

PRE-LECTURE: HOW TO PREPARE PROPERLY

Academic Listening – Participation in Lectures

Throughout academic life students have to attend many lectures. However, sometimes they end up uncomfortable because they do not understand what happened for the time they were there. This document gives tips to get the most from your lectures.

Know your course and topic of lecture

Check how this lecture fits within the whole course, you can check the syllabus provided at the beginning of your course. If your lecturer suggests key points and questions, go through them and jot some answers.

Familiarise yourself with the work you have done

While you listen to the lecture, relate what you hear to what you know; and look for the relationships between ideas; in this way you can not only add new concepts but reinforce what you already know.

Assigned readings

When your lecturer proposes reading to do beforehand, it is necessary to do it. Skimming the text gives you the opportunity to have a general idea about the text, you can read title, headings and topic sentences in each paragraph. In addition, you can prepare some questions for the lecturer.

While reading, you should bear in mind that **the key is to understand the outline of the topic and the key terminologies** – because if you don't understand these terms you are likely to be lost during lecture. You should also make use of this time to differentiate what you already understand and what you don't.

Look for the organizational structure of the topic - how is the information presented?

Does it begin with an example or application that is followed by explanation?

Does the information build from the general to the specific?

Does it go from specific instances to general principles?

Does the information describe a process?

Is the presentation linear (sequentially ordered) or is it complex and interconnected?

Answering these questions, may help you to understand how the lecture is going to be presented and thus a better note-taking process may take place.

Review Your Previous Lecture Notes

Not all lectures introduce a new topic, sometimes they are part of a previous lecture or class. Re-read old notes before the lecture because they can provide context and continuity.

Timing

This process should take between 15- 20 minutes. Remember, your goal is to simply prepare your brain to receive new information.

Active Learning

When you select the questions you want to ask the lecturer, or you need further information your brain is more willing to be concentrated. You can list your questions in a notebook or using post-it notes to consider so you can keep track of the lecture.

Get ready for the lecture

Arrive on time, late comers may miss valuable information provided at the beginning of the lecture. Find the best location, the front row is usually the best spot to be because it is away from distractions and you can see slides and supporting visual material clearer than the back seats.

Make sure you have enough supplies

If you take notes by hand, bring extra pens or pencils and paper. If you take notes on a laptop or other electronic device, make sure it is sufficiently charged and ready to go as soon as class begins, check plugs you can use so you can sit down near them and avoid disrupting the lecture.

Consider formatting options for your notes

The better you organize your notes, the easier they will be to understand, revise, and study. One option is the outline format, especially if the lecture is clearly structured and/or presented in such a manner.

In this format, you'll have section headings. Underneath each section heading, write down ideas in bullet form and supplementary ideas with indented sub-bullets. This is much better than just writing down everything as a new point.

CH 4: CH4sec1
Ancient Egypt & Nubia
 Sect 1: Egypt Under the Pharaohs
 I. The Nile River Valley
 A. The World's Longest River
 a. begins in E. Africa, flows 3500 miles to Med sea
 b. Nubia / Kush = mod. Sudan
 c. Cataract = groups of rocky rapids. Cataracts made it impossible for ships to travel upstream from Egypt
 B. Upper and Lower Egypt
 a. Upper Egypt = below the cataracts
 b. Lower Egypt = Nile Delta
 C. Floods and the Black Land
 a. Kemet "the black land" name Egyptians gave to rich dark soil on banks of the Nile
 b. yearly flooding is what created the Kemet
 c. yearly floods left rich fresh soil layer - but Nile floods were unpredictable
 D. The Red Land
 a. Next to the Black Land lay vast deserts "The Red Land"

Be warned that lecturers are not always organized about the main points with subpoints. Keep in mind that you may have to reorganize your notes after the lecture.

Adapted from: <http://studentstoolbox.com/lecture-preparation/>

<https://www.wikihow.com/Take-Lecture-Notes>