

## Discussion Questions

*Make it Stick: the Science of Successful Learning*  
by Peter C. Brown, Henry L. Roediger III, and Mark A. McDaniel

1. What, if anything, was surprising to you about how people learn and remember?
2. What evidence do the authors give to support the book's ideas? Is the evidence convincing?
3. A central idea is that people learn something better and remember it longer when they focus on trying to get the new knowledge or skills *out* of the brain instead of trying to get them *in*. Why do you think this is the case?
4. The authors write that it is helpful to try to solve a problem before being taught the solution. Can you think of an example in your own life?
5. If you are currently trying to master something new, are you likely to change your learning strategies as a result of reading this book? How so?
6. If the most effective learning strategies, such as spaced and mixed retrieval practice, feel less productive than ineffective strategies like rereading and massed practice, how likely is it that learners will embrace them?

If you are an instructor, how might you help your students learn effective study strategies and stick with them?

7. Why do you think that some students are motivated to master highly difficult memory and motor-skill challenges like action video games but are not motivated to learn challenging subjects in school? Why are some learning challenges motivating and others off-putting?
8. What problems or issues does this book raise, either directly or by implication? Do the authors—or can you—offer solutions? Who would implement those solutions? How probable is success?
9. Are the book's ideas controversial? How so?
10. In many places, concerns for improving education have been hijacked by politics. Does this book suggest ways to recast the conversation? How so?