

Great Note Taking Strategies / Templates

Template 1: Outline Notes

Template 2: Cornell Notes

Start by watching [this video!](#)

Tips for ALL Note Taking:

1. Don't use full sentences! Abbreviate, shorten, write things in your own words (this is KEY to remembering it)
2. Use colors (highlighters, colored pens, etc.) to create a code for yourself. Personally, I use a yellow highlighter for super important things (conclusions, outcomes, etc.) and then one or two colored pens for less important, but still important things (dates, names, etc.)
3. Computer vs. handwritten notes
 - Computer is faster and allows you to rearrange your notes after you've started writing (you can group things together and add new points under things you already wrote), but there's less retention of the material
 - i. [Some great note taking apps you can use: Evernote, GoodNotes \(great for Ipad\) , SimpleNotes, Microsoft OneNote](#)
 - Handwritten notes is much slower, but scientific research has proven that handwriting helps you remember the content better
 - Try both and then choose what works best for you!

Outline Notes

Here is a basic breakdown of how you can outline your notes to be the most effective. You don't need to copy this exactly, it is a guide, so make it work for whatever subject/topic/class you're using it for.

A Basic Structure:

- Main Idea / Section Topic / etc.
 - A main point about this topic but more specific
 - Another point directly related to the point above
 - A second support point to the point above
 - A third supporting point or other important information
 - A second main point about this topic
- Repeat this structure for other main ideas / section topics

At the end of your notes, answer the essential question (doesn't need to be a full sentence or paragraph, bullet points are sufficient).

Example:

Title on paper: **Sumer and Mesopotamia - Unit 3**

Essential Question: How much does geography affect people's lives?

- Sumerian Civilization
 - Mesopotamia means "between two rivers" - that's where Ancient Sumer developed
 - Access to water = crops / food / drinking water ---> food and water means more people can live here & civilization can develop
 - City states created:
 - Unique cultures
 - Languages / Writing System
 - Traditions
 - Economic activities
 - Organized government
 - Establish laws to rule civilizations
 - Conduct trade
 - Expand through conquest of other civilizations
 - Social hierarchy (Ruling family- priests, merchants, scribes, artisans - peasant farmers - slaves)
 - Organized religion
 - Sumerian knowledge, technology and advancements were eventually passed down to Greece and Rome

Cornell Notes

Here is a basic breakdown of how you can use the Cornell Note Taking Method. This one is a little harder to do on a computer, and might be better with physical pen/paper but it works either way.

Basic Structure: *Draw a line across the top of your paper, down the left side and then at the bottom*

Title/Main Idea at the Top, Name, Date, etc.

Main Idea / Heading / Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Notes about main idea #1 ● Notes about main idea #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More notes about this point ○ More notes about this point ● Notes about main idea #1
Main Idea / Heading / Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Notes about main idea #2 ● Notes about main idea #2 ● Notes about main idea #2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More notes about this point <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ More notes about this point above
Main Idea / Heading / Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Notes about main idea #3 ● Notes about main idea #3 ● Notes about main idea #3

Summary / Answer to the Essential Question / Main Conclusions *(fill in this part after or at the very end of your lesson! Not during. Read through your notes and jot down the summary)*

Example:

Unit 3 - Sumer and Mesopotamia

Essential Question: How much does geography affect people's lives?

Mesopotamia - what does it mean?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mesopotamia means "between two rivers" - that's where Ancient Sumer developed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access to water = crops / food / drinking water ---> food and water means more people can live here & civilization can develop
Sumerian Civilization - Advancements / Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unique cultures ● Languages / Writing System ● Traditions ● Economic activities

Sumerian Influence on Future Civilizations

- **Organized government**
 - Establish laws to rule civilizations
 - Conduct trade
 - Expand through conquest of other civilizations
- **Social hierarchy** (Ruling family- priests, merchants, scribes, artisans - peasant farmers - slaves)
- **Organized religion**

- Sumerian knowledge, technology and advancements were eventually passed down to Greece and Rome

Ancient Sumer - Developed a lot of new technological advancements and advancements that helped their civilization grow and expand quickly.

EQ: Geography affects lives because where a civilization is located is a direct factor in it's advancement. Sumer was located between rivers which meant they had access to drinking water, water that could harvest crops and water to build a large civilization. If they developed in the dessert with no water, no food, etc. they may not have been able to develop in the way that they did.