

Note-taking Skills



**20 “Do’s”
of
Note Taking**

Note-taking Skills



What you'll learn

- In this presentation you will learn 20 good note-taking skills that you can apply in lectures *and* text reading.

Note-taking Skills



**Why take
notes?**

Note-taking Skills

Importance of note-taking

- Adequate notes are necessary to efficiently study and learn.
- The purpose of notes is to provide you with a written record of the ideas you thought were important in the lecture.
- Note taking can be done during lectures or when reading.
- The act of writing notes keeps you focused.

Here are some common note-taking skills / habits that students adopt in lectures. Consider each one in turn and determine whether the skill / habit is a *good habit* or *bad habit*.

1. I listen actively to what the lecturer says to ensure that I understand the point before I write.
2. I pay attention to cues for important points, transition from one point to the next, repetition of points for emphasis, changes in voice inflections, listing of a series of points, etc.
3. If I disagree with the points, I will keep arguing in my mind.
4. I raise questions if appropriate.
5. I use large notebooks to take notes.
6. I leave some blanks between points.
7. I take down everything that the lecturer says.
8. I don't pay attention to some minor points which do not seem related to each other in the lecture.
9. My notes are difficult to read, and I always spell out every word without using abbreviations.
10. I rarely copy the things written on the board.



Questions?

So what do I need to know to take good notes?

See if you can fill in the blanks that follow. **Answers on left**

20 Do's of Note-taking

Homework

Detective

Mind

Separate

Word

1. Do your _____ before you go to class. Try to guess what the instructor will talk about.
2. Do think of yourself as a _____ with one of the richest sources of clues standing directly in front of you.
3. Do have your mind set and ready to receive the first idea that is presented. Try to keep your _____ from wandering.
4. Do keep your notes for each class _____ from other classes.
5. Do not try to take down every _____ your teacher says. You will miss the overall point your teacher is trying to make. Spend more time listening and attempt to take down the main points.

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6. Do leave some blanks as you move from one point to the next so that you can fill in additional _____ later if necessary. Your objective is to take helpful notes, not to save paper.
7. Do listen for _____ as to important points, transitions from one point to the next, repetition of ideas, changes in voice inflections, and a list or series of points.
8. Do remember that many teachers attempt to present a few _____ points and several _____ points in a lecture. The rest is explanatory material and samples.
9. Do continually ask yourself “How does this _____ to the main point....to what we talked about last time....to what I read in the textbook.”
10. Do copy everything written on the _____, regardless. Have you ever stopped to think that every blackboard scribble may be a clue to an exam item?

Notes / information

Cues / clues

Major / Minor

Relate

Board

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11. Do develop your own _____ to note-taking.

Three examples of note-taking:

1. Use diagrams and pictures where necessary. Sometimes it is helpful to draw pictures that illustrate the connections between ideas, sequences, or events. (See next slides as examples)

Try clustering your thoughts and ideas.

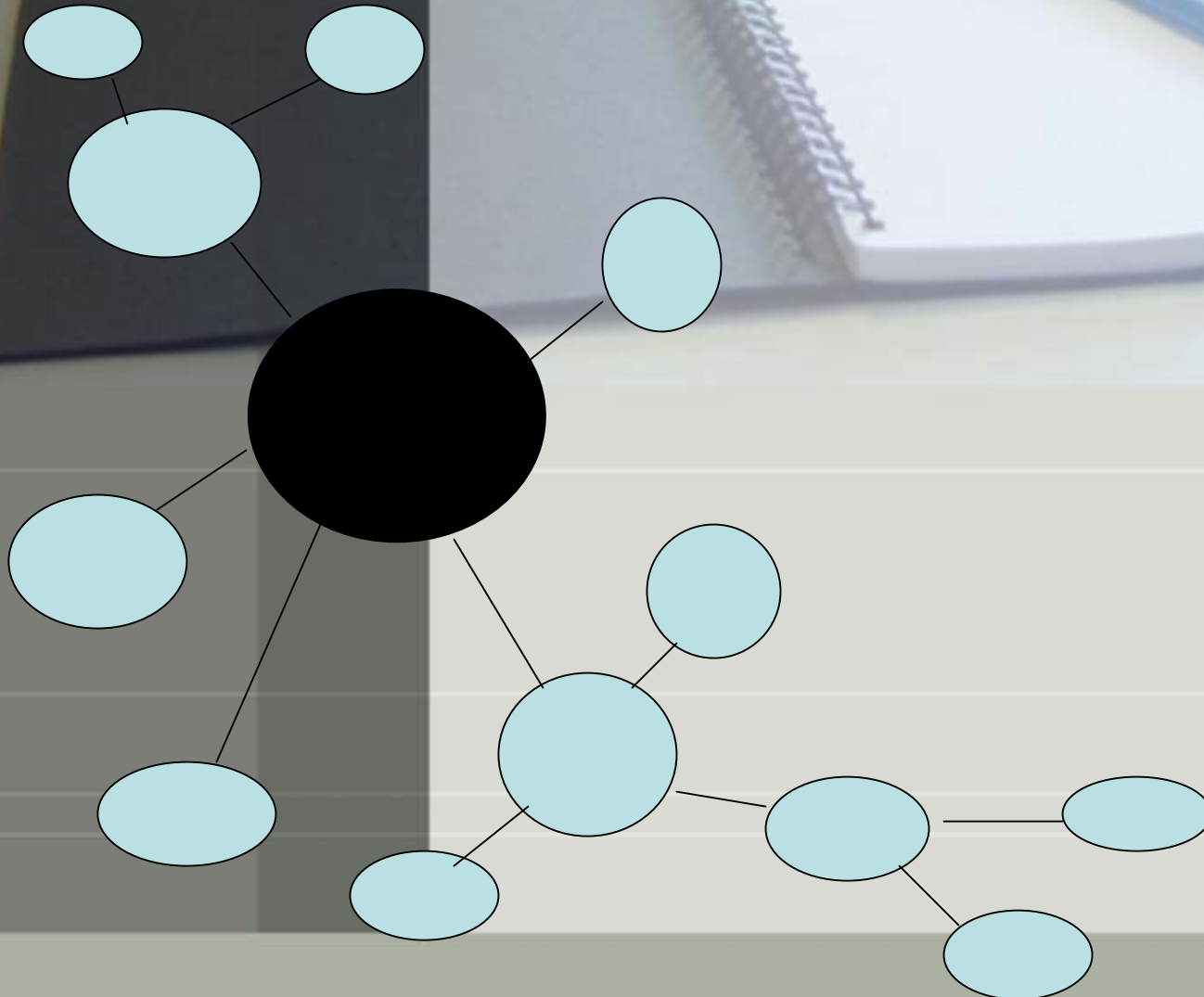
Do map and organize your thoughts with circles; then connect them.

- Start in the middle of the page with the topic and cluster thoughts around that.
- Connect circles after class recalling how connections were made.
- Write a paragraph about these connections.

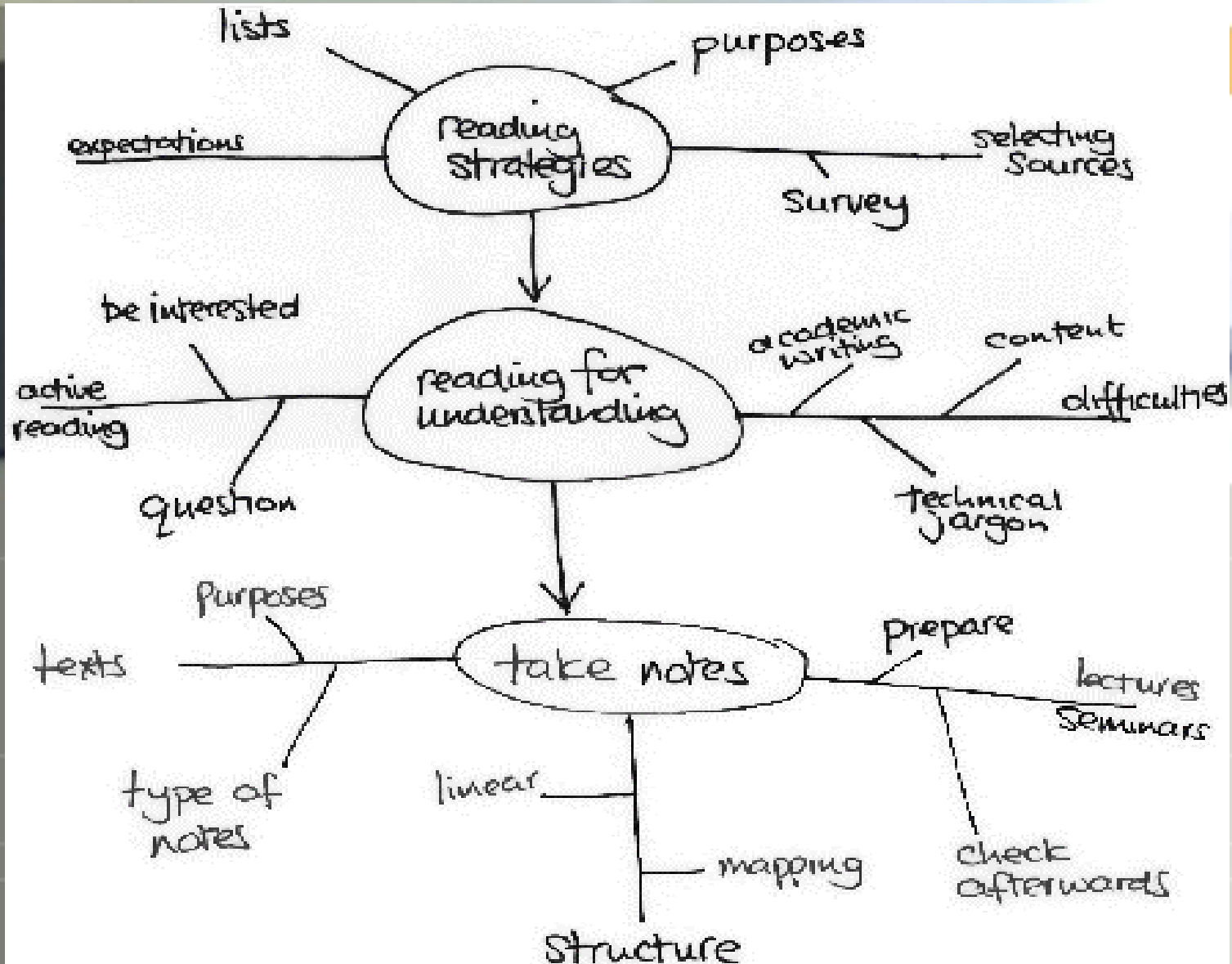
Style

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Gathering Ideas: Clustering



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2

Cornell Notes

- Main notes column (done in class)
- Key word column (done after class)

Key words that you make after class go here.

Notes taken in class are written in this portion of the page.

Ideally, focus on main ideas and important details.

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3. Linear Note-taking

- **A. MAJOR TOPIC**

1. Key point

- supporting point.
- supporting point.
- supporting point.

2. Key Point

- supporting point.
- supporting point.
- supporting point.

- **B. MAJOR TOPIC**

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Linear Example:

- To motivate oneself in life:
 - Create a vision of who you want to be
 - Make it a vision that you will “stay hungry” for or “up to”
 - Don’t wait until you receive one
 - Create it now; it can always be changed later

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12. Do review what your teacher said. _____ after the lecture, write the main points, questions, and cue words in the left-hand area of your notes. Underline some of them. Use colored pencils. Draw arrows. Star important points. Re writing some notes may be helpful.
13. Do use the above summary to see if you can _____ the notes in your own words when they are covered up. Review them within 24 hours.
14. Do pay special attention at the end of the lecture, because a lot of information might be given in the last _____ minutes.
15. When it comes to note-taking, _____ is more: develop abbreviations to reduce the amount you have to write.

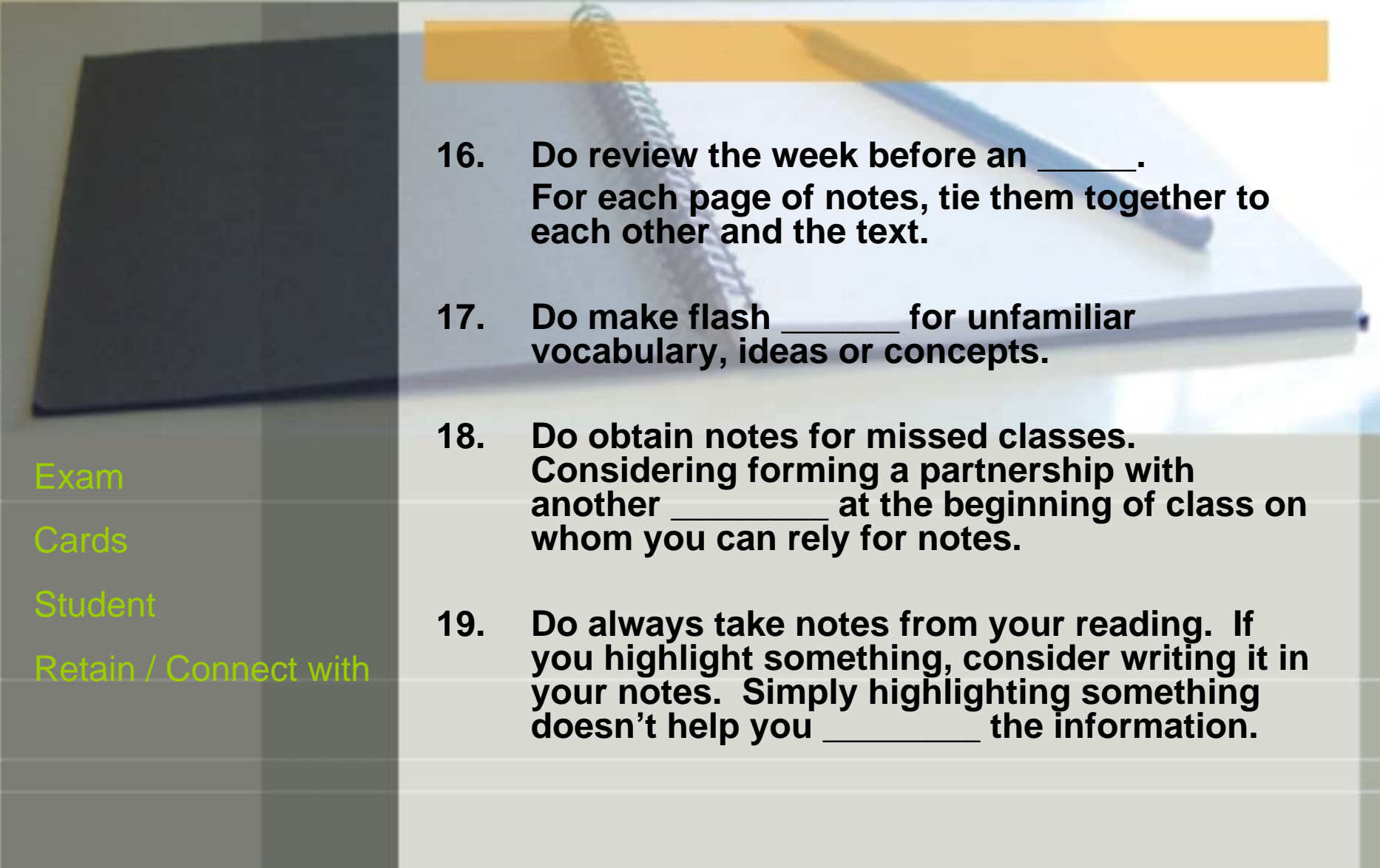
Soon / Right

Remember / Phrase

Ten

Less

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- 
16. Do review the week before an _____.
For each page of notes, tie them together to each other and the text.
 17. Do make flash _____ for unfamiliar vocabulary, ideas or concepts.
 18. Do obtain notes for missed classes.
Considering forming a partnership with another _____ at the beginning of class on whom you can rely for notes.
 19. Do always take notes from your reading. If you highlight something, consider writing it in your notes. Simply highlighting something doesn't help you _____ the information.

Exam

Cards

Student

Retain / Connect with

Note-taking Skills

20. Do use the *SQ4R* system.

How *SQ4R* works:

Survey Here is where you skim or survey the material. It means looking over the whole assignment before you actually start to read it.

How much material does the author use to get their idea across?

Pay attention to headings and subheadings.
Look at charts, pictures, graphs, captions.

Note-taking Skills

SQ4R continued

Question

This is a crucial stage in personalizing the material, making it really yours.

From your survey write down questions that you, personally, want answered.

What are you curious about here?

What might the author be able to tell you about the topic that you don't already know?

Sometimes, turning the headings and subheadings into questions helps.

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SQ4R continued

Read

Now you are ready to actually read the assignment.

Read the introductory paragraphs rather carefully.

Add to your personal list of questions

Add difficult words to your question sheet

Keep asking yourself: What is the author's main purpose in writing this material?

Note-taking Skills

SQ4R continued

Review

After you have completed the reading, try to remember each section. What was the author's main purpose? What were the chief points? What was the overall plan?

Recite

One of the best ways of understanding anything is to tell it to someone else in your own words.

At this final stage, "tell" your answers to the questions.

Reflect

Think about what you have just learned and how it ties with the ideas from previous readings and classroom notes.

- Learn your instructor's style to detect the structure and inter-relationship of ideas in a lecture
- e.g., starts with written outline, follows it, repeats key ideas, does not get off topic, ends on time.
- e.g., starts with no outline, meanders through various topics, writes on the board, sums lecture very well at the end

Summary

- In this presentation, you have been introduced to some common note-taking skills/habits.
- Take a moment to reflect.
- On a separate piece of paper write your top five strategies.

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Create the vision that
you are a great
note taker.

Thank you