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Alloway's "How can I remember all that? Simple stuff to improve your working memory" (book review)

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Book Reviews

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Alloway, T. P. (2019). *How can I remember all that? Simple stuff to improve your working memory*. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. 61 pp. $15.95. ISBN 9781785926334

Working memory is what we use to remember new facts, sort of like memory post-it-notes that help us store data we need to remember or use to multi-task. According to the author, working memory is different from both short-term memory and long-term memory. Short term memory usually last only for a few seconds, like trying to remember names, phone numbers or book titles. Long-term memory is more like a library where we store accumulated knowledge that we've gained over the years like facts, mathematics and grammar. But students who have problems with working memory may actually have high IQ's but be limited in what they can report back on demand by teachers and parents. Dr. Alloway, a psychologist who specializes in the role that working memory plays in learning, says one of every ten children have working memory problems. This one factor plays a big part in the difficulties facing children with ADHD, dyslexia, dyscalculia (difficulty with mathematics) and ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder).

It's important for teachers and librarians to be aware of this foundational learning disability because it affects so much of a child's school years. Working memory predicts learning success and impacts all areas of learning from kindergarten to college. While students with poor working memory will not likely catch up with their peers, their working memory can be trained once it is detected by breaking down information into more manageable bits, building long-term knowledge, and keeping their environment simple.

This book was written for grown-ups to read with children with these problems as part of the book is from the viewpoint of "Tommy" who explains how these issues affect him and make him feel. It also includes additional resources at the end of the book for testing working memory as well as citations for research studies that have been mentioned in the book. This should be appropriate for most college and university libraries who serve institutions with psychology and education majors that deal with special needs.

Reviewer
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