poorly behaved children. But context also plays a part. Teachers may expect less of the same individual in a generally high-achieving class than in a class that performs less well overall.

Although the self-fulfilling prophecy (Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968) has had a considerable influence in schools over the past 20 years, recent evidence has shown that what teachers do (or fail to do) matters more than what teachers expect with regard to student achievement. Goldenberg (1992) described two cases of paradoxical expectancy in which the children's first grade, year-end achievements were in marked contrast to what the teacher had expected. He concluded in one case that "The teacher had failed to take corrective action when she should have *because she had expected* [the student] to do well on her own" (Goldenberg, 1992, p. 539). In the other case, "*in spite of the teacher's low expectations* for [the student's] success, the teacher took actions that appear to have influenced [her] eventual first-grade reading achievement.... Low expectations were clearly evident, but they were irrelevant in determining the teacher's actions" (p. 539). Although expectations can have an influence on teacher behavior, then, they do not always matter. What appears to be more important is whether the instructor monitors student achievements and takes corrective action as necessary.

Sensory memory, attention, and pattern recognition, while important, obviously tell only part of the story. When learners have paid sufficient attention and pattern recognition of selected portions of the stimulus has occurred, a great deal more processing is still required for the information to become a meaningful and permanent part of memory. The next stage of activity occurs in working memory.

Working Memory

Information selected for further processing comes to the working memory. At this stage, concepts from long-term memory will be activated for use in making sense of the incoming information. But, as indicated earlier in the chapter, there are limits to how much information can be held in working memory at one time and for how long information may be retained there, unless, of course, something is done to increase capacity or duration in some way.

In a now classic study of short-term memory, George Miller (1956) demonstrated that about 7 ± 2 numbers could be recalled in a digit-span test. This test consisted of reading subjects a list of numbers and asking them to immediately repeat what they had heard. With seven items being the typical memory span, is it any surprise that local phone numbers are exactly seven digits? Miller also whimsically wondered whether there are magical qualities to the number 7; after all, there are "the seven wonders of the world, the seven seas, the seven deadly sins, the seven daughters of Atlas in the Pleiades, the seven ages of man, the seven levels of hell, the seven primary colors,