

# 2B | Memory man

VOCABULARY: playing cards



- 1 Work in pairs. Use the words in the box to help you name the playing cards in the photo.

*the ten of diamonds*

hearts clubs diamonds spades  
jack queen king ace joker

- 2 Complete the text with words from the box. Write the correct form of the verbs.

**Nouns:** face hand odds pack suits  
**Verbs:** bet count deal draw shuffle

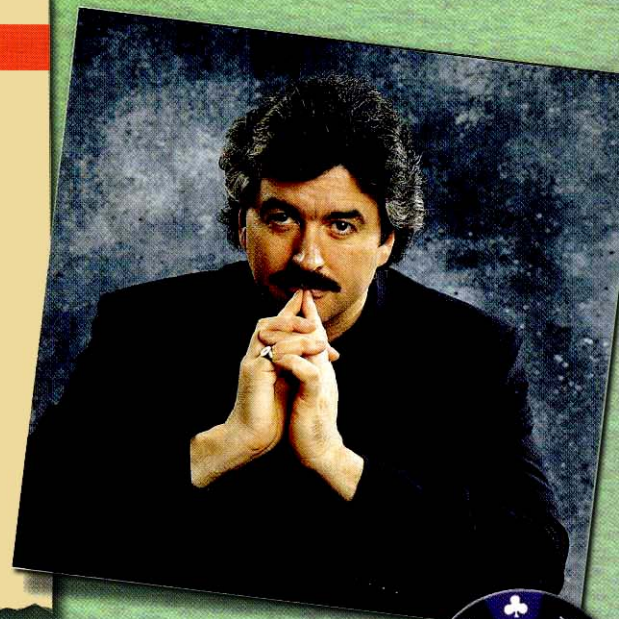
## LISTENING

- 1 Close your book and see how many of the playing cards pictured on this page you can remember.
- 2 You are going to hear an interview with Dominic O'Brien, memory expert and eight-times winner of the World Memory Championships.


### Basic rules of blackjack

The object of the game is to achieve a total that is greater than that of the dealer and which does not exceed 21. The game is played with a standard (1) \_\_\_\_\_, or deck of 52 cards. The four (2) \_\_\_\_\_ – hearts, clubs, diamonds and spades – have no relevance in blackjack and jokers are not used. Cards from 2 to 10 are worth their (3) \_\_\_\_\_ value (eg the 5 is worth five points), the jack, queen and king (4) \_\_\_\_\_ as 10 and the ace is worth either 11 or 1.

Players are (5) \_\_\_\_\_ first one card, then another, both face up. Each player then decides whether to (6) \_\_\_\_\_ further cards from the deck. The dealer, whose first card is face down, is the last to complete his or her (7) \_\_\_\_\_. Because cards are not (8) \_\_\_\_\_ between each game, more experienced players keep track of those that have already been played, in order to calculate the probability or (9) \_\_\_\_\_ of the next card having a high or low value. 'Card counting', as it is called, is particularly useful in helping professional gamblers decide how much money to (10) \_\_\_\_\_.





 **1.7** Listen to Part 1 of the recording and complete the gaps in the notes with a number.

### World Memory Championships – started in 1991

10 events over (1) \_\_\_\_\_ days

#### Memorizing Tasks

A number with approx.  
(2) \_\_\_\_\_ digits

Packs of playing cards  
– about (3) \_\_\_\_\_ packs

100 fictitious historic dates

Spoken number: (5) \_\_\_\_\_ digits

One deck of cards (fastest time)

Typical age range of contestants:  
(7) \_\_\_\_\_ to 35.

#### Guinness Book of Records

(8) \_\_\_\_\_ individual cards

Errors made: (10) \_\_\_\_\_

Max. no. of errors allowed:  
0.5 per cent (= 14)

#### Time to memorize

one hour; 90 mins. to recall

one hour


(4) \_\_\_\_\_ mins.

1 digit per second

Dominic's personal best:  
(6) \_\_\_\_\_ seconds

12 hours to memorize;  
(9) \_\_\_\_\_ hours to recall


Which of the tasks and achievements you heard about in Part 1 impress you most?

 **1.8** Listen to Part 2 and answer the questions.

- 1 What three techniques does Dominic use to memorize information?
- 2a Which of the playing cards on page 18 does he associate with each of the following?

Bill Gates   Kylie Minogue   James Bond

- b Where in the house does he place these three people and what are they each doing there?
- 3 What were the findings of the brain study carried out on Dominic and other top memorizers?

 **1.9** Listen to Part 3 and decide whether the statements are true or false. Correct the false ones.

- 1 Before going into a casino Dominic spent six months studying the game of blackjack.
- 2 During that time, he dealt out 1,000 hands to himself.
- 3 As a result of his success in a casino, he decided to become a professional gambler.
- 4 In the United States he was banned from thirteen casinos, but made winnings of 10,000 dollars.
- 5 At school he was an A-grade student.
- 6 He began training his memory when he was thirteen.

## SPEAKING

**1** Work in two groups, A and B. You are going to use Dominic O'Brien's techniques to memorize a sequence of eight cards.

Group A: Turn to page 140.

Group B: Turn to page 147.


**2** Work with a student from the other group. Turn to your partner's page and listen as he/she ...

- 1 names his/her cards in their correct order.
- 2 tells you the story of the journey which helped him/her remember the cards in sequence.

**3** Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.


- When might the journey method be useful for memorizing items in a set order?
- Would you use this method? Why or why not?

## PRONUNCIATION: chunking

 **1.10** Listen to the following extract from the listening. Notice how Dominic makes a slight pause in between each group of words or 'chunk' of speech. Chunking helps the listener make sense of what the speaker is saying, just as punctuation helps the reader make sense of what the writer has written.

... it's the use of association/so if I say 'key'/you think of 'door'/'rabbit'/you think of 'carrot'/that's association/the second one is the use of location/I use journeys/familiar journeys/a journey round my house/a journey round a golf course/to store information/to keep the sequence going/and the most important ingredient is the use of imagination/something that we all possess/erm, and that combination works very well ...

**2** Practise reading the tapescript in exercise 1 aloud, pausing slightly after each chunk.

 **1.11** Turn to tapescript 1.11 on page 156. Chunk the script, marking each division with a line (/). Then listen to the recording to compare your ideas.