

PRACTICE TIPS FOR LEARNING NEW BRIEFS

by Linda Lee, M.Ed., author of "Brief Relief" books

Here are some practice tips you might find useful in your quest to learn new briefs:

1) **Keep a notebook of new briefs**: If you're a visual learner, keep a running list of briefs in a notebook reserved especially for this purpose. When you have a break at work, take a few of them and practice writing them on your machine. Take the notebook with you on errands and when you're waiting for an appointment, review your new briefs. Snap a pic of a page of your briefs with your cell phone so that the briefs go with you wherever you go in case you forget your notebook. Glance at them as you go about your day. Write them on sticky notes. Stick them on your vanity, your machine, your refrigerator, your tabletop.

In other words, immerse yourself in the new briefs for a while. Roll them over in your mind and verbalize them. When you're in your car, say them out loud and visualize how you write them. Practice writing them on your machine for a few minutes each day until they become second nature. When they do, move onto the next group of briefs and repeat.

2) **Record audio clips of your new briefs**. If you're an auditory learner like I am, take a few briefs -- say 10 -- and record short pithy sentences with them. Make the sentences funny. In fact, the sillier, the better. Humor is an effective learning aid.

For example, say you want to learn the family of briefs featured in one of my posts in The Brief Exchange:

for the purpose FOP
for the purpose of FOPF
for the purpose of the FOFPT
for the purposes FOPS
for the purposes of FOFPS
for the purposes of the FOFPTS

Record yourself saying:

"Trump is for the purpose."
"Trump is for the purpose of."
"Trump is for the purpose of the."
"Trump is for the purpose of the power."

"Trump is for the purposes."
"Trump is for the purposes of."
"Trump is for the purposes of the."
"Trump is for the purposes of the power."

(Update: I have nothing against Mr. Trump, who, since the time of this writing, became president.)

Silly, I know, but it works. Keep practicing your silly sentences a few minutes each day until the new briefs fly off your fingers.

3) **Use a flashcard app**. Take advantage of the terrific flashcard apps that allow you to record your briefs and play them back for practice. *Quizlet* and *Flashcardmachine* are two that are really good. Since they're apps, you can load them on your phone and your briefs will accompany you wherever you go. And

they're free! At home or work, you can play the audio and write along as the briefs are being recited.

4) **It's all in the family:** Remembering briefs is easier when they're part of a well-constructed family with common starting and/or ending elements. It's much easier to recall a new brief when you usually tack on -T to add "the" or -F to add "of" to the main brief. Consistency is key to improving recall and reducing the dreaded hesitation factor that leads to drops.

5) **Master the two-word power phrases:** And, finally, briefs for common phrases will give you the most return over the long haul. A good place to start are the common two-word phrases that we hear all the time: in the, on the, by the, so he, so I, can you, will you, but then, and so, and then, etc. I call them "power phrases," since mastering them will have a dramatic effect on your writing. Conjugating up one-stroke briefs for the everyday phrases that we hear repeatedly over the course of a proceeding will give you the most mileage and are well worth taking the time to master. In fact my original book, titled "Brief Relief: 25,000+ Potent One-Stroke Briefs for Common Phrases," includes more than 350 of these two-word phrases for immediate results.

Well, that's it in a nutshell. Please don't get overwhelmed by briefs you see in my briefs forum or in books. As they say, a journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. Just practice a few briefs each day and, before you know it, you'll be a master briefologist.

Write short, write fast, and brief on!

Briefly yours,

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