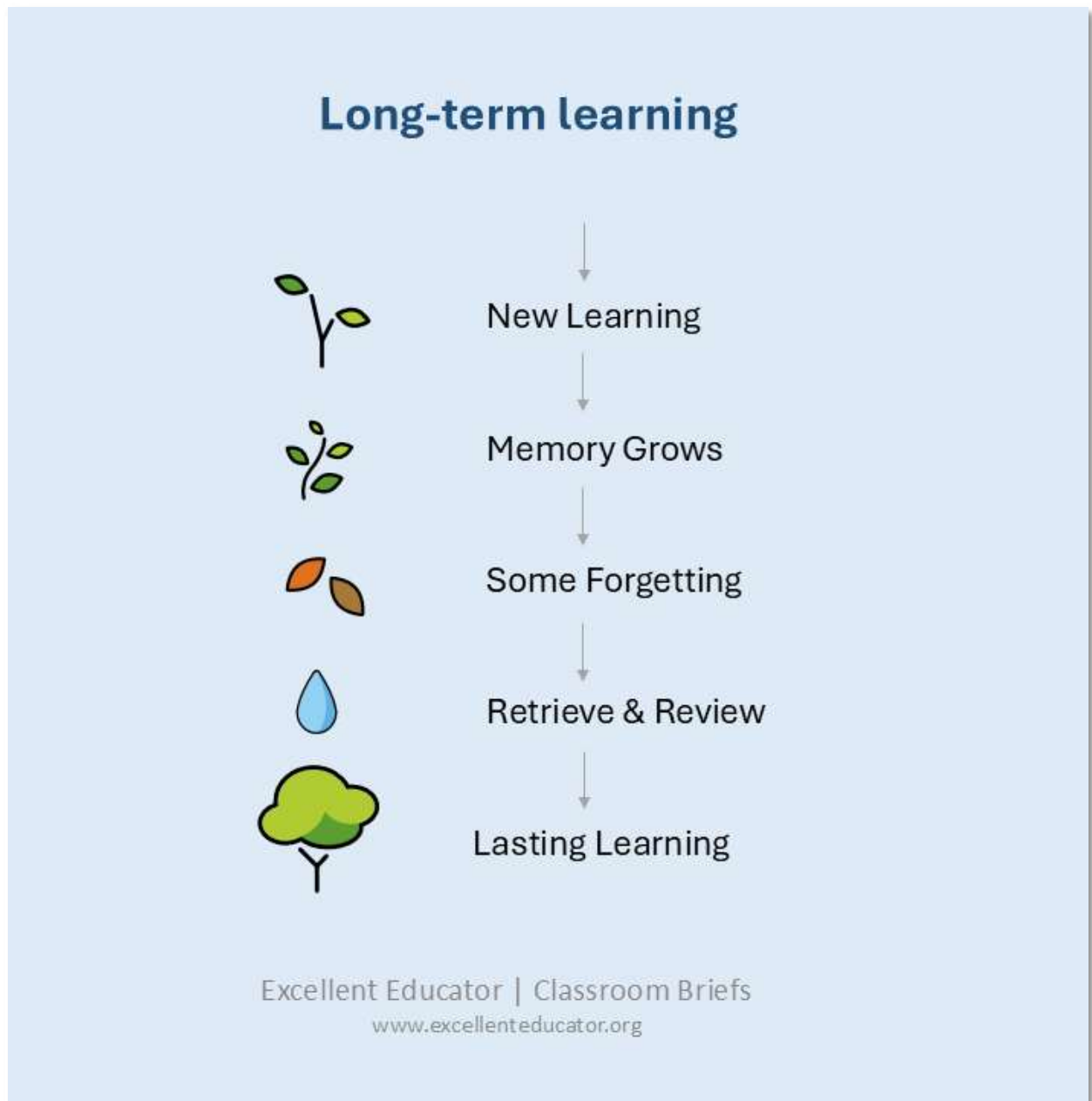


Memory Grows Stronger After Retrieval

Some forgetting creates an opportunity for stronger remembering.

Excellent Educator, 3(15), 3-4, 2026



💡 Visual Insight

Like a growing plant, memory becomes stronger when retrieval follows natural forgetting.

Research in Brief

This review challenges the belief that forgetting is always harmful. The authors explain that certain learning conditions that produce some forgetting—such as spacing study sessions, changing learning contexts, and interleaving different topics—can strengthen learning when students later retrieve or restudy the material. The extra effort required to recall forgotten information acts as powerful practice, helping knowledge become more durable and easier to use in new situations.

Try Tomorrow

- Ask retrieval questions before reviewing previous lessons.
- Spread revision across several days instead of one long study session.
- Mix different types of problems during practice rather than grouping similar ones together.

One Key Takeaway

A little forgetting followed by successful retrieval strengthens long-term learning.

Keywords

Retrieval practice, spaced learning, interleaving, desirable difficulties, forgetting, long-term retention

Original Research

Bjork, R. A., & Bjork, E. L. (2019). *Forgetting as the Friend of Learning: Implications for Teaching and Self-Regulated Learning*. *Advances in Physiology Education*, 43, 164–167.