

## BRIEF SUMMARY

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**Koutstaal, W., & Cavendish, M. (2006). Using what we know: Consequences of intentionally retrieving gist versus item-specific information. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 32, 778–791.**

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The effect of a prior gist-based versus item-specific retrieval orientation on recognition of objects and words was examined. Prior item-specific retrieval increased item-specific recognition of episodically related but not previously tested objects relative to both conceptual- and perceptual-gist retrieval. An item-specific retrieval advantage also was found when the stimuli were words (synonyms) rather than objects but not when participants overtly named objects during gist-based recognition testing, which suggests that they did not always label objects under general gist-retrieval instructions. Unlike verbal overshadowing, labeling objects during recognition attenuated (but did not eliminate) test- and interference-related forgetting. A full understanding of how retrieval affects subsequent memory, even for events or facts that are not themselves retrieved, must take into account the specificity with which that retrieval occurs.

**KEYWORDS:** episodic memory, categorical memory, retrieval-induced forgetting, problem solving, thinking

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