

Introduction

I first wrote *Cognitive Reorganization* in 1983 to provide clinicians with a source for activities for clients presenting with nontraditional communication deficits following traumatic brain injuries, nondominant hemisphere lesions, cerebral dysfunction secondary to disease processes, anoxic episodes, mass effects, and other generalized neurological impairments. It was among the first publications in the 1980s to organize therapeutic tasks from cognitively simple to complex rather than by linguistic modality. The activities are hierarchically organized with exercises that address cognitive processes using linguistic information which is often preserved after such injuries. The easier tasks address attention and more difficult ones progress to increasing working memory demands. Convergent and divergent tasks require top-down and bottom-up processing, which are necessary for the verbal problem-solving and decision-making skills that contribute to safety and independence in activities of daily living. Clinicians are free to select activities that are appropriate to their individual clients' needs throughout the course of therapy.

This third edition has been updated to include new, contemporary stimuli, preserving the best material and tasks from the earlier editions. I have created hundreds of fresh stimuli, with many pages offering twice the number of items for greater variety. With task variety in mind, several exercises offer optional instructions from which clinicians may select based on their clients' needs. Shaded areas that did not photocopy well have been eliminated. Bleed tabs have been added for quick location of chapters. The mathematical reasoning tasks from the *Practical Math Workbook* (S. Holloran & E. Richardson, 1996, Austin, TX: PRO-ED) have been returned to this edition as well. Individual items have been modified to be applicable for either in-patient or out-patient settings and to incorporate the ever-changing technological advances. A new chapter addressing simple attention has been included, and all answers have been moved to the back of the book.

Cognitive Reorganization emphasizes a compensatory rather than facilitative approach toward memory and orientation deficits. The following types of strategies that clinicians commonly use have been shown to aid in addressing memory and orientation deficits. The use of these strategies is determined by the client's strengths, weaknesses, and preferences, with the ultimate goal being to improve the client's functional ability at all levels.

1. *Rehearsal*: repeated practice of material to be remembered (e.g., the client says a phone number or message repeatedly while writing it down)
2. *Verification*: the client orally repeats what he or she heard to verify accuracy
3. *Association*: the client groups objects, tasks, words, or actions that are similar (e.g., items on a shopping list that are refrigerated)
4. *Mnemonics*: the client remembers information by combining the first letter of words to make a new word (rhymes or rhythms may also be used)

5. *Chunking*: the client groups words, numbers, and so forth to reduce the number of bits to remember (e.g., 792-2538 is regrouped into 792-25-38)
6. *Visual imagery*: the client forms a specific image or picture of items, tasks, or directions to be remembered (unusual images are often easier to remember)
7. *Anchor points or landmarks*: the client attempts to orient himself or herself by using remembered information, such as a previous time, date, location, or event (e.g., yesterday was Sunday, today must be Monday; noon is when the sun is directly overhead)
8. *Self-questions*: the client asks self questions to facilitate the recall process (e.g., What is the next step?)
9. *Predictability*: the client consistently performs routine tasks in the same way or at the same time so that they become habits (e.g., always eating dinner at 5:30 P.M.)
10. *Environmental placement*: the client places items in consistent locations to facilitate finding them (e.g., puts keys or wallet by door)
11. *Devices and equipment*:
 - using or carrying a calendar or electronic planner
 - carrying a daily class or work schedule, daily journal, notebook, or Post-it adhesive notes
 - using an alarm watch, paging system, or timers for daily reminders
 - referring to a schedule board
 - recording scheduled events on a tape recorder, personal digital assistant, or computer
 - using the radio or television for orienting to time, weather, date, etc.
 - using maps, guides, and directories to navigate in unfamiliar locations

Cognitive Reorganization has provided practical and challenging exercises for clients in the United States and around the world for more than two decades. And although it is designed with cognition in mind, most of the activities are useful for addressing linguistic disorders as well.

As the lyrics from the 2001 song “Oh, the Thinks You Can Think,” composed by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty for *Seussical the Musical*, state, “If you open your mind all the thinks you will find, you don’t need an excuse.... Oh, the thinks you can think!”