

## Test Taking Tips

- ✓ When you first receive your test, do a quick survey of the entire test so that you know how to efficiently budget your time.
- ✓ Do the easiest problems first. Don't stay on a problem that you are stuck on especially when time is a factor.
- ✓ Do the problems that have the greatest point values first.
- ✓ Don't rush but pace yourself. Read the entire question and look for keywords.
- ✓ Always read the whole question carefully. Don't make assumptions about what the question might be.
- ✓ If you don't know an answer, skip it. Go on with the rest of the test and come back to it later. Other parts of the test may have some information that will help you out with that question.
- ✓ If you have time left when you are finished, look over your test. Make sure that you have answered all the questions, only change an answer if you misread or misinterpreted the question because the first answer that you put is usually the correct one. Watch out for careless mistakes and proofread your essay and/or short answer questions.

## Multiple Choice Test Taking Tips

- ✓ Read the question before you look at the answer.
- ✓ Come up with the answer in your head before looking at the possible answers, this way the choices given on the test won't throw you off or trick you.
- ✓ Eliminate answers you know aren't right.
- ✓ Read all the choices before choosing your answer.
- ✓ Don't keep on changing your answer, usually your first choice is the right one, unless you misread the question.
- ✓ In "All of the above" and "None of the above" choices, if you are certain one of the statements is true don't choose "None of the above" or one of the statements are false don't choose "All of the above".
- ✓ In a question with an "All of the above" choice, if you see that at least two correct statements, then "All of the above" is probably the answer.
- ✓ A positive choice is more likely to be true than a negative one.
- ✓ Usually the correct answer is the choice with the most information.

## Essay Test Tips

- ✓ Read the directions carefully. Pay close attention to whether you are supposed to answer all the essays or only a specified amount (i.e. "Answer 2 out of the 3 questions).
- ✓ Make sure that you write down everything that is asked of you and more. The more details and facts that you write down, the higher your grade is going to be.
- ✓ If the question is asking for facts, don't give your personal opinion on the topic.
- ✓ When writing your essay, try to be as neat as possible, neater papers usually receive higher marks.
- ✓ Make an outline before writing your essay. This way your essay will be more organized and fluid. If you happen to run out of time, most instructors will give you partial credit for the ideas that you have outlined.
- ✓ Don't write long introductions and conclusions, the bulk of your time should be spent on answering the question(s) asked.
- ✓ Focus on one main idea per a paragraph.
- ✓ If you have time left at the end, proofread your work and correct any errors.
- ✓ Budget your time. If you have an hour to write 3 essays, spend no more than 20 minutes on each essay, then if you have time left over at the end go back and finish any incomplete essays.
- ✓ If you aren't sure about an exact date or number, use approximations i.e. "Approximately 5000" or "In the late 17th century."
- ✓ If you make a mistake, simply draw a line through it, it is much neater and quicker than erasing it.

## True-False Test Tips

- ✓ Usually there are more true answers than false on most tests.
- ✓ Read through each statement carefully, and pay attention to the qualifiers and keywords.
- ✓ Qualifiers like "never, always, and every" mean that the statement must be true all of the time. Usually these type of qualifiers lead to a false answer.
- ✓ Qualifiers like "usually, sometimes, and generally" mean that if the statement can be considered true or false depending on the circumstances. Usually these type of qualifiers lead to an answer of true.
- ✓ If any part of the question is false, then the entire statement is false but just because part of a statement is true doesn't necessarily make the entire statement true.

## Open Book Test Taking Tips

- ✓ Spend an equal or greater amount of time preparing as you would for a normal test. The open book test will most likely be harder than if it were a closed book exam.
- ✓ Familiarize yourself with the book and relevant materials.
- ✓ If it's allowed, write down all the important formulas and key information on a separate sheet so you don't have to search through your book for it.
- ✓ Focus on learning the main ideas and get a feel for where they are located in the book, learn the details later if there's still time.
- ✓ Highlight important points, use post-it notes, bookmarks and make notes in your book, if it is allowed.
- ✓ Bring all the resources that your professor or teacher allows.
- ✓ Answer the easy questions that you know off the top of your head first, then go back and answer the questions where you need to reference your book.
- ✓ Use quotations from the book to support your view, but don't over-quote, be sure to give your own insight and commentary.

# 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 ½ 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.

Main Point s	Notes

# The Outlining Method

Dash or indented outlining is usually best except for some science classes such as physics or math.

1. The information which is most general begins at the left with each more specific group of facts indented with spaces to the right.
2. The relationships between the different parts is carried out through indenting.
3. No numbers, letters, or Roman numerals are needed.

## Method

Listening and then write in points in an organized pattern based on space indentation. Place major points farthest to the left. Indent each more specific point to the right. Levels of importance will be indicated by distance away from the major point. Indentation can be as simple as or as complex as labeling the indentations with Roman numerals or decimals. Markings are not necessary as space relationships will indicate the major/minor points.

## Advantages

Well-organized system if done right. Outlining records content as well as relationships. It also reduces editing and is easy to review by turning main points into questions.

## Disadvantages

Requires more thought in class for accurate organization. This system may not show relationships by sequence when needed. It doesn't lend to diversity of a review attach for maximum learning and question application. This system cannot be used if the lecture is too fast.

## When to Use

The outline format can be used if the lecture is presented in outline organization. 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.

## Example:

- Extrasensory perception
  - definition: means of perceiving without use of sense organs.
    - three kinds
      - telepathy: sending messages
      - clairvoyance: forecasting the future

- psychokinesis: perceiving events external to situation

## The Mapping Method

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.

### 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.

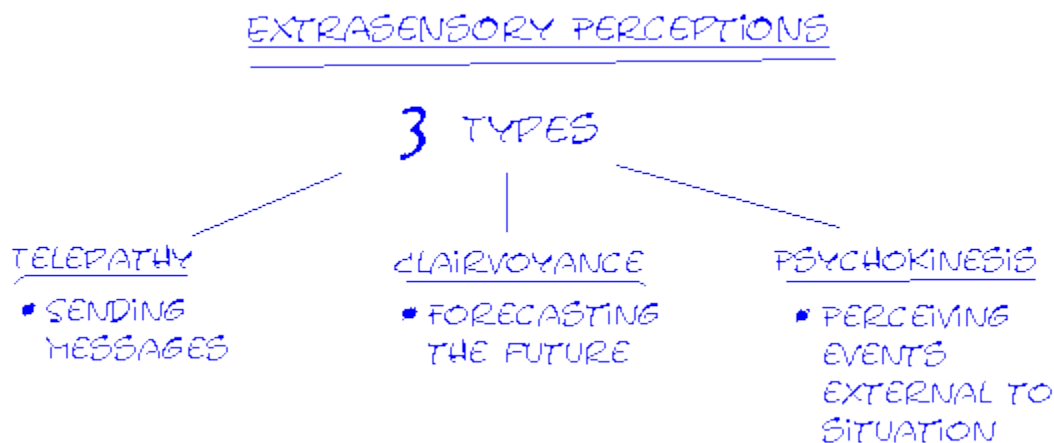
### Disadvantages

You may not hear changes in content from major points to facts.

### 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.

### Example:



# The Charting Method

If the lecture format is distinct (such as chronological), you may set up your paper by drawing columns and labeling appropriate headings in a table.

## Method

Determine the categories to be covered in the lecture. Set up your paper in advance by columns headed by these categories. As you listen to the lecture, record information (words, phrases, main ideas, etc.) into the appropriate category.

## Advantages

Helps you track conversation and dialogues where you would normally be confused and lose out on relevant content. Reduces amount of writing necessary. Provides easy review mechanism for both memorization of facts and study of comparisons and relationships.

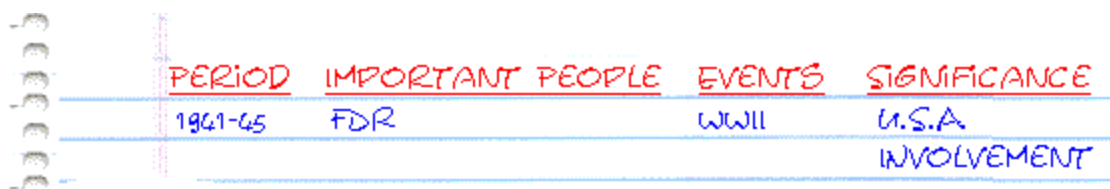
## Disadvantages

Few disadvantages except learning how to use the system and locating the appropriate categories. You must be able to understand what's happening in the lecture

## When to Use

Test will 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.

## Example:



<u>PERIOD</u>	<u>IMPORTANT PEOPLE</u>	<u>EVENTS</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE</u>
1941-45	FDR	WWII	U.S.A.
INVOLVEMENT			

# **The Sentence Method**

## **Method**

Write every new thought, fact or topic on a separate line, numbering as you progress.

## **Advantages**

Slightly more organized than the paragraph. Gets more or all of the information. Thinking to tract content is still limited.

## **Disadvantages**

Can't determine major/minor points from the numbered sequence. Difficult to edit without having to rewrite by clustering points which are related. Difficult to review unless editing cleans up relationship.

## **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 tends to present in point fashion, but not in grouping such as "three related points."

## **Three Examples:**

### **Example 1:**

A revolution is any occurrence that affects other aspects of life, such as economic life, social life, and so forth. Therefore revolutions cause change. (See page 29 to 30 in your text about this.)

### **Sample Notes:**

Revolution - occurrence that affects other aspects of life: e.g., econ., socl., etc. C.f. text, pp. 29-30

### **Example 2:**

Melville did not try to represent life as it really was. The language of Ahab, Starbuck, and Ishmael, for instance, was not that of real life.

### **Sample Notes:**

Mel didn't repr. life as was; e.g., lang. of Ahab, etc. not of real life.