

from **The Hamilton Spectator**

Food For Thought: Brains Are Fun Places

by Mary K. Nolan, Spectator Staff Reporter

HAMILTON - Is your brain a party place or Dullsville? The choice is yours, says brain trainer Brian Thwait's.

"Our brains are really fun places," maintains Thwait's...."We just need to know how to use them better."

(He) has become a hot property on the speaking circuit, sharing his brain power boosters with educators, employee groups, parents, managers — even students as young as in Grade Four.

Thwait's starts his entertaining two-hour "Train Your Brain" seminars with a memory test "just to show them how bad they are" and re-administers it later in the program to prove how his seven simple brain skills principles can expand brain power.

Visualizing the information we see helps us remember it, he says. So does selectivity, where the information is broken into small bytes using techniques like bullets, highlighting and subheads. And making things meaningful helps make them memorable, he stresses. If it isn't meaningful, reorganize it so that it is.

Thwait's is convinced that most reports and written material are designed to put people to sleep on purpose.

Everybody knows brain skills — we've all used techniques such as "a,e,i,o,u and sometimes y" or "30 days hath September" or "i before e except after c" to remember important things, and most of us have had that info stored in the old gray matter for decades.

Thwait's once showed a musical staff to an audience of retirees and found that at least 70 percent of them instantly recalled "Every Good Boy Deserves Fudge", a mnemonic childhood slogan for remembering the notes on the treble clef lines.

Children start out with great little sponge brains, but are "de-geniused" as they move through school, Thwait's says, and end up as adults doing things "the aggravating, frustrating, boring way".

He even uses brain trickery to help people remember his name — THW8S.

"All I'm doing is putting ideas into people's heads," says Thwait's, whose last audience was a group of accountants.