

Teacher Notes: Recording Research Notes

Recording information accurately and systematically is an important research skill. Properly done, this step will save students a great deal of time when they prepare their final product or presentation. Taking notes should not be a tedious process. Encourage students to develop their own styles or "tricks" in the context of certain general guidelines. Periodically ask students to produce their notes for assessment or feedback rather than only evaluating the final product.



General Recommendations:

- Give students frequent opportunities to practice picking out key words as they read or listen.
- Encourage students to develop creative ways of keeping their research question(s) in mind as they conduct their research, and to narrow down their topic. This may be done by creating an electronic or paper note-taking frame before taking research notes. The frame may be used as an outline for recording and organizing notes.
- Practise paraphrasing with students, encouraging them to cut down the number of words used to describe or define a topic.
- Offer students the chance to share with their peers methods that they have found helpful (e.g., colour coding, abbreviations, electronic organizers...)
- Some students may prefer to organize notes using an outline format; others may prefer a web or map. Give them the opportunity to practise both styles, emphasizing that they must be organized by topic and linked sub-topics.
- Introduce students to the four basic types of notes, providing examples of each:
 - R Paraphrase (P)
 - R Summary (S)
 - R Quote (Q)
 - R Comment (C)

Guidelines for Recording Notes:

- Always keep the research question(s) in mind.
- Develop a list of key words or expressions. Refer to a web directory such as the Google directory to help narrow down topics. <<http://directory.google.com/>>
- Use 5X7 note cards or separate sheets for each topic. This makes it easier to change the order of topics later on. If using an electronic file, use a chart or table to divide topics or sub-topics.
- Label all notes at the top of the page with a topic or sub-topic.
- Record reference details at the bottom of each note card or sheet *as notes are taken*. This way, it will be easier to refer back to sources.
- Distinguish fact from opinion as notes are recorded. Record the source of the opinion stated and reasons given to support it.
- Do not use complete sentences unless quoting. If quoting, cite all reference details directly after the quote.
- Pay attention to spelling; grammar is less important.
- If contradictory information is found, be sure to record the sources and dates, and to consider the supporting evidence.

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Examples of Note-Taking Models

Note-Taking Cards: Number cards in order, and colour code as needed.

<p>Sub-Topic: _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point form • Key words only • Underline important ideas or key words • Careful about spelling • Fact or opinion? • Record sources below as you go • Label S (summary) P (paraphrase) or Q (quote) <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record personal ideas here. • Use your own words. Don't steal ideas! <p>Source:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • web address, site name, page title, date • author, title, year, page 	<p># _____</p>
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Cornell Note System: Divide a lined page into two columns: one for notes, and one for key words, with a space at the bottom for summarizing, commenting, or evaluating.

Recall Column	Note Column
	<p>Source : _____ Date : _____</p>
<p><i>Record key words or questions here</i></p>	<p>Main idea: _____</p> <p>Details:</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>Main Idea: _____</p> <p>Details:</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p>
<p><i>Write a summary or reflection here:</i></p>	