

TAKING NOTES



AGENDA

- Starter
- Easy as One, Two, Three
- Go!
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will identify important details in note taking and recognise their significance.

Students will learn strategies for taking effective notes.

Students will practice and evaluate note-taking skills.

Materials Needed

- 1 A4 paper for each student and a Writing Implement. (Part 1)

Starter (3 minutes)

Ask students to take out a sheet of paper and write today's day, date, and the name of this class in the top right corner. Ask the following questions:

- If you put this paper in your folder right now and looked it over next week, would it remind you about what happened in this class today? (*Students should say no.*)
- Would it remind you of any homework that was assigned? (*Students should say no.*)
- Would it help you recall important information we discussed? (*Again, students should say no.*)

Point out that if the paper contained notes, the answers would be different. Notes are an important way to remember and learn. Explain that learning how to take notes will become more and more important, as note taking is necessary in school and on the job. Explain to students that they will learn about taking notes that work for them.

Part I Easy as One, Two, Three (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students learn strategies for taking effective notes.

1. Students learn how to take notes that are easy to use.

Students fold down a portrait A4 piece of paper into 3 sections. Label Section 1, Section 2, Section 3. Explain that you are going to give students some tips on taking effective notes. Tell students to write these tips on the paper.

The teacher's notes that follow correspond to the outline on the activity sheet. Refer students to section 1. Explain that they are to write each of the following tips in Section 1. Tell them that these tips will help them take notes that will be easy to use:

- Write the subject, the day, and the date at the top of each page. (Explain that this keeps notes organized and in order.)
- Leave lots of space between sentences. (Explain that this will give students room to add to their notes or write questions.)
- Use abbreviations and symbols for words. (Explain that this will enable students to write faster. You might make a list of common symbols on the board. For example, "b/c" for "because," "=" for "equals" or "is," an arrow for "results in" or "produces.")
- Don't worry about writing complete sentences or spelling correctly, unless asked to do so or unless misspelling would lead to confusion.

2. Students learn how to take notes that are important.

Ask students to write in section 2 these tips, which will help them identify what's important when taking notes:

- Write down only the topic, main ideas, and important details—not every word that's said or read.
- Write down questions the teacher asks. Find the answers when you are studying later.
- Copy information that's displayed on the board.
- Star, circle, or underline anything that the teacher repeats or tells you is important to remember.

3. Students learn how to review notes.

Refer students to section 3. Explain that notes are important for review and study. Tell students that the following tips will help them know when to review their notes:

- Read over your notes at the end of the day when you are studying. Answer questions in your notes. Fix notes that don't make sense.
- Plan ahead and be prepared for your classes. Check your notes for homework and assignment due dates.
- Save your notes and review them before quizzes and tests.

Tell students to keep their activity sheets in their folders and read them occasionally to remind themselves of how to organise and use their notes. Doing this will help them become more successful students.

Part II Go! (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students will practice and evaluate note-taking skills.

1. Students exchange information with partners.

Ask students to find partners. Explain that each student will give verbal directions to their partner on how to get to a certain place from school. Tell students not to say the name of the place; they can only give directions.

Tell students that when they give directions, they should concentrate on how they get from school to their chosen places, and think through the routes step by step. Tell students that as they listen to their partners' directions, they are to take notes in order to pass on the directions later.

Give students about six minutes to exchange information. Halfway through the allotted time, tell students to change roles.

2. Students evaluate information.

When time is up, ask students to quickly review their notes to make sure they are complete. Then, have students retell the directions to their partners and, if they know it, the name of the destination. Students should use their notes when giving back directions to their partners.

Tell students to evaluate how well their partners took notes on the directions. Have them award a score of 10 if they are able to reach the destination successfully, five if they are in the neighbourhood, and zero if they become totally lost.

3. Students reflect on their abilities.

Ask those who received a score of 10 to share their notes. Invite a few students who received lower scores to describe how they got off track.

Explain that taking good notes takes practice. Point out that if students continue taking notes, they will get better at it.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to describe three characteristics of effective note taking. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Taking notes in your classes and when you read will help you become a more successful student.
- Take notes that are easy to use.
- Review your notes when you study each day and when you prepare for tests.

Student Assessment

1. Why is it important to take good notes?
2. List three things you can do to make sure your notes are on target.
3. Read a news or magazine article and take good notes on it.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Practice is the best of all instructors.”

Have students discuss how this applies to note taking.

Addressing Multiple Learning Modes

Obtain a large, detailed photo or painting of a city scene. Divide the class into three groups, and have each take notes on the scene. Group one should take notes as if they are police investigating a crime. Group two are filmmakers checking out a movie location. Group three are tourists.

Have the groups compare notes. Discuss the differences between the groups' notes.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about one way in which they plan to improve their note taking.

Have students review their notes one week later to see if they've met their goals.

Using Technology

Find an age-appropriate video on www.youtube.com about a topic of interest to your students. Have students view the video and take notes on it.

Discuss as a class the different notetaking methods that students used during the video.

Homework

Have students look through old notes that they've written, and have them identify ways they could improve their note-taking skills.

Additional Activity

If students need additional reinforcement, teach relevant lessons from *Note Taking Made Easy!* by Deana Hippie.

Allow students to experiment with various note-taking methods. Have them discuss what works best for them and why.