

# Demonstration for Eyewitness Testimony & Reconstructive Memory

**This activity allows your students to experience false memories. It is based on the work of Deese, Roediger & McDermott, often called the DRM paradigm.**

Show the word lists below one at a time. Show them only for the time it takes you to read the words aloud to your students. Show the first one then give one minute to write them down. Give verbal exhortations such as,

*“You’ll probably find the first few are easy and then you hit a wall, just push right on through it. It is important you get as many as possible.”*

After 60 seconds, show the second list. Again, only show it for as long as you read it aloud. Then allow 60 seconds for recall, complete with similar exhortations to put pressure on to get as many words as possible.

It is probable that some of your teaching group will have included ‘sweet’ in the first list and ‘anger’ in the second list but they weren’t there.

Invite suggestions about why people ‘recalled’ words that weren’t on the list. Possible explanations include clustering of memories, use of schemata & excitation of adjoining neurons.

Further discussion can be based on the conditions that made it more likely that false memories would occur (e.g. stressing importance of recalling lots of words).

Sour

Sugar

Toffee

Nice

Pop

Taste

Candy

Bitter

Cake

Honey

Chocolate

Tooth

Pie

Good

Tart

Mad

Fight

Fury

Wrath

Rage

Calm

Fear

Hatred

Emotion

Happy

Temper

Enrage

Hate

Mean

Annoy