Who wants to be a Memory Master?

A Memory Master (MM) is a student who has mastered/memorized ALL (100%) the material for a given Foundations’ cycle.

**Purpose:** To encourage excellence in subject grammar memorization and recitation, two skills that will serve students well along their educational journey.

**Process:** It is recommended that families not enter into this process half-heartedly. Parents should encourage older Foundations students to “own” their memory work and to practice it daily/weekly. *(Students cannot “cram” the memory work into the two weeks before proofing!*!) If a parent and student choose to attempt Memory Master testing, but change their minds, this is fine at any point.

**Procedure:** Many Proofs enable a student to become comfortable reciting information to a variety of people and to give the student and parent good feedback on a candidate’s strengths and weaknesses.

Students are proofed for the title of Memory Master by following these steps...

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<th>March Madness</th>
<th>Who to proof with?</th>
<th>When to proof?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Week 21</td>
<td>At home</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tutor will evaluate student at week 23 and/or 24 to determine if the student should “advance” to the Memory Master Final Round.</td>
<td>See “How to proof” page</td>
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<tr>
<td>Another Parent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutor</td>
<td>Week 23-24 (semi-final round)</td>
<td>Foundations Day/Lunch/After noon/Proof Day</td>
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**Memory Masters** are students who have memorized all the memory work in one year. They are honored at an end of year award program. An award’s program is totally up to the Director. I was very strict in my program, giving points only to students who can quickly tell all the facts from every category. I drill any student who thinks they know all the material on the whole year’s memory work. The student has to demonstrate mastery of even the first weeks’ memory work as well as any current material. I feel like the ceremony is a time to reward the hardest working students and encourage the other students to be Memory Masters the following year. Just be sure to be clear that it is totally optional to become a Memory Master. My youngest sons could care less about the whole event, but I will encourage, maybe even require, them to become Memory Masters during fifth and sixth grades as there is no reason they can’t do it by then.

Memory Master Proofing Process

**1st Proof: Parent**  
Administered: Near Week 21

You will proof every piece of information for each subject. This will be the student’s first, thorough proof, so don’t rush. Record the student’s results on the Proof Sheets. You will know whether to proceed in the Memory Master process, according to recommendations, following this Parent Proof.

**2nd Proof: Another Adult**  
Administered: Near Week 22

Have another adult proof every piece of information, paying particular attention to those areas of weakness in the first proof. The student should move through this proof with ease and less struggle. Record the student’s proof results on the same Proof Sheets used by the Parent.

**3rd Proof: Tutor**  
Administered: Week 23/24

The student’s tutor will proof the student on all facts for all 24 weeks, in all subjects. The tutor should be able to move through the proof sheets easily, with the student recalling each piece of information. If that is not the case, the tutor will recommend that the student try again next year, and will not advance the student to the Director. Grace is encouraged, and small glitches should be given a second chance, but repeat attempts should be the exception, and should not occur more than once or twice in the Tutor’s complete proofing. We require mastery, but not necessarily perfection.

**Final Proof: Director**  
Administered: “Week 25”

The student, having passed the complete tutor proofing, should be comfortable with the process; and should be able to recall any piece of information. The Director should have a predetermined sampling of questions from all subjects, on which she will spot test the Memory Master candidate. This part of the test should take about 20 minutes per student, and should be a Director’s time of affirmation.

How do I know if my student should attempt Memory Master testing?

1. The student has shown ownership of the memory work, and practices it regularly.
2. The student is a Journeymen or Master, (though younger students may also test).
3. In the first proof: Student has no more than three X’s (missed facts) per subject.
4. In the second proof: Student has no more than one X per subject, and he/she has been able to confidently and successfully recite his/her memory work to another adult.
5. Your child’s tutor, who observes your child each week, has positive feedback for you.
6. After completing the first two proofs accordingly, show the proof results to your child’s tutor, and speak to her about the possibility of scheduling the third (Tutor) proof.

What if my child doesn’t proof well for others, but knows the material?

This can happen, especially for young students. In these cases, we recommend recognizing your student’s efforts within your home. Reciting information to other people is a confidence and maturity issue that parents should mentor and encourage their children in as opportunities present themselves.

My child really knows the information, but missed a few when testing with the tutor...

We must have a testing standard to honor a student as a Memory Master. This may be an issue of nervousness or maturity, but encourage your child with recognition of his/her efforts within your own family if he/she is not successful with the tutor, as you had hoped.

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The proofing process provides students opportunities to practice the skills of reciting information within a safe, Christ-honoring environment. Parents need to be careful not to become overly focused on achievement, but rather on the beauty of the process. The recognition should be secondary to the student’s discipline, ownership of the work, and overall knowledge the gained in the entire process.

How to Proof

Use the proof sheets from the Foundations Guide (or provided by your director). Keep a record of the student’s proofs, showing any gaps, and what they have successfully mastered.

Timeline: Start with first card in the set and have the student continue. Memory Masters should be able to go to the end of the entire set. Some hesitations or re-starts are acceptable, but leaving titles out entirely, or students asking for prompts, is not allowed.

History: From the Proof Sheets, say, “Tell me about...”, and the subject of the sentence listed for that week, such as “Greek/Roman gods” (Cycle 1, Week 3). The student should recite the sentence from memory word for word. (Singing is also fine, as long as it is accurate.😊)

Geography: Using appropriate maps included in the Foundations Guide or provided by the Foundations Director, to include the blank outline maps for the cycle, or an unlabeled map from the Memory Master Notebook, proof the Weekly Geography locations in these ways:

(1) SHOW: Say the location and have the student locate it on the map.
(2) TELL: Point to a location on the map and ask for the location’s name.

Parents, tutors, and directors should ideally use a combination of these methods.

Latin & English Grammar: Give the definition (i.e. A Preposition) or List Title (i.e. Helping verbs). Students should recite the definition or complete list (spoken, sung, or written). For scripture recitation, students should recite entirely in English, followed by entirely in the Latin (Cycle 3 only). Latin declensions and conjugations should be treated as ordered lists.

Science facts: Ask questions and have students reply without prompting (giving them the first word). Students should answer with a complete sentence (i.e. The five kingdoms of living things are...) OR repeat the question and give the answers (i.e. What are some parts of a plant cell? Nucleus, cytoplasm, cell wall, etc.) Give list titles and students recite the lists.

Math facts: Students ages 9 yrs and younger may skip count the tables, squares, and cubes, by reciting, singing, or writing them. Those ages 10 and older must recite the multiplication facts, the squares and cubes, and the math laws and measures. Students may write these facts as well, in completeness and accuracy on a blank paper, chalkboard, or whiteboard.

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