Your Guide to Note Taking

Important skills for successful study

The **SKILL OF NOTE TAKING**

*Read each paragraph carefully and then make concise notes in dot points of the key points*

In preparation for writing a piece of work, your notes might come from a number of different sources: books, textbooks, internet, and teacher notes. When taking notes from any source, keep in mind that you are attempting to make a list of ideas and accurately record information and other people's opinions. You might take many more notes than you will ever use. This is perfectly normal. At the note-taking stage you might not be sure exactly what evidence you will need. In addition, the information-gathering stage should also be one of understanding and defining your ideas.

- 
- 
- 

The notes you gather in preparation for writing will provide important information written in key words only. They might include such things as the quotations and page references that you plan to use in an essay. Your planning should produce an outline in point form of the topic you are covering. Your objective whilst taking the notes is to distinguish the more important from the less important points being made. Record the main issues, not the details. You will write down key words from the original source of information. You may use a quote if it is thirty words or less if you think they may be used in a quotation. Don’t try to write down every word or copy out long extracts from books. One of the important features of note-taking is that you are making a concise list of ideas from the originals, and then eventually paraphrasing the notes and therefore the information will be written in sentences that are your own words.
Full grammatical sentences are not necessary when note taking. Use abbreviations, initials, and shortened forms of words. Use lettering, numbering, and indentation for sections and for sections. Use headings and sub-headings. Good layout will help you to absorb and recall information. Some people use coloured inks and highlighters to assist this process of identification.

- 
- 
- 

Some people take so many notes that they don’t know which to use when it’s time to do the writing. They feel that they are drowning in a sea of information. So remember to make lists, use numbers or dots or mindmaps to organize your notes. Notes will be more effective if they are recorded clearly and neatly. Good layout of the notes will help you to recall and assess the material more readily. Write clearly and leave a space between each note. The notes you make will form part of your essay so it is important that your notes are neat. Keeping the items separate will make them easier to recall. The act of laying out information in this way will cause you to assess the importance of each detail.

- 
- 

Select only those few words of the source material which will be of use. Read carefully, think more, and write less. Be selective choosing only the key ideas. Keep the project topic or the essay question more clearly in mind. Take notes only on those issues which are directly relevant to the subject in question. Even though the notes you take are only for your own use, you will often need to show your teacher so that you provide evidence of researching and note taking correctly.

- 
- 
-