

SESSION – 1

🌀 NOTE TAKING

I. Effective and Efficient Note-taking

- Taking good notes is one of several keys to academic success in college.
- It is the practice of recording information received from another source (Eg. Lecture, Seminar, Reference Books etc.,).
- Note taking will help us to recall the information.

Reasons to develop effective note-taking techniques:

1. Prevents forgetting

Our memory fades quickly. For most students, forgetting occurs very rapidly after listening to a lecture, or reading over informational material even if the material is engaging and interesting. **After lectures, for example, research shows that we forget 50% of what we hear within an hour and more than 70% within two days.**

2. Encourages concentration

Taking effective notes requires a student to be mentally active during a lecture or while reading. One has to pay attention, interact with information, make decisions about what to record, and write. Given that the mind is occupied with a demanding task, there is less opportunity for the mind to wander.

3. Records testable material

Instructors generally expect students to remember and apply facts and ideas presented in lecture or in texts. Tests are based on key ideas teachers emphasize in their lectures and/or written material that supports key concepts or themes. In other words, the testable material.

Note-taking Ideas

- There are a number of different ways to take notes, and it is best that you use the method you feel most at ease with.
- However, there are four general ideas that could help you to improve your note taking.
 - Use white space to separate major ideas.
 - Try to limit your notes to one concept or section per page.
 - Use abbreviations and/or symbols where possible to avoid long sentences.
 - Write down the information in your own words.

Note-taking Methods

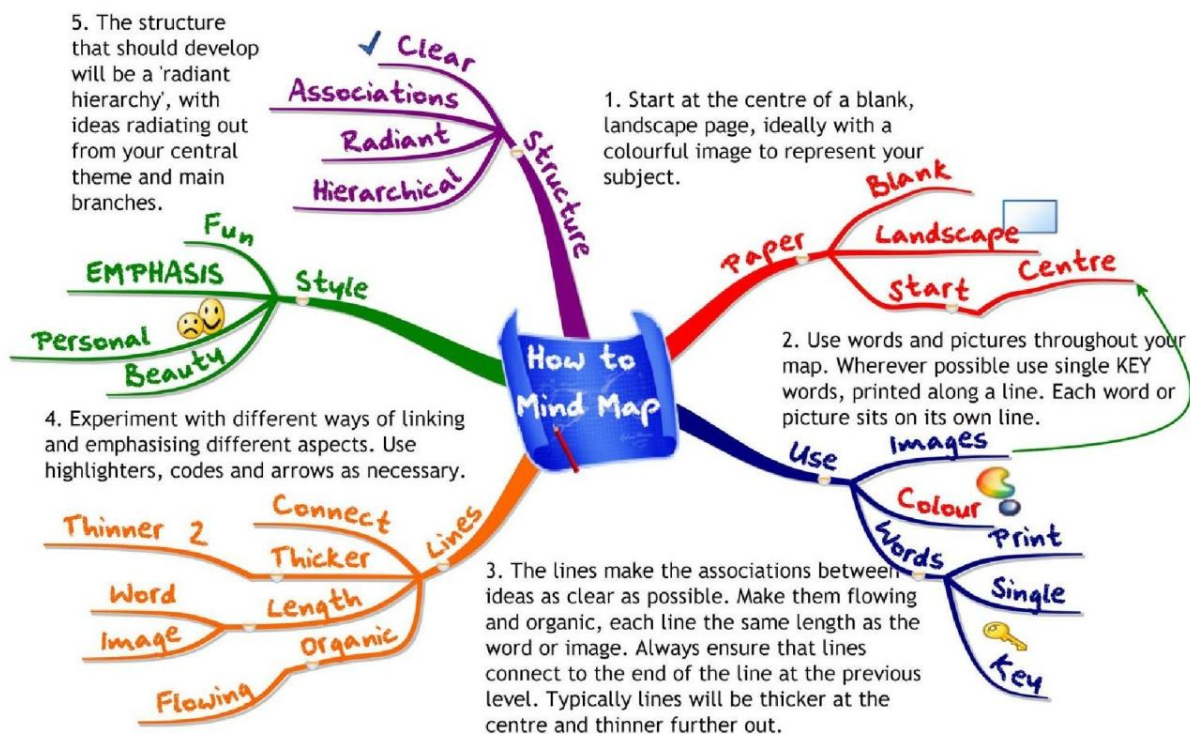
- Mind mapping
- The Cornell Method
- The Outlining Method
- The Charting / Flow Method
- The Sentence Method

A. Mind Maps®

- A mind map is a diagram in which ideas, concepts and images are linked together around a central concept, keyword or idea.
- Mapping is a method that uses comprehension/concentration skills and evolves in a note taking form which relates each fact or idea to every other fact or idea.
- Mapping is a graphic representation of the content of a lecture.
- It is a method that maximizes active participation, affords immediate knowledge as to its understanding, and emphasizes critical thinking.
- This format helps you to visually track your lecture regardless of conditions.

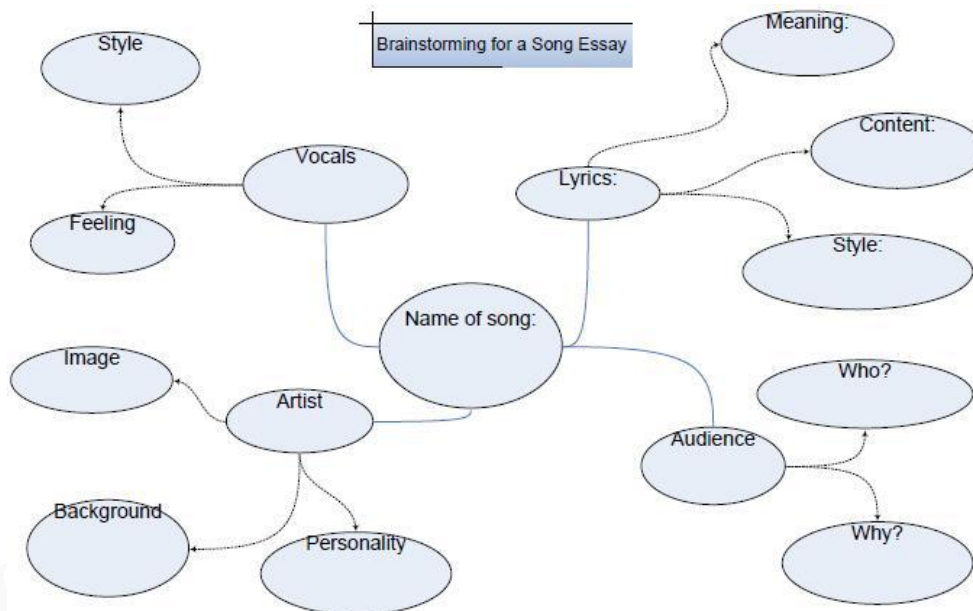
Mind Maps are Useful for:

- Brainstorming – individually, and as a group.
- Summarizing information, and note taking.
- Consolidating information from different research sources.
- Thinking through complex problems.
- Presenting information in a format that shows the overall structure of your subject.
- Studying and memorizing information.



Exercise 1:

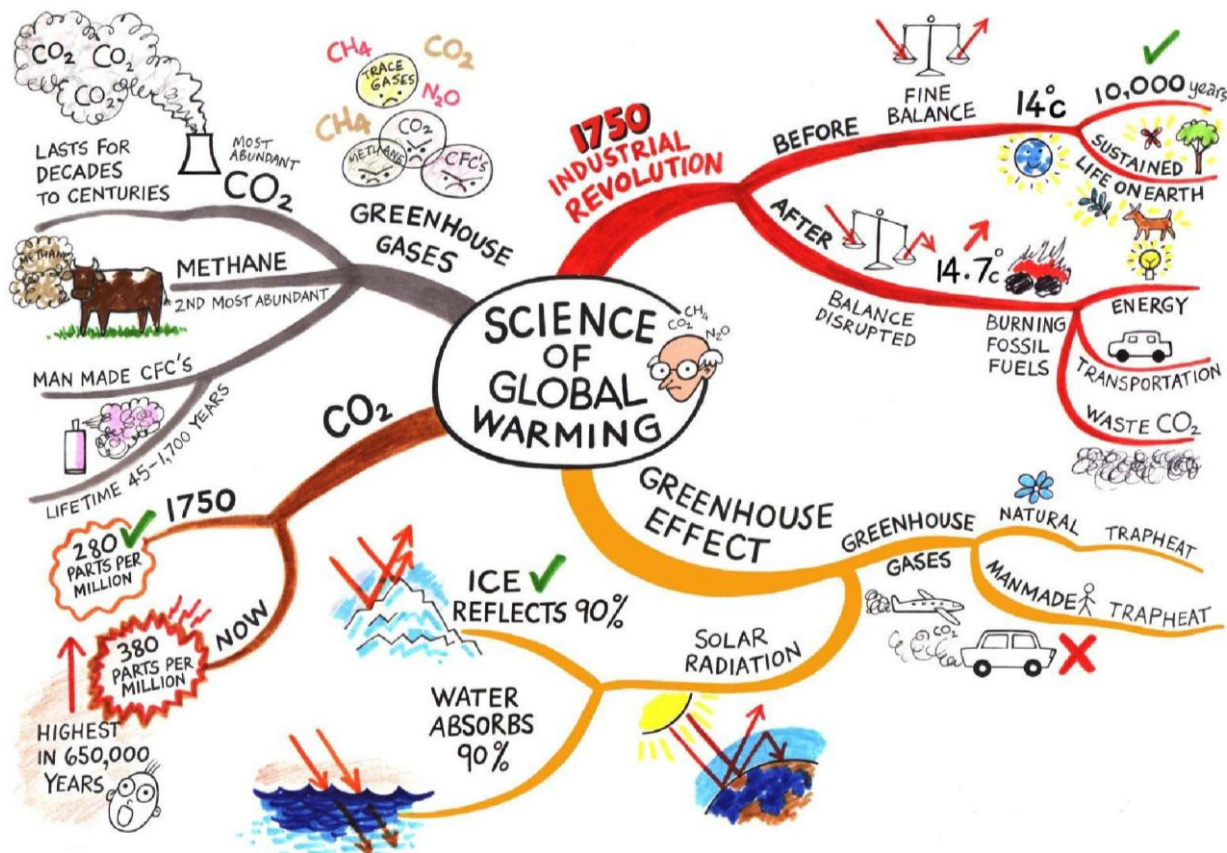
Complete the basic level mind map below about a song of your choice.



Once you understand how to take notes in Mind Map format, you can develop your own conventions for taking them further. The following suggestions can help you draw impactful Mind Maps:

- **Use Single Words or Simple Phrases** – Many words in normal writing are padding, as they ensure that facts are conveyed in the correct context, and in a format that is pleasant to read.
- In Mind Maps, single strong words and short, meaningful phrases can convey the same meaning more potently. Excess words just clutter the Mind Map.
- **Print Words** – Joined up or indistinct writing is more difficult to read.
- **Use Color to Separate Different Ideas** – This will help you to separate ideas where necessary. It also helps you to visualize the Mind Map to recall. Color can help to show the organization of the subject.
- **Use Symbols and Images** – Pictures can help you to remember information more effectively than words, so, where a symbol or picture means something to you, use it.
- **Using Cross-Linkages** – Information in one part of a Mind Map may relate to another part. Here you can draw lines to show the cross-linkages. This helps you to see how one part of the subject affects another.

Here are some sample mind maps for different areas of study:



Advantages

- This format helps you to visually track your lecture regardless of conditions.
- Little thinking is needed and relationships can easily be seen. It is also easy to edit your notes by adding numbers, marks, and color coding.
- Review will call for you to restructure thought processes which will force you to check understanding.
- Review by covering lines for memory drill and relationships.
- Main points can be written on flash or note cards and pieced together into a table or larger structure at a later date.

When to Use

- Use when the lecture content is heavy and well-organized.
- May also be used effectively when you have a guest lecturer and have no idea how the lecture is going to be presented.

Exercise 2:

Now try creating your own mind map on any of the following topics:

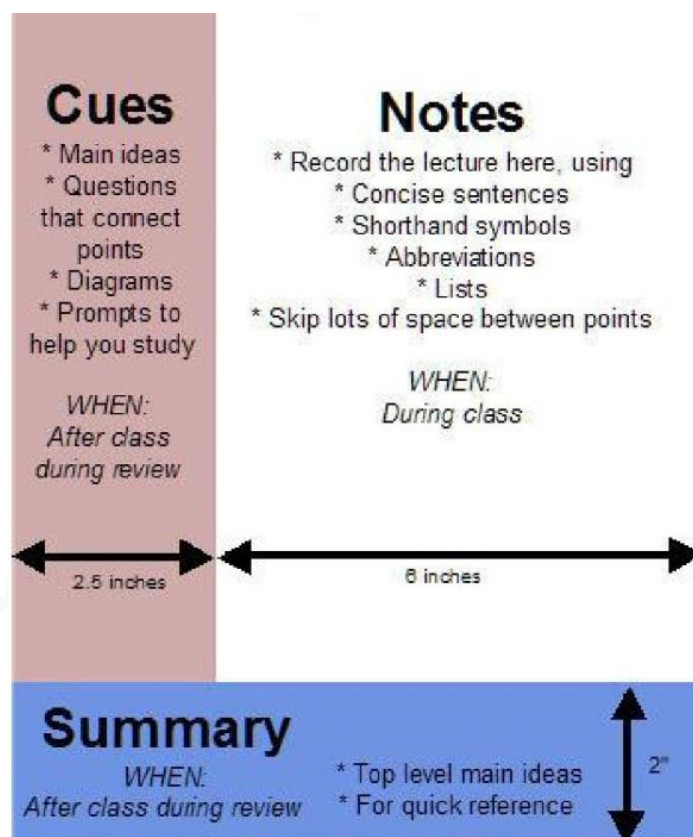
1. Parts of Speech in English
2. Modes of Transport
3. Travelling Abroad
4. Internet Revolution

SESSION – 2

B. Cornell Note-taking System

- The Cornell note-taking system is a note-taking system devised in the 1950s by Walter Pauk, an education professor at Cornell University.
- Pauk advocated its use in his best-selling *How to Study in College*.
- The Cornell System is a great way of organizing your notes so that you can later identify the key points and actions, and recall information easily.
- With this system, you organize the notes as you take them; there is no need to go extra effort of rewriting your notes.
- So the system is both effective and efficient.
- In the Cornell Method, you simply **divide up your notes into 3 sections**.
- The right column is home to the **general area**.
 - ✓ This is where you keep your most important ideas that the teacher has covered during class.
 - ✓ It is important that you try to summarise as much as possible and to be smart when note taking.
- The left area (**margins**) serves to compliment the general area.
 - ✓ Writing **notes in the margins** helps us understand and relate each part of our notes.
 - ✓ This section may develop during the class itself or at the end of it.
- The last section labelled '**summary**' should be left blank during class as it is intended for use when you are reviewing/ studying the class notes.
 - ✓ This lessens the need to keep up with the teacher's delivery and write fast.
 - ✓ You should try to **develop a short summary** of key points in this section for greater reflection of the class notes.

Given below is the page format for the Cornell method:



Cornell Note-taking Sample

The sample page shows a Cornell note-taking format with the following sections and labels:

- Heading:** Located at the top right, containing fields for Name, Course name, Period, and Date.
- Essential Question:** A label pointing to the top left section, which contains the question: "How Can I be Successful in Class?"
- Questions:** A label pointing to the middle left section, which contains three questions:
 - Why should I ask questions?
 - Where should I sit?
 - Why should I take notes?
 - What kind of help can I get?
- Notes:** A label pointing to the middle right section, which contains three sub-sections:
 - Ask Questions:
 - Keeps you engaged in lesson
 - Teacher views you as good student
 - Sit up Front:
 - Keeps you focused
 - Take Notes:
 - Keeps you engaged in lesson
 - Have something to study
 - Get Help When Needed:
 - Ask teacher
 - After school tutoring
 - Tutorials
- Summary:** A label pointing to the bottom section, which contains a summary paragraph: "There are several ways to be successful in class. First, you should ask questions. Second, you should sit in the front of the class. You should also take notes and get help when you need it."

Advantages of the Cornell Note-taking System

- ✓ Keep your notes organised for easy review later
- ✓ Allows you to find important information easily

- ✓ Focuses on important concepts like vocabulary words, people, theories, processes, etc.
- ✓ Provides an efficient method of taking notes during any kind of lecture
- ✓ Allows you to review for tests in an easier way

How It Works

- Professor Pauk thought that the best and most efficient to take notes revolved around **the 5 R's**.
- These five note taking essentials are said to be rather helpful to students who are tasked with producing and accurately applying the information covered while taking notes.

The 5 R's are:

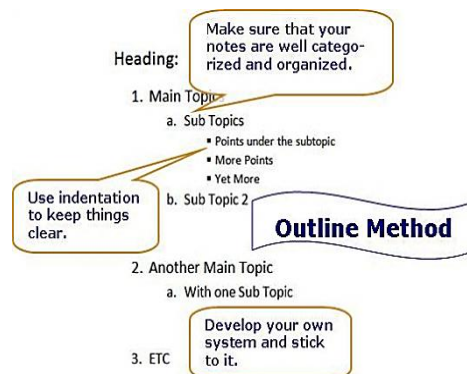
- Recording
 - Reducing
 - Reciting
 - Reflecting
 - Reviewing
- **Recording:** It's super important to write or type all of the main topics and important details that are covered during your lecture or meeting. These detailed notes will be entered into the note taking column for you to reference later when it's time to buckle down for a study session.
 - **Reducing:** You can pull out important keywords or topics by reducing the amount of extra information that is of less importance. This reduced info will be entered into the cue column and will serve as a buzzer reminding you to pay special attention to the corresponding data in the note taking column.
 - **Reciting:** Here you will go a step beyond merely reading and understanding the notes you have taken. You're going to test the amount of information you actually retained and your note taking ability. Recite the information you've written down as if you were teaching someone who has no prior knowledge of the topic or as if you were tasked with telling your professor or boss everything that they taught you.
 - **Reflecting:** The need to sit back and reflect upon the notes you've taken and what you've learned is super important. This is when you sit back and ask yourself "What does it all mean?" "Why is this important?" and "What am I to do with this information?"
 - **Reviewing:** One of the best ways to get the information within your notes to stick around for easy recall is by simply reviewing your notes. Take 10-20 minutes each day to review everything you've entered into your template. You can re-read it or re-write it if you'd like. Any form of reviewing your notes will work wonders and you'll soon see the amount of information you're able to retain increase, which sets you up for success when the time comes to apply it.

Other Note Taking Methods

Try different methods to see what fits your note taking style and the material you're covering and choose the one that works for you.

- **Outlining Method:**
 - ✓ The outlining method to note taking reminds us a lot of what an outline for an essay or even the table of contents in a text book look like.
 - ✓ You will basically write/type your main points which will be followed by corresponding bullet points beneath that pertain to the main heading and add to the idea as a whole.
 - ✓ It's a rather effective way to keep your notes and thoughts organized on paper.

- ✓ The outline method of note taking starts on the left-hand side of the paper.
- ✓ The most important points are placed at the left edge of the paper.
- ✓ Less important points, which are typically ideas that support the main points, are indented to the right.
- ✓ Each set of less important points is indented more to the right.
- ✓ It is easy to see, at a glance, the level of importance of the different ideas because of the distance between them and the major points.
- ✓ As the name suggests, the Outline method is a outline of the material, divided into Main topics, SubTopics, and details.



When to Use

- The outline format can be used if the lecture is presented in outline organization.
- This may be either deductive (regular outline) or inductive (reverse outline where minor points start building to a major point).
- Use this format when there is enough time in the lecture to think about and make organization decisions when they are needed.
- This format can be most effective when your note taking skills are super sharp and you can handle the outlining regardless of the note taking situation.

Charting Method

- The charting method of taking notes is good when you need to place related information into different categories, arrange information in a certain order or when you want to compare the relationships between different ideas.
- Each column on your chart will need to be labeled with topics covered during your note taking, key words or important phrases.
- This method allows you to write less, but it can be tricky to learn and slightly more time consuming as a result.
- This method of note taking is great for subject matter that can be broken down into categories, such as similarities/differences, date/event/impact, pros/cons, etc.
- Charting is effectively a table of rows and columns. The top row normally classifies the concept with descriptions or keywords listed in the row below.

The Charting Method

Period	Important People	Events
1941-1945	FDR	WW II

When to Use

- To focus on both facts and relationships.
- Content is heavy and presented fast.
- You want to reduce the amount of time you spend editing and reviewing at test time.
- You want to get an overview of the whole course on one big paper sequence.

Sentence Method

- With this method you simply write every new concept, or topic on a separate line. You can also number the information if you wish. It is recommended that you use some form of visual aid to group related points together.

The Sentence Method

Example Lecture: A revolution is any occurrence that affects other aspects of life, and so forth. Therefore revolutions cause change. (see pages 29-30 in your Textbook about this)

Sample of Notes: Revolution = occurrence that affects Aspects of life... econ, soc, etc... text pp. 29-30
*Develop your own set of abbreviations and symbols.

When to Use

- Use when the lecture is somewhat organized, but heavy with content which comes fast.
- You can hear the different points, but you don't know how they fit together.
- The instructor presents in point fashion, but not in grouping such as "three related points."

Tips for Effective Note Taking

1. Go to class prepared.

"Always have a plan and believe in it. Nothing good happens by accident." — Chuck Knox, NFL football coach

- Use a three-ring binder instead of a spiral or bound book. Pages can be easily removed for reviewing. Handouts can be inserted into your notes for cross-referencing. You can insert your own out-of-class notes in the correct order (Ellis).
- Bring highlighters to class. Instructors will frequently make comments like, "This is an important concept." Or, "Make sure you understand this." These are direct clues that this will more than likely be on an exam. Highlighting these notes will help remind you later that this is definitely something you need to know.
- Read assigned material and previous class notes before class. Make notations about material or concepts you don't understand. Look up vocabulary words that are unfamiliar to you. You will have a better understanding about what the instructor is lecturing about and that will allow you to better decipher the more important points of the lecture.

2. Improve your listening skills.

"Learn how to listen and you will prosper even from those who talk badly." — Plutarch (A.D. 46 – 120), Greek biographer and philosopher

- Start by entering the classroom with a positive attitude. Going to class thinking, "This is the last place I want to be today" only sets the stage for inattentive listening. Approaching lectures with a positive attitude allows one to be open-minded and enables you to get the most out of the information presented.
- Make a conscious effort to pay attention. Concentrate on concentrating.
- Adapt to whatever direction a lecture takes. When a lecture takes an unexpected detour, say a student asks a question you aren't particularly interested in, students have a tendency to "zone out." Before you know it, the lecture got back on track five minutes ago, and you missed crucial information that should have been noted.

3. Develop a note-taking method that works for you.

"Learn, compare, collect the facts." – Ivan Petrovic Pavlov (1849 – 1936), Russian physiologist.

Fine-tune the structure and organization of your notes to increase your note taking speed and comprehension later.

- Start each new lecture on a new page, and date and number each page. The sequence of material is important.
- Write on one side of the paper only. You can set them out side-by-side for easier reviewing when studying for an exam.
- Leave blank spaces. This allows you to add comments or note questions later.
- Make your notes as brief as possible. "Never use a sentence when you can use a phrase, or a phrase when you can use a word" (Berkeley).

- Develop a system of abbreviations and symbols you can use wherever possible.
- Note all unfamiliar vocabulary or concepts you don't understand. This reminds you to look them up later.

4. Pay close attention to content.

"There is a great difference between knowing a thing and understanding it." – Charles Kettering (1876 – 1958), American electrical engineer and inventor

Knowing what and how much to write down is sometimes difficult. Rely on some of the following tips for what to include in your notes.

- Details, facts, or explanations that expand or explain the main points that are mentioned. Don't forget examples.
- Definitions, word for word.
- Enumerations or lists of things that are discussed.
- Material written on the chalkboard or on a transparency, including drawings or charts.
- Information that is repeated or spelled out. (University of Texas at Austin)

5. Review and edit your notes.

"Ideas won't keep; something must be done about them." – Alfred North Whitehead (1861 – 1947), English mathematician and philosopher

Academic skills centers and other authorities on effective study skills consider reviewing and editing class notes to be the most important part of note taking and essential to increasing learning capacity.

- It is extremely important to review your notes within 24 hours.
- Edit for words and phrases that are illegible or don't make sense. Write out abbreviated words that might be unclear later.
- Edit with a different colored pen to distinguish between what you wrote in class and what you filled in later.
- Fill in key words and questions in the left-hand column.
- Note anything you don't understand by underlining or highlighting to remind you to ask the instructor.
- Compare your notes with the textbook reading and fill in important details in the blank spaces you left.
- Consider rewriting or typing up your notes.

SESSION – 3

PREPARING QUESTIONS

Question

What is a question?

- A sentence worded or expressed so as to elicit information.
- A matter requiring resolution or discussion.
- Questions are places you allocate in your mind for answers to sit. If you haven't asked the question, the answer has nowhere to go.

QUESTIONING – FIRST STEP TOWARDS FACT FINDING

POWERFUL QUESTIONS AND KEY OUTCOMES		
Who	Question	Outcome
Watson and Crick	“What might DNA look like in 3D form?”	Discovery of the double helix
James Burke, CEO, Johnson & Johnson	“What is the most ethical action we might take?”	Restoration of consumer confidence
Ray Kroc	“Where can I get a good hamburger on the road?”	Creation of McDonald’s

Questioning

- Gathering information is a basic human activity – we use information to learn, to help us solve problems, to aid our decision making processes and to understand each other more clearly.
- Questioning is the key to gaining more information and without it interpersonal communications can fail.
- Questioning is fundamental to successful communication - we all ask and are asked questions when engaged in conversation.
- *“Asking good questions is productive, positive, creative, and can get us what we want.”*

Benefits of Questions

- Control : Questions you ask keep the conversation on track & keep you in charge of the interaction
- Information : if you are careful with your questions you can discover all kinds of useful information
- Listening: questions prompt the other person to talk more so that you can listen more & clearly
- Bonding: appropriately asked questions enthuse the respondent & thus forge bonding easily
- Persuading: Questions persuade people to respond and specific and directed questions can make the person respond in your way

Preparing Questions

- The questions we ask will set us up for our destination.
- Spend time to frame questions that are apt to meet the objective set.



Why Ask Questions?

Some of the main reasons questions are asked:

Although the following list is not exhaustive it outlines the main reasons questions are asked in common situations.

- **To obtain information:**

The primary function of a question is to gain information – ‘What time is it?’

- **To help maintain control of a conversation**

While you are asking questions you are in control of the conversation, assertive people are more likely to take control of conversations attempting to gain the information they need through questioning.

- **Express an interest in the other person**

Questioning allows us to find out more about the respondent, this can be useful when attempting to build rapport and show empathy or to simply get to know the other person better.

- **To clarify a point**

Questions are commonly used in communication to clarify something that the speaker has said. Questions used as clarification are essential in reducing misunderstanding and therefore more effective communication.

- **To explore the personality and or difficulties the other person may have**

Questions are used to explore the feelings, beliefs, opinions, ideas and attitudes of the person being questioned. They can also be used to better understand problems that another person maybe experiencing – like in the example of a doctor trying to diagnose a patient.

- **To test knowledge**

Questions are used in all sorts of quiz, test and exam situations to ascertain the knowledge of the respondent. *‘What is the capital of France?’* for example.

- **To encourage further thought**

Questions may be used to encourage people think about something more deeply. Questions can be worded in such a way as to get the person to think about a topic in a new way. *‘Why do you think Paris is the capital of France?’*

- **In group situations**

Questioning in group situations can be very useful for a number of reasons, to include all members of the group, to encourage more discussion of a point, to keep attention by asking questions without advance warning. These examples can be easily related to a classroom of school children.

So what is it that makes a question powerful?

The questions we ask will set us up for our destination. Spend time to frame questions that are apt to meet the objective set.

A Powerful Question

- Generates curiosity in the listener
- Stimulates reflective conversation
- Is thought-provoking
- Surfaces underlying assumptions
- Invites creativity and new possibilities
- Generates energy and forward movement
- Channels attention and focuses inquiry
- Stays with participants
- Touches a deep meaning
- Evokes more questions

Questioning

- Stimulates creativity
- Motivates fresh thinking
- Surfaces underlying assumptions
- Focuses intention, attention, and energy
- Opens the door to change
- Leads us into the future

The right questions help you connect with people in a more meaningful way as they aid one for

- Better understanding of problems
- People to perceive you as an understanding and competent person
- You to work effectively as a team

- You to take responsibility for your actions and solve problems easily
- You to be able to deduct the root cause of an issue
- Take revealing depositions
- Great ability to gather information
- You to convince others about your ideas
- You to be great at persuasion
- Aid to negotiating skills
- You to reduce errors
- You to give meaningful feedback and feed forward
- You to defuse volatile situations

SESSION – 4

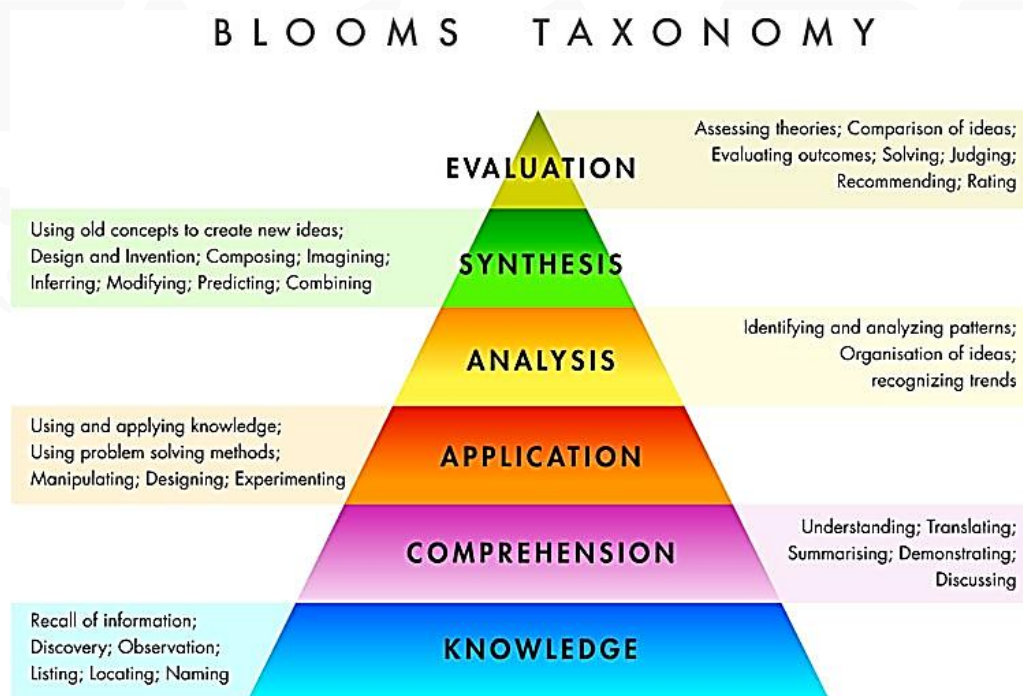
🌀 FRAMING QUESTIONS

Types of Questions

Educators have traditionally classified questions according to Bloom's Taxonomy, a hierarchy of increasingly complex intellectual skills.

Bloom's Taxonomy includes six categories:

- Knowledge – recall data or information
- Comprehension – understand meaning
- Application – use a concept in a new situation
- Analysis – separate concepts into parts; distinguish between facts and inferences
- Synthesis – combine parts to form new meaning
- Evaluation – make judgments about the value of ideas or products



Blooms Level I: Knowledge

Exhibits memory of previously learned material by recalling fundamental facts, terms, basic concepts and answers about the selection.

- **Keywords:** who, what, why, when, omit, where, which, choose, find, how, define, label, show, spell, list, match, name, relate, tell, recall
- **Questions:** • What is...? • Can you select? • Where is...? • When did ___ happen? • Who were the main...? • Which one...? • Why did...? • How would you describe...?

Blooms Level II: Comprehension

Demonstrate understanding of facts and ideas by organizing, comparing, translating, interpreting, giving descriptors and stating main ideas.

- **Keywords:** compare, contrast, demonstrate, interpret, explain, extend, illustrate, infer, outline, relate, rephrase, translate, summarize, show, classify
- **Questions:** • How would you classify the type of...? • How would you compare...? contrast...? • Will you state or interpret in your own words...? • How would you rephrase the meaning? • What facts or ideas show...? • What is the main idea of?

Blooms Level III: Application

Solve problems in new situations by applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a different, or new way.

- **Keywords:** apply, build, choose, construct, develop, interview, make use of, organize, experiment with, plan, select, solve, utilize, model, identify
- **Questions:** • How would you use...? • How would you solve ___ using what you've learned...? • What examples can you find to...? • How would you show your understanding of...? • How would you organize _____ to show...? • How would you apply what you learned to develop...?

Blooms Level IV: Analysis

Examine and break information into parts by identifying motives or causes. Make inferences and find evidence to support generalizations.

- **Keywords:** analyze, categorize, classify, compare, contrast, discover, dissect, divide, examine, inspect, simplify, survey, test for, distinguish, list, distinction, theme, relationships, function, motive, inference, assumption, conclusion, take part in
- **Questions:** • What are the parts or features of...? • How is _____ related to...? • Why do you think...? • What is the theme...? • What motive is there...? • Can you list the parts...? • What inference can you make...? • What conclusions can you draw...? • How would you classify...?

Blooms Level V: Synthesis

Compile information together in a different way by combining elements in a new pattern or proposing alternative solutions.

- **Keywords:** build, choose, combine, compile, compose, construct, create, design, develop, estimate, formulate, imagine, invent, make up, originate, plan, predict, propose, solve, solution, suppose, discuss, modify, change, original, improve, adapt, minimize, maximize, theorize, elaborate, test, happen, delete
- **Questions:** • What changes would you make to solve...? • How would you improve...? • What would happen if...? • Can you elaborate on the reason...? • Can you propose an alternative...? • Can you invent...? • How would you adapt _____ to create a different...? • How could you change (modify) the plot (plan)...? • What facts can you compile...?

Blooms Level VI: Evaluation

Present and defend opinions by making judgments about information, validity of ideas or quality of work based on a set of criteria.

- **Keywords:** award, choose, conclude, criticize, decide, defend, determine, dispute, evaluate, judge, justify, measure, compare, mark, rate, recommend, rule on, select, agree, appraise, prioritize, opinion, interpret, explain, support importance, criteria, prove, disprove, assess, influence, perceive, value, estimate, deduct
- **Questions:** • Do you agree with the actions/outcome...? • What is your opinion of...? • How would you prove/disprove...? • Can you assess the value or importance of...? • Would it be better if...? • Why did they (the character) choose...? • What would you recommend...? • How would you rate the...?

Questioning Techniques

- Asking the right question is at the heart of effective communications and information exchange.
- Some common questioning techniques are:
 - ✓ **Open and Closed Questions**
 - ✓ **Funnel Questions**
 - ✓ **Probing Questions**
 - ✓ **Leading Questions**
 - ✓ **Rhetorical Questions**

Closed Questions

- *A closed question can be answered with either a single word or a short phrase.*
Eg: 'Are you happy?' and 'Is that a knife I see before me?'
- Closed questions have the following characteristics:
 - ✓ They give you *facts*.
 - ✓ They are *easy* to answer.
 - ✓ They are *quick* to answer.
 - ✓ They keep control of the conversation with the *questioner*.

Open questions

- *An open question is likely to receive a long answer.*
- Although any question can receive a long answer, open questions deliberately seek longer answers, and are the opposite of closed questions.
Eg: 'What happened at the meeting?' and 'Why did he react that way?'
- Open questions have the following characteristics:
 - ✓ They ask the respondent to *think* and reflect.
 - ✓ They will give you *opinions* and *feelings*.
 - ✓ They hand control of the conversation to the *respondent*.

Funnel Questions

- This technique involves starting with general questions, and then homing in on a point in each answer, and asking more and more detail at each level. It's often used by detectives taking a statement from a witness:
"How many people were involved in the fight?"
"About ten."
"Were they kids or adults?"
"Mostly kids."
"What sort of ages were they?"
"About fourteen or fifteen."

Probing Questions

- Asking probing questions is another strategy for finding out more detail.
- Sometimes it's as simple as asking your respondent for an example, to help you understand a statement they have made.
- At other times, you need additional information for clarification.
Eg: When do you need this report by, and do you want to see a draft before I give you my final version?"
- An effective way of probing is to use the '5 Whys' method, which can help you quickly get to the root of a problem.

Leading Questions

- Leading questions try to lead the respondent to your way of thinking.
- Leading questions are good for getting the answer you want but leaving the other person feeling that they have had a choice.
Eg: How late do you think that the project will deliver?

Rhetorical Questions

- Rhetorical questions aren't really questions at all, in that they don't expect an answer. They're really just statements phrased in question form.
Eg: Isn't John's design work so creative?
- Rhetorical questions are good for engaging the listener.

Activity: My Little Arm (Based on the video)

We are going to watch a video titled

"MY LITTLE ARM"

Before watching the video, write **2 predictions** about this video based on the title.

After watching the video...

- Were your predictions correct?
- WHY or WHY NOT?

Now...

- On a piece of paper, write **3 questions** about this video for your neighboring classmate to answer.
- Exchange your papers with the classmate and write the answers to the questions.

Finally...

How many different questions did the class come up with?

Learning Outcome

The activity teaches the significance of asking the right questions. The questions should be framed appropriately to elicit the desired information. The right question can definitely get you the right response. With a properly-framed question, finding an elegant answer becomes almost straightforward.

SESSION – 5

☞ GOOD VS BAD QUESTIONS

Gathering information is a basic human activity – we use information to learn, to help us solve problems, to aid our decision making processes and to understand others more clearly.

Questioning is the key to gaining more information and without it interpersonal communications can fail. It is fundamental to successful communication - we all ask questions when engaged in conversation. Asking good questions is probably one of the most important and powerful workplace interpersonal skills. It's also one of the most powerful tools available to a manager. Yet it is not something we often stop and think about.

Many problem solving techniques or management tools and models really just provide structures to help us to ask good questions. We rarely give the questions we ask a second thought. Yet given that these questions can be potentially very powerful, it's worth gaining a better understanding of how questions can be used effectively.

We sometimes find questions and answers fascinating and entertaining – politicians, reporters, celebrities and entrepreneurs are often successful based on their questioning skills – asking the right questions at the right time and also answering (or not) appropriately. The questions individual asks can be categorized into two types:

- Good questions
- Bad questions

There's a difference between Good question and Bad question.

Good questions

Well-conceived questions usually lead to the “aha moments.” The “aha moments” are what make a group learning experience invaluable. So what are qualities of a good question?

- **Purposeful** – Every question can have a different function. A question can invite the group to participate (what do we need to study and why?), direct discovery (what does it say?), help the group process the content (what does it mean?), or challenge the group to practice what they are learning (what do we do?). It is not just about having a set of questions! It's about asking the right question at the right time for the right reasons.
- **Guides without prescribing** – Good questions help keep the discussion on track. You are guiding the group toward understanding a specific truth or concept and responding based upon that specific understanding.
- **Encourages a higher level of thinking** – Not all questions are created equal. A question that facilitates critical thinking and processing is of more value than a “got it” question (questions that are usually a repetition of content presented by the lecturer).
- **Empowers** – A great question will empower the group to think and become an active part of the learning/discovery process.

Bad Questions

Developing your tactical awareness of which questions to use – and when, is of course an incomplete picture. You also need to be equally aware of which questions to avoid. Questions that are best avoided fall into three categories.

- **Leading questions** – where you suggest the answer in the question – “Do you think that...” “Don't you think that...”
- **Multiple questions** – asking several questions at once.

- **“Why” questions** – use the word “why” sparingly because it can often be associated with sounding critical or can be a very challenging word. You can still get similar answers by choosing a different way of asking a question. For example: “tell me about...”, “what do you think are the reason for...”

More about Good Question and Bad question

Good Question	Bad Question
Help you choose evidence	Just rewards a topic
Gives you a position on which to take a judgment and make an argument	Can be answered from simple factual digging
Forces you to analyze and think critically	Too big
Suggest an outline	Too vague
Sends you a debate you can present and join	Morally one sided
Answers others curiosity – including people who know the subject - not just yours	Suggests you write a “report”.
Suggests what primary evidence to interpret	Counterfactual- Can be disapproved

Example of topics, Bad Questions and Better Questions:

Topic: Causes of the American Civil War
Bad Question: What caused the American Civil War (Too big)
Pretty Good Question: What were the most important causes of the Civil War? (Allows judgment, argument)

Effective Questions

Effective questions are questions that are powerful and thought provoking. Effective questions are open-ended and not leading questions. They are not “why” questions, but rather “what” or “how” questions. “Why” questions are good for soliciting information, but can make people defensive so be thoughtful in your use of them. When asking effective questions, it is important to wait for the answer and not provide the answer.

When working with people to solve a problem, it is not enough to tell them what the problem is. They need to find out or understand it for themselves. You help them do this by asking them thought provoking questions. Rather than make assumptions find out what the person you are talking to knows about the problem.

For example: *“What do you think the problem is?”*

Behind effective questioning is also the ability to listen to the answer and suspend judgment. This means being intent on understanding what the person who is talking is really saying. What is behind their words? Let go of your opinions so that they don't block you from learning more information. Pay attention to your gut for additional information.

Listening Skills as Part of Effective Questioning Include:

Articulating

Attention and awareness result in articulation and succinctly describing what we have learned from our client. Sharing our observation clearly but without judgment does this. We can repeat back to our clients just what they said.

We can expand on this by articulating back to them what we believe they mean. This helps a person feel heard. For example: "What I hear you saying is . . ."

Clarifying

Clarifying is a combination of asking and clearly articulating what we have heard. By asking questions our client knows we are listening and filling in the gaps. When our client is being vague, it is important for us to clarify the circumstances. We can assist them to see what they can't see themselves by making a suggestion. For example: "Here's what I hear you saying. Is that right? "

Being Curious

Do not assume you know the answer or what your client is going to tell you. Wait and be curious about what brings them to see you. What motivates them? What is really behind the meeting? Use your curiosity so that your next question can go deeper.

Silence Giving the person we are listening to time to answer questions is an important aspect of listening. Waiting for the client to talk rather than talking for them is imperative for an effective listener.