

# Pelmanism

## Lesson 6

This Product Brought To You By:

**Joanne Reid**

<http://chaoscure.com>

### **This is a Public Domain Document**

I've made some changes to bring this series of documents up to date. I'm sharing it with you because it helped me bring together a lifetime of experience dealing with the assorted problems in creating order out of chaos.

<http://chaoscure.com>

# PELMANISM

## Mental Connections

### Lesson No. 6

#### The Pelman System of Mind and Memory Training

#### FOREWORD

**Editor's Note: This is basically the original course but I've made some minor changes in an attempt to bring it into the 21<sup>st</sup> century but essentially kept the same language.**

To the Student:

Previous lessons have shown you the value of trained senses. As a result you now gather daily larger amount of mental material than ever before. The eye especially has become quick to see and understand. How are you to handle this increasing harvest of facts, ideas, notions, impressions, and fancies? This lesson tells you about the fundamental processes. Later lessons will complete the tuition.

There is a grammar of thought and a grammar of words. Hence there is bad grammar in thinking just as there is in language.

*We want to help you to think accurately.*

You need not only a knowledge of words but of values. You must follow the right methods as well as possess the power of expression. Grip this lesson from the first paragraph to the last.

### **I. THE STREAM OF THOUGHT**

1. Ask yourself this question: "Do my continually changing thoughts and feelings follow each other at random?" Presuming you are free to think the matter out quietly, take a sheet of paper and jot down as many as you can remember of the thoughts of the past hour. It is now, say, 9 p.m. At 8 p.m. you were sending your insurance money to the Secretary of the Company, and, having posted the letter, you returned to the reading of the book which was put aside for a moment or two: in order to remit your premium before the days of grace were exhausted. You read for half-an-hour; then a friend called and you discussed politics for ten minutes. After his departure you were reminded that the basement bell did not ring, and you carried out this bit of repair work rapidly, with becoming pride in your ability to do so, finishing at nine o'clock.

### Sequence in Events

2. On analyzing the events of this hour a little closely, you realize that there is a definite sequence in their happening; that thoughts do not come at random, but proceed by the law of association. While you were reading your book, you came across the word "insurance"; and that reminded you of the pressing importance of dispatching your premium before it was too late. Having done this, your interest in the book caused you to return to it, and for half-an-hour you were following the hero and heroine through trials and tribulations to marriage. Then there was a break. A friend's call and his ardent politics changed your world of fiction for a world of fact; and you went at it hammer and tongs for ten minutes. He left, perhaps only half convinced, and on shaking hands with him at the gate you remembered the basement bell.

You repaired it.

Such is the history of your mental hour. All its thinkings form a link of associations with one inevitable break, that of the friend's visit. Of course you could have avoided this if you had been so disposed. You could, for instance, have seen the word "insurance," and even thought

of your insurance policy without acting upon the thought; and you could have refused to see your friend on the plea that you were busy. By avoiding the chances of interruption, you would have secured greater concentration and obtained a more complete command over the thoughts connected with the book.

### **The Mind-Wanderer**

3. But even a mind that wanders thinks according to the laws of association. Let us see how this happens. Thomas Jefferson, a young man of twenty-three, is trying to devise some way of spending his evening. His thoughts for about ten minutes are represented in the following words; Hippodrome; Charley; Miss Turner; fashions; Wanamaker's; Simons; South America; Patagonians; advertising evils; Harlem.

He began by wondering what was the best seat he could afford at the Hippodrome; and then he wondered if his friend, Charley, could go with him; from Charley he immediately passed to Charley's fiancée, Miss Turner; and, from her to fashions, frills and furbelows; then he thought of Wanamaker's; and, as that was like the name of his own firm, he must needs think of the office staff, especially of Simons who

had robbed the safe, and skipped away to South America. That reminded him of the Patagonians who were said to be six or seven feet high and he wondered whether a man's height could be raised, as the advertisements said. Here he paused to meditate on the frauds of advertising; and on the way beautiful country outlooks were made hideous. He was just thinking he would change his lodgings to a better suburb than Harlem, when Charley called unexpectedly.

### **II. CONNECTED THINKING**

4. The worst mind-wanderer in the world has thoughts which are intimately connected in this way, even though in a five minutes' reverie he may begin with a thought about margarine and finish up with a speculation about the planet Mars. The mischief, however, is often serious. A man who uses his thinking powers in this listless fashion becomes unable to fix his attention on anything for long; his memory develops deplorable weaknesses due to inattention; and, as a consequence, self-confidence decreases, in corresponding ratio. No doubt there are times when we should allow the mind to take its own course, or accept the drift in which we find ourselves. The mind must not be drilled unceasingly; it must on occasion "stand at ease," as in

the conversation of a social evening. But when business or study is before us, and we have a program to fill, hour by hour, the more consistently we follow the demands of attention, the better it is for our mental powers generally. In this lesson we shall deal with the well known laws of association under the general heading of the Pelman Principles of Mental Connection.

### **Connected and Unconnected Facts and Ideas**

5. If you take an unordered list of words you find it rather difficult to recall them, because they are not so grouped as to be an organic whole. Here is such a list: dome, a, glass, many, of, white, eternity, life, stains, radiance, of, colored, the, like. As a mere list of words it seems to convey no meaning—but when Shelley used them he wrote:

Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,

Stains the white radiance of Eternity

What a difference! The introduction of method by means of grammatical arrangement, and the infusion of exalted feeling, turns a seemingly unmeaning group of words into poetry of the highest order. We shall proceed, first of all, to point the intellectual moral. There may

## Pelmanism – Lesson 6

---

be in your mind much that is excellent in itself, but it fails to find expression, because the material is not arranged. Facts and ideas are scattered round in barren isolation which should be gathered into fertile groups.

6. Now the object of this lesson is to provide a method whereby you will be able not only to think in a concentrated manner, thus avoiding the waste of mind-wandering, but to reap the harvest of your mental efforts. Such a result is worth working for, and if you are at all keen about it you will easily master the elementary technique of subsequent pages. Read through the following fifteen words, once only, and see how many you can write down in the order given.

Town	Lens
Camera	Continent
Cat	Glass
Island	Man
Window	Africa
Adonis	Fur

## Pelmanism – Lesson 6

---

House                      Photographer

Animal                     Warm

7. In all probability your efforts will not be a conspicuous success. Let us rearrange them, however, in a connected order; then, after reading through the list, once only, try to write them down from memory.

Town                        Animal

House                      Cat

Window                    Fur

Glass                       Warm

Lens                        Africa

Camera                    Continent

Photographer            Island

Man

This time your success will possibly astonish you. Each idea in the rearranged series of fifteen words has an obvious association with the

idea immediately preceding it, and with the idea immediately following it. The first list shows the difficulty of remembering unconnected ideas; the second list exhibits the ease of recollection when a natural association exists. Our object, however, is not merely to increase memory power, but to assist you in the development of a logical and creative mind. It will be a great advantage, no doubt, to arrange groups of data in such a related manner as to recall them with ease; and we shall show you, in later lessons, how this is done. But it will be a still greater advantage to be able to focus your attention on the true relationships of a subject, and to arrive at your own unaided conclusion.

### **Order and Classification**

8. The superiority of the second list of words lies in the effect of order. The first list was a "higgledy piggledy" affair. In the second, we arranged the words according to the principles of mental connection, and the "anyhow" element gave place to system.

9. There is another sphere in which order is the secret, and that is the sphere of classification. We are all classifiers, whether we know it or not. The boy who brings the newspapers round every morning is a

classifier, but he never calls himself by that name; and if he were to ask the boy from a competing newsagent's, whether he had "classified" his customers, the second boy might see in it some dark insult calling for immediate and forcible protest. Both boys are classifiers: they do not grab an armful of papers, then begin to deliver them, going here, there, and everywhere, in such a manner as to visit some streets three times over. Like the postman, they classify their addresses, and organize the whole journey so as to deliver the newspapers without going over the same ground twice. Similarly the boy at the railway bookstall is a classifier; he arranges his magazines and papers in a manner that not only appeals to the customer's eye, but enables him to find at once whatever is required by a purchaser.

### **Examples of Qualification**

10. Classification, as a word, is usually associated with the study of science, or of logic, but, as may be seen from the illustrations just given, it is a method employed by all who have to deal with masses of articles. Without classification the work of distributing goods would be endless. It is a method used by the librarian. How else could he find the books that are wanted? Whichever way, we turn we find this work

of classification going on; and where it is not carried out efficiently there is confusion, inaptitude, and failure.

11. Here is a mechanic who uses a number of drills, which are kept in a box at his side. When he changes a drill, he has to turn over perhaps ten or twelve before he fingers the right one, thus wasting time and movement. Someone suggests that the drills should be classified, marked, and stuck in a "drill plate" in the order of size. This is done, and the gain in speed and accuracy is considerable, as the mechanic sees the drills standing up like a set of organ pipes, and reaches for the size he wants without touching the others. Classification in the workshop is just as necessary as it is in the laboratory of the scientist.

12. Now, in order to bring the matter home to you, we are about to ask a personal question. "Have you learned to classify the facts you deal with every day, usually described as experience?" Do you arrange, according to a plan, all the new things you learn, or do you throw them on to a sort of general heap? For instance, if you pick up a popular paper and read that a certain burglar wrote a book whilst serving a term of penal servitude, do you simply say "He must have been a unique burglar" and then forget the matter, or do you

immediately place the fact in its proper association with other books, some of them famous which have been written in prisons? If you do, then, your powers work on the principles of mental connection; you classify your knowledge as it comes to you. If you do not, you will find that you forget half of what you read, because its associations are weak. You will also experience more difficulty in learning, and new ideas will be slow in coming.

### **Untidy Minds**

13. Such are the evils of having an untidy mind, in which impressions, ideas, convictions, fancies, and all the phenomena of consciousness are so ill arranged that you never know where to find anything when you want it. Classification is the introduction of order into the mental life: a place for everything and everything in its place. "But how do we classify experience?" demands a reader. "Take the events of an average day and tell me what I ought to do." We shall.

14. In the first place don't make a tremendous business of it. It is really quite a simple affair and not one to worry about. If the mind could not do its own classifying to some extent, rational life would be greatly impeded. But the principles of mental connection, fortunately,

work unconsciously. Life would not be worth living if, immediately you got out of bed in the morning you had to begin solemnly to classify the toilet soap, then the towel, then the breakfast, then the trolley, and so on throughout the livelong day. There is a time to classify these things, and it is done unconsciously by repeated use. Begin, rather, with the morning paper; not consciously with the teeth set, but with an alert mind, and when you have found an interesting item about the Baku oil wells, or a lecture on the chemistry of soils, or the discovery of a missing Raphael, connect it with any previous item you have met with on the same subject; deliberately exploring your consciousness for possible associations by way of similarity or contrast. You may have no other chance during the day of exercising your mind in this way; but if you form the habit you will classify ideas and information unconsciously and without effort.

### **Unifying Knowledge**

15. At first; success may not be marked, but you will have received a vivid impression of the item that interested you, and when, some turnings later you read a paragraph about the Roumanian oil wells, or the building of a new Agricultural College, or the latest purchase of a Raphael, your recall of the previous impressions will be instantaneous,

and you will thus classify your knowledge, You will also unify it, indeed you will do much more than that.

### **Judgment**

16. As your knowledge increases there will come to you the power of judgment, that is, opinions of more or less weight will be formed. You cannot classify two items of knowledge about mineral all without comparing or contrasting them; and out of this process you evolve a conclusion, tentative it may be, but still a conclusion. If the item about Baku oil was to the effect that a vast new territory was to be opened up, and the item about Roumania indicated the exhaustion of the wells in that country, you could not very well link the two items together without drawing an inference as to the probable rise in Baku shares, and, perhaps, in the price of lamp oil. The listless absorber of news paper print might fail, through force of habit, to register a connection, but not you.

### **III. IMPORTANCE OF STANDARDS**

17. The value of your judgments or opinions is decided by the extent of your acquaintance with the best standards. A popular illustration

may be found in the awarding of prizes at a dog show. If, you were suddenly called upon to act as a judge, owing to the absence, of some "doggy" expert, what would be expected of you? First, your classification would have to be accurate. If an owner brought up a basset hound and you classed it as a dachshund, your fellow judges would ask you to retire. To them it would be almost as criminal as if you mistook a bloodhound for a pom. A judge must know every class of dog down to the last detail. Next, he must have an intimate acquaintance with the best representatives of each class; he must have good standards. These come to him from classified experience and from the close study of types. The dictionary defines the word standard as "a measure of quantity, quality, or value established by law or general consent." We should prefer to say that it is established by the scientific method, of which more anon.

### **Classification and Knowledge**

18. It should be clearly understood that these mental processes which we have tried to explain by using familiar topics are precisely the same as those used in all the higher branches of knowledge. A classification of dogs is just as legitimate as a classification of the fine arts, or of human emotions, or of postage stamps; indeed without such

classifications the getting of knowledge would be matter of supreme difficulty.

If, for instance, you had to arrange all flowering plants into classes, in order to know them, you would need half a lifetime to deal with only one genus; whereas you find that previous botanists have done this work already, thus simplifying your labors, and enabling you to identify at once flowers which you have not seen before. Moreover, you can remember details more easily when knowledge concerning them is based on an ordered scheme; and new conceptions arise in the mind with greater readiness. Fortunately, the important spheres of life and thought have already received a provisional classification, and it remains for us to make use of this fact for the advancement of our own intellectual interests, by mastering such classifications as we need and by the study of individual cases. This brings us to Definition.

#### **IV. THE NEED OF DEFINITION**

19. Definition, broadly considered, has to do with what a thing is. Even when we have a classification before us it is not always easy to arrive at a definition, on account of obscurities which are continually arising. Here is a case in point. Some years ago a white woman in New York

applied to the courts for an annulment of marriage, declaring that when she married her husband he told her he was a white man, but she had since discovered he was not. To some people this sounds like an absurdity. They cannot believe that a woman could fail to recognize a person's color. "Impossible" is their verdict. There are white men, brown men, black men, yellow men, and "variegated": this makes up the classification.

20. No doubt, but cases arise in which the application of a classification is not easy and one has to begin to define. The woman referred to called in the experts, and after examining her husband they found certain conformations and colors of the finger nails, and other peculiarities which, despite the apparent whiteness of the skin, proclaimed an immediate ancestor of non-white origin, and the wife won her case. Hence the saying that classification deals with groups, and definition with individuals. They represent two sides of one thought process. Of course, a group may sometimes figure as an individual group, but not as often in the ordinary affairs of life as in natural science.

### **Marks of the Trained Mind**

21. One mark of a trained mind is (a) its ability to classify experience and to deal with individual instances, (b) knowledge of the best standards. The reader is, therefore, urged to introduce more order into his thought-life. The process itself is often greatly illuminating; the sudden confrontation of one experience with a like experience, happening in different circumstances, may result in a flash of insight carrying the mind altogether beyond the limits of the classification itself.

22. It must not be forgotten that all our ordered schemes of knowledge are tentative arrangements; they stand for the best we know, but they are not final. Thus, in the early nineteenth century, literary criticism had its rules for valuing prose and poetry, and when a famous reviewer applied them to Wordsworth's poems the verdict was uttered in the now famous words, "This will never do." Eventually, it was the rules of literary criticism which would not do, and they were scrapped. The classification was wrong, hence the standard of values could not be right. It was a wiser world that welcomed Kipling, whose works did not fit the prevalent classification. Speaking of him, in conjunction with Loti, Mr. Edmund Gosse says: "The old rhetorical

manner of criticism was not meant for the discussion of such writers as these." (Question at Issue, p. 258.)

23. So while you classify your experience, always remember that experience transcends classification. You cannot put life into it scheme; the unknown "x" confronts us everywhere.

### **Look for the Excellent**

24. As for standards, these are constantly changing. The social standard, the money standard, the standard of education, and many another, are slowly evolving, consequently we are not surprised when we see differences assert themselves. The real question for us, however, is: "What is the standard now" 'We do not mean in any one thing, but in everything with which we are concerned. The one safe rule is to get into touch with that which stands for excellence.

25. For instance, a student wishes to begin the study of Profit Sharing, considered as a payment from the capitalist to the workman. Some writers think this is economically sound; others - deny it.

How does the student usually begin his inquiries? By purchasing an elementary, and perhaps one-sided discussion of the subject, which

warps opinion out of its logical orbit. He would be much better advised if he went direct to a standard authority; or, to the best writer on one side, then to the best on the other side. In that way one can easily classify the writers of lesser caliber and appraise their arguments. The method of discovering authorities will be dealt with in a later lesson.

### **V. THE PELMAN PRINCIPLES OF MENTAL CONNECTION**

#### **Classifying Connected Words**

26. Before expounding the PELMAN Principles of Mental Connection there is a preliminary difficulty respecting definition to be considered. Turn again for a moment to the second list of words. Some of the word-couples are quite obvious in their connection: Town and House being whole and part; also House and Window. But Glass and Lens are not quite clear. Are we to think of the relationship in this way; that Lens is the object and Glass one of its attributes? Or are we to think of them as synonyms, just as we speak of spectacles as glasses? This raises a further question: Is the connection between ideas one which is thought of or is it a necessary connection between thoughts?

27. Here is an illustration. To you, the connection between Glass and Lens may be purely logical. Glass is a substance which becomes a Lens when a certain conformation is given to it; therefore, the connection is that of object and attribute. To me, the primary connection may be purely personal, for the shell which killed my friend at Lens forced a piece of Glass into his skull. In the first instance, the connection is one between thoughts, with no other element affecting it. In the second instance it is a connection thought of.

### **The Personal Element**

28. In going through any list of connected words you will sometimes find, that this personal association is stronger than any other connecting principle; and, when that is the case; you should use it. You may also find that two words are capable of being grouped under two or more of the principles of connection. This fact arises from the complexity of experience, which offers us opportunities of taking different points of view. Care and Pain are obviously connected by similarity of sound; but, if one reflects a little, there might be a connection in the mind of a rheumatic person who used a cane to relieve the pain of walking. Who is to say which of these connections takes precedence? To some students concatenation will come first;

others will give the priority to similarity of sound. But for our purposes the main thing is to perceive possible connections and to use them for the work of memory and thought.

29. The PELMAN Principles of Mental Connection are four in number, as follows:

(1) The Principle of Inherent Connection.

(2) The Principle of Opposition.

(3) The Principle of Concatenation.

(4) The Principle of Similarity of Sound.

(1) The first principle is so named because the connection is inherent, or exists actually within the two ideas themselves, quite apart from any personal experience. The sub-divisions of Inherent Connection are:

(a) Synonymy. In this case the two words represent the same idea and have almost the same meaning; one word can be used in place, of the other without any great alteration in the sense.

For example, ghost and apparition are synonymous. So are poor

## Pelmanism – Lesson 6

---

and indigent; frequently, often; work, labor; empty, vacant; tired, weary; question, query; obtain, procure.

(b) General and Particular. The word "General" in this sense means a sort or kind of thing, but it is always a sort or kind which includes several minor sorts or kinds within itself, the minor sorts or kinds being known as "Particular." For example: Animal would be General, and dog, cat, elephant would each be Particular. Flower and daisy is another example; flower being the General, and daisy being the Particular. Dog and terrier are General and Particular; so are city, New York; tree, oak; fish, cod; author, Shakespeare; school, high-school; move, run; color, green.

(c) Common Denominator. This classification is applicable where the two ideas are of the same sort or kind and can both be included under a wider or more general kind known as "General" the two ideas existing subordinately, or side by side, within the same general class. Compare the following examples of the Common Denominator with the examples already given of General and Particular. Oak and elm are Common Denominator,

for they are both trees. Red and Blue are Common Denominator, for they are both colors. Other examples are London, Paris (both capitals); dog, cat (both domestic animals); walk, run (both being sorts of movement); Sunday, Monday (both days of the week); terrier, poodle (both dogs); New York, Halifax (both ports); cod, herring; Shakespeare, Milton; man, woman; colonel, captain; river, sea; coat, hat; boot, stocking.

(d) Whole and Part. This sub-division is very easy to understand, for it includes all those cases in which one of the ideas is a part of the other. Horse and head would be an instance of Whole and Part, horse being the Whole and head the Part. Other examples are: man, arm; lion, mane; forest, tree; year, month; book, leaves; loaf, crust; Canada, Ontario; atmosphere, oxygen.

(e) Object and Attribute. Here one of the two words will be found to denote a person or thing, while the other expresses some characteristic quality, or attribute, or action peculiar to that thing. We divide this section into three: (a) Object and Attribute; (b) Object and Function; (c) Object and Accessory. For example, under the first (a) we include snow and white; ice and cold, lead

and heavy; desert and dry; night and dark. Under the second, (b) we include fish and swim; bird and sing; man and walk; scales and weigh. Under the third, (c) we include mother and good; heat and oppressive; laziness and foolish. Notice here, that although table, wood, is an example of Whole and Part, yet table, wooden, is an example of Object and Attribute, for wooden is an adjective. Table, wooden table, would be an example of General and Particular, table here being General, white wooden table would describe for us the particular kind or species of table.

(f) Cause and Effect. The application of this classification is simple. It is used when one of two ideas follows as the effect or result of the other. An illustration is seen in labor and weariness, in which labor is the cause and weariness the effect. Another example would be printing-press, book, the printing-press being the cause and the book the result. The following are additional examples: Illness, fretful; army, battle; artist, picture; author, book; cloud, rain; enemy, war; tailor, clothes; cigar, smoke.

(g) Complement. This is the, last subdivision of the Principle of Inherent Connection, and it is the least frequently used. It occurs in cases in which one idea demands the existence of a second and correlative idea in order to complete the thought suggested, as parent, child; teacher, pupil; shepherd, flock; lecturer, audience.

30. The second of the Four Principles of Mental Connection is the Principle of Opposition. In this case the connection is not one of mere difference. It is not sufficient that the two ideas are unlike one another. In order to be classed under Opposition, they must be absolutely contrary to one another. For example, wood and iron must not be classified under opposition, as, though they are unlike one another, they are not the exact opposite of one another; but hard and soft form an instance of opposition, because they represent opposite extremes. North and South would be a case of Opposition, and would East and West, but North and West would not be Opposition, nor would South and West. The following are examples of Opposition: light, dark; day, night; strong, weak; well, ill; war, peace; short, long; friend, enemy; thick, thin; idle; industrious; giant, dwarf.

31. The third of the Four Principles of Mental Connection is the Principle of Concatenation. In this case the connection does not arise out of any similarity between the two ideas themselves,- but is due to the fact that the two ideas happen to have been presented to the mind under circumstances likely to bind them together, so that the thought of one recalls the thought of the other. Wellington and Waterloo are examples of Concatenation, for although there is no similarity between the two yet one can scarcely think of Wellington without thinking also of the Battle of Waterloo. Again, room and chair would be an example of Concatenation; the chair is not a part of the room for it can be removed entirely without in any way altering the room itself, yet the thought of the chair almost always brings into the mind the thought of room. Other examples are: water, can; watch, pocket; city, traffic; holiday, country.

32. Connections by Concatenation are often purely personal in their character, and depend upon the special knowledge or experience of the individual. To a man who kept a tame monkey in his garden the example "garden, monkey" might be a strong instance of Concatenation, though to the majority of persons the connection would be unnoticeable.

33. The fourth of the Four Principles of Mental Connection is the Principle of Similarity of Sound. This differs from the three other Principles in that the connection is not really a connection between actual ideas, but between the words which represent those ideas. The principle of Similarity of Sound occurs between two words whenever one word, or a part of one word, sounds very much like the other word, or like a part of the other word. For instance, knight and night are perfect in Similarity of Sound. Bird and burden is another good example of this law. Notice that in Similarity of Sound the similarity should occur either in the whole word, or else in the accented syllables. The following are examples: Pick-axe, axiom; bright, bride; son, sun; brother, another; ocean, notion; tent, attentive; flock, flog;, stock, stocking; feet, feed; great, grade; tie, tile; ape, April; food, tool. The above Principles of Mental Connection are of the greatest importance, and it is absolutely imperative that they should be mastered thoroughly. All the examples given should be studied closely. Very often one pair of words can be classified under several of the above laws or subdivisions. In such a case you should use that classification which seems strongest to you personally.

**The Application of Analysis**

34. Let us now proceed to examine the application of these Four Principles of Mental Connection to the list of fifteen words as rearranged on page 5. (See below.) It was by means of a subconscious recognition of these Laws that you were enabled to remember the list so readily. The conscious and deliberate analysis of the connections would have made the task still more easy and the remembrance more nearly permanent. In the following example you should reason out carefully for yourself each connection:

Whole and Part	Town	Whole and Part
Attribute and Object	House	Whole and Part
Concatenation	Window	Whole and Part
General and Particular	Glass	Whole and Part
Whole and Part	Lens	Whole and Part
Object and Attribute	Camera	General and Particular
Common Denominator	Photographer	General and Particular
	Man	General and Particular
	Animal	Object and Attribute
	Cat	General and Particular
	Fur	
	Warm	
	Africa	
	Continent	
	Island	

Now, without reading this series of words again, endeavor to write this list backward, beginning with the word "island" and working back to the word town. This also you will probably achieve without hesitation.

### **The Repetition of a "Series"**

35. When repeating any similar "Series" of connected words, say the words of the Series alone, and do not repeat or trouble to think about the classification. The classification enables you to learn the Series in the first instance, so that afterward you can repeat the Series itself without recalling the classification. Never attempt to learn a "Series" of connected words merely by several repetitions of the words, but always by classifying in accordance with the connecting Laws.

### **The Translation of "Series"**

36. If you knew a foreign language, you will find that you can translate the "Town" Series into that language and repeat it forward and backward as easily as in your native tongue. Such an exercise is of great value to all who are studying foreign languages. A "Series" which contains examples of Similarity of Sound should not be translated unless an equally striking Similarity of Sound exists between the two words after translation. If you study the following series of one hundred words carefully, taking about a dozen words at a time and analyzing the connections as you did in the "Town" Series, you will find that you can immediately repeat the whole Series from memory,

## Pelmanism – Lesson 6

---

forward or backward. Like the words "Town" to "Island," the Series from "Island" to "Deep" may be translated into any language.

The regular, daily repetition forward and backward, from memory, of a Series such as the above, is, if persevered in, an invaluable aid towards the cure of mind-wandering, so long as the repetition demands the exercise of thought and has not become merely mechanical.

### Continuation of the "Town" 'Series

Island	Strong	Needle*	Coal	Sting
Water	Steel	Sew	Mine	Bee
Drink	Battleship	Garment	Quarry	Queen
Eat	Gun	Coat	Stone	King
Breakfast	Shell	Sleeve	Monument	Crown
Morning	Explosion	Arm	Great	Gold
Night	Wound	Hand	Small	Money
Sleep	Surgeon	Finger	Child	Wealth
Bed	Physician	Ring	Girl	Luxury
Soft	Medicine	Marriage	Pinafore	Motor Car
Hard	quinine	Church	Apron	Wheels
Diamond	Bitter	Organ	Dainty	Round
Sapphire	Sweet	Music	Delicate	Earth
Blue	Pleasant	Song	Fragile	Sun
Green	Holiday	Words	Care	Sun Dial
Leaf	Voyage	Book	Careless	Clock
Plant	Ship	Author	Lazy	Time
Garden	Sail	Pen	Punish'	Space
Bird	Canvas	Ink	Whip	Wide
Eagle	Cotton*	Black	Birch	Deep

\* Before translating, place "thread" between cotton and needle.

### **Mind-Wandering**

37. It is obvious that there is practically no limit to the number of words that might be committed to memory in this way, because the mind is never troubled with more than two ideas at a time. If the student cares to construct a Series of his own, he will find that, if the ideas come, within the laws of connection when taken two at a time, and if he carefully compares each pair before proceeding to the next pair, he can remember a Series of a thousand words as easily as he remembers a Series of twenty.

38. When constructing a Series you should take care that each word you add has a more intimate connection with the word immediately preceding it than with any word a few steps earlier in the Series. Thus, in the, "Island" Series, it would be unwise to write "Island, water, drink, liquid," for although there is a connection between "liquid" and "drink" there is a still closer and more obvious connection between "liquid" and "water." If you were to write "water, drink, liquid," it would suggest that when you wrote the word "liquid" you had failed to drive out from your mind the idea of "water" your attention being still centered more strongly on "water" than on "drink".

**VI. USEFUL APPLICATIONS OF ASSOCIATION**

39. Suppose that you have to learn the thirty-six exceptions to the rule that in Latin all nouns of the third declension ending in *is* are feminine. Many a schoolboy has labored hard and long over these thirty-six words, only to forget them again and never to be sure that he knew all of them. Let us arrange these thirty-six exceptions in pairs so that we shall have to pay attention to two only of them at a time. The connection may not be so obvious as in the first series, but a little thought will discover it. Here is the list:

(English)	(Latin)	(English)	(Latin)
Mullet	Mugilis	Stem	Caulis (2)
Fish	Piscia	Bundle	Fascis
River	Amnis	Club	Fustis
Canal	Canalis	Lever	Vectis
Ditch	Scrobis	Axle-tree	Axis
Worm	Vermis	Ploughshare	Vomis
Dust	Pulvis	Sword	Ensis
Path	Callis	Nail	Unguis
Hillock	Collis	Blood	Sanguis
Stone	Lapis	Snake	Anguis
Fire	Ignis	Dormouse	Glis
Firebrand	Torris	Net	Cassis
Bellows	Follis	Hair	Crinis
Ashes	Cinis	Rope	Fumis
Fine Flour	Pollis	Collar	Torquis
Bread	Panis	Circle	Orbis
Cucumber	Cucumis	Month	Mensis
Cabbage	Caulis (1)	End	Finis
		Doorpost	Poetis

40. Now, a peculiarity about a list of words learnt in this manner is that it is not necessary to repeat the whole list to discover if any particular word is in it or not, because, if the word is in the series, it will immediately recall the word which it was associated. If it is not, it will recall nothing. You do not need to repeat the "Town" series of words to tell us that the word "eat" was in it, and that "annex" was not nor the second series to tell us whether or not ensis, piscis, finis or cassis exceptions. Whether you learnt the series in English or Latin makes no difference, provided you know the exact meaning of the Latin words.

### **Clues to Over Three Thousand French Words**

41. More than three thousand words with the following twenty-two endings are spelled the same in French as in English.

able	Abominable
ace	Disgrace
acle	obstacle
ade	Barricade
al	illegal
ance	Resistance
ant	Constant
ence	Patience
ent	Impatient
ge	Rage
ible	Reprehensible
ice	Avarice

## Pelmanism – Lesson 6

---

ite	Israelite
ct	Strict
ine	Discipline
ion	Legion
tude	Multitude
gue	Demagogue
ule	Ridicule
ure	Caricature
ile	Hostile
et	Pamphlet

La brochure is French for an ordinary pamphlet: le pamphlet for a hostile pamphlet only.

It will be observed that these twenty-two specimen words, forming the "Abominable" Series, selected from the larger list of three thousand odd, are joined together by the Principles of Mental connection..

42. How this principle of comparing and classifying ideas may be applied easily and interestingly to the infinitely various problems of memory will be shown as the lessons proceed. Some applications will be immediately obvious, such as speaking without notes. What are notes for? To remind you of that which comes next. The minister, the lawyer, or the lecturer, does not jump from the idea with which he starts to something totally foreign to his subject. His line of thought and argument, with appropriate illustration, is planned out beforehand and divided into headings. If these divisions follow one another

logically, he has only to write them down and compare them two at a time, classifying the connection, to remember each of them in its exact order, regardless of their number. If you are a public speaker, try it. If you do not know what comes next in your discourse, the arrangement of your topics must be shockingly inept.

### **VII. THE RECOLLECTION OF ISOLATED FACT**

43. The subconscious action of Association may sometimes be employed effectually in the effort to recall an isolated fact, the remembrance of which cannot be awakened easily by any other means. The method is to return to the surroundings in which you last were aware of the fact you wish to remember. For example, if you have mislaid bunch of keys, you may remember where you placed them if you go back to the place where you know you last used them. If you have "forgotten" the funny story told you by a friend, it may recur to you if you think of what preceded it. The reproduction of some of the component elements in a situation tends to revive in the mind the impressions made by other component elements which may not be actually reproduced without such stimulus. It is, of course, impossible

to classify these purely arbitrary associations, depending as they do chiefly upon propinquity of time and place.

### **An Actress on Memory**

44. In this connection, it is interesting to record what Mrs. Kendall, the celebrated actress, has to say about the way in which actors and actresses remember their "parts." She says, "The memory can be cultivated, like any other faculty, up to a certain pitch. Practice works wonders. If you have not played a part for years, the re-reading of it, three or four times only, will bring it back to you. We have so much to help our memory on the stage. We have what is called the "business" of the scene. The fact that you have to do certain things brings a certain line back to your memory. Often when you enter your house, and sit at the same place and at the same table, the memory of the past returns, C'est la meme chose sur la scene. A little bit of "business" brings back a speech; the remembrance of a speech brings back a bit of "business;" the one helps the other. Still, though an exceptional memory is not absolutely necessary, it is an enormous help.

"The most extraordinary instance of memory that I personally remember was that of old Mr. Buckstone, who used to come upon the stage at rehearsals, reading his part and not knowing a word; but he would come on at night, and the clothes, and the situation, and the whole thing, brought the words back to him. I am speaking of the repetition of an old part. The fact of putting on the clothes, and dressing for the part, and speaking about it for a little, brought it back."

### **VIII. SO-CALLED "SYSTEMS OF MNEMONICS"**

45. Various systems of so-called "Mnemonics" are founded upon arbitrary associations of locality. In some of these, the pupil is directed to imagine a square sheet of paper, ruled into nine or sixteen squares, and then to imagine that he sees in each square a word or picture indicative of the fact to be remembered. 'It would be appalling to contemplate the chaotic state of a brain subjected to such a tax through several weeks of diligent study. A somewhat similar system instructing the pupil to locate and picture in imagination all the facts he wants to remember, as being present in some room familiar to him. There would be obvious impediments in the way of applying this

method to the memorization of a list of the Presidents of the United States, or the mountains of Europe, or the Emperors of Rome. In a later lesson we illustrate fully the correct manner of dealing with such facts.

### **Legitimate Use of Artificial Aids**

46. But although the systems just mentioned are hopelessly opposed to the laws of psychology, it must not be assumed that every artificial aid to memory is to be condemned as worthless. Thousands of students of physics have remembered the order of the colors in the spectrum by the artificial word "Vibgyor," in which V stands for violet, I for indigo, B for blue, G for green, Y for yellow, O for orange, and R for red. Again, the letters, p, a, d, forming the word "pad" give the initials of the membranes of the brain from within outward: p--pia; a—arachnoid; d—dura.

The cutaneous nerves crossing the region of the Iliac crest may be remembered by the word "slide," in which s=sacral nerves; l=lumbar nerves; i=ilio-gastric; d—dorsal; and e= external cutaneous.

### **Rhyme as an Adventitious Aid to Memory**

47. Verse is usually memorized with greater rapidity than prose, and this is largely due to associations of rhyme and rhythm. For this reason verse may occasionally prove to be a short cut to the remembering of certain facts. Probably most of us owe our recollection of the number of days in each month to the old rhyme; "Thirty days hath September.." The following example, given. by the (late) Rev. James Copner, embodies the various styles of English Ecclesiastical Architecture together with the centuries in which they flourished:,

"From six to eleven Anglo-Saxon style ran;  
Through eleven and twelve Anglo-Norman took its span;  
Semi-Norman or Transition came next on the scene;  
In twelve it commenced and ended thirteen.  
Early English, Decorated sand Florid or P. (Perpendicular)  
In thirteen, fourteen 'and fifteen we see;  
And lastly, Debased—of styles the most, mean—  
We date from the end of Century sixteen."

It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that the use of such expedients as those illustrated in the last paragraph, should be considered merely as aids and not in any way as a substitute for a true psychological development of the memory, such an that embodied in the PELMAN System. In a later lesson we shall show how unconnected facts can be dealt with by the Principles of Mental Connection.

### **EXERCISES**

#### **Exercise XIX**

There are no doubt several subjects of the greats eat importance to you personally, either because you are deeply interested in them or because they concern your calling. Thus, for a paper-maker, any new item connected with glazing or water marks would instantly attract attention. A paragraph about a cutting machine might not attract the same notice; and one about a new fiber might be read without more than a passing wonder. Nevertheless, both of these items may ultimately, be of real importance to the paper-maker. The cutting machine may be more efficient for paper than the knives at present in use, and the fiber may become an ingredient in a new sort of paper. This means that no sort of "cutter" and no kind of fiber, can be a

matter of indifference to the paper-maker; but the only way in which he can contribute to progressive movements is to classify all cutting machines and all materials that are likely to come into line with his purposes. If he fails in this respect it will be because the information in his mind, gathered from all sources, is unorganized, that is, unclassified, and therefore unappreciated as to its possibilities.

Now, put yourself in the place of the paper manufacturer. Instead of the items which concern but which may escape him, discover those which concern you. They are probably there in your consciousness awaiting proper organization. As yet the work of classifying and valuing is incomplete. You are therefore, losing a certain number of ideas which might be of great service. The man who is mentally alive does not lose them; he becomes the leader among his fellows.

"But," you ask, "how am I to begin? Your advice sounds good, and yet I don't know how to make a start." We shall tell you by suggesting a series of questions. (a) What is the object of your calling? (b) How does it differ from closely allied callings? (c) When did new and advantageous methods appear, and who invented them? (d) In what other occupations are processes used similar to yours, and can you

learn anything from them? (e) Have you unified all the knowledge you have obtained about your calling? To answer these questions properly is not a simple matter, so get pen and paper and do the thing thoroughly. It is a fine exercise in itself, and it has other values of a real character. Let not the student object that as an exercise it deals with trade and commerce, not with studies. Substitute the word studies for calling and the questions are equally apposite. The exercise is not one that can be worked in an hour; it is rather a continuous process extending over a period, until memory has yielded up all its material, and judgment has assessed its value. It applies to the employee as well as the employer, if the employee makes the employer's affairs his own concern.

### **Exercise XX**

To repeat, from memory, a series of connected words, which you have drawn up for yourself is not so good an exercise as to repeat a list which has been drawn up by someone else. The reason is obvious. In your own list the connections have been strengthened by the effort of imagination; in the other list, it is necessary to perceive the connectives of another mind; Use the "town" series and its continuation.

### Exercise XXI

At some time or other, everybody, or nearly everybody, has to make a speech. It may be a great occasion with an audience of thousands, or a small occasion like a presentation occupying a few minutes. In any case a certain order of idea must be observed, and to remember this order is important. Here the principles of connection are a real help. Suppose you have to take part in a debate on "Is a lawyer justified, in defending a prisoner of whose guilt he is cognizant?" The affirmative speaker has resumed his seat, and you now stand up to argue the following points, which you wish to argue from memory.

- (a) It degrades Justice into a competition of skill between two barristers both of whom believe in the prisoner's guilt.
- (b) It defeats Justice by clever but insincere pleading.
- (c) The lawyer becomes an accomplice of the prisoner when he deliberately frustrates the intention of the Law he ought to uphold.
- (d) The lawyer who acts a lie cannot retain his self-respect.

The main ideas of these four divisions can be "keyed" together in the following way: Degrades, Defeats, prisoner (i. e. accomplice of prisoner) self-respect.

Some students being good visualisers, do not find it necessary to -do more than to study the outline closely; they see the points mentally when speaking. Others can "see" nothing, and need a word series to fall back upon in case of momentary forgetfulness: In any event the exercise of forming such a series is good from every point of view: concentration, analysis, classification, and logical sequence.

### **Exercise XXII**

Fill in the blanks of the following story. Each blank stands for one word. In some cases the first and last letters of a word are given.

The sergeant had been through (1) ..... battles, and in the last scrap half of his jaw had been (2) ..... away. When in hospital he bore his sufferings (3) p.....y until the time when he began to be well (4)..... for his relations to (5)..... him. Then he was nervous. He was especially nervous about (6) .....wife's seem his fractured (7)..... and (8)..... the nurse pitifully to give him (9) w.....g of the approaching visit, so that he might (10) ..... himself

for the ordeal. "I'm a coward," he lamented. When his wife came, he (11) ..... himself for the ordeal. She was wonderfully brave. Just for a moment she shuddered, then (12) ..... him.

### **SPECIAL EXERCISES FOR MIND TRAINING AND HEALTH**

#### **Sixth Lesson**

It is surprising how effective Self-suggestion is. As a great writer has advised, say to yourself last thing at night that the next day you will get through your work comfortably and successfully, and that everything will go smoothly. Do not mention that you will not feel annoyed or tired; keep such words as annoyance and tiredness out of your mind. Simply lay stress on the ease and pleasantness and success of the next day's work.

The right time for Self-suggestion is just before you fall asleep.

The best times for recalling the advantages of the right exercises are while you dress and while you undress. Except for occasional practice, you gain little by attending to the different movements and actions of the actual dressing and undressing.

It is as well sometimes, however, to attend to these on purpose; for instance, while you have your bath, enter thoroughly into the sensation of sponging yourself with water; while you brush your hair, enter thoroughly into the muscular movement of the brushing, and the sensations upon the skin of the head and upon the hair.

### **I.—In Bed**

The new exercise is another one in muscular breathing, corresponding to the abdominal one in the Second Lesson. Here, when you have inhaled as before, with your hands over your ribs, do not exhale at once, but, while you hold in the breath, draw the ribs in; then let them out again; then draw them in again; so as to compel the air which you have inhaled to circulate freely throughout the lungs. Then, if there is any air left, exhale it.

Still lying in bed, and keeping both your hands and arms limp, and your left leg and foot limp, bring your right leg up; bring it up bent, with the toes as far as they will go from you, so as to stretch the front muscles of the legs. Draw the right knee up towards your chest; do not let your chest come forward to meet your knee. Keep your head

## Pelmanism – Lesson 6

---

well back, and your chin in. Then shake out your right foot and leg; let them rest. Go through the exercise with your left foot and leg instead.

Next, instead of being content with this partial movement, go through the same movement with your right leg, letting your left leg rest; but this time draw your right knee towards your chest with your two hands. You will be surprised how much further you can go by the help of the hands. It was just the same in the breathing exercises, in which the hands helped, you to exhale more thoroughly. And then shake out and rest that right leg, and do the exercise with the left leg instead.

Then, if you are strong enough, do it with the two legs together.

Then rest, and relax, and recall the successive exercises in imagination and memory. You ought to find this fairly easy.

The movements have many advantages, not only in strengthening important muscles of the trunk, but also in squeezing and massaging the liver and the stomach. It is the right leg that has most effect upon the liver, the left leg that has most effect upon the stomach.

### **II.—Out of Bed**

Stand with your legs comfortably apart, keeping your feet firm on the ground, and keeping your knees well back. It is most important in this exercise to have the small of the back hollow, and the chin in; or you may, if you like, look up to the ceiling, with the head well stretched back, but, of course, without strain. First, keep your left hand and arm relaxed and limp; then bend your right arm, and bring the back of your right hand under your chin; keep your right elbow close to your right ribs. Send your right hand quietly up in front of you, this time with the fingers stretched back, but kept all together. The palm should be away from you, not facing. Now send your right thumb further forward and downward, and sweep round quietly with your right arm, still kept stiff as you would in some kinds of swimming. Bring it back, and bring your shoulder back and down till your right hand and arm are down; then bring them up again to the first position, and repeat twice. Keep your left hand and arm limp; do not let them "sympathize" with the movement. Now shake out that right hand and arm; let them in their turn be relaxed and limp, and go through a similar exercise with the left hand and arm. Then do it with the two sides together. Then rest, and recall the exercise in imagination.

### **PELMAN LESSON VII**

Originality of ideas, treated of in Lesson VII, is a fascinating subject. And not only fascinating but really, important. "New ideas" in commerce, in literature, art, and the other professions, mean progress. The next lesson will therefore appeal to you very forcibly.

### **DON'TS**

1. Don't allow your resolutions to crumble; just continue in the spirit with which you began the Course.
2. Don't complain that you are a "born mind-wanderer." You may be, but conquer the habit by discipline. Hundreds have succeeded before you.
3. Don't skim this Lesson. Go over it until you know it.
4. Don't fail to test your knowledge by self-questioning.
5. Don't be satisfied with a half-knowledge of anything. Be thorough.

6. Don't forget that the formal exercises we prescribe, will, if practiced, enable you to do consciously what was, at first, a conscious effort.

### **DO THIS**

1. In all mental training, effort should be carried out in a rational manner. Therefore, however diligently you work at mental connection see to it that your mind has its periods of "play."
2. The four words in this lesson which should be mastered in all their ramifications are: Connection, classification, definition and standard.
3. Decide what classifications you need in (a) your calling, and (b) for your private studies.
4. Begin to use the principles of mental connection as an aid in the evolving of new ideas.
5. Make it a matter of conscience, of pride, if you will, to work for certain prescribed periods of time without allowing your mind to wander.

## Pelmanism – Lesson 6

---

6. Remember that mental training involves moral training. The virtue of perseverance is really the power of concentration in one of its many forms of expression.

\*\*\*

Thank you for reading...check out <http://chaoscure.com/pelmanism>  
for the rest of the series.