

Note Taking Tips and Techniques

By Chaya Wineberg

Grade Level: Elementary-High School

Description:

This booklet presents a series of tips and techniques to teach students how to properly and effectively take notes. Note-taking is a crucial skill for the successful integration of material being taught in virtually every subject and this booklet helps to clarify the points that need to be focused on.

Goals/Objectives:

Students will incorporate various techniques into their note taking skills in order to record information more effectively.

Instructions:

1. Have the students read the points aloud.
2. Where there are blanks, the students should fill them in individually.
3. Provide any essay about any topic and have students take notes using the techniques presented.
4. Have them answer comprehension questions which the teacher provides to assess their understanding of the essay.

Welcome to our Note-Taking Course!

The average lecturer speaks approximately 125-140 words per minute, and the average note-taker writes at a rate of about 25 words per minute.

It is very important, therefore, to learn how to write notes so you only write the most important words out of the 140 that were spoken.

Please read the following points carefully; they will help you throughout your life.

Part 1: Beginning of Class

- 1.** Write down the subject, the name of the teacher and the date. This is to make sure your notes are organized properly and you don't end up looking for Navi notes in the Chumash section!
- 2.** **Listen** carefully to the **introduction** (if there is one). By knowing this **outline**, you will be better prepared to anticipate what notes you will need to take.

Part 2: Starting Class

- 3.** *Listen to what the teacher is saying. Don't write down every word she says: you cannot write that fast and you will end up missing important information. Focus on what you are writing - don't just write what you hear. First process the information and then write it down.*
- 4.** Since you don't have enough space to write everything, only write things that are **confusing** or **new** to you.

5. A. To make sure that you get everything, get in the habit of **skipping words** like "the" and "a" and make use of **abbreviations**. Also, do not use complete sentences. They are a waste of time and space.

Examples of abbreviations:

Write the longhand version for each of these abbreviations. These are just some you can use in your notes.

4: _____

e/w _____

2: _____

e/o _____

b/c _____

s/w _____

t/4 _____

u _____

e/t _____

ur _____

s/o _____

w/ _____

s/t _____

w/o _____

Put in your own examples here:

B. Besides for abbreviations, you can also use symbols:

+ _____

x _____

= _____

> for greater than, more, larger

- minus

< for less than, smaller, fewer than

/ for per

C. Besides for abbreviating words, you should also drop the last several letters of a word. For example, substitute "appropriate" with "approp."

D. Drop some of the internal vowels of a word. For example, substitute "large" with "lrg."

One thing to keep in mind when using abbreviations: make sure that when you look back at your notes you will be able to read what you have written!

6. Recognize **main ideas** by highlighting them.

7. Pay **special attention** to pieces of information that are *not* written anywhere; ex. In the Navi

Part 3: After Class

8. **At the end of the class, ask questions about points that you did not understand.**

9. **Even if someone else's notes seem better to you, trying to use them will only confuse you. Use your own notes.**

10. **If you find it helpful, you can re-write your notes, maybe make them a little easier to understand. This can be a very helpful tool for a test, and for the future.**

► Five Important Reasons to Take Notes

1. It triggers basic lecturing processes and helps you to remember information.
2. It helps you to concentrate in class.
3. It helps you prepare for tests.
4. Your notes are often a source of valuable clues for what information the teacher thinks most important (i.e., what will show up on the next test).
5. Your notes often contain information that cannot be found elsewhere (i.e., in your textbook/Navi).

► Tips for Finding Major Points in Lectures

Ok, so you should only write down the most important points in class. But how do you know which ones the teacher is emphasizing? Here are four tips:

The teacher is usually making an important point if she:

1. *Pauses before or after an idea.*
2. *Uses repetition to emphasize a point.*
3. *Uses introductory phrases to precede an important idea.*
4. *Writes an idea on the board.*

Remember: your goal is to understand what the teacher is saying, not to try to record *exactly* everything she says.

Note-taking self-check

1. It is important to write clearly so that I understand my notes.
 True False
2. There is only one way to take notes.
 True False
3. Not all kids need to take notes.
 True False
4. Only the details of the class should be in the notes.
 True False
5. There should be as many notes as possible on the page.
 True False
6. Experimenting with different ways of taking notes is not a good idea.
 True False
7. Using a friend's very good notes is better than using my own notes.
 True False
8. Listening to what is said will help me take better notes.
 True False
9. Using an outline will help me take notes better.
 True False
10. Learning how to take good notes will help me do better in school.
 True False

How did you do? If you got between 1-5- keep practicing! If you got between 5-8- you're getting there! If you got between 9-10- you're doing pretty well! Give yourself a check!