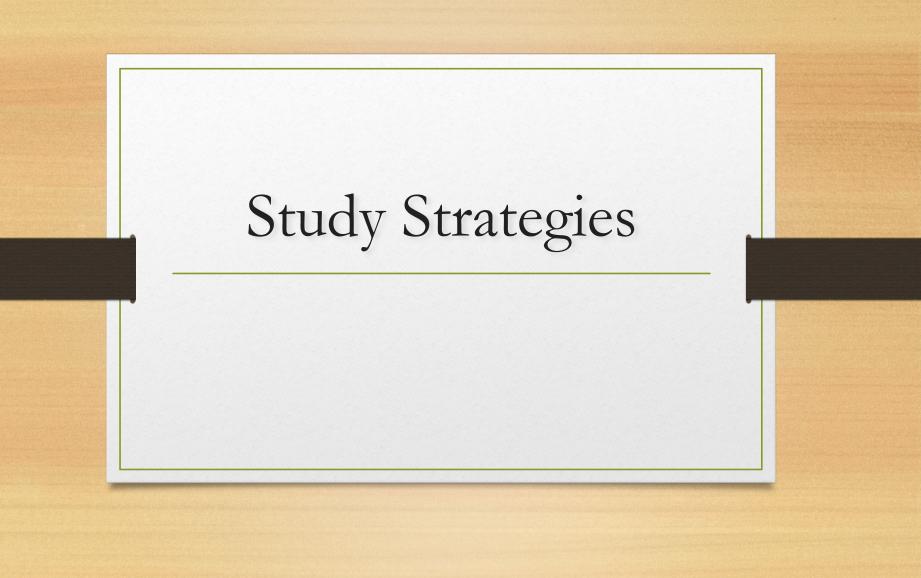
# How to Take Notes, Study, and Test Effectively

College Success Workshops

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## How to Study Effectively

- Create favorable conditions
- Generate a positive attitude
- Develop good techniques

### Favorable Conditions

- Location can you concentrate?
  - Are there distractions?
  - Music? TV? Street noise?
- Create a Schedule
  - Study at specific times each week
  - Arrange hard subjects when fresh, etc.

### Positive Attitude

- Clarify goals how does this fit?
- Find a way to make subject meaningful.
- Ask questions. Be an active learner.
- Reward yourself after each study period breaks, food, walks, music, phone, etc.

## Good Techniques

- SQR3
  - Survey (Skim) the section. Look for key words, figures and summaries.
  - Questions for each major topic
  - **R**ead and answer questions
  - **R**ecite the main points.
  - **R**eview. Create 1 page summary sheet.

### Additional techniques

- Use repetition to increase remembering. Flash cards.
- Review summary sheets and chapters weekly.
- Create associations, analogies, metaphors, and summaries.

### Deal with Problem Areas

#### Procrastination

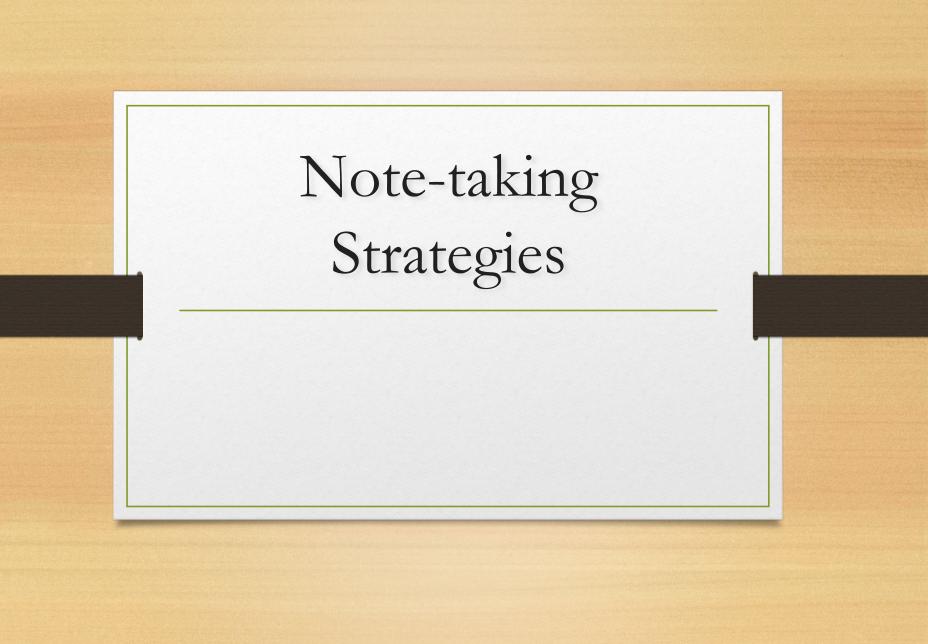
• Start quickly. Take the first step.

#### Concentration

• Remove distractions. Talk about the subject with yourself. Questions. Imagine talking with the author.

#### Boredom

• Switch subject matter. Be more active



### Notetaking – the Cornell Method

- Divide the paper into 2 columns
  - Right column for notes
  - Left column for "recall" (key phrases)
- Record lecture content in right column
- Reduce move key words/phrases to left column after lecture

### The Cornell Method

- Recite the information using these key words
- Reflect relate material to own experiences, add own thoughts
- Review use left column throughout the term

# Note-taking Tips

- Create your own abbreviations:
  - b/c (because), w/ (with), w/o (without), ex (example), diff (difference)
- Ask questions or to repeat something
- Prepare for class (familiar material)
- Stay till the end (catch summaries)

# Note-taking Tips

- Photocopy notes; then exchange and compare with friend
- Leave empty space to fill in gaps later
- Ask instructor for details after class
- Tape record (with permission)

# Note-taking Tips

- Use an outline format. Topic on one line and supporting details below.
- Sit near the front of the room
- Write legibly. Date your notes. Keep notes for one class together.
- Review each day and at end of week.

# Testing Strategies

### Learning about Forgetting

- We forget about 95% of what we are exposed to
- 53% of that forgetting happens within 20 minutes of first exposure
- Solution multiple exposures
- Better than last minute "cramming" (see 7 Day study plan)

## Seven Day Study Plan

- Day 1 organize notes, materials, & text book
- Day 2 Review lecture
- Day 3 Review text
- Day 4 Review lecture & text
- Day 5 Review lecture
- Day 6 Review text
- Day 7 Review everything

- Take care of yourself
  - Sleep, hygiene & healthy breakfast
  - Positive attitude & relaxation
  - Arrive a few minutes early
  - Sit away from doors, windows, or other distractions (& others' stress)
- Think of a reward for yourself after the exam is over

- Scan whole test check point values and budget time accordingly
- Read the directions *twice*
- Think of exam as opportunity to show the professor what you know

- Answer the easy questions first
- Then move to the more difficult
- Essays
  - Write an outline, summary or notes in margin or on the back
  - State main idea forcefully
  - Back it up with supporting detail

- Write as neatly as possible
- Check the clock to stay on track
- Relax remember to breathe
- Test anxiety an exaggerated sense of personal threat ("fight or flight")
- Poor performance on a task does not indicate personal worth

- True False questions
  - Look for qualifiers or negatives
  - Check each part of the statement
  - Think "true", and guess when you must
- Matching questions
  - Start with item you are sure of, then move to items you are less certain of, then guess

#### • Short answer

- Answer only what is asked
- Keep answer short & to the point
- If you have difficulty retrieving some aspects of answer, show what you know
- If you forget proper terminology, show what you know in your own words

#### • Multiple Choice

- Be sure it is "best" answer, not "all correct" answers (or "answer that doesn't belong")
- Read all the choices
- Cross out those that don't fit (decoys)
- Stick to the subject of the course
- Watch for negatives and extreme words, such as "only", "always" or "most".

- "All of the above" questions
  - Look for two or more correct choices
- Numbers if you don't know, cross out highest and lowest and guess in middle
- Choose between two look alike choices, crossing out other options
- Longer choices are often correct

- The almost perfect walls of granite boulders surrounding some lakes in Iowa were formed by:
  - American Indians
  - Prehistoric men
  - Huge meteors
  - Thick ice

- Because of its lack of lumber, Syria has many "beehive" homes built of:
  - Metal
  - Concrete
  - Marble
  - Mud brick

- Which materials are NOT used in making saddles?
  - Linen, canvas, serge
  - Rubber and cork
  - Wood and leather
  - Iron and steel

- The author suggests that the desert:
  - Climate is unpredictable
  - Heat is always unbearable
  - Is totally empty of rain
  - Earthquakes pose constant danger

- Which of the following cities are European capitals?
  - Paris
  - Stockholm
  - London
  - All of the above

- The "Great Pyramid" originally stood how many feet high?
  - 281 feet
  - 381 feet
  - 481 feet
  - 981 feet

- The author considers himself an authority on:
  - Touring the Middle East
  - Middle East rug dealers
  - Middle East rug bargains
  - Behavior patterns of tourists

- Why are the climates of Europe generally warmer than North America's, when they are both about the same latitude?
  - There are fewer mountains in Europe
  - The waters surrounding Europe moderate the climate, helping to keep the winters warmer and the summers cooler
  - There are fewer trees in Europe

## Test Anxiety

- Most students experience some level of anxiety during an exam.
- A small amount can actually sharpen mental alertness and enhance performance.
- Too much anxiety can interfere with exam performance.

# Test Anxiety

- What causes test anxiety?
  - Lack of preparation
    - Cramming the night before the exam
    - Poor time management
    - Failure to organize text information
    - Poor study habits

### Test Anxiety

- What causes test anxiety?
  - Worrying about the following:
    - Past performance on exams
    - How friends and other students are doing
    - The negative consequences of failure (often exaggerated)
    - "All-or-nothing" thinking
  - Losing perspective
    - It's only a test there will be others

# Physical Signs of Test Anxiety

- Any or all of the following:
  - Perspiration
  - Sweaty palms
  - Headache
  - Upset stomach
  - Rapid heartbeat
  - Tense muscles

## Effects of Test Anxiety

#### • Nervousness:

- Difficulty reading and understanding the questions on the exam
- Difficulty organizing your thoughts
- Difficulty retrieving key words and concepts when answering essay questions
- Doing poorly on an exam even though you know the material

## Effects of Test Anxiety

- Mental blocking:
  - Going blank on questions
  - Remembering the correct answers as soon as the exam is over

### How to Reduce Test Anxiety

- Study and know the material well enough that you can recall it even under stress
- Practice good time management and avoid laziness, procrastination and day dreaming
- Avoid cramming the night before exams
- Build confidence during the semester

### How to Reduce Test Anxiety

- Learn to concentrate on the material by:
  - Generating key questions from your textbook and your notes
  - Focus on key words, concepts & examples
  - Make charts & outlines to organize information in notes & textbooks

### Relaxation Techniques

- Take a couple of long deep breaths (not quick shallow ones) to relax the body and reduce stress
  - Count to five as you breath in and out
- Focus your mind on your breath or some object
- Tense and then relax muscles throughout the body

### Relaxation Techniques

- If allowed, go get a drink or go to the bathroom
- If allowed, eat something
- Break your pencil lead then go sharpen it
- Notice any negative or panicky self-statements; offer reassurance (it's OK)

### After the Test

- During the exam, think of the post-exam reward you have promised yourself
- Whether you did well or not, follow through on the post-exam reward
- Try not to dwell on any mistakes you might have made
- Just relax for a little while