



We all make memories, and memories make us who we are. This book explores the art and science of memory, how and why we remember, and what happens when we start forgetting. Meet memory champions, learn tricks to remember and discover how shared memory makes us human.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Monique Polak is the author of over 30 books for young people including *Remember This: The Fascinating World of Memory*, *Open Science: Knowledge for Everyone* and *What World is Left*. She is a three-time winner of the Quebec Writers' Federation Prize for Children's and YA Literature, now called the Janet Savage Blachford Prize. Her work has also been nominated for prizes such as the Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction and the Arthur Ellis Award. She lives in Montreal.



ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR:

Valéry Goulet is a French Canadian designer, illustrator and design instructor originally from Quebec. With a master's in interaction design from Université Laval, she's worked with global brands and agencies, and her illustrations have garnered attention far and wide. When she's not illustrating, Valéry instructs for the Visual Communication Design program at the University of Alberta and the Bachelor of Design program at MacEwan University. She lives in Edmonton.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

1. What is your earliest memory? Write a paragraph about your earliest memory. Try to include details from at least two of the five senses.
2. Transitional objects can help kids get through challenging times or adapt to life changes. These objects can include stuffed animals, baby blankets and much more. Did you have a transitional object when you were younger? Perhaps you still have it, and it continues to bring you comfort. Either write a paragraph describing your transitional object or a paragraph told from the point of view of that object. What would your old teddy bear have to say about sharing life with you?
3. Flashbulb memories are formed when we learn about important and sometimes shocking events, often ones that will go on to make the news. Think of an important event that affected your community, country or even the whole world—for instance, the moment you learned the COVID-19 pandemic was declared, or that your school would be closed for an indefinite period. Write a paragraph describing where you were and how you felt when you learned this news.



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4. Olfactory memories are connected to our sense of smell. Write a paragraph about your favorite—or your least favorite—smell. What is your oldest memory of smelling that smell? How does this particular smell make you feel?
5. The next time you have to memorize something for school, try one of the memory tricks you will find on page 35–36. For instance, get musical. Turn what you are trying to remember into a song, then sing it. Write a short report afterwards to let your classmates know whether the trick worked for you.
6. Memorize a poem. It doesn't have to be a long one! When Monique Polak, the author of this book, was a child, she memorized many poems from Robert Louis Stevenson's collection *A Child's Garden of Verses*. All these years later, Monique still remembers the poems—and occasionally recites them to herself when she goes for a walk or uses a swing. You could even organize a small class activity or party where everyone gets to recite a poem they have memorized. Just make sure to keep a copy of your poems nearby in case you need backup!
7. The older people get, the more memories they make! Interview an older person. Make sure to take notes during the interview! Ask them to tell you about their happiest memory. You could also try asking them about their saddest memory. If you do, be sure to ask how they managed to get through this difficult period. Share your notes with your classmates.
8. Try the Mining Memory Exercise on page 78!

