

ON MEMORIZING

Here are a few tricks I've used over the years to memorize pages of dialogue, narration, or lyrics. Everyone learns differently, so take whatever you can use:

1. This may seem obvious, but be sure to SAY THE WORDS ALOUD. Your **Muscle Memory** will go to work for you. (There's nothing like repetition. Repeat them enough, and you'll find your mouth forming the words before you even think of them.)
2. Drill the lyrics just before bed. Even if you're really sleepy, the material seems to just seep into your subconscious, and boom!, is more available to you in the morning. This has saved my butt (and my job!) on many occasions.
3. Think about what we're saying with the text, and tell the story. If you think of the story as lyrics in a logical progression, they will come to you easier. ALWAYS think ahead, know where you're going. So while you're singing one line, you're already thinking the thoughts that lead you to the next line.
4. The act of writing the words down yourself is a fantastic tool! For some, it gives them something to visualize. For others, the mere act of writing (or typing) seems to get those synapses forming.
5. Though this can be harder in a language you're not familiar with, try playing word games. Use any rhymes in the text to help you. Use the poetry! Also look for alliteration / the 1st letters of each line in a phrase (or 1st letter of a key word) and see if they form a pattern, etc.
6. In the theatre, or in TV, actors have actions that go along with what they're saying. Those actions naturally lead you to what you then say. When you practice the songs, give each line an action, movement or gesture.
7. I've spoken cues and my lines into a tape recorder and fallen asleep with it running (or with the script over my head!). Doing it more "passively", say before bed, or in the car, works too. We're all busy, and this solves the problem of how to find the time to do it!
8. Speaking of cues, look at the other parts as well for your cues. You'll need to count the correct number of measures certainly, but also what they're saying leads you to your lines.
9. Work a little bit at a time, section by section. Get a sense of the structure of the song: A section, B section, Bridge, repeat the A section, for example.
10. Take "snapshots". Experiment with glancing at your music ahead of time at rehearsal, then not looking at the music when you sing the next line. You'll start to find your own ways of abandoning the crutch of the sheet music. **Use rehearsal to memorize.**
11. Use a cheat sheet during rehearse; glance at the beginnings of lines or phrases.

Some people think it's easier for professionals; it isn't. Prepare, prepare prepare.

HAPPY MEMORIZING!