



# Note - Taking Tips

(Using the "GREAT Notes" Method)

GREAT Notes =

Get ready

wRite

Edit

Ask questions

Test yourself

#### Get Ready Phase – Set the stage

- Complete homework assignments
- Bring the right materials
- Browse notes prior to class, anticipate a "pop" quiz
- Sit front and center
- Prepare yourself to be focused

#### wRite Phase – Note taking

- Include key information
  - Ex. main ideas, facts, details, examples & definitions
- Listen for instructor's cues of importance ex. repetition
- Use abbreviations and symbols
- Write only on the front side of paper
- Try the Cornell Method, mind maps, or outline formats (see examples)

#### Edit Phase – Makes notes useable

- Clean up after class, ex. check spelling
- Fill in the gaps
- Use back side of paper
  - Vocabulary words
  - Make up your own examples
  - Draw charts, pictures, diagrams
  - Add new notes from your textbook
  - Write down questions for your instructor

#### Ask Questions Phase – Put yourself in an instructor role

- Design sample test questions
- Changes passive learner to active learner

# Test Yourself Phase – Moves info to long-term memory

- Can only be done after questions are made
- Read the questions and recite your answers aloud

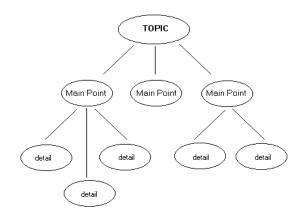
# Cornell Method example:

Cue Column is 1/3 portion of the page	Today's Date, Instructor Name, Class, Topic(s), Your Name
Main ideas here - Edit after lecture	All notes go here during class lecture
Summary section: Create sample test questions here	

# Outline example:

- I. First main topic
  - A. Subtopic
    - 1. Detail
    - 2. Detail
  - B. Subtopic
    - 1. Detail
    - 2. Detail
- II. Second main topic
  - A. Subtopic
    - 1. Detail
    - 2. Detail
  - B. Subtopic
    - 1. Detail
    - 2. Detail

# Mind Map example:



# Miscellaneous Tips:

- Use a three-ring binder
- Use 3 x 5 note cards for flash cards
- Label, number, and date all notes
- Copy down all material from the white/chalk board or overhead
- Leave blank spaces (if you use both sides of your paper)
- Use graphic signals for parts of your notes that you need to focus on (?)
- Use graphic signals for parts of your notes that you totally know (☺)
- Take notes in different colors
- Use highlighting sparingly
- Type up your notes on the computer
- Notice your wandering mind it's ok, just refocus
- Participate in class discussions
- Relate the class and your notes to your ultimate goals
- "Be" with the instructor
- Sit in a class room location with minimal distractions
- Compare notes with a classmate
- Experiment with formats use what works for you
- Use a tape recorder FYI to your instructor as a courtesy
- Ask Your Instructor for Clarification!!

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#### Adjusting to Different Lecture Styles

- "Talking over your head" When difficult concepts are not thoroughly explained.
  - ◆ **Strategy:** Ask questions (lots if necessary!)
- "Rambling" When the presentation consistently goes off track with the topic at hand.
  - ♦ **Strategy:** Ask carefully worded questions related to the last main point.
- "Mumbling" When the instructor speaks too softly or does not enunciate well.
  - Strategy: Sit up front, listen closely, and ask to repeat main points.
- "Tortoise and Hare" When the instructor speaks too slowly or too quickly.
  - ◆ Strategy (tortoise): Ask to repeat or clarify the main points.
  - ◆ Strategy (hare): Anticipate what is to come, abbreviate, and make connections between concepts. Try not to stress out!
  - \*\* Comparing notes with a classmate is a great strategy for all of the above! \*\*



For more info on success strategies, stop by the CONNECT TO SUCCESS OFFICE Office #1655 or dana.kobold@rrcc.edu or 303.914.6317

Hand out info adapted from *Skills for Learning Power @ 2001* and the Wallace State Community College - Hanceville website