

# NOTE TAKING PRACTICES FOR MATH & SCIENCE

## PREPARATION

- **Read Assignment BEFORE Class**
  1. Even if some of the material is hard to understand while reading, being familiar with the content will be very helpful during the lecture
  2. Make notations of any questions during the initial reading, and if these remain unanswered during the lecture, ask questions in class or afterwards
- **Utilize Formatting Tips**
  1. Use loose-leaf notebook paper
  2. Set up notebook paper for note taking (see RECORDING below and see page 2)
  3. Label each lecture at top of page with date/text pages/topic
- **Be an Active Listener**
  1. Attend all classes
  2. Eliminate distractions
  3. Sit in the front row or down the center row
  4. Pay close attention to the very end of lecture; key information may be squeezed in at the end
- **Look for Verbal and Physical Cues**
  1. Practice listening/watching the instructor for cues while taking notes
  2. Important information is usually indicated by *Pauses, Repetition, Change in Tone of Voice, Items Written on Board/Overhead, and Signal Words*

## RECORDING

- **Pay Attention to Content and Organization**
  1. Have all supplies needed for class
  2. Neatness counts
  3. Write on only one side of the page
  4. Always copy examples and board work
  5. Learn to abbreviate/write in phrase form
  6. Write down as many facts as possible
- **Find a User Friendly Note Taking System That Works for You**
  1. Think about your learning style (Auditory, Visual, Hands-on)
  2. Think about the type of class (Math, History, Literature, Science)
  3. Some options available: **Outline** (Auditory), **Mapping** (Visual), **Index Cards** (Hands-on), **2 Column Method** (Anyone)

## REVIEWING

- **Edit notes within 24 hours of class**
- **Re-read notes and make up questions based on the information**
- **Recite answers to questions**
- **Reflect on notes: apply this new information to what has already been learned**
- **Review all notes as often as necessary to retain information**

## 2 COLUMN NOTE TAKING EXAMPLE

<u>Types of Matter</u>	Page 78	10/20/14
<div style="margin-bottom: 20px;">○</div> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Solids</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Have a definite shape</li> <li>b. Have a definite volume</li> </ul>	
<p style="margin-left: 40px;">Liquids</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Do not have a definite shape</li> <li>b. Have a definite volume</li> </ul>	
<div style="margin-bottom: 20px;">○</div> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Gases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Do not have a definite shape</li> <li>b. Do not have a definite volume</li> </ul>	
<div style="margin-top: 20px;">○</div> <p>Summary: (Lecture notes/summary can go in this area.)</p>		

## Three Column Math Notes Example

Problem	Solution	Explanation
Find an equation of the line with slope 4 that contains the point (2, -1).	Step 1: $y = 4x + b$	Substitute 4 for the "m" in $y = mx + b$ ; "m" is the slope.
	Step 2: $-1 = 4(2) + b$	Replace x with 2 and y with -1 in the equation.
	Step 3: $-1 = 8 + b$	In ordered pairs, the first value is for x, the second is for y.
	Step 4: $-9 = b$	Multiply to simplify.
	Step 5: Equation: $y = 4x - 9$	Solve for b by subtracting 8 from both sides.
	Step 6: $-1 = 4(2) - 9$ Is this true?	Replace the "b" with -9 in the equation $y = 4x + b$ .
	Step 7: $-1 = 8 - 9$ YES	Check the answer by substituting the x and y values in the answer.

Adapted from: Downing, Skip. *On Course, Study Skills Plus Edition*, 1st Edition. Boston: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2011. 168.