



# TAKING NOTES

## Evaluate Your Present Note-Taking System

Ask yourself:

1. Do I use complete sentences? They are generally a waste of time.
2. Do I use any form at all? Are my notes clear or confusing?
3. Do I capture main points and all subpoints?
4. Do I streamline using abbreviations and shortcuts?

Five Important Reasons to Take Notes

1. Notes trigger memories of lecture/reading
2. Your notes are often a source of valuable clues for what information the instructor thinks most important (i.e., what will show up on the next test).
3. Notes inscribe information kinesthetically
4. Taking notes helps you to concentrate in class
5. Notes create a resource for test preparation
6. Your notes often contain information that cannot be found elsewhere (i.e., in your textbook).

## Guidelines for Note-Taking

1. Concentrate on the lecture or on the reading material.
2. Take notes consistently.
3. Take notes selectively. Do NOT try to write down every word. Remember that the average lecturer speaks approximately 125-140 words per minute, and the average note-taker writes at a rate of about 25 words per minute.
4. Translate ideas into your own words.
5. Organize notes into some sort of logical form.
6. Be brief. Write down only the major points and important information.
7. Write legibly. Notes are useless if you cannot read them later!
8. Don't be concerned with spelling and grammar.

## Tips for Finding Major Points in Lectures:

The speaker is usually making an important point if he or she:

1. Pauses before or after an idea.
2. Uses repetition to emphasize a point.
3. Uses introductory phrases to precede an important idea.
4. Writes an idea on the board.

## Ways to Reduce and Streamline Notes

1. Eliminate small connecting words such as: is, are, was, were, a, an, the, would, this, of. Eliminate pronouns such as: they, these, his, that, them. However, be careful NOT to eliminate these three words: and, in, on.
2. Use symbols to abbreviate, such as:

+ , & for and, plus  
= for equals  
- for minus  
# for number  
x for times  
> for greater than, more, larger  
< for less than, smaller, fewer than  
w/ for with  
w/o for without  
w/in for within  
\_ for leads to, produces, results in  
\_ for comes from  
\_ for increase  
\_ for decrease  
/ for per

For example:

"The diameter of the Earth is four times greater than the diameter of the Moon."

Becomes:

"Earth = 4x > diameter of Moon."

3. Substitute numerals with symbols, for instance:

Substitute "one" with 1  
Substitute "third" with 3rd

4. Abbreviate:

Drop the last several letters of a word. For example, substitute "appropriate" with "approp."

Drop some of the internal vowels of a word. For example, substitute "large" with "lrg."

# NOTE TAKING SYSTEMS

## 5 Methods

- ☐ The Cornell Method
- ☐ The Outline Method
- ☐ The Mapping Method
- ☐ The Charting Method
- ☐ The Sentence Method

## The Cornell Method

The Cornell method provides a systematic format for condensing and organizing notes without laborious recopying. After writing the notes in the main space, use the left-hand space to label each idea and detail with a key word or "cue."

Method - Rule your paper with a 2 \_ inch margin on the left leaving a six-inch area on the right in which to make notes. During class, take down information in the six-inch area. When the instructor moves to a new point, skip a few lines. After class, complete phrases and sentences as much as possible. For every significant bit of information, write a cue in the left margin. To review, cover your notes with a card, leaving the cues exposed. Say the cue out loud, then say as much as you can of the material underneath the card. When you have said as much as you can, move the card and see if what you said matches what is written. If you can say it, you know it.

Advantages - Organized and systematic for recording and reviewing notes. Easy format for pulling out major concept and ideas. Simple and efficient. Saves time and effort. "Do-it-right-in-the-first-place system."

Disadvantages - None

When to Use - In any lecture situation.

# The Cornell Note Taking System

<b>What are the advantages?</b>	<b>Three Advantages:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is a method for mastering information, not just recording facts</li> <li>2. It is efficient</li> <li>3. Each step prepares the way for the next part of the learning process</li> </ol>
<b>What materials are needed?</b>	<b>Materials:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Your notebook with lined paper</li> <li>2. 2½ Inch column drawn at the left hand edge of each page to be used for recall cues</li> </ol>
<b>How should notes be recorded?</b>	<b>During class, record notes:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Record notes in paragraphs, skipping lines to separate information logically</li> <li>2. Don't force an outlining system, but do use any obvious numbering</li> <li>3. Strive to get main ideas down. Facts, details and examples are important, but they are meaningful only with concepts</li> <li>4. Use abbreviations for extra writing and listening time</li> <li>5. Use <u>graphic organizers</u> or pictures when they are helpful</li> </ol>
<b>How should notes be refined?</b>	<b>After class, refine notes:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Write questions (including possible test ?'s) in the left about the information on the right</li> <li>2. Check or correct incomplete items               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Loose dates, terms, names</li> <li>b. Notes that are too brief for recall months later</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Read the notes and underline key words and phrases</li> <li>4. Read underlined words and write in recall cues in the left hand column (key words and very brief phrases that will trigger ideas/facts on the right). These are in addition to the questions</li> </ol>
<b>What are the ways to recite notes?</b>	<b>Recite notes three ways:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cover up the right side page. Read the questions. Recite information as fully as possible. Uncover the sheet and verify information frequently (This is the most powerful learning tool in this notes system)</li> <li>2. Reflect on the organization of the lectures. Think and record any connections you see regarding what is important</li> <li>3. Review by reciting, reflecting and reading your impressions of your notes</li> </ol>
<b>What are the five steps of this system?</b>	<b>This system in brief:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Record</u> lectures in the main column</li> <li>2. <u>Refine</u> lectures with questions, corrections, underlining, recall cues and pictures</li> <li>3. <u>Recite</u> by covering the main column and expanding on recall cues – then verify</li> <li>4. <u>Reflect</u> on organization by studying all cues</li> <li>5. <u>Review</u> by repeating Recite and Reflect steps</li> </ol>

## Cornell Notes (English Class)

<b>Reading a Novel</b>		JQ Student English 12 January 3, 200X
<b>Chapter 1 <i>Cry, the Beloved Country</i></b>		
Where does the story take place?  How is the land contrasted in the first chapter?	South Africa  — Rich, matted grass and hills — Wet — Streams — Well-tended — Not too many cattle feeding — Not too many fires — Stand barefoot—safe — “Ground is holy.” — Keep it; guard it—guards & protects men. vs. — Rich green hills break down in the valleys — Red and bare — Dry — Too many cattle feeding — Too many fires have burned — Coarse and sharp. Wear shoes—not safe for bare feet — Not kept or guarded—no longer keeps men.	
Prediction: Why did the book start with this contrast?  Significant passage (page 34): “They are valleys of old men and old women, of mothers and children. The men are away, the young men and the girls are away. The soil cannot keep them any more.”	This book is going to contrast the lives of different people and different places. It will be about destruction.  This passage is important because it suggests something about the relationship between the land and the people. It shows how people have abandoned the land or have been driven from the land—how it can’t sustain them anymore.	
<b>Summary</b> This first chapter is short and has a lot of description. It makes me want to draw a picture of it and create a map to show the geography. No specific characters are introduced in the first chapter which makes me wonder if the land itself might be considered a character. It seems significant that there would be this much description of the land if it didn’t play a major role in the story. There are human-like qualities to the land: it can guard and protect men (in the first description) or NOT (in the second description).		





Identify significant literary devices  
that define a writer's style and  
use to interpret work

Lang. Arts

Oct. 12, 2009

## Essential Question:

How does Langston Hughes' poem, "Mother to Son", advise the reader to overcome difficulty and keep from giving up in life?

## Questions:

## Notes:

① What is the significance of the speaker in the poem?

① Speaker -

- \* Voice that communicates a poem's ideas, actions, descriptions, & feelings
- similar to narrator
- can be unknown or specific (like character)

② How does a poet's choice of speaker affect the mood/meaning of a poem?

② Impt.

- Poet's choice of speaker contributes to the poem's mood/meaning
- who speaks is as impt. as what is said
- different points of view regarding same event (ie. parent, child, elderly person)
- \* the person telling the story gives point of view and affects the message told ← P.O.V \*

③ How does Hughes use vocabulary to contribute to and convey his message?

③ Vocab -

- helps to understand meaning
- \* Writer's/poet's style
- "crystal stair" = luxuries (metaphor) compares 2 things
- ie. "Life for me ain't been no crystal stair"
- "reachin'" - replace letter at end of word (dialect)
- "'cause" = because → slang var. lang used by group speech patt.

## Summary:

The speaker/voice in the poem is important because it communicates the ideas/feelings of the poem. Who the poet chooses as the speaker identifies the point of view and affects the message/meaning. Hughes uses vocabulary and style to convey the message that life is hard when Mother says "Life for me aint been no crystal staircase."

## Questions:

## Notes:

④ How are literary elements used in "Mother to Son" to convey the author's message?

④ Literary Elements:

① Speaker:

- voice of poem
- creates tone (attitude)
- attitude based on P.O.V.

② Character:

- person

① Mother (Hughes' author)

③ mother - hardworking, determ.  
son - wants to give up because life is diff.

⑤ How does the poet's choice of speaker contribute to the mood / meaning of the poem?

⑤ Mood:

- emotional quality
- atmosphere (feeling get from poem)

⑥ Meaning:

message in poem  
lesson

③ Mother - uses her victory & survival of diff. exp. to motivate son

④ Hard life - filled with many difficulties

- \* - "tacks, splinters, torn-up boards"
- "climbin', reachin', turnin'" = Struggle
- "goin' in the dark"
- w/ no light to guide the way
- not giving up is like climbing stairs... if she could do it so can he (Mother's message)

## Summary:

The mother's words in Hughes' poem "Mother to Son" shows life as a climb up a staircase full of tacks, splinters, torn up boards and sometimes without light; but even though it is a hard climb, she says don't sit down on the steps and give up, keep climbing until you achieve.

Topic: _____	Name: _____
Source: _____	Class: _____
_____	Period: _____
_____	Date: _____
Questions	Notes
Summary	