



The Ultimate Note-Taking Kit



How to write perfect study notes.

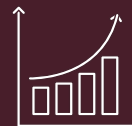
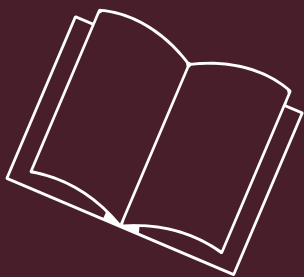


Table of Contents

1. Getting Started	3
Purpose of this Note-Taking kit	3
Who would use this Note-Taking kit?	3
When should you use this kit?	3
Will this help me revise for exams?	3
2. How to use your notes to study	3
Memorisation	3
Practice responses	3
Quizzes	3
Summarising	3
3. The Ultimate Guide to Writing Perfect Study Notes	4
Is there more than one way to make notes?	4
4. Writing perfect notes for different purposes	4
5. How to write perfect text, textbook, or source notes	5
Step 1: Read/watch the source	5
Step 2: Highlight/underline important info	5
Step 3: Summarise the content	5
Step 4: Add additional notes	5
Step 5: Keep adding onto them throughout the year	5
6. How to write perfect class and lecture notes	6
Step 1: Write down key things	6
Step 2: Highlight the most important things	6
Step 3: At home, transfer these notes into revision notes	6
Step 4: Only extrapolate the most important information	6
Step 5: Add any extra notes	6
7. Different Note-taking Styles	8
Split page notes	8
Cornell Method	9
QEC	10
Flow Method	11
Split page Notes Template	12
Cornell Template	13
QEC Notes Template	14
Flow Style Notes Template	15

1. Getting started

Purpose of this note-taking kit

This note-taking kit gives you a comprehensive guide to creating detailed and functional notes as well as different formats of note templates for you to use.

Who should use this note-taking kit?

We've designed this kit for all students studying all subjects. If you're studying something, you're going to need to make practical and detailed notes. This is here to help you!

When should you use this kit?

Whenever you need to make notes. Print the templates off and take them to class or use them

at home or in the library when you're making notes about your texts and textbooks!

We've given you a variety of different note-taking templates so that you can use the style that suits you and your subjects!

Will this help me revise for exams?

Yes! This kit is an invaluable tool for putting together study notes that are written with revision and exam prep in mind!

Follow the steps to fill out the notes and use our handy revision tips for putting them to use preparing to ace your exams!

2. How to use your notes to study

Having great or pretty notes is one thing, learning how to make the most of them to ace your exams is something else entirely. What we'll look at now are the study methods you should follow to make the most of your perfect study notes to ace your assessments!

Memorisation

The key purpose of notes is to help you memorise information. You should set aside time each week to read through your notes and try and commit things to memory.

Don't do this in one sitting, try and do it in smaller chunks! The aim is not to memorise masses of information in one sitting, it is to memorise all the key information accurately! Memorisation is essential for recalling information in exam conditions, so you must find the time for this.

Practice responses

Writing practice responses helps you develop your ideas and memorise information.

Because of how the brain is 'plastic', that is, it is malleable and can change to accommodate more information, writing information down is a good way of cementing learning.

The act of writing responses and essays, especially handwriting rather than typing, functions as higher-order thought.

Writing essays is thinking as well as entrenching information - the more responses you write, the more you memorise and develop your ideas. In addition, because of the nature of most HSC exam questions being developed to prevent students from memorising essays, writing a variety of practice essays will help you prepare more effectively!

Quizzes

Cornell notes and split page notes are great for quizzing yourself. But even if you use other methods, you should use your notes to quiz yourself.

Summarising

This is an essential process for all notes. You don't want to have produced some perfect notes and then think - "I'm done now!" That's not how studying works!

Instead, you should try and summarise your notes to make them more concise and condensed. Summarising notes will help you memorise the information.

3 Our students come first

3. The Ultimate Guide to Writing Perfect Study Notes

Good notes make for good marks, perfect notes make for perfect marks (or close to!). Making perfect notes is an investment in time and your future. If you want that 99.95 ATAR or the A+ or Band 6 result, it all starts with excellent notes. And that means commitment.

If you want to do well and want the notes to help you get there, then there aren't really any short-cuts! There's just consistent habits and "grind".

This is a good thing because it means anybody can achieve great marks, they just need to do the work! In this article, we're going to break down what goes into this.

Is there more than one way to make notes?

Yes! If you don't want to have to commit to one style. Don't worry, after we show you the processes, we're going to look at a few different styles. In addition, we'll look at plenty of examples on the way. However, we do insist that when you do write notes you write them by hand.

Research consistently shows that handwritten notes encourage and support recall and visualisation.

Let's get started!

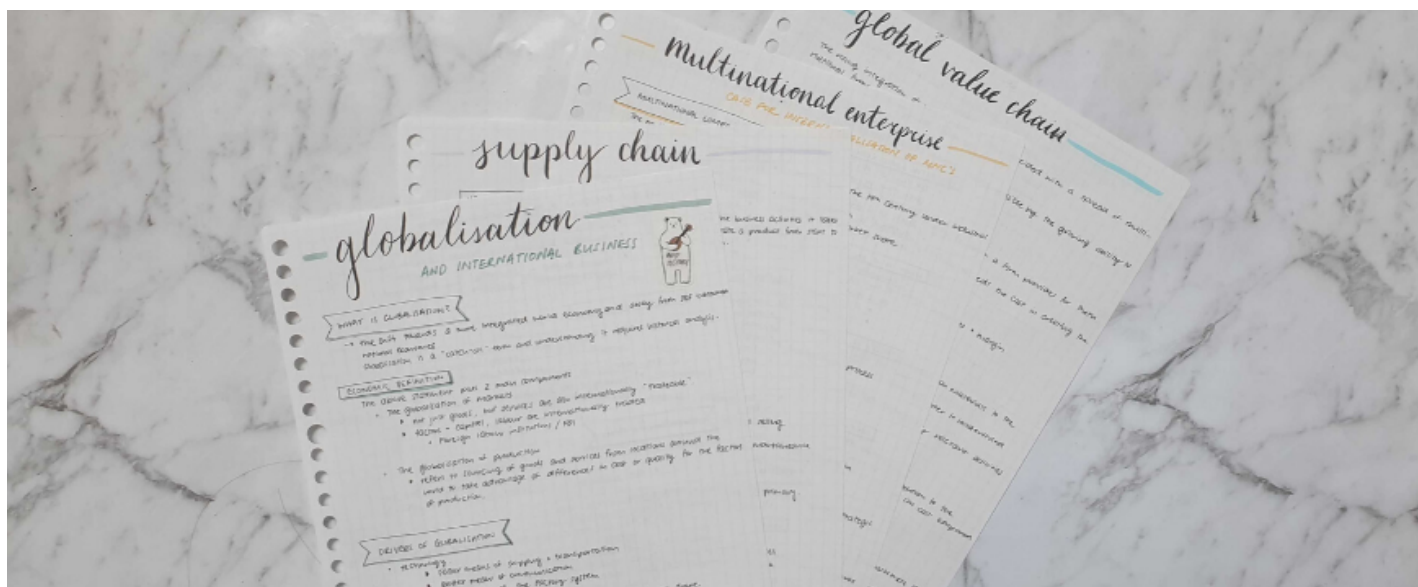
4. Writing perfect notes for different purposes

Depending on your purpose, how you make your notes is clearly going to differ.

You'll do one thing for texts and textbooks but something different for in-class or lecture notes. Text summaries and textbook notes tend to be more polished and produced over a couple of hours and iterations.

Class and lecture notes are often messy and thrown together quickly, requiring rewriting and organisation.

Let's take a look at both methods.



5. How to write perfect text, textbook, or source notes



Writing notes isn't something that happens in one step or one sitting. Instead, you need to commit time to them. Let's look at what's involved in writing notes from texts and text books.

Use this method to make notes about texts or from textbooks! OK. Now you've seen the process let's look at it in more detail!

Step 1: Read/watch the source

Before you write notes, you need to have information. You need to start with source material. This can be the novel set for study, your Maths textbook, or your Science textbook. Ideally, read the text through once, and then go back through and read again to start highlighting/underlining key info.

Step 2: Highlight/underline important info

Highlight or underline relevant information and passages.

"Knowing the content broadly will help you decide what you need to focus on."

It may be tempting to highlight everything. But it's not all key information. Focus on the essential details. This will help you learn information as you write notes.

Step 3: Summarise the content

Now you want to start creating notes. It helps to start with headers and expand on headers with dot point summaries of information.

"Different subjects will warrant different ways of developing this."

Try and utilise note-taking methods that suit the content. English notes may benefit from tables for connecting information to text, techniques, and Module concerns.

Maths notes might focus on methods and equations.

Step 4: Add additional notes

(eg. things i need to remember, analysis, additional research)

Don't leave your notes to sit, add to them consistently. When adding further information, make sure you read through your existing notes.

"Reading your existing notes before adding more notes helps entrench knowledge!"

Adding your most recent ideas, discoveries, or hacks to a set of notes keeps it a live document.

Step 5: Keep adding onto them throughout the year

As the year progresses, develop your notes further with more information and ideas. Notes are important for studying and revision.

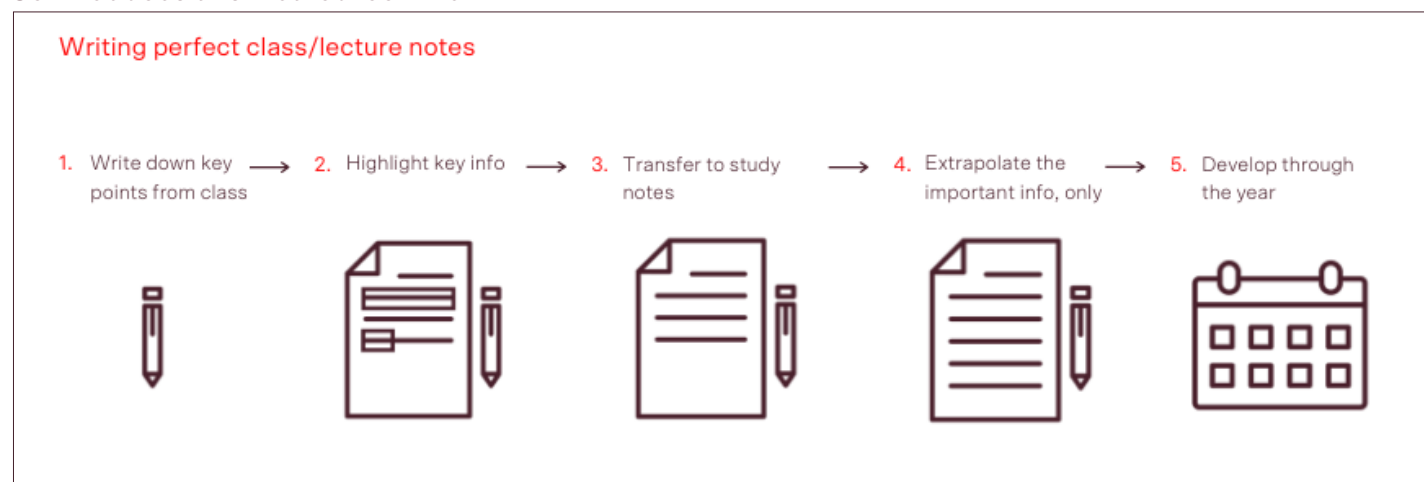
"One method Matrix students find useful is trying to condense notes down to cheatsheets or summary sheets."

These function as good revision notes and are excellent resources for revision.

It's one thing to take notes about a text or novel or film, but something else to make notes about a class or lecture!

6. How to write perfect class and lecture notes

So what does this method look like?



Making notes in class or lectures requires focus and the ability to condense a lot of information into manageable chunks.

We tend to write far slower than other people speak. This means we need to be judicious when taking notes so as not to miss key points or get bogged down and miss great swathes of a class. People speak at an average of 130-150 words per minute compared to handwriting notes at an average of 120-155 words per minute.

Use this step-by-step process for taking in-class notes. What we'll do now is describe this efficient and effective process for taking class notes.

Step 1: Write down key things your teacher says in my first set of rough notes

When the teacher, or lecturer, is speaking and describing things or processes, focus on writing keywords and key statements, first.

"Trying to write everything will mean you miss most of it."

You want to make initial notes around key ideas. Use the moments where your speaker pauses to start adding further information. You may find that Cornell or flow systems are the most effective ways to develop class notes.

Remember, the key focus is covering the important details, not all the information. This is the first step, so don't get anxious or stressed if you miss things, there will be time to try and fill in the blanks.

Step 2: Highlight the most important things (eg. formulas).

Try and do this in class, if you have time. You want to highlight the most important facts, ideas, or pieces of data while they are fresh in your mind.

"Try and go through your notes in-class and highlight the salient points."

If you run out of time in class, try and find an opportunity to highlight things at school while things are fresh. This will act as a trigger when you transcribe and expand things later!

Step 3: At home, transfer these notes into revision notes

Now you've got base notes, you're in a position to develop this information further.

First, transcribe the major in-class information. Begin with the keywords you highlighted, copy that across and then add the surrounding detail from your class notes.

Step 4: Only extrapolate the most important info

Once you've got the basic info down, fill in the blanks. Use the missing information as a launchpad to researching further details. This may mean reading a textbook or novel and developing notes from that source (see above). Stay focused on the keywords and ideas you highlighted when developing notes. If you encounter an interesting idea, make a note and return to it later!

“Don’t get distracted by interesting rabbit holes when you are trying to produce notes and resources for later study.”

If you find you have questions that aren’t resolved as you transcribe your notes, write these down. You want to take these along to your next class or contact your teacher or tutor about them for assistance. It’s okay if you have questions after making notes to this point, it’s a key part of the process. Not following up on those questions, though, is a critical mistake!

Don’t try and cram everything into one page! Leave space in your notes to include the information you are missing.

Step 5: Add any extra notes (eg. things you need to remember, analysis, or additional research)

Make sure you follow up on the questions that you have! You want to add that information later. You want to keep adding to your notes:

1. Questions you have
2. Answers to those questions
3. Additional points you need to remember
4. Interesting pieces of research.

Remember, every time you add to your notes, take the time to read your existing notes.

7. Different Note-Taking Styles

Okay, now you know the process, let's look at some different styles. After this, we'll give you some templates to print out and use!

Split page notes

Split page notes

1. Use headers to summarise to summarise the information and ideas.

These headers should be triggers. You should be able to cover the other column and recall all the information from the headers.

1. Use headers:	2. Make notes in dot points:
Summarise the	• Use short concise
information in the	sentences
facing column	• Summarise the ideas that
	fit the header
	• Use key words
	• Include quotations,
	references, and
	important formulae
	• Add short points as the
	year progresses

2. Expand on the content in this column. To do this, summarise ideas, use keywords. You want to be able to cover the other side of the page and know what the head should be.

M

As the name suggests, these are notes where the page is split in half.

1. On one side, include the keywords or headers you can use as triggers
2. On the right side, include dot-point summaries and quotations

Once you've completed your notes, you can easily cover the summary side and tried to recall the information prompted by the keyword or header.

Above: The best layout for Split page notes

Split page notes are great for developing revision notes or summarising STEM textbooks.

Notes, Keywords, Summary

1. Cue-Column

2. Note Taking Column

Aim to ask questions that:

- ### 3. Summary Section

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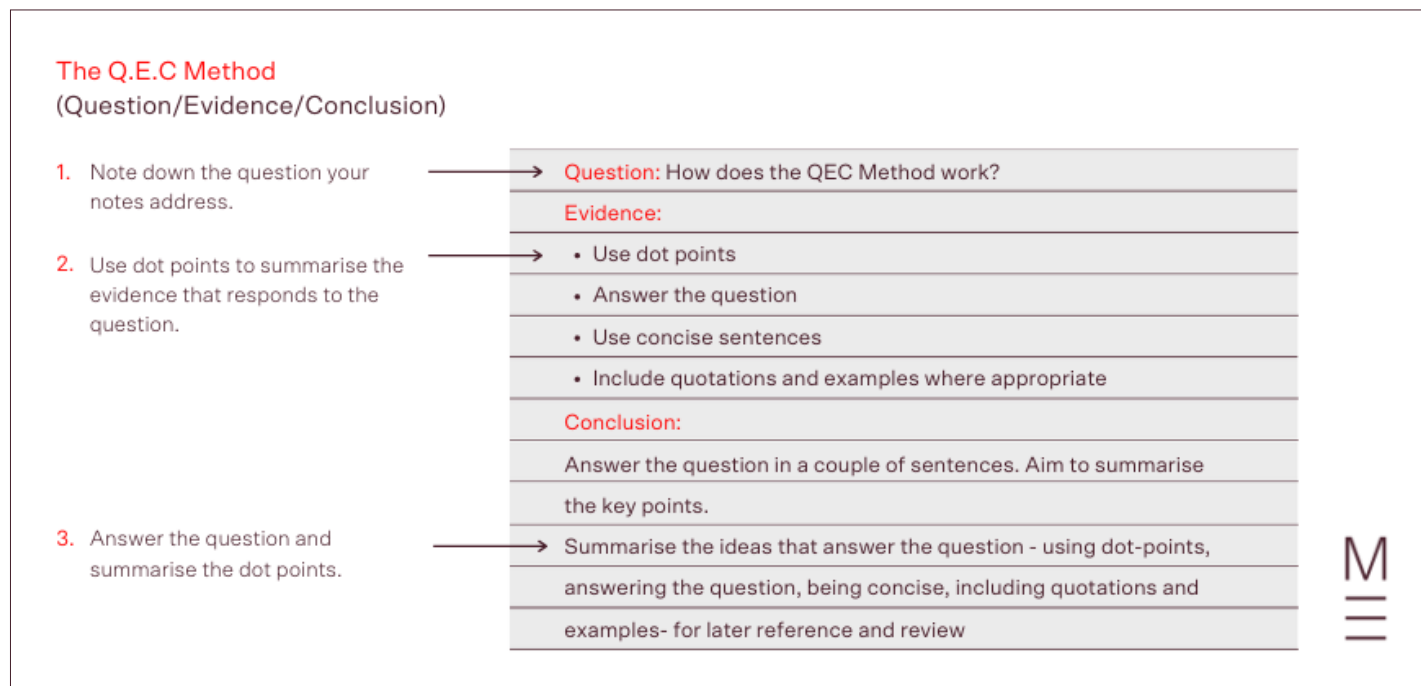
Above: An example of laying out Cornell notes

To use this method, follow the following steps:

- 9

QEC

Question, Evidence, Conclusion



QEC notes develop information with an eye to putting together arguments or writing essays. The acronym, QEC stands for Question, Evidence, Conclusion.

QEC notes begin each section with a question. The information that follows is there to support a response to that question. The final part is a concluding statement. The conclusion should function like either a summary or thesis statement in response to the question.

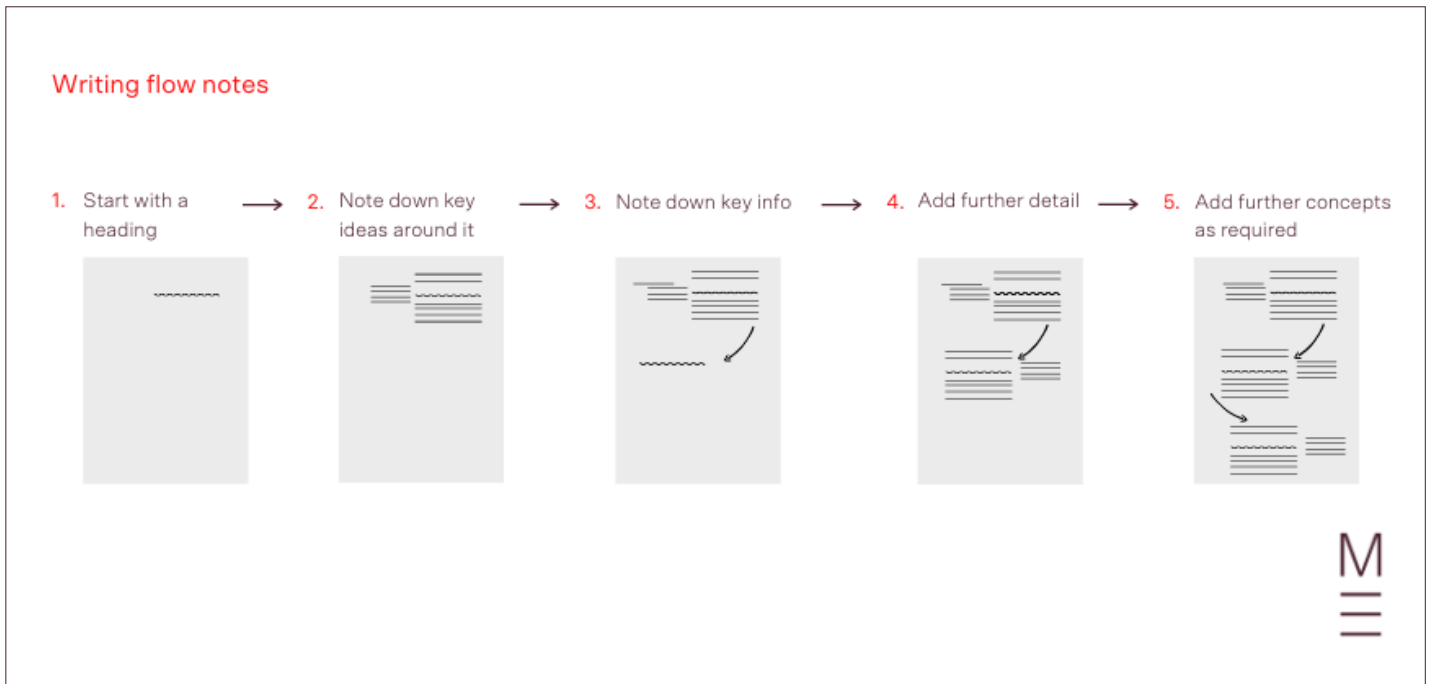
Above: An example of Question/Evidence/Conclusion (QEC) notes.

QEC notes are great for humanities subjects - English, History, Economics - and also STEM subjects.

So what's the process for producing these?

1. Divide the page into two or three sections
2. In each section, begin with a question
3. Below the question, write concise dot-point notes
4. Include key quotations, facts, and formulae (where required)
5. For the conclusion, write either:
 - A statement summarising the information above in response to the question
 - A thesis statement or topic sentence that is a direct response to the initial question that encapsulates the information above.

Flow method



The Flow method isn't as neat and structured as the methods above. Instead, it is a way to create free-flowing notes on the go! To produce flow notes, you want to think about the process behind producing a mind-map. But rather than making a mind-map, you want to create some flowing ideas.

Above: An example of flow notes

A significant flaw with flow notes is that they can get messy and disorganised.

How do you go about this? The process for producing flow notes. Okay, let's expand on this process:

1. Begin with a keyword
2. Expand on those ideas in a bubble around the keyword
3. Nearby on the page, in an area with some blank space, write down the next keyword
4. Connect it to the first with an arrow
5. Expand your notes around the second keyword as you did the first
6. Rinse and repeat as you connect and expand on subsequent notes.

This method is great for producing lecture notes, but as it is not as structured, the notes can be difficult to follow and develop later.

Subject:

Title:

Date:

This image shows a handwriting practice sheet. It features a central vertical line that divides the page into two equal halves. Horizontal lines are drawn across the entire page, providing a guide for letter height. On the left side, a large, faint capital letter 'N' is printed, spanning from the second line from the top to the second line from the bottom. On the right side, a large, faint capital letter 'M' is printed, also spanning from the second line from the top to the second line from the bottom. The letters are designed to be traced or used as a model for writing practice.

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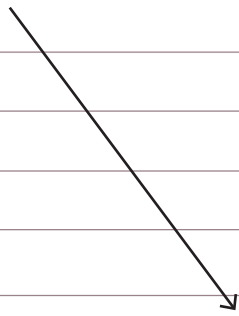
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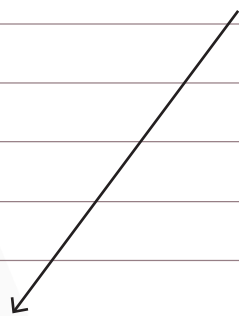
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Question:	Evidence:
	Conclusion:
Question:	Evidence:
	Conclusion:
Question:	Evidence:
	Conclusion:
Question:	Evidence:
	Conclusion:

Keyword



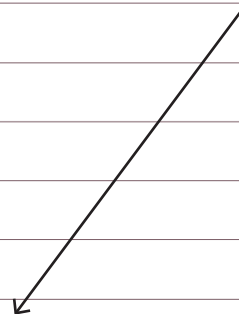
Keyword



Keyword



Keyword



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