ProTalk

Discussion Files



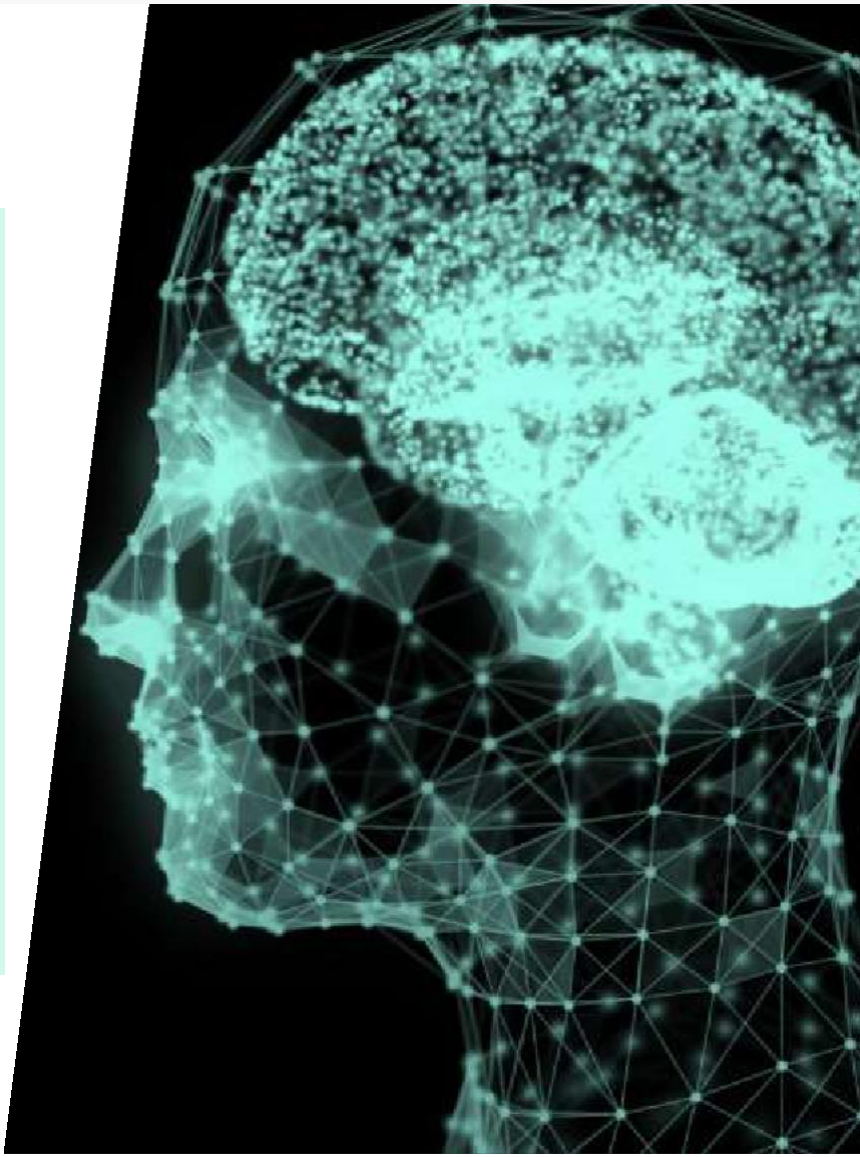
C1. Human memory implant

Afaq Language Center

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Goals

- Can recognise and recall some more technical vocabulary related to memory and technology.
- Can maintain an in-depth discussion on the pros and cons of having a memory implant.



What do you think?

Every day we deposit **memories** into our **brains**, but for some people those memories disappear just as quickly as they are formed. A **neuroscientist** has an **audacious** idea about how to stop that happening.

Your memory

What is your most **treasured** memory? Do you struggle to remember certain things?

Memory techniques

What techniques are there to help people remember things?
Do you use any of them?



mnemonic devices

repetition

Test your memory

Look at the slide and try to remember as much as possible. Your teacher will take away the slide after 30 seconds.









What can you remember?

What can you remember from the previous slide? Try to describe the pictures in detail.

Did you use any techniques to help you remember?

Memory

Discuss the questions below.



1. What is your earliest memory?

2. What is your happiest memory from your childhood?

3. Would you like to be able to remember everything? How would it change your life?

Forgetting

Sometimes we have memories which we would rather forget. Do you have memories that you would like to remember more clearly?



Read the text and summarize it.

Human memory implants



Scientists have discovered multiple ways to extend human **lifespan** by making our bodies less **vulnerable** to disease. What they haven't yet worked out is how to slow the **ageing process** of the mind. It is a common fear of humans that they will grow old to have a fully-functioning body but the **ravages** of **Alzheimer's** will catch up with them. Of course, Alzheimer's is not the only cause of memory loss, a knock to the head or a traumatic event can produce similar disappearances of our pasts. One scientist thinks he may now have discovered a way to prevent or reverse that loss.

Read the text and summarize it.

Human memory implants

A **biomedical engineer** and **neuroscientist** believes he may have discovered how the brain forms long-term memories. He has spent the last 35 years investigating the behaviour of **neurons** in the **hippocampus**, this is the part of the brain that transforms short-term memories into long-term ones.



The neuroscientist now believes he might have **cracked it!** A **silicon chip** has been designed to **mimic** the behaviour of these neurons. In the tests, the scientist connected the silicon chips externally to rat and monkey brains, and they worked!

Losing your memory

Do you know anyone who has lost their memory for any reason? How do you imagine it would feel?



Getting older

Are you worried about getting older? Discuss what you think might be the positives and negatives of ageing.



Do you understand?

Do you understand what the biomedical engineer and neuroscientist is trying to do? Use the words below to help you explain.

hippocampus

neurons

silicon chip

short-/long-term

mimic

Memories

What do you think the quotation below means? Do you agree with it?

> Memories make the man.

Living without a memory

In what ways do you think it would be difficult to live without a long-term memory? Which everyday activities would it be difficult to complete?





A perfect memory

If we could all have a perfect memory, how do you think life would change?



holding grudges

exams

work and jobs

Worries

Is there anything that would worry you about having a human memory implant?



Selling the implant

Imagine you were in charge of marketing and selling the fully working memory implant. Discuss the factors below, thinking about how you would advertise the product.





target audience

cost

advertising

slogan

About you

Are there any circumstances under which you might accept a human memory implant?

Presentation

Think about the pros and cons of having a memory implant.
What is your overall consensus?
Prepare a two-minute presentation about the pros and cons of having a memory implant.
Include several reasons to support your point of view. Give your presentation to the class. Answer questions and get feedback.

Pros	Cons