

Improving Your Learning



1. What isn't effective.
2. Some basic principles.
3. What is effective.
4. A general strategy for this course.

Topics

1. Rereading.
2. Underlining.
3. Rereading what you underline.
4. Only cramming (unless that is the only option).
5. Using practice tests to evaluate your learning, rather than to enhance it.
6. Avoiding making mistakes.

What Is Not Effective

Learning & Memory

1. The fact that to-be-learned information is easier to recall during learning does not mean it will be at a later time.
2. We are often not very good at assessing our own learning and memory abilities.
3. We seem to encode in a relational manner.
4. The act of retrieval changes the retrieved content.
5. Retrieval can be a more potent stimulus for recall than further study.
6. Effective learning is seldom easy.

Some Basic Principles

Generally speaking: the more active the learning method, the better the learning.

What Is Effective

Self-testing

Self-testing is considered one of the most effective ways of learning. Questions can be obtained by:

- Creating questions within a study group.
- Using flash cards (but only for simple definitions).
- Self-generate questions during or immediately after a lecture.
- Using text resources (online tools or study guides).

What Is Effective

Distributed Practice

Ideally, for best long-term retention, you would space your learning over lengthy intervals (retention duration appears to be proportional to the length of those intervals).

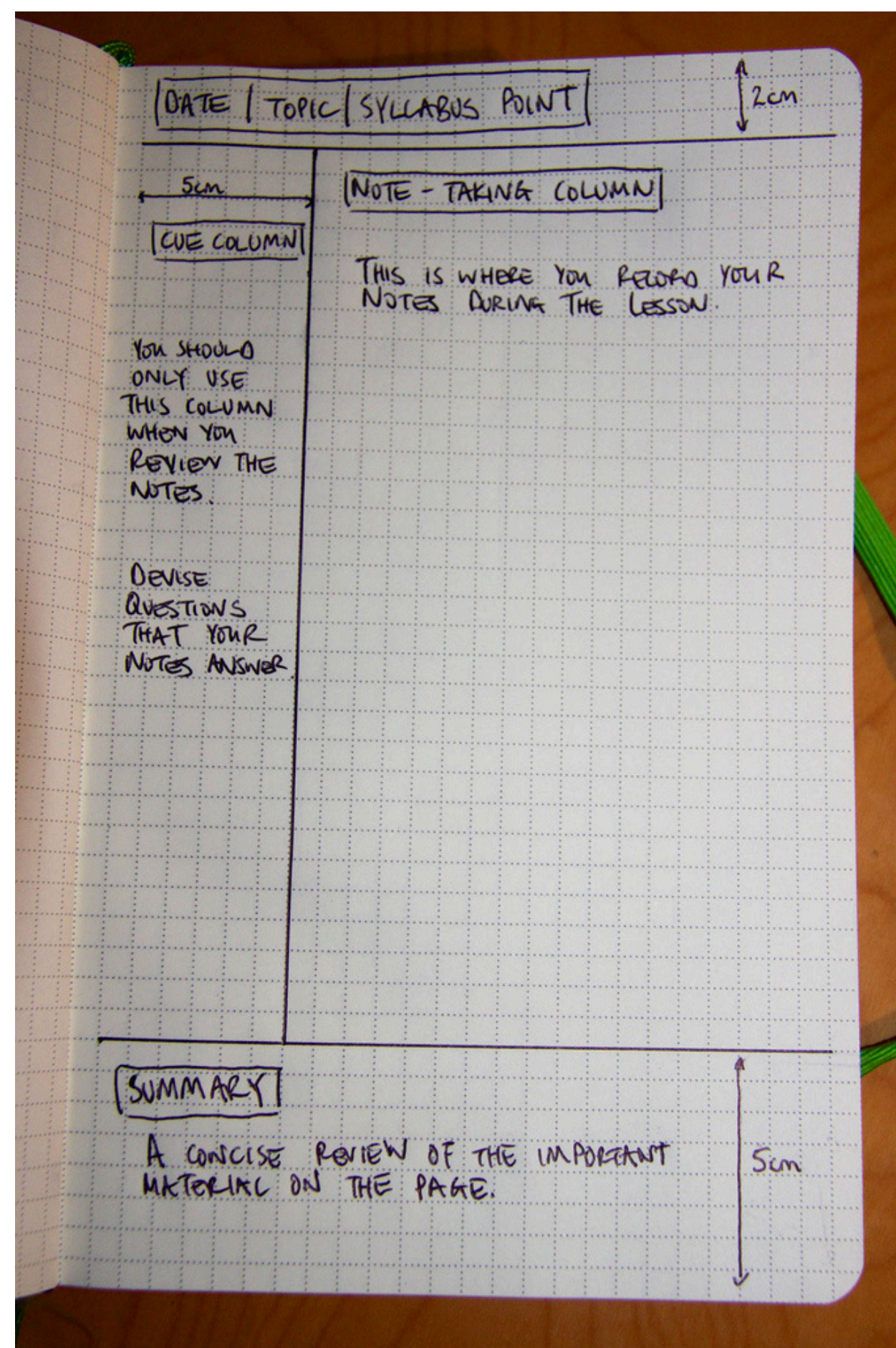
What Is Effective

Remembering over Duplicating

- Copying one's notes is only effective if one is actively involved in the materials as they are being copied
- One more effective strategy is to study the notes, and then try to reproduce them.

What Is Effective

Cornell Method



What Is Effective

Interleaving

- Rather than studying the topics in the order they were presented, mix them up.

What is Effective

Managing Exam Anxiety

- Try to reduce the information into a manageable amount early on.
- Combine your notes from the lectures with your notes from the text.
- Avoid stimulants immediately before an exam.

What Is Effective

For this Course

- Realize that it is not enough to know the lecture materials alone or the text materials alone.
- Realize that knowing the definitions of terms should be just the start of your studying.
- Reduce your notes by integrating the lecture and text materials.
- Create questions from those notes, and then self-test.

A General Strategy