

Study Skill Workshop #5: Taking Better Lecture Notes

1. PREPARE FOR LECTURES

2. WHEN IN DOUBT ...

3. GO ON A DIET!

4. KNOW YOUR INSTRUCTOR

5. USE A GOOD NOTEAKING METHOD

6. REVIEW YOUR NOTES INTERACTIVELY

7. TYPE OR REWRITE YOUR NOTES

THE CORNELL NOTETAKING SYSTEM

Have you ever asked to borrow someone's notes and found them impossible to figure out? Some students seem to have little control over lecture information and no planned means for recording notes that could become an invaluable source for studying. This handout presents a system that was developed at Cornell University several years ago. It incorporates the principles of learning by using the left brain functions while recording and reducing. The right brain functions are engaged while reviewing and reflecting. Spaced learning and over-learning are also part of the review step.

Before a lecture begins, prepare several pages in your notebook to look like the sample on the next page. Please look at the next page now and observe the general organization of the sheet.

Step #1: RECORD

During the lecture, record as many meaningful facts and ideas as concisely as you can. Do this on the right side of the page.

Step #2: REDUCE

As soon as you possibly can after the lecture is over, reduce the facts to key words or phrases that will later help you remember what was presented in class. It is most important that this be done while the lecture is still fresh in your mind. Perhaps the best plan is to fill in the “*reduce*” column while still in the classroom (as the rest of the class is leaving!). The key words or phrases should be written clearly in the second column on the left side of your paper.

Step #3: RECITE

Once you have the key words in the REDUCE column, use them as a guide to recall in your own words what you have recorded. This should be done as soon as possible after recording and reducing your notes, and you can then continue this procedure while studying for the upcoming test on that material.

Step #4: REFLECT

Think about the information you have recorded and recited. Try to organize the information so that it will be meaningful to you later. One way to do this is to write a short summary of the important facts, ***your own words***. This should also be done soon after completing the first three steps.

Step #5: REVIEW

Spend a short period of time every other day or so in a quick review of the material. Using short periods of review will help you retain more than trying to cram just before a test.

Chapter/Subject Covered: _____

Page: _____

Date: _____

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(Titles)**

* Main Idea
Supporting Details

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Summary:

Note-taking Sample 1

From: "Amazing Poisonous Animals"

P= Poison

<p>Arrow-Poison Frog (6)</p>	<p>Arrow-Poison Frog Rainforest So. & Cen. Amer. 40 types All <2" Bright color Skin has most deadly animal P 1 frog-P 2 kill 20,000 mice</p>
<p>African Puff Adder (6)</p>	<p>African Puff Adder 1 of world's deadly snake P make victim bleed inside 1- Burning pain (wound) 2- Bruise 3- Lips tingle P fatal ½ hr-few days</p>
<p>Gila Monster (6)</p>	<p>Gila Monster 1 of 2 P liz. in world Lives US desert When threatened throws head up- snort- puff P attack nerves- cause pain/ paral P spills into mouth from gland in bottom jaw Arrow-Poison Frog Store fat in tail- can live off for mos or yrs</p>

Summary: This page introduces 3 poisonous animals: the Arrow-poison Frog, the African Puff Adder, and the Gila Monster. The frog is unusually small but very deadly. The Adder is a poisonous snake. The Gila Monster is a desert-dwelling lizard.

Note-taking Sample 2

From: "Amazing Poisonous Animals"

P= Poison

Arrow-Poison Frog	Arrow-Poison Frog Rainforest S&C Amer 40 types All <2" Bright color Skin has most deadly animal P 1 frog-P 2 kill 20,000 mice
where? types? size? color? deadly? mice?	
African Puff Adder	African Puff Adder 1 of world deadly snake P make victim bleed inside 1- Burning pain (wound) 2- Bruise 3- Lips tingle P fatal ½ hr-few days
kind? victim? step1? step2? step3? fatal time?	
Gila Monster	Gila Monster 1 of 2 P by in world Lives US desert When threatened throws head up- snort- puff P attack nerves- cause pain/ paral P spills into mouth from gland in bottom jaw Arrow-Poison Frog Store fat in tail- can live off for mos or yrs
kind? where? threatened? attacks? origin? tail?	

Summary: This page introduces 3 poisonous animals: the Arrow-poison Frog, the African Puff Adder, and the Gila Monster. The frog is unusually small but very deadly. The Adder is a poisonous snake. The Gila Monster is a desert dwelling lizard.