

THE
VERBAL TO VISUAL
NOTEBOOK



A SET OF ACTIVITIES TO BUILD
YOUR VISUAL NOTE TAKING SKILLS

DOUG NEILL

— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

COPYRIGHT © 2014 DOUG NEILL

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

NO PART OF THIS BOOK MAY BE REPRODUCED IN ANY FORM OR BY ANY ELECTRONIC OR MECHANICAL MEANS WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THE AUTHOR, WHO SPENT MANY AN HOUR WITH ULTRA FINE POINT SHARPIE IN HAND WRITING THE WORDS AND SKETCHING THE IMAGES YOU'LL FIND THROUGHOUT THIS BOOK. SHORT EXCERPTS FOR REVIEW PURPOSES ARE A-OKEY, AS ARE PHYSICAL COPIES PRINTED FOR CLASSROOM USE (WHICH IS, IN FACT, ENCOURAGED).

THROUGHOUT THIS BOOK MANY ALLUSIONS ARE MADE TO THE AUTHOR'S HOME STATE OF OREGON, HIS FORMER CAREER PATHS, HIS IDEALISTIC HOPES FOR THE FUTURE, AND (IN ONE CASE) THE SOON-TO-BE-PUBLISHED WORK OF HIS OLDER BROTHER, WHICH HAPPENS TO INVOLVE DINOSAURS.

MORE ABOUT THIS BOOK AND ITS AUTHOR AT VERBALTOVISUAL.COM

— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS
(AND MINE IN PARTICULAR)

— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

A SPECIAL THANKS TO THOSE WHO TOOK AN
EARLY LOOK AT THIS BOOK AND GAVE
SOME WONDERFUL FEEDBACK:

THORSTEN, NAT, CHASIMA, ACLAN, AND CAROLINE-ISABELLE
MUCH APPRECIATED.

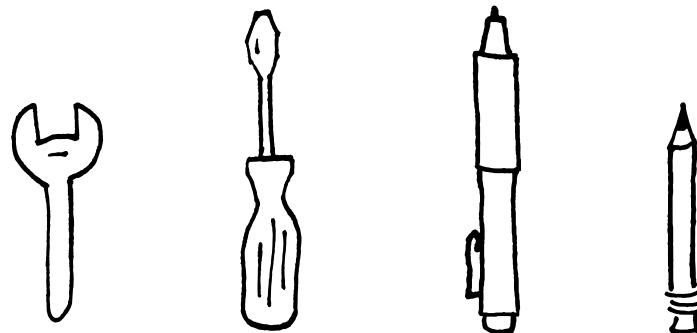
I.

INTRODUCTION

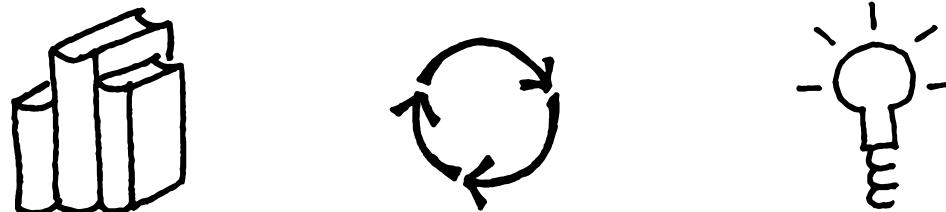
— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

WELCOME

WELCOME TO THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK, A RESOURCE FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO BRING IDEAS TO LIFE. WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS BOOK IS A SET OF ACTIVITIES TO HELP YOU BUILD YOUR SKILLS AS A SKETCHER OF IDEAS.



THE BEAUTY OF LEARNING HOW TO SKETCH OUT IDEAS IS THAT YOU CAN THEN TAKE THAT SKILL AND APPLY IT TO WHATEVER CHALLENGES YOU FACE EACH DAY. I'VE FOUND IT TO BE A GREAT LEARNING, PROBLEM-SOLVING, AND IDEA SHARING TOOL.

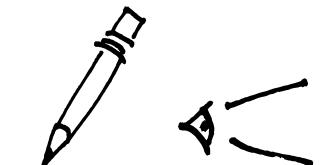


I THINK YOU WILL AS WELL, AND I HOPE THAT THE ACTIVITIES THAT I HAVE DESIGNED HELP TO YOU DEVELOP AND REFINED THAT TOOL.

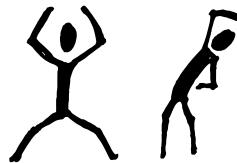
— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

THE CATEGORIES

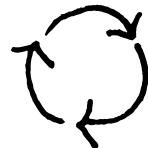
THE ACTIVITIES THAT FOLLOW SHARE THE COMMON THREAD OF FOCUSING ON ONE OR MORE OF THE SKILLS REQUIRED TO EFFECTIVELY TAKE VISUAL NOTES. BUT THEY DIFFER IN THEIR APPROACH, AND I HAVE DEVELOPED A SET OF CATEGORIES SO THAT YOU HAVE A SENSE OF WHAT YOU'RE GETTING INTO WITH EACH ACTIVITY.



TRAIN THE HAND
AND EYE



GREAT AS
WARM-UPS



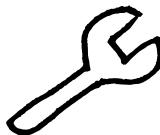
REPETITIVE

THESE ARE GOOD ACTIVITIES TO START WITH IF YOU'RE NEW TO WRITING BY HAND AND NEW TO SKETCHING. DON'T WORRY ABOUT FILLING THE PAGE IN ONE SITTING - MOVE ON IF IT GETS TEDIOUS; COME BACK LATER IF YOU FEEL LIKE IT.

PLAYFUL
PRACTICE



LOW-STRESS,
LIGHT HEARTED



BUILD
SKILLS



GOOD FOR
NEWBIES

ANOTHER ACTIVITY GOOD FOR NEWBIES TO THE WORLD OF SKETCHING IDEAS - FUN OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD SKILLS IN A LOW-PRESSURE WAY.

— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

PURPOSEFUL PRACTICE



MORE
FOCUSED



BUILD A SKILL
OR TWO

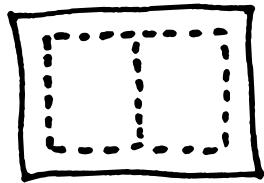


YOU PICK
THE SOURCE

THESE ACTIVITIES ARE A BIT MORE SERIOUS. SKILL-BUILDING IS STILL THE GOAL, BUT THE TOPICS ADDRESSED ARE MORE PRACTICAL AND PURPOSE-DRIVEN.

SKETCH → THEN → DO

THESE ACTIVITIES ENCOURAGE YOU TO ACT ON YOUR IDEAS, OFTEN IN FUN WAYS, BUT SOMETIMES WITH A MORE SERIOUS BENT.



TEMPLATE



YOU PICK
THE SOURCE



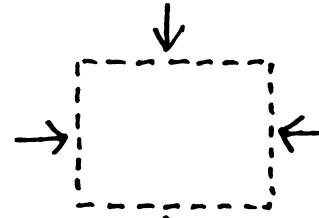
GET YOUR
BEARINGS



PLAN OF
ACTION



ACT



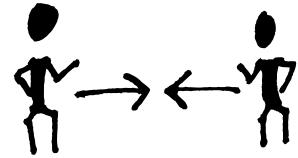
USEFUL
CONSTRAINTS



REUSABLE

THE TEMPLATES PROVIDE SOME STRUCTURE TO A VISUAL NOTE TAKING SESSION. YOU GET TO PICK THE SOURCE (BOOK, LECTURE, PODCAST, VIDEO, ETC.) AND TEST OUT THE SET OF CONSTRAINTS. IF YOU FIND A STRUCTURE THAT YOU LIKE, BY ALL MEANS, KEEP USING IT!

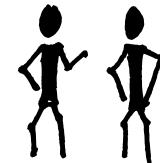
— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —



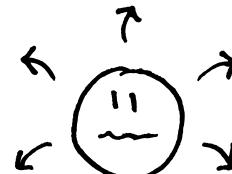
CONNECT



COMMUNICATE



COLLABORATE



GET OUT OF
YOUR OWN HEAD

THOUGH WE OFTEN SKETCH OUT IDEAS FOR OUR OWN PURPOSES, THESE ACTIVITIES GIVE YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO USE YOUR SKETCHES AS A WAY TO CONNECT WITH OTHERS.



PERSONAL



ATTENTION
TURNED INWARD

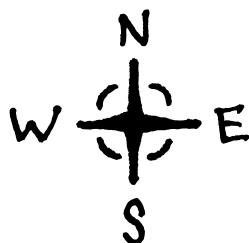


PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
(NO RUNNING REQUIRED)



SELF-KNOWLEDGE

MOVING IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION, THESE ACTIVITIES WILL TURN YOUR ATTENTION INWARD, GIVING YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET TO KNOW YOURSELF A BIT BETTER WHILE ALSO DEVELOPING THE SKILL OF SKETCHING OUT IDEAS.



ADVENTURE



GET OUT INTO
THE WORLD



POTENTIALLY
CHALLENGING



REWARDING

THESE ACTIVITIES ENCOURAGE YOU TO GET OUT INTO THE WORLD, INTERACT WITH IT IN A VARIETY OF WAYS, AND SKETCH OUT YOUR EXPERIENCE. TAKE THESE ON AT YOUR OWN RISK ".

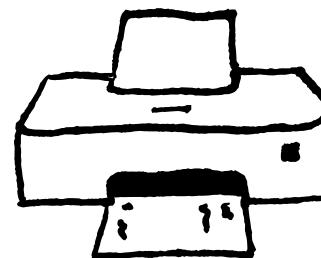
— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

HOW TO

THE ACTIVITIES IN THIS BOOK FOLLOW A GENERAL PROGRESSION IN DIFFICULTY AND COMPLEXITY. FEEL FREE TO JUMP AROUND, BUT IF YOU'RE NEWER TO THIS IT WOULDN'T BE A BAD IDEA TO WORK THROUGH THE BOOK MORE OR LESS IN ORDER.



THERE ARE LOTS OF ACTIVITIES HERE. DON'T FEEL THE NEED TO RUSH AND GET THROUGH THEM ALL IN A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. WORK STEADILY TO IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS, BUT DON'T FORGET TO TAKE BREAKS TOO :).



I HAVE DESIGNED THIS DIGITAL BOOK TO BE PRINTER FRIENDLY, SO FEEL FREE TO PRINT OUT THOSE ACTIVITIES THAT YOU'D LIKE TO HAVE A PHYSICAL COPY OF. (AND MAYBE EVEN TO MAKE COPIES FOR CLASSROOM USE IF YOU'RE AN EDUCATOR.)

ONE LAST THING...

— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

EXPERIMENT.

PLAY.

THIS IS ONE OF THOSE
YOU-GET-OUT-WHAT-YOU-PUT-IN
BOOKS.

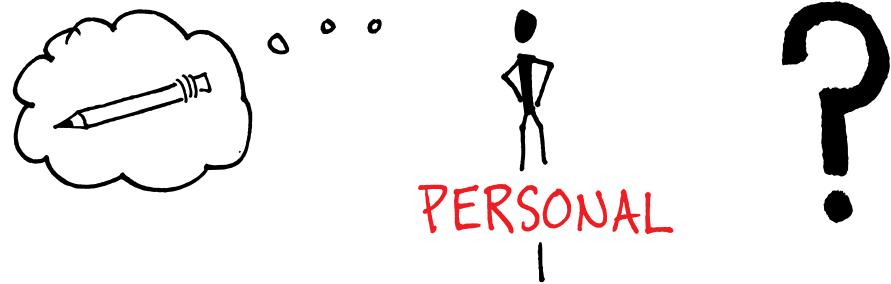
SO PUT YOUR WHOLE SELF INTO IT,
AND SEE WHO COMES OUT.

II.

ACTIVITIES

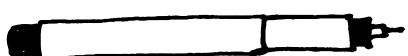
— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

SKETCH OUT (OR WRITE OUT) THE REASONS WHY YOU WANT TO DEVELOP
THE SKILL OF VISUAL NOTE TAKING.

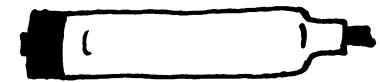
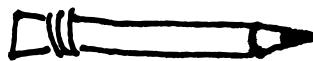


— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

WRITE THE ALPHABET WITH TEN DIFFERENT WRITING UTENSILS.
THEN PICK THE ONE THAT YOU LIKE BEST.



PLAYFUL
PRACTICE
2



— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

START GATHERING QUOTES YOU LIKE. EACH TIME YOU COME ACROSS A NEW ONE THAT YOU'D LIKE TO REMEMBER, WRITE IT OUT HERE. TRY TO USE A DIFFERENT FONT FOR EACH (AND DON'T BE AFRAID TO REWRITE THE SAME ONE UNTIL YOU LIKE THE WAY IT LOOKS).

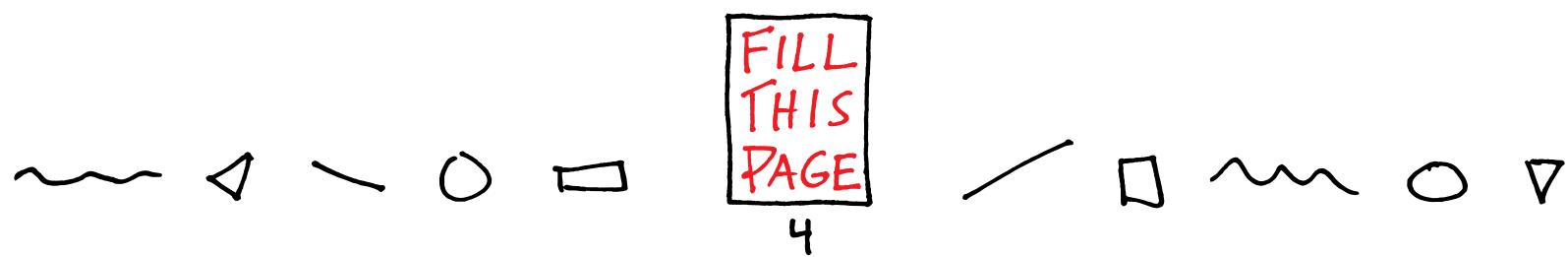
GO CONFIDENTLY IN THE DIRECTION OF YOUR DREAMS!

PLAYFUL
PRACTICE
3

LIVE THE LIFE YOU'VE IMAGINED. -HENRY DAVID THOREAU

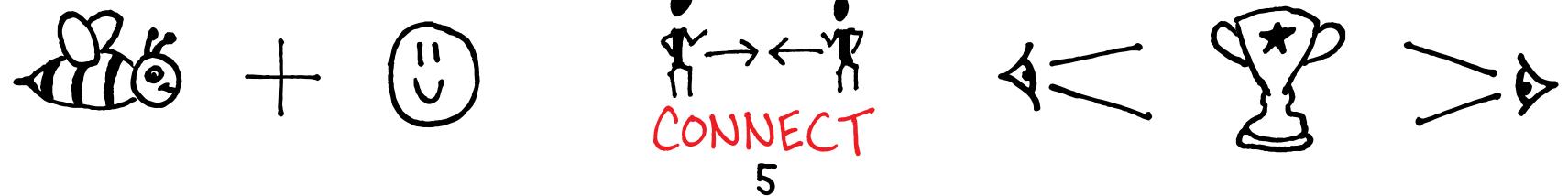
— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

FILL THIS PAGE WITH SQUIGGLES, LINES, TRIANGLES, CIRCLES,
RECTANGLES, AND ANY OTHER SHAPES YOU CAN IMAGINE.
(NO REPRESENTATIONS OF ACTUAL OBJECTS, PLEASE).



— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

MAKE UP YOUR OWN PICTORIAL REPRESENTATION OF WORDS OR PHRASES.
THEN SHOW THOSE TO A FRIEND TO SEE IF THEY CAN FIGURE OUT
THE WORD OR PHRASE YOU HAD IN MIND.



— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

GET IN FRONT OF A MIRROR. MAKE FACES AT YOURSELF.
SKETCH SOME OF THEM. LABEL EACH WITH AN EMOTION OR CAPTION.



PLAYFUL
PRACTICE
6



— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

LOOK AROUND YOUR IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT.
SKETCH AN ICON FOR SEVEN OF THE THINGS THAT YOU SEE.

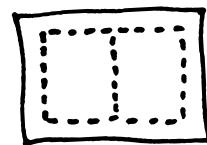
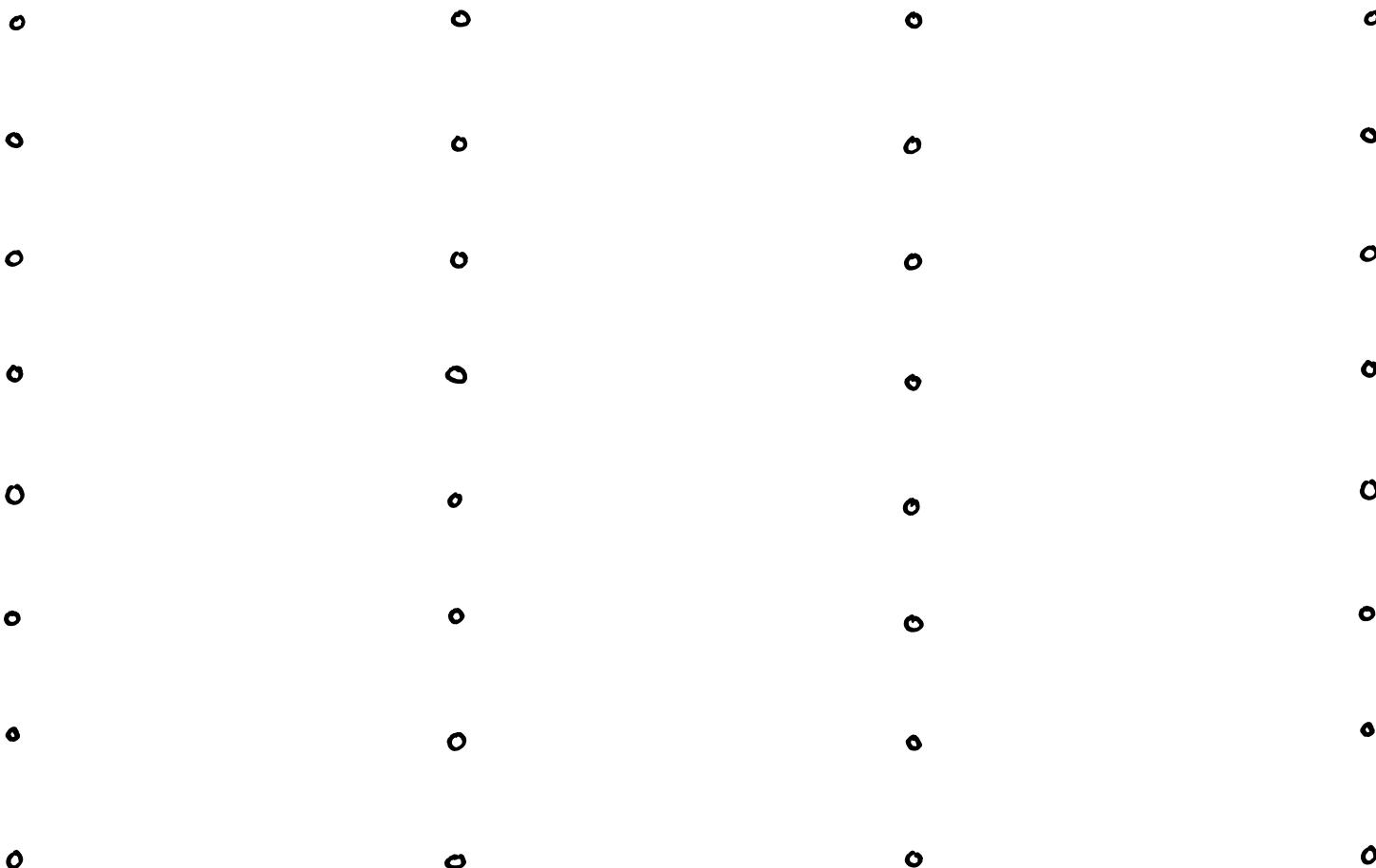


PLAYFUL
PRACTICE
7



— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

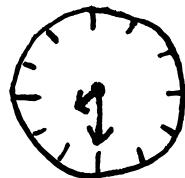
BULLETS ONLY



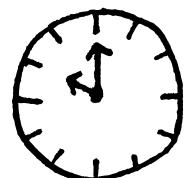
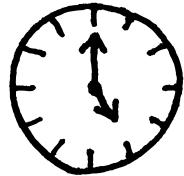
TEMPLATE

— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

SOMETIME THIS EVENING, SKETCH OUT FOUR THINGS THAT HAPPENED TODAY.

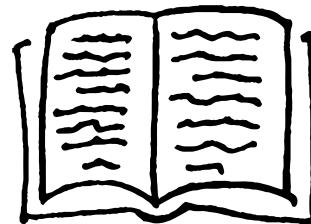


PLAYFUL
PRACTICE
9

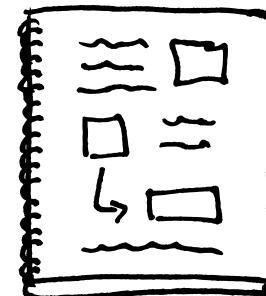


— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

WHILE READING A NON-FICTION BOOK, UNDERLINE THE INTERESTING PARTS.
SKETCH OUT EACH CHAPTER USING THOSE UNDERLINED SECTIONS AS A GUIDE.



PURPOSEFUL
PRACTICE
10



— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

IT CAN BE FUN TO EMBED WORDS WITHIN OBJECTS THAT YOU DRAW.
LOOK AROUND YOU FOR SOME OBJECTS TO SKETCH OUT, THEN
FILL IN WITH TEXT.



PLAYFUL
PRACTICE
||



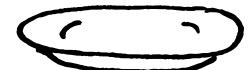
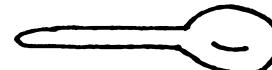
— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

BEFORE COOKING A MEAL, SKETCH OUT THE RECIPE.
THEN COOK AND EAT, AND SKETCH OUT A REVIEW OF THE MEAL.



SKETCH → THEN → DO

12



— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

FILL THIS PAGE WITH CAPITAL LETTERS.

(CAPITAL LETTERS



13

ARE MY FAVORITE !)

— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

FILL THIS PAGE WITH LOWERCASE LETTERS.



(with practice these could grow on me)

— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

GRAB A DICTIONARY. (HOPEFULLY YOU STILL HAVE ONE IN BOOK FORM). OPEN TO A RANDOM PAGE AND SELECT A RANDOM WORD ON THAT PAGE. SKETCH OUT THAT WORD AS AN ICON OR DIAGRAM. REPEAT UNTIL THIS PAGE IS FULL.

re.cip.ro.cate ↕

PURPOSEFUL
PRACTICE
15

ob.fus.cate ↙ ☺

— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

BROWSE THROUGH A MAGAZINE. WHEN YOU SEE FONTS YOU LIKE (CHECK OUT THE COVER, THE HEADLINES, AND THE BODY TEXT OF ARTICLES), RIP OUT THAT PAGE. ONCE YOU'VE GOT FIVE DIFFERENT FONTS, PRACTICE WRITING FONTS HERE.



PLAYFUL
PRACTICE
16



— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

SKETCH OUT YOUR WORKSPACE AND HOW YOU USE IT.



PERSONAL

17



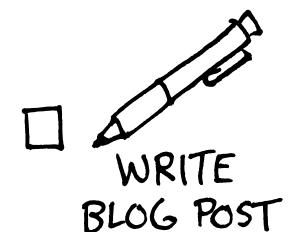
— THE VERBAL TO VISUAL NOTEBOOK —

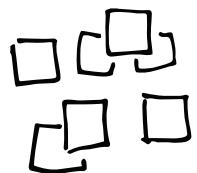
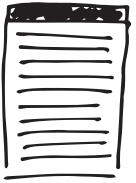
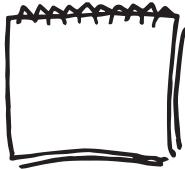
SKETCH OUT YOUR TO-DO LIST FOR TOMORROW.

USE AN ICON OR DIAGRAM FOR EACH ELEMENT ON YOUR LIST.



SKETCH → THEN → DO
18



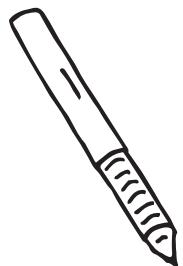
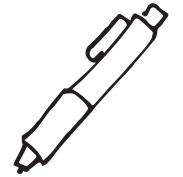
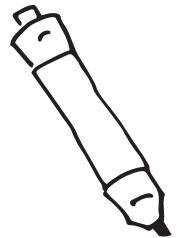


THANKS FOR CHECKING OUT THIS PREVIEW OF

— THE — VERBAL TO VISUAL — NOTEBOOK —

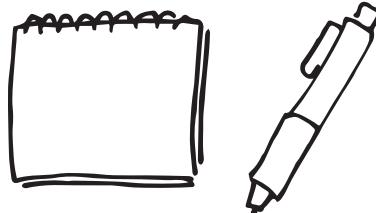
I HOPE THAT BY JUMPING INTO THESE ACTIVITIES
YOU'VE GOTTEN A FEEL FOR WHAT SKETCHNOTING IS ALL ABOUT,
AND THAT YOU'RE ALREADY ON YOUR WAY TOWARD BUILDING
YOUR OWN VISUAL NOTE-TAKING SKILLS !

IF YOU'D LIKE TO KEEP AT IT, YOU CAN PICK UP THE [FULL VERSION HERE](#),
BUT NOTE THAT IT'S ALSO INCLUDED IN THE PURCHASE OF ANY OF OUR COURSES !
(SEE THE NEXT PAGE FOR MORE DETAILS ON THOSE.)



WANT TO DIG DEEPER?

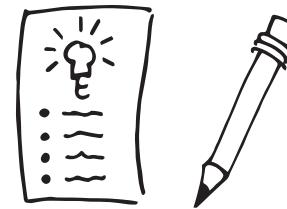
IF YOU LIKE WHAT YOU SAW HERE AND WANT TO DIG DEEPER INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR SKETCHNOTING SKILLS, CHECK OUT OUR ONLINE COURSES:



AN INTRODUCTION TO VISUAL NOTE-TAKING

RECONNECT TO MAKING MARKS BY HAND AS YOU LEARN TO USE TEXT, LAYOUT, IMAGERY, AND COLOR TO ENGAGE YOUR VISUAL BRAIN.

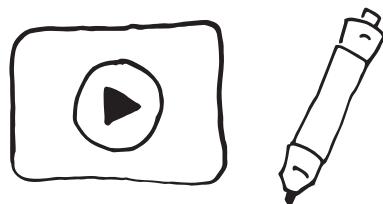
[LEARN MORE](#)



SKETCHNOTING IN THE CLASSROOM

ADD SKETCHNOTING TO YOUR TOOLKIT AS AN INSTRUCTOR AS YOU HELP YOUR STUDENTS DEVELOP THEIR OWN VISUAL THINKING SKILLS.

[LEARN MORE](#)



HOW TO MAKE SKETCHNOTE VIDEOS

TAP INTO THE POWER OF VISUAL STORYTELLING AS YOU LEARN THE TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR MAKING ILLUSTRATED VIDEOS.

[LEARN MORE](#)



LEARN IN PUBLIC

CREATE NEW PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BY SHARING THE AUTHENTIC JOURNEY OF YOUR SKILL DEVELOPMENT ONLINE.

[LEARN MORE](#)