

repeatedly write them down. The others were told to draw them in order to memorize them. Who did better when tested for recall?

The doodlers were the hands-down winners.

And, no, it didn't matter in the slightest if participants showed any artistic ability. After just 40 seconds of low-quality sketching, subjects not only remembered significantly more, they also recalled more detail and context about the words and ideas they were studying. In short, they learned more, faster.

Why drawing is the most effective study technique

Why is drawing such a powerful way to study? To figure this out, the researchers tried to narrow down what exactly about drawing was so effective. Would tracing an existing drawing of an idea have the same effect? Would looking at someone else's visual representation? While both of these approaches were better than just reading over a word or concept, drawing beat them all.

The researchers hypothesize that's because drawing gives your brain so many different ways to engage with new material -- you have to figure out how to draw it by imagining it in detail in your mind, you experience the physical feeling of rendering that idea, and then, in the end, you look at a visual representation of it.

The bottom line is simple: Most of us are [probably not using the best techniques to study](#). And drawing is the top of the heap when it comes to research-backed approaches. Not only will it help you get smarter fast, but drawing is also so simple and discreet that you can use it in almost any setting -- from a lecture hall to a meeting room.

"Drawing improves memory across a variety of tasks and populations, and the simplicity of the strategy means that it can be used in any setting where it's OK to doodle," [sums up the Association for Psychological Science post](#) highlighting the findings.

So next time you want to learn, don't read or write. Doodle instead.