

# Memory Work Ideas

This is a compilation of memory work ideas that were published week-by-week in the Catholic Schoolhouse Blog for Year 2. They can be used with any year, any week, any subject of memory work. Some are appropriate for groups and others are more suited for at home use. Hopefully this list will help make memorization fun and interesting for your homeschool!

Write out a memory sentence on a dry erase board. Have everyone recite it. Then erase a word (draw a line as a blank space), and have everyone recite. Keep erasing words and reciting until you have only the punctuation left!

Grab a ball (the more fun the ball the better- think squishy, tentacle-y). Sit in a circle and say the memory work sentence that you will be working on. Have everyone repeat after you. Toss the ball to a student and have them recite the memory work (while squishing or pulling the fun ball). If they recite it correctly then that student can choose who to toss the ball to next. If they need help, help them and then they toss it back to you. Every time you (the teacher) has the ball, everyone recites together. Continue until everyone has a chance to hold the ball and recite the memory work on their own.

**Play duck, duck, goose to a memory work sentence this week.** Have your students sit in a circle. The 'goose' recites the memory work as they walk around the circle, when they finish the memory work they tag the next person they come to, to be the 'goose.' In the traditional duck, duck, goose, the tagged person has to chase the current goose around the circle back to their spot. If the goose gets to the spot before being caught, the tagged person becomes the 'goose.' You can choose if your group is too wild for this part or not. ;)

**Musical Memory work**– Pull out the drums, sistrum, or make the tambourine (or use any percussion-type instrument) this week to help you memorize. For each syllable in a memory sentence beat your drum, shake your sistrum or tambourine. If you have no instruments have your students clap or stomp for each syllable.

Note- Being able to differentiate between syllables is an important pre-reading skill. Include even your littlest ones in this activity so they can start to learn how to break words up into

syllables.

**Play a version of follow the leader.** Have your students form a line and choose a starting place. **The leader picks an action to do** (pat your head, skip, hop, lunge, twirl) **as they walk around the room doing the action and leading in reciting the memory work.** The leader says the memory work and everyone following repeats. When he/she gets back to the starting point again, the leader runs to the back of the line and the next person in line picks a new action and a new memory sentence. Letting the leader choose the memory sentence to recite allows them to choose one they may have memorized best. Try to have each student choose something different, but be flexible so it stays fun, and help them out with the memory work as needed.

Write a memory work sentence on notecards, **each word on it's own card.** Then hide them around the room. Have your students hunt for the cards and then arrange them in the correct order! Once they have it in the correct order (and **only** when they have it correct) they get to shout the memory sentence as loud as they can! (Because what kid doesn't love a reason to shout?)

Do your kids brush their teeth? (I hope so) **Write some their memory work on the mirrors in the bathroom.** Instead of mindlessly brushing their teeth for 2 minutes, they could be reading and cementing that memory work in their brains right before bed. Dry erase markers work just fine for us, or you could get glass markers.

HINT- don't stress yourself out by adding this to your own to-do list. Make it the **responsibility of an older student to write a new memory work sentence each week for the younger ones.** It can be a fun privilege to write on the mirrors, and it will help them memorize the work even better for your kinesthetic and visual learners!

Play a version of the game **cold and hot, memory work style!** Write the memory work on a card. Send your 'seeker' out of the room, keep the rest of the students in the room while you hide the card somewhere. Let your 'seeker' come back and start searching. As the seeker searches, the rest of the students recite the memory work. As the seeker gets *closer*, *everyone recites louder.* As your seeker *gets farther away from the card*, *everyone recites*

*more quietly.* If the seeker is really far away everyone whispers.

Play a **memory work head game!** This is a great one if you have lots of students or are meeting with a CSH program. Write out a memory sentence on notecards cards- one word per card (or split the memory sentence into sections depending on how many students you have). Give each student a card without letting them see it, to hold to their forehead facing out (so everyone else can see it). See how fast they can arrange themselves in the correct order! Let them talk and figure it out verbally the first time, and then shuffle cards and try again with no talking! If it's something they don't have memorized yet, or if you're working with younger students, write the memory sentence on the board or somewhere they can see for reference.

Write some memory work (BIG) on the sidewalk or driveway/parking lot with chalk ahead of time. Before going outside, line up your students and say the memory work pointing to a student for each word. Then go outside and see how fast they can find their word. Once everyone is in place, go down the line, each saying their word in the memory work. Then everyone say it together. Shuffle the kids and repeat as many times as you want!

If you can't go outside, write the words on cards or paper and tape them to the floor!

Memory Mother May I- play the classic mother may i game, but the Mother must ask memory work questions! The 'children' ask 'mother' if they may take X steps/twirls/hops etc, and the 'mother' must require them to correctly answer a question about or recite a memory work sentence. Something like this:

*"Mother may I take 2 frog jumps?"*

**"Finish this line: A conjugation is a word that..."**

*"joins words, phrases, or clauses together"*

**"Yes, you may take 2 frog jumps!"**

<jump> <jump>

If they get it wrong, then 'mother' may say "No you may NOT take 2 frog jumps" or whatever move.

Sing your memory work in different pitches this week! Try to sing like a soprano, as high pitched as you can. Next sing it in a mid-tone, last sing in a base. You may need some ear plugs, but I bet your students will memorize their memory work!

**Play a new version of hide-and-seek this week.** Whoever is IT doesn't count to ten though, they recite a memory verse before seeking everyone else! Let whoever is IT decide which memory sentence to recite, and have some printed versions of them in case they need help!

Play this silly game: Write the memory work on paper plates, dividing it up into either words or short phrases. (One word or short phrase per plate). Toss the plates into the air, and then see how fast your students can put them in the right order! If you want to make it more exercise, write the memory work on frisbees, go outside and throw them. Your students have to retrieve them and put them in the right order as fast as possible!

If you have a gym nearby or a basketball goal in your driveway, this could be a fun memory game for you! Play a version of [HORSE](#), memory work style! Choose 5 memory work sentences/songs to work on. Then have your students try to make a basketball goal from 5 different positions. When they make it in the first position, they have to recite the first memory verse correctly to move to the second position. Keep going until someone has made a goal AND said the memory work for that position correctly in all five places!

Play a memory grab bag game. Write the subjects on notecards or slips of paper and put them into a brown paper bag. Have your students take turns pulling out a subject and reciting the memory work for that subject. If they get the whole sentence/memory line correct- they keep the notecard/slip of paper and get 1 point! If they mess it up, they have to place it back in the bag! Keep going until the bag is empty. See who has the most points!

Play a memory work password 'game' this week at home. For each doorway in the house, decide on a memory sentence one must recite before entering (like a secret password). If you want to make it fun, you can make sure the doors are closed, the memory work for entering is printed and taped the the back of the door. That way the 'guard' has it handy for checking the accuracy of the memory-work-password. Make sure all the memory work is posted somewhere for reference.

A simpler version is to choose just one memory work sentence that is the whole house's password for the day. When you get back from the grocery store/soccer practice/dance class/ etc everyone has to say the secret password/memory work before you can go inside! Once everyone has mastered that memory sentence, switch to a new one!

Make a Jeopardy 'board' with notecards. On one side of the notecard write the point value and on the other side, write the question. Your 'questions' can require the whole memory sentence to be repeated (like, "recite the phases of the moon memory work") or you can just ask a question that is based on the memory work (like "What is the Roman Numeral for 5?" Make some easy (like, "Name one of the seven sacraments") and some more difficult (like, "Name all seven sacraments") Adapt it for your age group and the subjects you've studied the most!

Here's an active idea- **Memory Work Tag!** Take your students to a basketball court (or other open area), and establish where the 'base' is. You pick a student (or take a volunteer) to be 'it' and chase everyone trying to tag others to become 'it'. Your students being chased can seek refuge in the base (where you can't be tagged), but must recite a memory verse once in the base. Once they've recited it, they have to leave the base! As the teacher you can stay in the base and hand out slips with the memory work on them, or determine which memory work they have to recite, or even make them recite in a group, however you wish!

Play Memory Memory Work. No I didn't stutter. Take your list of memory work sentences and split each sentence into two parts (part A and part B) and write each part on a different notecard. You could label them if needed. For example, on one card you write "Alphabetical order means organizing words" and on another card you write "in the same sequence as the letters of the alphabet." Then flip all the card with the sentences face down on the table and play the game 'memory' style. Flip two cards, if they form a completed memory work sentence then you get to keep them, if not flip them back over. Take turns until all the memory work sentences are completed!

Grab several buckets or coffee cans (or boxes) and label them with each subject of memory work. **Then have your students take turns tossing a bean bag** (or small ball or stuffed animal,

whatever you have) toward the buckets. Whichever bucket they get, they have to recite the memory work for. For your older students you could hand them a check list and see who can make a bucket for and recite every subject's memory work first. Then have prizes for everyone!

Play duck, duck, goose- memory work style. Instead of calling duck, duck, duck, etc as you walk around the circle, recite a memory work sentence. When you get to the end of the memory work, the last person you touch is it (or the goose) they have to chase around the circle and try to catch the memory work reciter. If they do, then that person has to try again and recite a different memory work, if not caught then the goose becomes the one who recites and walks around the circle.

A cool memory trick I learned is to write down the first letter in each word in something you are trying to memorize. First have your student read the memory work aloud. Then hand them a sheet of paper and have them write down the first letter in each word, as you read the memory work to them. See if they can recite the memory verse using just their 'cheat' sheet of first letters. Next use only the first letter in the sentence. Then recite with no cheat sheet! You'd be surprised how fast you can memorize something this way!

The last week is perfect for reviewing all the memory work of the year. Pull out all your history cards and lay out sections of them (like 20 in a row) and see if your students can identify the history topic from the picture. If they get it right let them flip that card over. You could make a game out of it by starting with the first 5, once they have those correct, flip them back to the pictures and add the next 5. Keep going until you have the whole timeline laid out. Can your students recite the whole year 2 timeline from just the pictures?