**Open Your Class with this Tomorrow**

***Witness for the Defense: the Accused, the Eyewitness, and the Expert who put Memory on Trial***

**Misinformation Effect**

**Purpose:** Memory is fallible. Often times even when we are trying our best to recall information we forget what we are trying to remember and may even insert inaccurate information because it is consistent with our schemas of what we believe should have happened rather than what actually did happen.

**Procedure:** Read aloud the list of words below and allow 3 to 4 seconds between words. Ask students to listen but not write anything as you read the list of words/phrases. Once you have completed the list, ask students to count backwards from 20 to eliminate any recency effect and then go through the following list by asking them if they heard you say the word.

**List**

1. **Barrier Reef**
2. **White caps**
3. **Snorkeling**
4. **Tide**
5. **Sailing**
6. **Starfish**
7. **Saltwater**
8. **Lobster**
9. **Algae**
10. **Barnacle**
11. **Octopus**
12. **Swimming**
13. **Shark**
14. **Pier**
15. **Surf**
16. **Kayak**
17. **Sand**

**Discussion:** Students will often remember words that are not included in the list (misinformation effect) and are often quite certain. Often times our brain remembers the big picture but forgets the smaller details. For this list, students may remember the word “ocean” even though it was not in the list. You may also see the serial position effect; students may remember items at the beginning and end of the list better than those in the middle.

Straub, R. O., Rea, C. P., & Myers, D. G. (2002). *Study guide: To accompany David G. Myers Exploring psychology, fifth edition*. New York: Worth Publishers.