

eFocused Note-Taking

Taking notes digitally allows students to record, process, and apply their learning in new ways. This resource for students and teachers highlights how digital tools can be used to support greater flexibility, personalization, and curation throughout the focused note-taking process.

Taking Notes

Create the notes.

Digital Considerations

1. Determine the purpose of the notes and create an essential question.
 2. Select a note-taking format and digital tool.
 3. Set up the notes, name them, and save them to the cloud in an eBinder, so they are organized, secure, accessible, and shareable.
 4. Takes notes on an information source (lecture, book, website, article, video, etc.).
 5. Select, paraphrase, and arrange the information in a manner that meets your note-taking objective.
- Tools to consider:
 - Google Docs, OneNote, or Notability for note-taking (Cornell notes, 2- and 3-column notes, etc.)
 - PDF annotation tool, like OneNote, Adobe Acrobat, or DocHub, for a graphic organizer
 - To record notes:
 - Type or write them using a stylus.
 - Take pictures of paper notes and resources, and save them to an eBinder.
 - Record audio of lectures and discussions.
 - Resist the urge to copy lectures and text word-for-word! Choose what's important and put it in your own words.

Processing Notes

Think about the notes.

1. Revise notes by underlining, highlighting, circling, chunking, questioning, adding, and deleting.
 2. Identify, select, sort, organize, and classify main ideas and details.
 3. Evaluate the relative importance of information and ideas in the notes.
 4. Share notes digitally with other students for peer review.
- Use formatting tools (highlighter, text color, bold, etc.) available in your note-taking tool.
 - Group similar ideas together while taking notes and by copy-and-pasting chunks of notes afterwards.
 - Use the sharing function in your note-taking tool or take a look at a partner's screen.

Connecting Thinking

Think beyond the notes.

1. Analyze the notes using inquiry to make connections and deepen content knowledge by asking questions.
 2. Add your own thinking to create greater understanding.
 3. Identify gaps or points of confusion.
 4. Connect to what you already know.
- Mark up the notes.
 - Draw lines or shapes to connect related ideas.
 - Insert media, such as images, audio, video, and weblinks, to build understanding and add context.
 - Create a curated set of notes by adding searchable tags, heading styles, and links to previous activities or notes.

Summarizing and Reflecting on Learning

Think about the notes as a whole.

1. Pull together the most important aspects of your notes and your thinking about them to craft a summary that captures the meaning and importance of the content and addresses the essential question.
 2. Reflect on how the learning helps you meet the note-taking objective.
- Summarize and reflect collaboratively.
 - Work in pairs or small groups to write the summary in a collaborative document.
 - Post individual summaries in a shared digital space, so students can review and respond to diverse ideas.

Applying Learning

Use the notes.

1. Put your notes to use as a resource or learning tool to help you apply or demonstrate what you have learned.
 2. Evaluate the notes to identify gaps, points of confusion, and the quality of the information in preparation for the project, presentation, test, or essay.
- Using one or more sets of notes as reference material, create an authentic product to share learning with others. Possible products might include designing a website, creating a short video, writing a blog post, or designing a game to teach content to others.
 - Inform research to prepare for structured discussions, such as Philosophical Chairs or Socratic Seminar.