

# The Memory Tray Game

KIDS HANDS-ON

RUN AT 11:05

25 MIN

## The point

Organization powers memory — Nebel’s own proof (book p.46). Sorting the tray *in your head* makes the recall number jump, and the kids measure it themselves.

## Materials

- The covered 20-item tray (a SURPRISE — prepped last night)
- Cloth cover • kitchen timer
- Re-stock stash of 10–15 fresh swap-in items (round 2)
- Number Log sheet + pencils • whiteboard for tallies

## Steps

- 1 **Round 1:** unveil the tray for **60 seconds** of silent looking. Cover it.
- 2 2 minutes: kids call remembered items **in turns**; you tally each on the board.
- 3 Count the tally; kids **shade the Round 1 bar** on the Number Log.
- 4 Name the problem: “your mind got stuck on two or three things, didn’t it?”
- 5 **Teach the secret**, tray visible: sort it into categories together, then **assign each category to a finger**.
- 6 **Round 2** on the re-stocked tray: 60 seconds of looking **category by category**. Cover it.
- 7 Recall by **walking the fingers** (“kitchen things... what was there?”); tally, count, shade the Round 2 bar.
- 8 Compare bars: **which is taller — and what changed?**

Say: “Your memory didn’t grow in ten minutes. You **ORGANIZED** what you saw — *four categories on four fingers* — and the categories carried the things for you. Organizing is a tool for your **MIND**.”

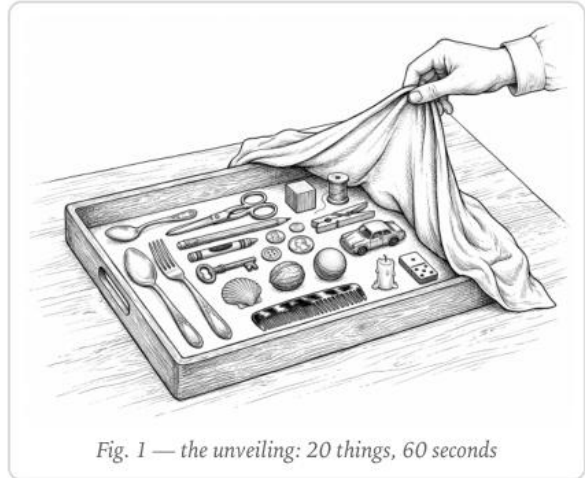


Fig. 1 — the unveiling: 20 things, 60 seconds

## TEACHER PREP — THE NIGHT BEFORE

Load 20 varied items from several natural categories (utensils, desk things, toys, coins). **Cover it and keep it secret** — the game only works as a surprise. Stage the round-2 swap stash.

## What to watch for

- Round 1 recall stalling after 6–8 items
- Round 2: whole categories arriving **in a burst** as a finger is touched

## EXPECTED RESULT

Round 2 beats round 1 for nearly everyone — a visibly **taller bar they shaded themselves**. If one child dips, the **GROUP** total still wins.