

Learning

To Learn

Handwritten Notes



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Students who used longhand remembered more and had a deeper understanding of the material.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> May, Cindi "A Learning Secret: Don't Take Notes with a Laptop" *Scientific American*

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Multiple studies have demonstrated this.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Muller, Pam A., Oppenheimer, Daniel M. "The Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard" *Psychological Science*

One group of studies included  
hundreds of students from  
Princeton and UCLA.

Students were given a lecture where some students typed notes, and other students wrote notes.

The students were later tested to evaluate retention.

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Some studies did immediate tests.

In other studies testing was delayed a week and students were allowed to study their notes.

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In every scenario the group that hand wrote notes retained more information.

WHY?

Taking notes by hand requires different types of cognitive processing than taking notes on a laptop.

Those different processes have consequences for learning.



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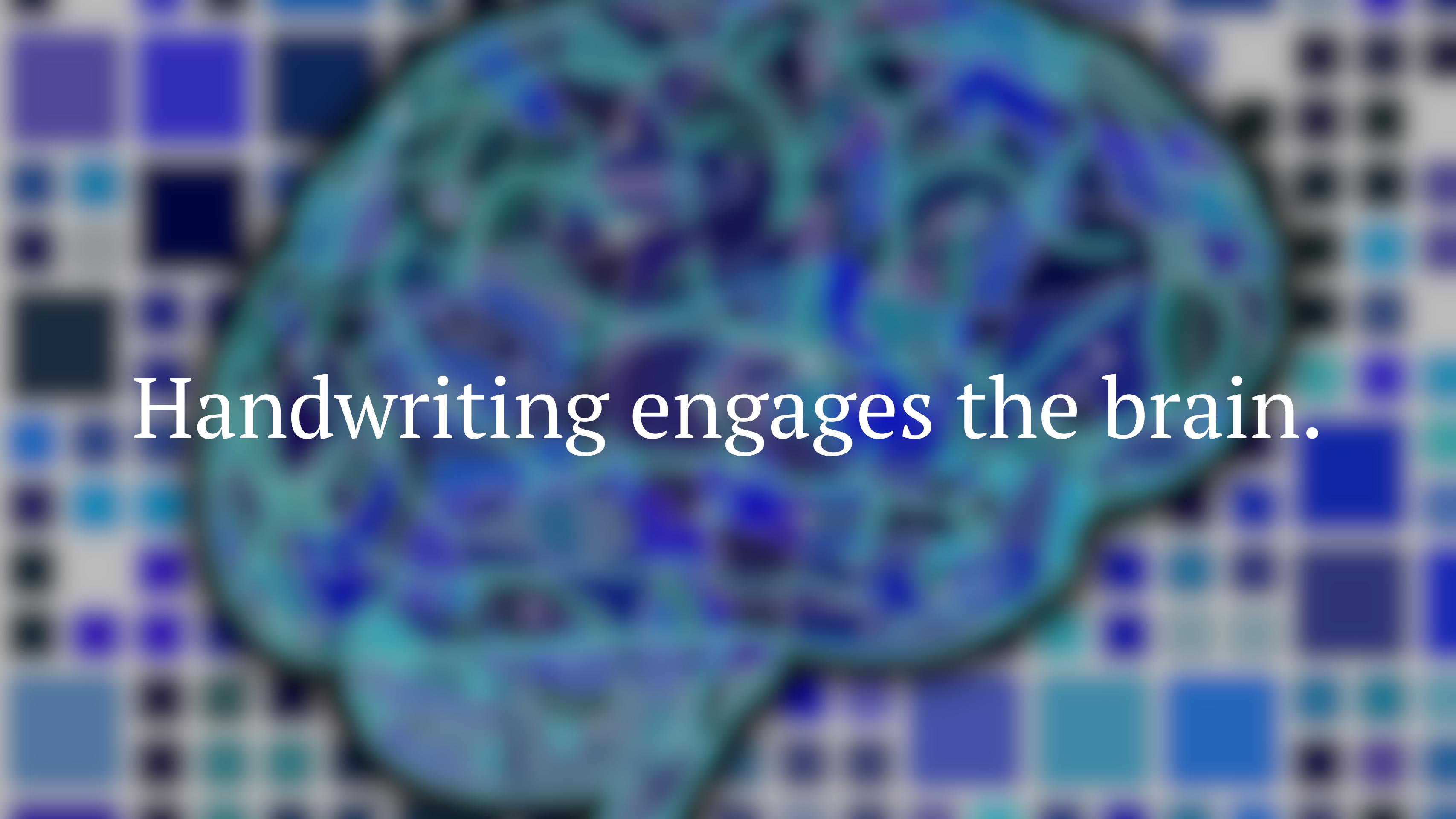
Writing by hand

Is slower.

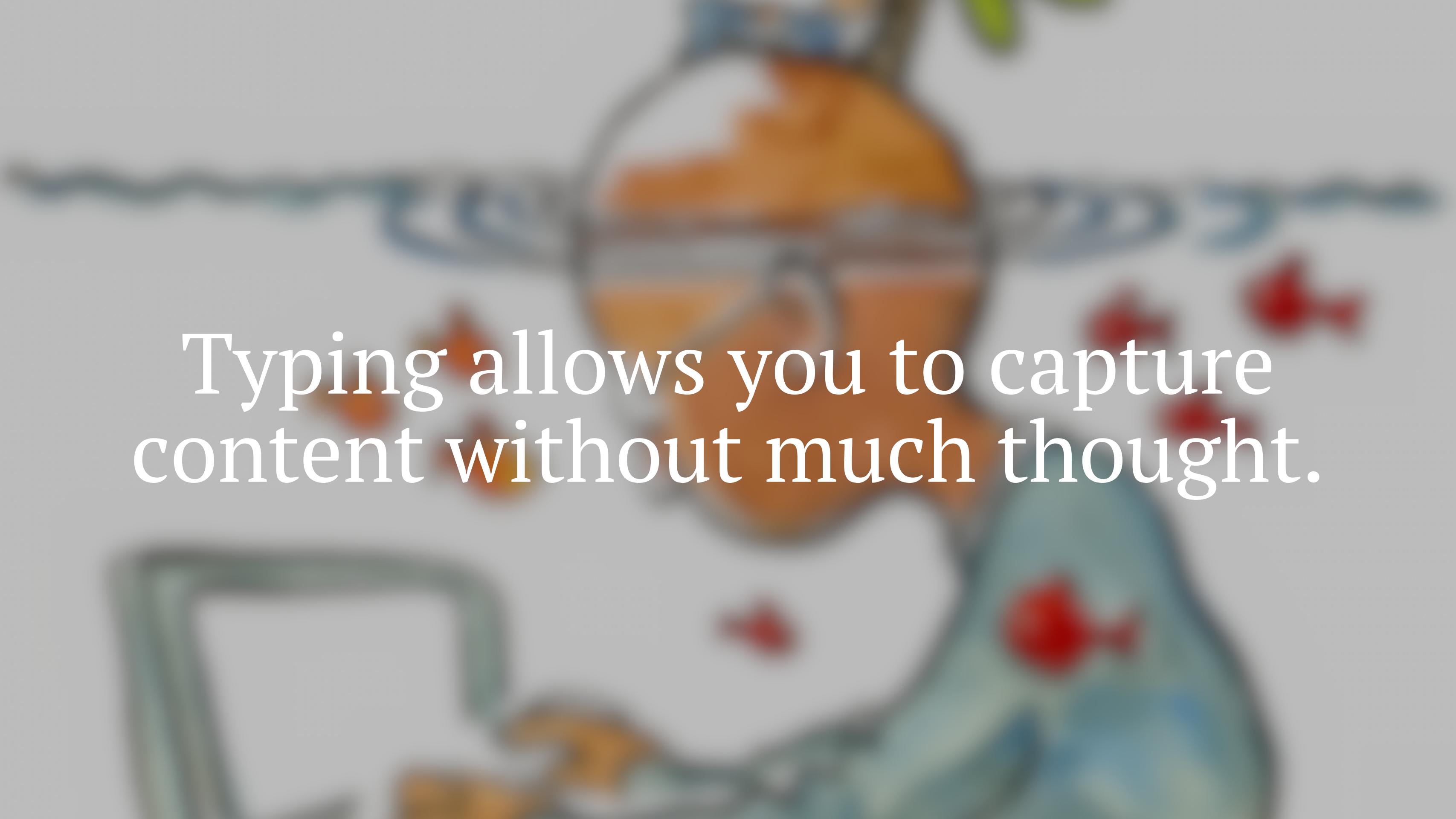
More cumbersome.

But requires you to listen,  
digest and summarize  
content.

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A blurred background image of a person's hand holding a pen over a blank sheet of white paper with blue horizontal lines. The hand is positioned as if ready to write.

Handwriting engages the brain.

A blurry, out-of-focus photograph of a person's hand holding a smartphone. The phone's screen displays a vibrant, abstract pattern of orange, red, blue, and green. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

Typing allows you to capture  
content without much thought.

