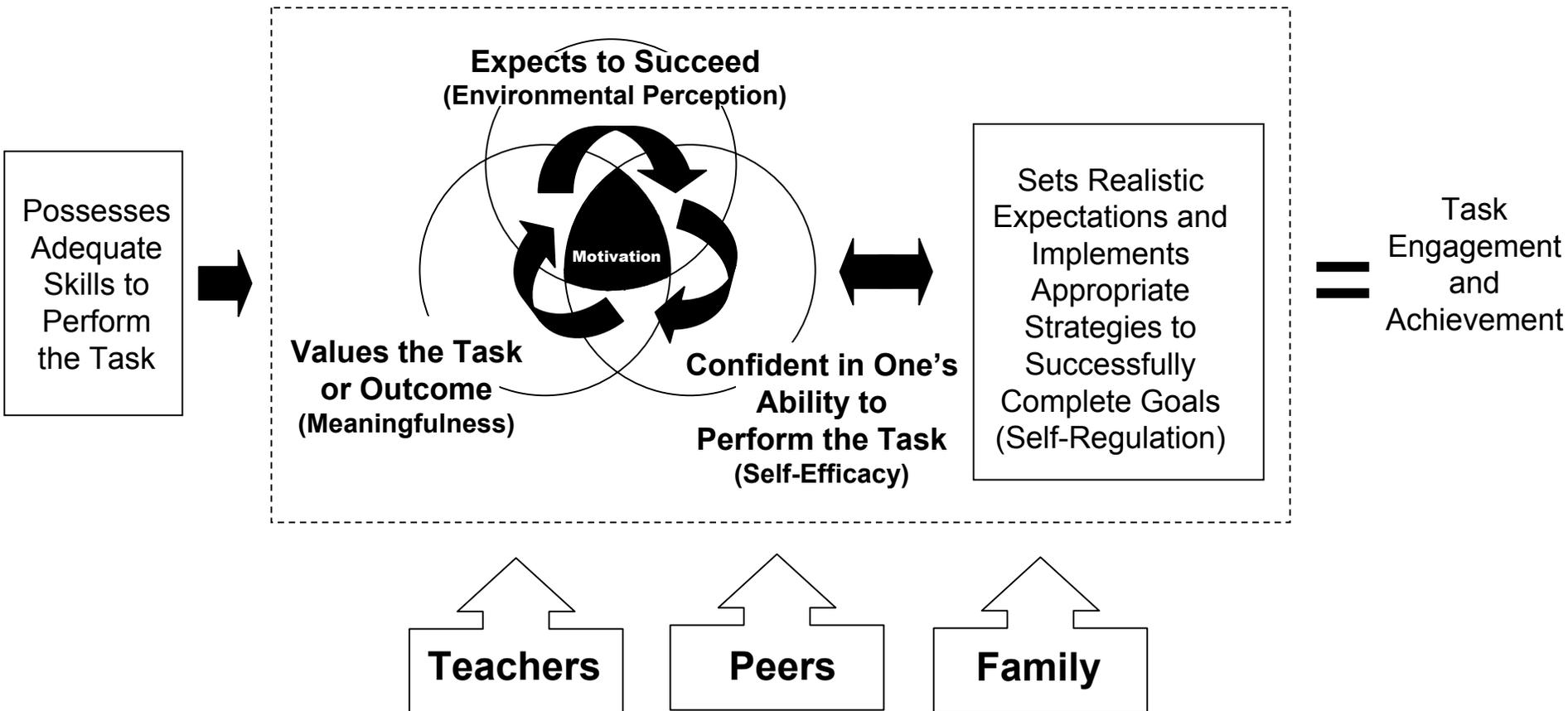- [ ] I recite the answers to questions on the topic that I made up myself.

WRITE

- [ ] I make a chapter study review by writing key points on index cards.
- [ ] I make and use flashcards for short answer questions or concepts.
- [ ] I make lists of related information by categories.
- [ ] I draw a diagram, map, sketch, timeline, or chart from memory, and then I check the book for accuracy.
- [ ] I write questions I think will be on the test and recite the answers.
- [ ] I create semantic maps (visual representation of ideas) to summarize the unit (webs, sequence chains, Venn diagrams).
- [ ] I use mnemonics to remember information.
- [ ] I rewrite class notes, rearranging the information in my own words.

VISUALIZE

- [ ] I close my eyes and picture in my mind what I am trying to remember (chart, map, event, scene, experiment, character).
- [ ] I try to remember where information is located on a page.
- [ ] I picture in my mind how the test will look, based on previous similar tests.
- [ ] I organize and design graphic organizers to put abstract information into concrete and visual form.
- [ ] I represent concepts with symbols so I can remember them.

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