PRACTICAL AND FINANCIAL LITERACY

Taking Effective Notes

Difficulty level: Easy

Practical and Financial Literacy

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Overview of the concept

This is how you take notes you can actually revise from, like writing a lesson or a video down in your own words under clear headings, instead of copying pages nobody can use. Copying word for word fills pages without making anything stick, and those pages are painful to reread later. Good notes pick out the main ideas, put them in your own words, and leave space for examples that matter. That is what turns a lesson into a short set of notes you can actually use before a test.



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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q How should you lay out a page of Cornell notes?

SOLUTION

Page split: left column = cues, right column = notes.

Bottom strip = summary in your own words.

During class, write in the right column only.

Draw a vertical line to make a narrow left column and a wide right column, plus a summary strip at the bottom.

During the lesson, write main ideas and examples in the right column, in your own words.

Within a day, add cue questions on the left and a short summary at the bottom.

EXAMPLE 2

Q Your teacher gives a long explanation of photosynthesis. How should you take notes on it, instead of copying every word?

SOLUTION

Teacher says a long explanation of photosynthesis.

Weak notes: the whole explanation copied word for word.

Strong notes: 'Plants use sunlight, water, CO_2

to make sugar + oxygen.'

Listen for the main idea, not every word.

Write that idea in your own short sentence, with the key terms kept.

Leave space between ideas so examples and questions can be added later.

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Practice questions

1 In the Cornell method, what goes in the left column only?

- A Main ideas and examples
- B Cue questions
- C A short summary
- D The date and title

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2 What goes at the top of a page of Cornell notes?

- A The date and title
- B Cue questions
- C Main ideas and examples
- D A short summary

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3 What goes in the wide right column?

- A Main ideas, examples, and processes from the lesson
- B Cue questions
- C A short summary
- D Only the date

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4 What goes in the bottom strip of Cornell notes?

- A A short summary
- B Main ideas and examples
- C Cue questions
- D A copy of the whole lesson

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Write strong notes about how the seasons change in one short sentence, in your own words.

A. Seasons change because Earth tilts as it orbits the sun, so sunlight hits each place differently through the year.

B. Seasons change because Earth moves closer to the sun in summer.

C. Seasons change because the moon pulls on the oceans.

D. Seasons change because days get longer every month.

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Write strong notes about the water cycle in one short sentence, in your own words.

A. Water evaporates, condenses into clouds, falls as rain, and collects again.

B. Water falls as rain, then stays in the sea forever.

C. Water evaporates once and never comes back.

D. Water condenses into clouds and stays there.

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7 Write strong notes about gravity in one short sentence, in your own words.

- **A** Gravity pulls objects toward Earth.
- **B** Gravity pushes objects away from Earth.
- **C** Gravity only works on the moon.
- **D** Gravity makes objects float.

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8 Should notes copy every word the teacher says?

- **A** Yes
- **B** No

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9 When should you add cues and a summary?

- A Within 24 hours
- B Within a week
- C Within a month
- D Only before the exam

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10 Why leave space between ideas in notes?

- A So examples, corrections, and questions can be added
- B So the page looks empty
- C So notes take longer to write
- D So the teacher can mark the gaps

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ANSWER KEY

1. Cue questions
2. The date and title
3. Main ideas, examples, and processes from the lesson
4. A short summary
5. Seasons change because Earth tilts as it orbits the sun, so sunlight hits each place differently through the year.
6. Water evaporates, condenses into clouds, falls as rain, and collects again.
7. Gravity pulls objects toward Earth.
8. No
9. Within 24 hours
10. So examples, corrections, and questions can be added

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