

Taking Notes

The **BIG** Idea

- How will taking notes improve my performance in school and on the job?

AGENDA

Approx. 45 minutes

- I. Warm Up: Scavenger Hunt (5 minutes)
- II. What's My Line? (10 minutes)
- III. Take Note! (15 minutes)
- IV. The Red Effect (10 minutes)
- V. Wrap Up: Study Skills Assignment (5 minutes)

MATERIALS

STUDENT HANDBOOK

- Student Handbook page 27, What's My Line?
- Student Handbook page 28, Note-taking Methods
- Student Handbook page 29, Note-taking Methods (The Red Effect)

FACILITATOR RESOURCE

- Facilitator Resource 1, DO NOW: Taking Notes
- Facilitator Resource 2, The Red Effect
- Blackboard or overhead projector
- Index cards (optional)

OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, the student(s) will:

- Understand the importance of taking notes in school and at work.
- Compare and practice several methods of taking notes on material presented verbally.

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students play a game in which note taking is important. They also guess people's professions by looking at their notes. After modeling different ways of taking notes, students practice the different methods in a group activity.

PREPARATION

- The following handouts can be made into overhead transparencies or copied onto chart paper:
 - **Student Handbook page 28, Note-taking Methods**
 - **Student Handbook page 29, Note-taking Methods (The Red Effect)**
 - **Facilitator Resource 1, DO NOW: Taking Notes**
 - **Facilitator Resource 2, The Red Effect**
 - The paragraph, "This Monkey's Business was Art," from **Activity III**.
- Familiarize yourself with the different forms of note-taking methods you will model during **Activity III, Take Note!**. For additional information about note-taking systems, visit: <http://www.sas.calpoly.edu/asc/ssl/notetaking.systems.html>.
- Write the day's **BIG IDEA** and agenda on the board.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Taking notes helps students focus attention during class and remember the ideas and facts presented once class is over. It also encourages students to make connections and elaborate on classroom discussion topics. It helps them process information more fully, and to recall information with greater ease. It is important for students to find the note-taking method that works best for them. For this lesson, there is a considerable amount of time reserved to explain how to take notes in a step-by-step format so students will be able to understand and adopt the method that works best for them.

NOTE: This lesson is intended to prepare students for note taking based on a lecture, rather than written text.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

DO NOW:

(You may choose to replace the **Warm Up** activity (scavenger hunt) with a written Do Now. Present the questions on the board or overhead, and have students write only their answers on index cards.)

Questions:

1. In what class or classes do you regularly take notes?
2. Do you follow a certain method of note taking? Explain how you take notes. (If there are multiple methods, just list them.)
3. List two jobs that you think require some form of note taking. (There is no right or wrong answer, just try your best.)

[Give the students three minutes to answer these questions. Call on students to volunteer their answers, and then discuss what they will be learning today.]

For **Activity I, Scavenger Hunt**, if you think your students will be able to remember a list of five items without taking notes combine lists A and B into one longer list.

For **Activity III, Take Note**, time constraints may prevent you from teaching all three note-taking methods. If so, choose the two methods that you think your students will most benefit from.

Note: Students complete the two corresponding sections of **Student Handbook page 28, Note-taking Methods**, skipping the section not covered.

ACTIVITY STEPS

I. Warm Up: Scavenger Hunt (5 minutes)

- [For this activity, break students into small groups of four or five.]
- SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** We're starting today's class with a quick scavenger hunt. Listen carefully — I'm only going to give the directions once. [Pause.] Within your group, I'd like you to gather five objects. I will read from two lists. You can choose all the objects from List A or all the objects from List B. (See **Implementation Options** for suggestions.) The first group that gets all five objects from one of the lists wins. [Read the list aloud.]

List A	List B
A blank piece of paper	Lip gloss or chapstick
A homework planner	A shoelace
A pen or pencil	A coin
A highlighter	A watch
A textbook	A necklace

[NOTE: If after a few minutes, no group has come up with all the objects from a list, the group with the most objects wins.]

- SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Raise your hand if you wrote down the instructions. Did you write down every word I said, or just the important words? Was it possible to complete the task without taking notes? How did taking notes help?

Give yourselves a pat on the back if you had every item from List A. You're really prepared for class!

II. What's My Line? (10 minutes)

- SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** During the scavenger hunt, you saw that notes made it easier to remember what you had to do, which is true for most anything. We just can't keep the details of everything we hear in our heads, so we write things down. And since we can't possibly write everything down, we take notes to remember the important things.

This is, of course, true for students, but it's also true for just about every job there is.

Can anyone name a profession where note taking is important? [Students respond.]

2. [Refer students to **Student Handbook page 27, What's My Line?**]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Take a look at each set of notes on this page and see if you can figure out the job of the person who wrote them. For each one, there might be more than one right answer.

[Have students fill out the worksheet. After a few minutes, go over the answers with the entire class.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Were these notes different from just a list? How? What were some of the shorthand elements the notes included? How could people tell what was most important in their notes?

Underlining information or using stars or other symbols can help you know what's most important in your notes when you read them again.

III. Take Note! (15 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** There are a lot of different ways you can take great notes. Some people develop their own style. But there are also a few standard methods that a lot of people like to use. Listen to the following short news story. After I read it, I'll show you three different ways you could take notes on the information.

[Read the following paragraph aloud. Display the passage on chart paper and direct students' attention to it while you are reading.]

This Monkey's Business Was Art

An American art collector was not monkeying around when he paid \$26,352 for three paintings created by a chimpanzee. The three brightly colored abstract pieces were painted by Congo, a chimpanzee artist. They were created during the 1950s, when Congo was just three years old!

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: So, what's the main idea or subject of the story?

(Chimp art or a collector bought art made by chimp)

2. Most note taking starts with the main idea. When you use the outlining method, you

write the main idea or most general information at the left. Then, you indent and write the details of the big idea.

Turn to **Student Handbook page 28, Note-taking Methods**. Be sure to copy down the notes I take so you'll have a sample for both styles. You'll need them later in class.

So if I used the outlining method to take notes about the story, they might look like this:

[Write the following on the board, chart paper, or an overhead projector while you talk through the process. As you write "abstract" on the board, ask a volunteer for the definition.]

OUTLINING

Art collector bought art by chimp

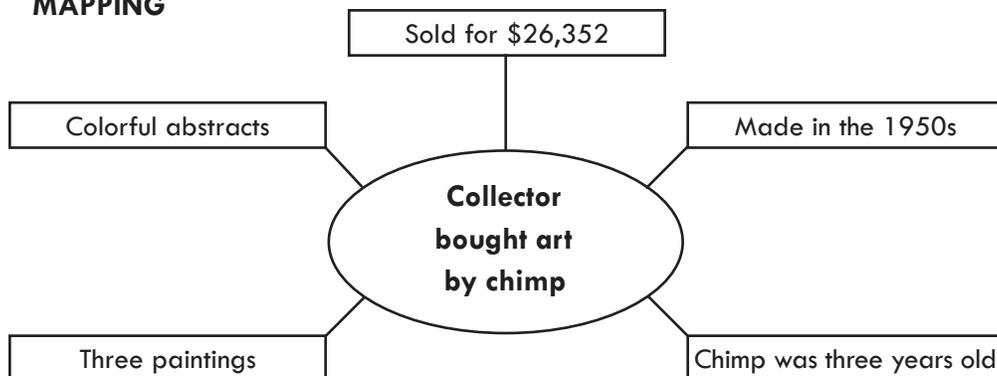
- Paid roughly \$26,000 for three paintings
- Colorful abstracts
- Made in the 1950s
- Chimp was three years old

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: "Art collector bought art by chimp" is the main idea. What the collector paid for it, what the art looks like, when it was made, and how old the chimp was when he made it are details that support the main idea.

[As you model this and the remaining methods, answer any questions students may have.]

3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** There's also a note-taking method you can use called mapping, which shows you the information in a graphic (or picture) representation: Some people call these **graphic organizers**.

MAPPING



SAY SOMETHING LIKE: How can you tell what the main idea is here?

(The main idea is in the circle)

4. CORNELL METHOD

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Another great note-taking strategy, which can really help when you're studying, is called the Cornell method. For this one, you draw a vertical line on your paper to make a small column and a big column. [Draw columns on board.] In the bigger column on the right, you would put all your notes about the chimp art. Then when the topic changes, say to elephant art, you would drop down a few lines and start another chunk of notes in the column. When you're finished taking notes, you write a word or phrase in the small column on the left side of each chunk that helps you to remember the information in the bigger column. Here's how it would look for a chunk of information about chimpanzee art.

Chimp art	Collector paid around \$26,000 for paintings
	Three abstract and colorful paintings
	Painted in the 1950s when chimp was three years old

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: So when you're studying, you just cover the different chunks of information on the right and see if you can remember the facts from your key words in the left-hand column.

IV. The Red Effect (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Let's try using one of these methods to take some notes on another news story. I want you to use the method that you are most comfortable with.

[Have students turn to **Student Handbook page 29, Note-taking Methods (The Red Effect)**. Instruct students to select one note-taking method to record their notes from "The Red Effect" story. Remind students that it is their mission to write down the main idea, plus two or three details that support it.]

[Have students review their strategy and remember how to identify the main idea and details in their notes. While you read the story, have them take notes using the strategy. Then put the story on the overhead and read it a second time, so that the students can see the story to correct the first draft of their notes.]

[Once students have finished taking notes, use the overhead projector or board to review their work. Begin with the Mapping method. Have students identify the main idea and describe how they showed it on the page (in a circle). Illustrate on the overhead. Do the same with the details shown as spokes radiating from the circle.]

[Briefly show how the same info would be recorded using the outline method and/or the Cornell method, depending on which strategies you covered.]

V. Wrap Up: Study Skills Assignment (5 minutes)

1. [Summarize with the following questions:
 - Which note-taking method do you prefer? Why?
 - In what class are you most likely to take notes? Why?
 - How can your notes help you prepare for a test?]

[You may choose to review this orally or have the students write down their responses on an index card. Students can turn in their cards before they leave class.]

DO NOW: Taking Notes

Directions: You will have three minutes to read the questions below and write your responses. You do not need to write the questions down.

Questions:

1. In what class or classes do you regularly take notes?

2. Do you follow a certain method of note taking? Explain how you take notes. (If there are multiple methods, just list them.)

3. List two jobs that you think require some form of note taking. (There is no right or wrong answer. Just try your best.)

The Red Effect

Want to win the big game? Wear red!

Is it possible for the color of a uniform to affect the outcome of a sports match? British anthropologists (scientists who study human behavior) think so.

In 2004, researchers studied the results of Olympic competitions in boxing, tae-kwon-do, and wrestling. These sports were great to study because uniform colors were randomly assigned. In each sport, contestants wearing red had a slight advantage. Those with red uniforms won a little more than half the time.

Was this a matter of chance? Or did red uniforms suggest danger and strength to opponents? Many scientists have studied “the red effect.” Some have found that the color of wrestlers’ uniforms may affect a referee’s scoring.

But nobody knows for sure. It’s not clear what effect red has on players, opponents, referees, and fans, or if it has any effect at all. It’s a great question to ask. And until it’s answered, you can be sure there will be many teams who are pinning their hopes on red.

What's My Line?

NOTES	PROFESSION?
<p>100 people/Saturday, July 16th at 4 p.m. Bloomville Town Hall</p> <p>RENTALS U Rent It Rentals R Us</p> <p>—tables, chairs, dishes, glasses, silverware</p> <p>MENU —Grilled chicken, rice, green salad, chocolate cake</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">TREES</p> <p>4 Blue Spruce 2 Oak *2 Maple 3 Scotch Pine (*along pathway)</p>	
<p>18 years old <u>**fever</u> stomach ache chills started a week ago otherwise healthy <u>**sister had stomach flu two weeks ago</u></p>	
<p>flop 2 over easy coffee, no cow blt squeeze one</p>	

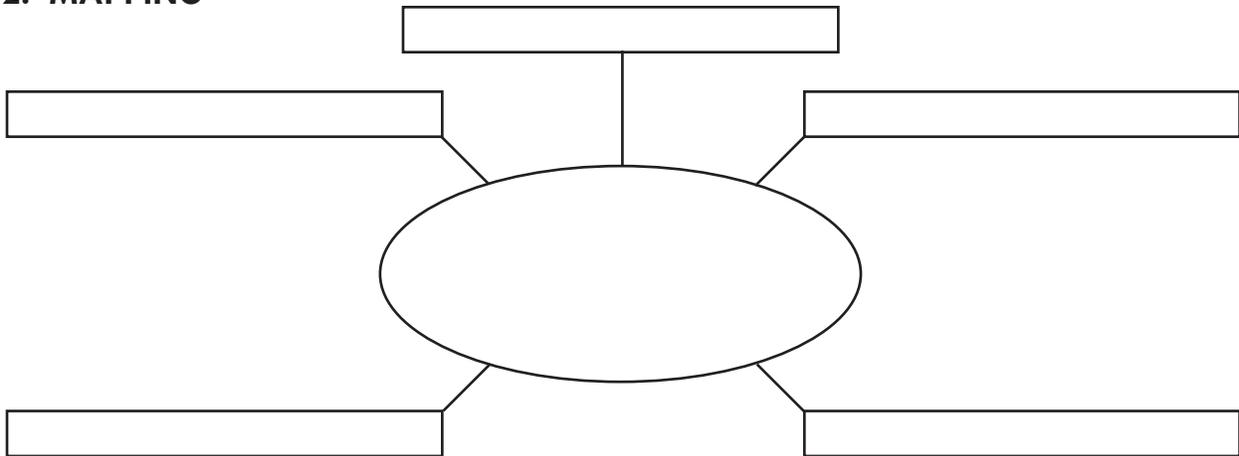
NOTE-TAKING METHODS



1. OUTLINING

-
-
-
-

2. MAPPING

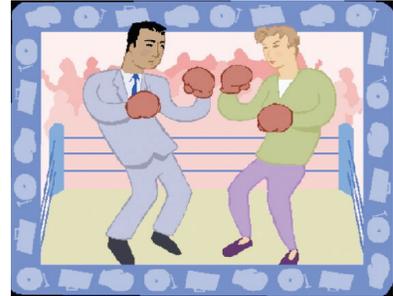


3. CORNELL METHOD

MAIN IDEA	SUPPORTING DETAILS

NOTE-TAKING METHODS (The Red Effect)

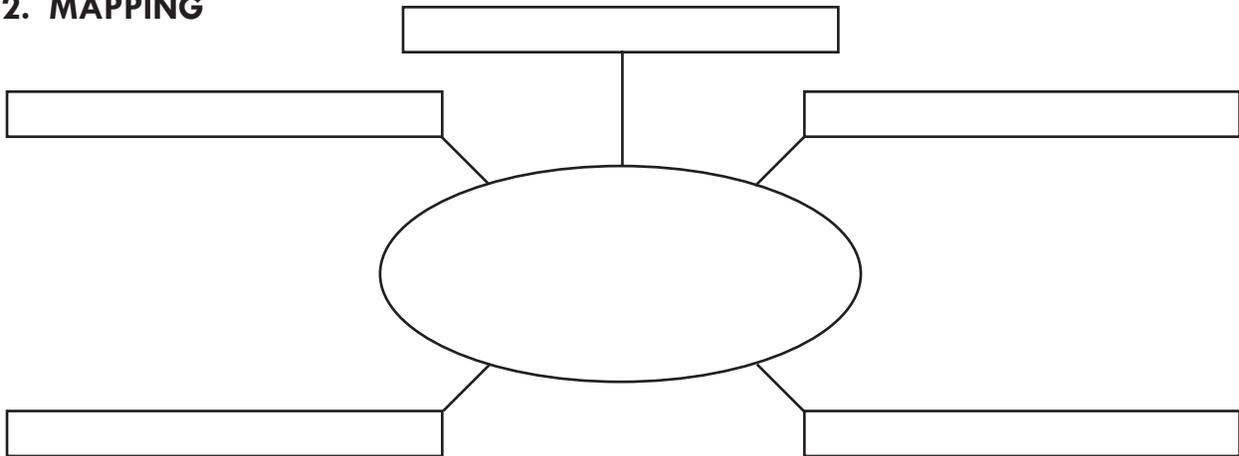
Directions: Choose one of the note-taking methods below to record your notes for the story, "The Red Effect."



1. OUTLINING

-
-
-
-

2. MAPPING



3. CORNELL METHOD

MAIN IDEA	SUPPORTING DETAILS

