



NOTE TAKING STRATEGIES



Note Taking Strategies

Most students are not taught how to take notes, or are taught these skills at a relatively late point in the course of their education (Boyle, 2007; Faber et al., 2000). When students are shown a structure for note-taking, it often improves the quality of their notes (Gray & Madson, 2007). Research has shown that taking notes actively can make you more likely to remember information and can help you perform better on exams (Bligh, 2000).



Your instructors expect you to make connections between class lectures and reading assignments; they expect you to create an opinion about the material presented. Therefore, your notes are your road maps.

There isn't an approach that works for everyone. What works for one individual may not work for another, and what works in one class may not work correctly in another class. But you can try some of the note-taking suggestions below.

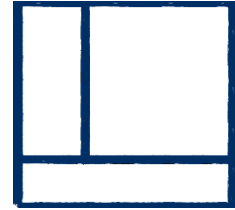
Cornell Method

The Cornell Method is a system for taking, organizing and reviewing notes. Professor Walter Pauk of Cornell University devised this method in the 1950s. Studies showed that students who were taught the Cornell method had a 10-12% higher average than students who were not taught this method (Donohoo, 2010; Faber et al., 2000)



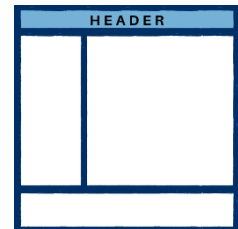
Step 1: Set up your page

You will divide your page into four different sections: two columns, a space at the bottom of the page and a smaller space at the top of the page. The right column should have significantly more space than the left column.



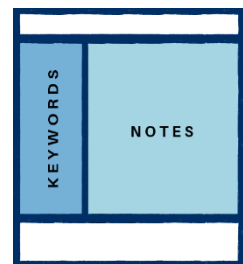
Step 2: Make a heading for your notes

The area at the top of your page will be used for your header. Include the date, course name, and lesson title in the heading. Labeling your notes helps you to identify specific information when studying for the exam.



Step 3: Taking notes

You will use the two columns in the middle of your page to organize your notes during class. The left column is used after initial note taking while you are reviewing your notes to record key points, terms, or any other cues that will help you to recall the information. The right column is where you'll define or explain the words and ideas in the left column.



Step 4: Summary

After class, you can use the area at the bottom of the page to make notes about the major themes or "big ideas" from the lecture. This step requires you to reflect on the information you received and to identify what is most important, which helps you quickly identify main concepts and review notes.





Table/Chart Method

This method is helpful in organizing information into categories while comparing events, theories, authors etc. This method is also helpful in quickly reviewing relationships.

- Set up your paper in columns and label appropriate headings for each topic.
- Use the columns to record important phrases, terms, and ideas, and arrange that information according to the main concepts.

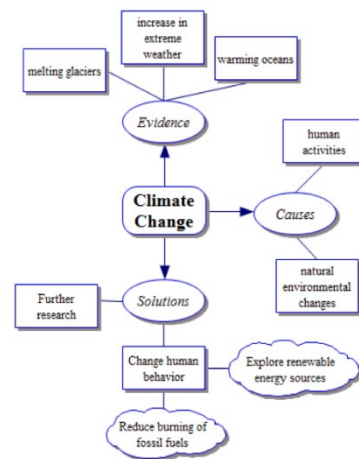
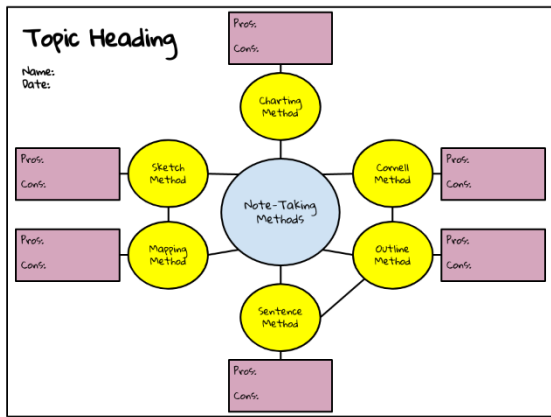
Topic Heading			
Name: Date:			
Method of Movement	Benefits	Drawbacks	My Opinion
Walking	Exercise No negative environmental impact	Slower Distance may be too far	Best when doing things close to home
Driving (my car)	Convenient Fast	Expensive to own Negative environmental impact	Best when have to travel long distances and with an inflexible schedule
Driving (taxi)	Convenient Fast Supports local economy	Expensive cost Negative environmental impact	Best to use in places I don't know the streets
Bus	Somewhat convenient Less environmental impact than a car	Can't choose schedule Somewhat negative environmental impact	Best to use when I have a flexible schedule and not travelling a long distance from home
Train	Fast Probably less environmental impact than a car	Can't choose schedule Less convenient than a car	Best to use when traveling long distances into the city, but too far for a bus, and when car traffic is heavy

Company/Brand Ethical Practices Matrix				
*Based on Sustainable Development Goals and World Fair Trade Organization principles				
Name: Date:				
Brand Practice	Starbucks	Adidas	Costco	Amazon
Living Wage WFTO #4 SDGs #8				
Gender Equity WFTO #6 SDGs #5, 10				
Environment WFTO #10 SDGs #6, 7, 11, 13, 14, 15				
Human Resources WFTO #9 SDGs #3, 4, 5				

Concept Mapping Method

This strategy is useful for visual learners. A major goal of concept map construction is to reorganize the existing knowledge with the already acquired knowledge (Ajaja, 2011; Briscoe & LaMaster, 1991; Nesbit & Adesope, 2006).

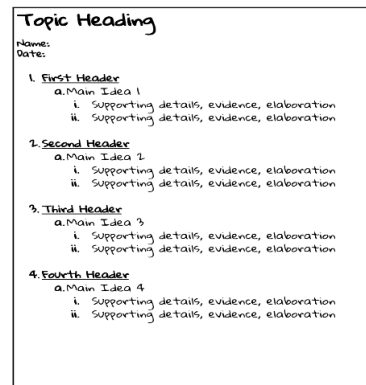
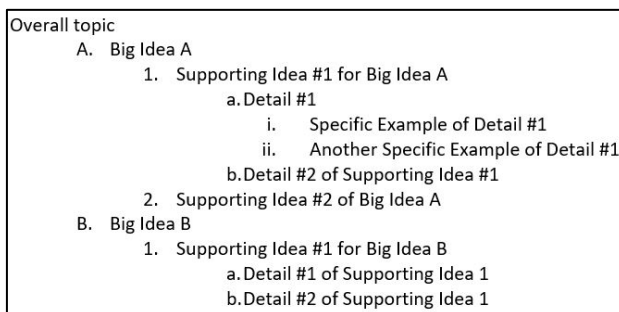
- Place the main idea of what you've read, or are learning, in the center of a page.
- As you continue to read, add supporting terms, phrases, or concepts around it. Use lines or arrows to link the supporting concepts to the main idea.



Outline Method

It is the most common method of note taking. It also allows you to elaborate on topics while taking notes in class and/or while reading texts. How you utilize this method depends on how many ideas, details, and examples you have.

- List key ideas or themes into a list of notes.
 - a. Indent the next line and add the first point related to that main idea
 - b. Continue adding other related points as letters of the alphabet and/or Roman numerals or decimals to further organize/scaffold.
- Repeat the step above for each main idea and related facts that follow.





References

- Ajaja, O. P. (2011). Concept mapping as a study skill: Effects on student achievement in Biology. *International Journal of Education Science*, 3(1), 49-57.
- Briscoe, C., & LaMaster, S. U. (1991). Meaningful learning in college Biology through concept mapping. *The American Biology Teacher*, 53(4), 214-219.
- Bligh, D. A. (2000). What's the use of lectures? San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Boyle, J. R. (2007). The process of note taking: Implications for students with mild disabilities. *The Clearing House*, 80(5), 227-232.
- Donohoo, J. (2010). Learning how to learn: Cornell notes as an example. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 54, 224-227.
- Faber, J. E., Morris, J. D., & Lieberman, M. G. (2000). The effect of note taking on ninth grade students' comprehension. *Reading Psychology*, 21, 257-270.
- Gray, T., & Madson, L. (2007). Ten easy ways to engage your students. *College Teaching*, 55, 83-87.
- Nesbit, J. C., & Adesope, O. O. (2006). Learning with concept and knowledge maps: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 76(3), 413-448.
- Note Taking Strategies. Washington University in St. Louis.
http://ctl.wustl.edu/learningcenter/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/11/Note-Taking_TLC_2020.pdf

Further Readings and Resources

- Pauk, W., & Owens, R. J. (2010). How to Study in College , Boston, MA: Wadsworth. *Chapter, 10, 235-277.*
- [Note-Taking in Class. UNC Learning Center.](#)
- [Note Taking: Strategies & Techniques. Teachings in Education.](#)