

- Write on the right side of the paper only
- Reserve left side of page for text notes on same topic, notes from video tapes, or comments or other points you missed in class. Don't crowd your notes.

DURING CLASS:

INTEND TO LISTEN!

- Lock in good listening skills
 - Hear the speaker out
 - Become an active listener—ask questions, nod to agree or disagree
 - Have good eye contact
 - Listen for lecture clues to indicate importance
 - ∞ pause
 - ∞ tap on board
 - ∞ write on board
 - ∞ voice pitch, tempo, etc. changes
- Writing Notes
 - Write on one side of the page
 - Write as neatly as you can
 - Listen for organizational patterns
 - ∞ Listen for introduction
 - ∞ Listen for number indicators (4 methods, or 3 steps)
 - Pay attention to instructor's posture and visual clues (gestures, volume, pitch)
 - Develop a set of abbreviations so you don't have to write every word. (See abbreviation handout.)
 - When possible, translate lecture into own words
 - Try to identify main topics and main ideas
 - Leave space under key points to fill in additional information
 - Record instructor's examples (graph, diagram, etc.) You can draw on blank page opposite.
 - Ask questions if you don't understand. Nod, smile, REACT.
 - Before leaving class, write down any missing information you didn't have time to write.

AFTER CLASS:

- Clear up questions by teacher or classmates. Do while lecture is still fresh in your mind.
- Fill in any additional missing points
- Edit notes
 - Complete "Recall Column"
 - Label main points
 - Highlight key points
 - Make 3" x 5" study cards
 - Summarize lecture in own words

PERIODICALLY:

- Review your notes. Glance at your recall clues and see how much you can remember before re-reading your notes.
- Look for the emergence of themes, main concepts, and methods of presentation over the course of several lectures.
- Make up and answer possible test questions using your recall clues in the margin of your notes.

If you are an auditory learner, you will benefit more by attentive listening and taking fewer notes.

If you are a visual learner, you will benefit most by taking as many good notes as you can. This also helps keep your mind focused and less free to wander.

TEXTBOOK NOTES

If the instructor lectures mainly from the textbook, mark and highlight in the book at the time of the lecture. The use of the following symbols “to mark” your textbook will call attention to items that may otherwise be overlooked.

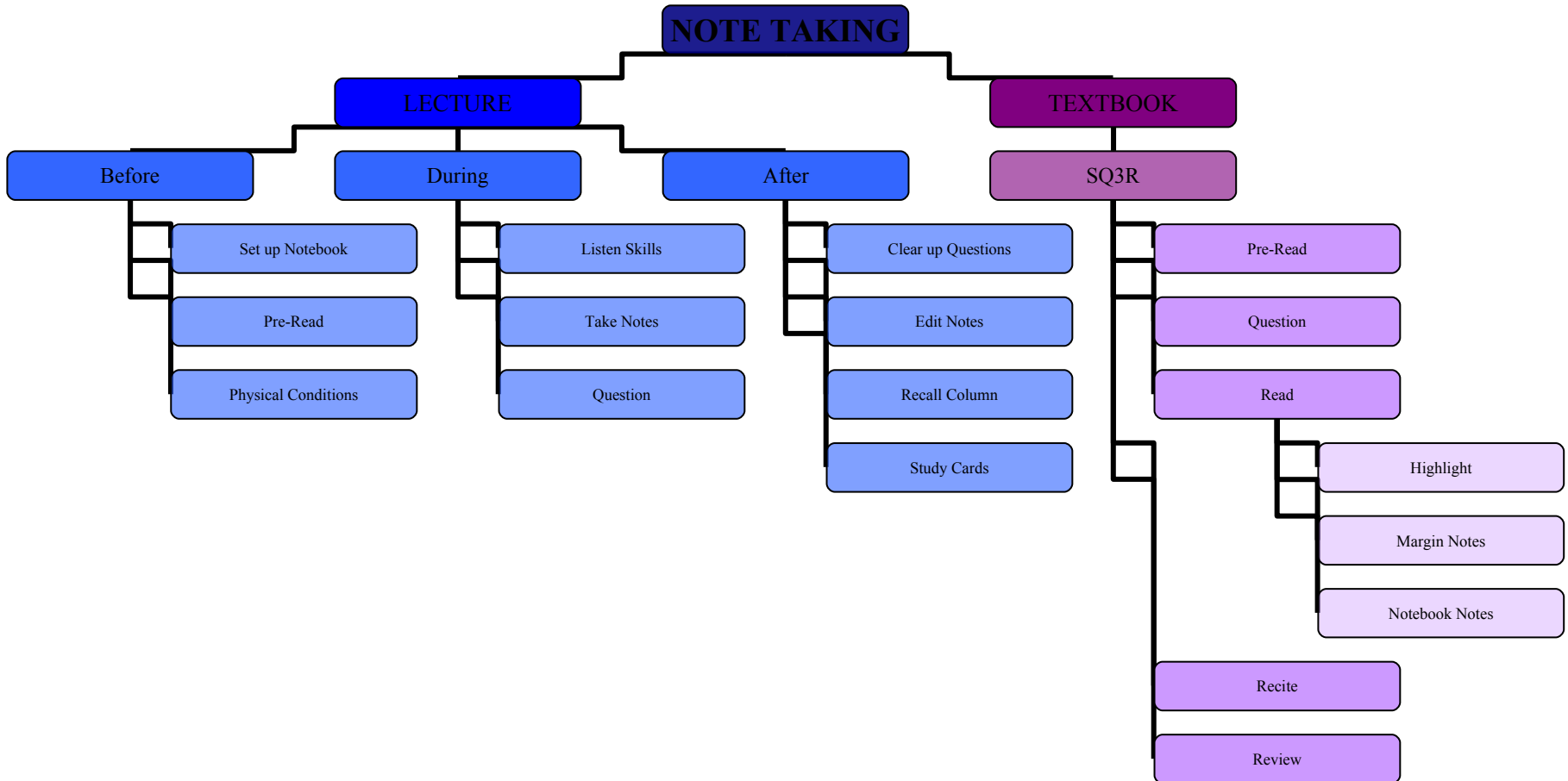
Use *****, **→**, **?**, **□**, **○** in the text and marginal notations.

MAPPING

This technique is good if you are a visual learner. It is also a good way to study parts and see how they connect.

See the following mapping diagram for a lecture on “Note Taking.”

GOOD LUCK!



COMMON NOTE-TAKING PROBLEMS¹

Problem

Solution

“My mind wanders and I get bored.”

Sit in the front of the room. Be certain to preview assignments. Think about questions you expect to be answered in the lecture.

“The instructor talks too fast.”

Develop a shorthand system; use abbreviations. Leave blanks and fill them in later.

“The lecturer rambles.”

Preview correlating text assignments to determine organizing principles. Reorganize your notes after the lecture.

“Some ideas don’t seem to fit anywhere.”

Record them in the margin or in parentheses within your notes and think about them during editing.

“Everything seems important.”

OR

“Nothing seems important.”

You have not identified key concepts and may lack necessary background knowledge—you do not understand the topic. Preview related text assignments.

“I can’t spell all the new technical terms.”

Write them phonetically, the way they sound; fill in the correct spellings during editing.

“The instructor uses terms without defining them.”

Write the terms as they are used; leave space to record definitions later; consult text glossary or dictionary.

“The instructor reads directly from the text.”

Mark passages in text; write instructor’s comments in the margin. Record page references in your notes.

¹ Kathleen T. McWhorter, *College Reading & Study Skills* (New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1995), p.276.