

# Notetaking



University of  
**Southern**  
**Queensland**

Notetaking and reading are interconnected skills that help you understand and organise unfamiliar content. Effectively crafted notes can aid in organising your thoughts, improving your memory, facilitating participation in class discussions, and preparing you for successful exam responses.

## Tips for effective notetaking

Effective notetaking skills will make it easier for you to record and recall your information for use in assessment and exam preparation. Start by using the following tips:

- Clearly organise your notes with main points and sub-points, using headings and sub-headings.
- Leave space to add notes later and use wide margins.
- Incorporate colour coding, bullet points, graphics, highlighting, and underlining for emphasis.
- Always include bibliographic details (author, date, title, etc.) for your sources to easily locate them later.
- Jot down any questions you'd like to ask in class; even if you don't get to ask, it will help you focus on relevant information and guide your further study.
- Consider using abbreviations – refer to the list of abbreviations at the end of this guide.

## Notetaking techniques

There are various methods for taking effective notes. Before choosing a technique, reflect on your purpose to determine which approach is best suited for the task.

### Linear Method

Presented in a list format with numbered points, headings, and subheadings, this approach is useful for analytical tasks as it allows arguments and processes to be broken down into subsections with further definitions and explanations.

#### I. Dogs (*main topic - usually general*)

##### A. German Shepherd (*concept related to main topic*)

1. Protection (*supporting information about the concept*)
2. Assertive
3. Loyal

##### B. Weimaraner (*concept related to main topic*)

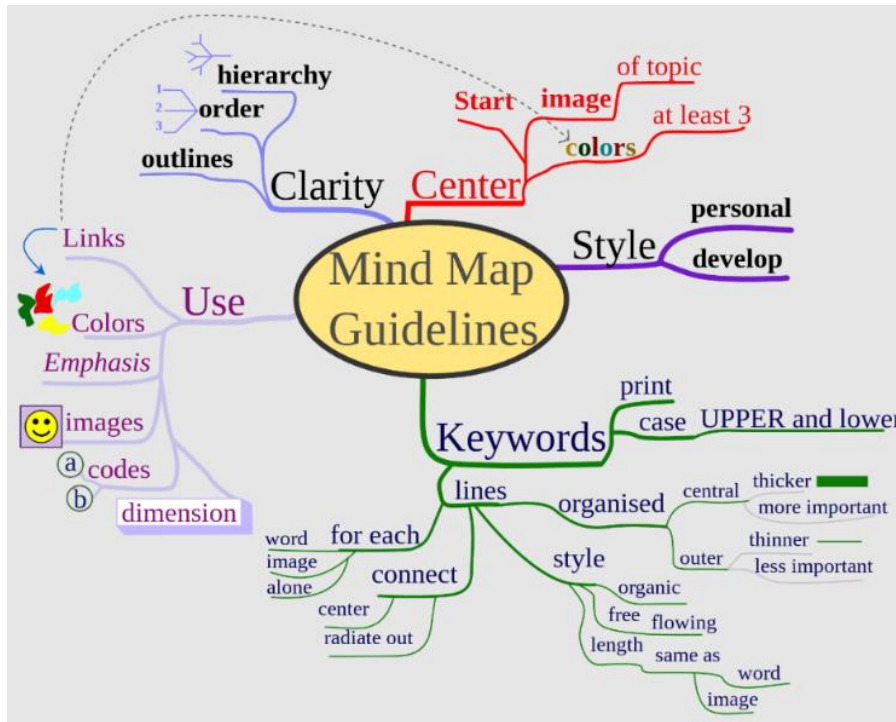
1. Family-friendly (*supporting information about the concept*)
2. Active
3. Healthy

#### II. Cats (*main topic*)

## Mind mapping and concept mapping

These terms are sometimes used interchangeably. They are both visual representations of information, however there are slight variations between the two and they can be used for different purposes.

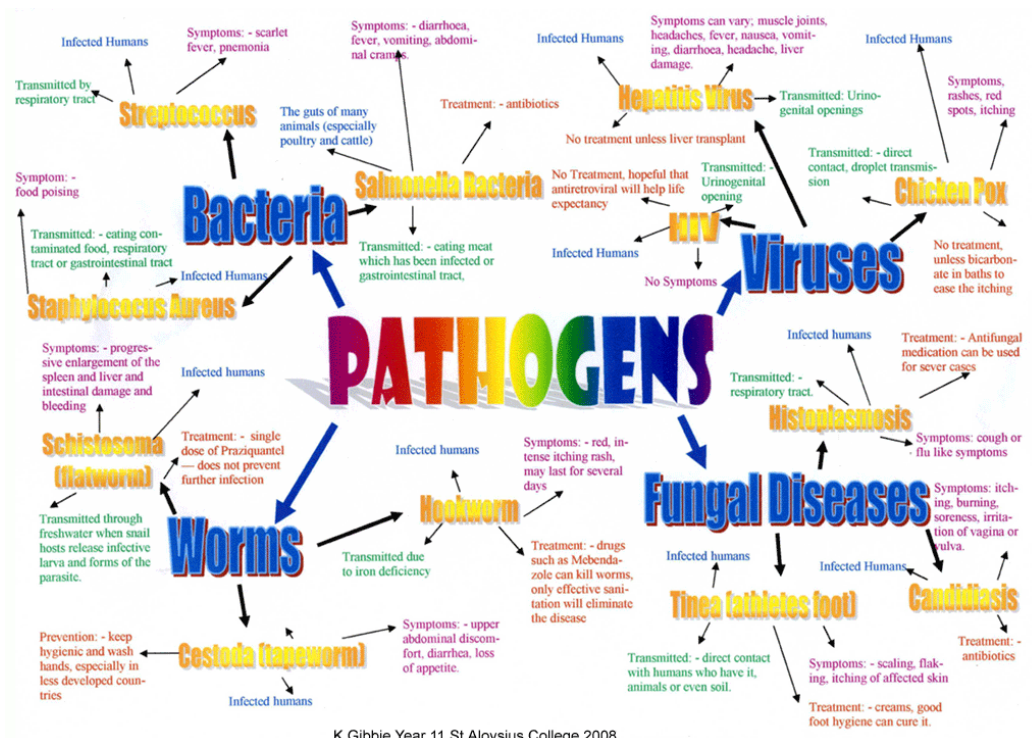
A mind map tends to focus on one idea at a time and is an easy way to brainstorm thoughts without worrying about order and structure. You may like to use a mind map to help with planning and structuring your assignments.



<https://www.pdhpe.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Minddiffer-Map.png>

## Concept maps

Concept maps are different from mind maps as they are often used to represent multiple concepts and ideas and show the relationships between these concepts. You may like to use a concept map as part of your exam preparation to help you understand and connect the information you are studying.



## Cornell Method

This method helps students organise and condense their notes for review and self-assessment. It involves dividing a page into three sections as shown.

**Recall column**

Cues  
Key words  
Headings  
Questions

**Notes column**

Write notes here:-

- main ideas, information, examples
- write in point form and short sentences
- use symbols and abbreviations
- add diagrams and drawings

Record your own thoughts and questions

**Summary**

Review your notes and write a short summary in your own words.

TOPIC: SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION  
RECALL FROM LECTURE NOTES FROM LECTURE.

Sociological Imagination C. Wright Mills

A gay couple unable to marry because of public policy

Personal troubles linked to Public Issues.  
↳ Experience vs social issues.

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- Ethnicity and policy of society - what is the structure of the society? Council plus state govt plus federal govt: 3 layers of liberal: conservative

Personal vs public - who is in this society?  
- urban, medium density mainly white.

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The individuals interaction with the institutions

Personal troubles - biography of the individual a local existence  
Public Issues - institutions affecting the local

C. Wright Mills wrote about the Sociological Imagination in 1950s. This links the personal troubles with public issues. A SUMMARY OF NOTES

[https://libguides.newcastle.edu.au/note\\_taking\\_in\\_lectures/mapping](https://libguides.newcastle.edu.au/note_taking_in_lectures/mapping)

## Index cards

Index cards are small cards designed for recording and organising information. Each card focuses on a single idea, task, or piece of information, with the content summarised or simplified, and each card connects to a central theme or concept.

**Question cards** have a study question on one side and the answer on the other

Why is note taking important?

Taking notes during meetings, seminars, or lectures activates a higher level of cognitive functioning.

**Definition cards** have a vocabulary term on one side and the definitions and additional details on the other

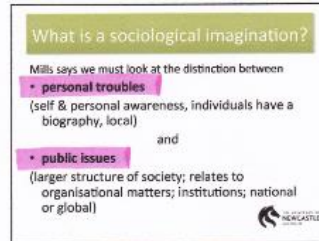
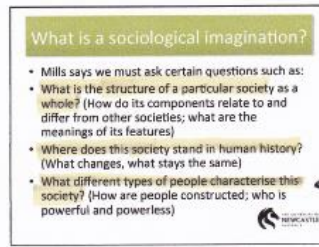
Extinction

Extinction of a species occurs when there are no more individuals of that species alive anywhere in the world - the species has died out.

## Slide print out

Most courses have the slides available prior to the lecture and you can print the slides in a format that suits your note taking purposes. There are options in Power Point to print multiple slides on a page, from one slide per page to nine. Three slides per page will make it easy to write notes next to each slide as you follow the lecture.

[https://libguides.newcastle.edu.au/note\\_taking\\_in\\_lectures/mapping](https://libguides.newcastle.edu.au/note_taking_in_lectures/mapping)



The Sociological Imagination  
Personal Troubles Linked to Public Issues.

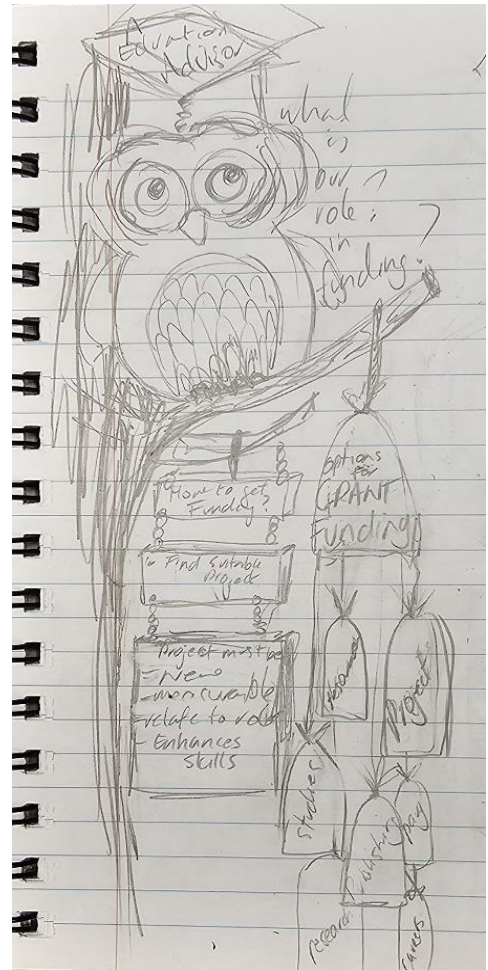
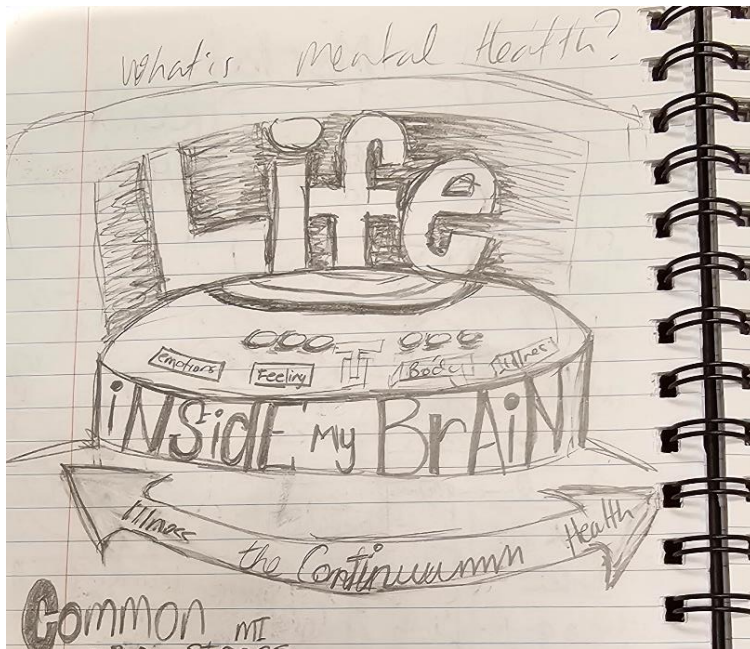
→ Ethnicity. How does the population affect society?

eg marriage equality  
 - personal  
 1 gay couple

- public  
 marriage institution  
 left vs right

## Sketchnoting

Sketchnoting is a visual note-taking technique that involves combining illustrations, symbols, and text to record ideas.



## Further support

Contact your student learning advisors via the Support for Learning team here:

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