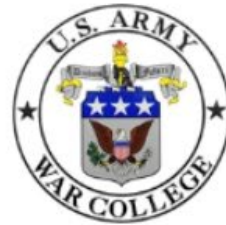


Writing Center Consortium

for Graduate-level PME



Faculty Workshop Series 2021

Note-taking Templates: Strategic Tools for Learning, Research, and Writing

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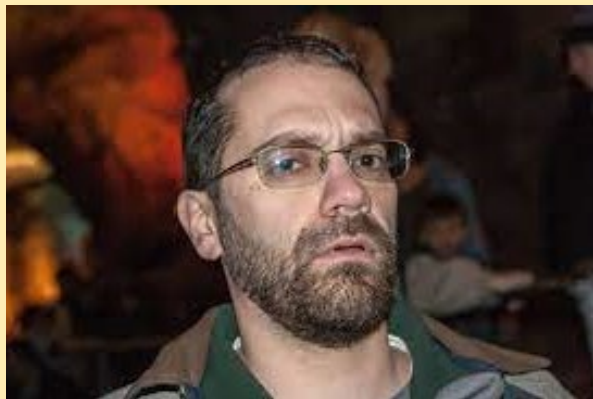
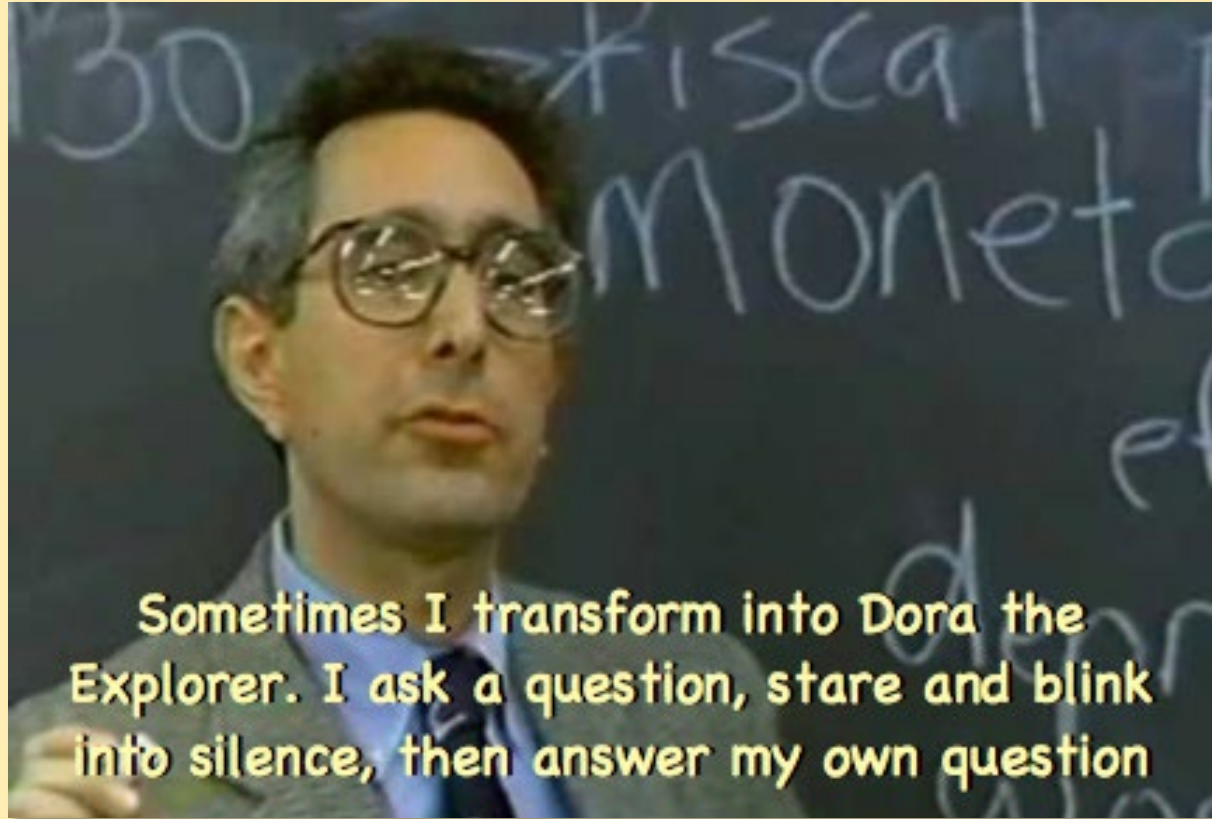


Graduate Writing Center
Naval Postgraduate School

Agenda

- Why guided note taking matters
- Best Practices
- Strategic Reading's Link to Note Taking
 - I—Identify and Summarize
 - II—Analyze and Critique
- Ex 1: Template requirements and options
- Ex 2: Sample Templates: Review and “Test Drive”
- Ex 3: Crafting Your Template

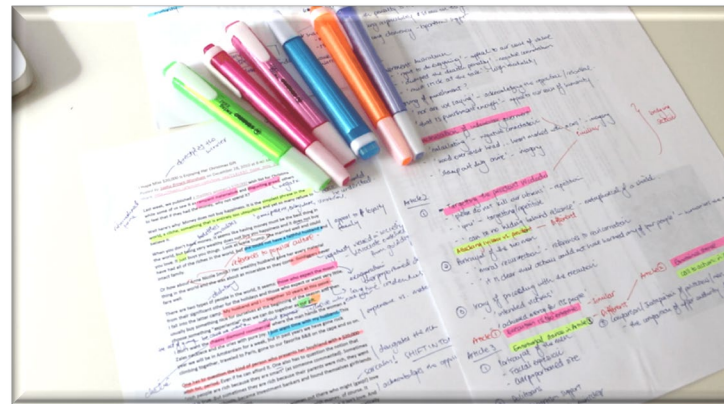
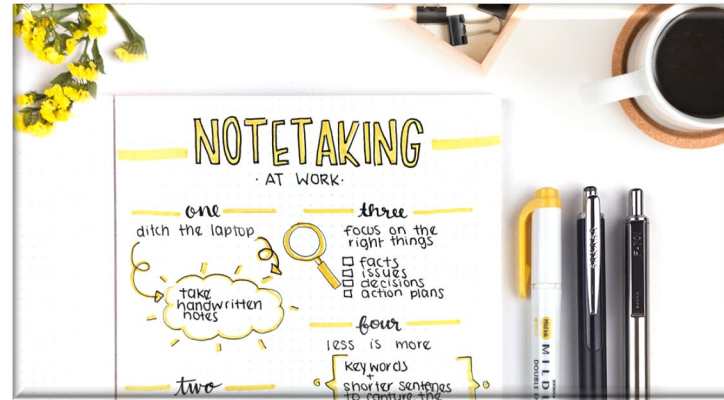
The blank-stares-and-silence phenomenon



How do you
prepare
your
students for
discussions?

Why guided note taking matters

- Note-taking and learning strategies are *not intuitive* (Garcia-Mila and Andersen)
- Students *benefit from explicit instruction* and guidance (Donohoo)



Note taking is the process of engaging information to capture key ideas and concepts in written form (Ingel, et al.)

Note taking improves learning functions

1. Understand what your professor deems important (as signaled via a note-taking template)
2. Discuss with more confidence, engagement, and depth
3. Easily access relevant texts for papers and exams
4. Keep track of sources
5. Learn Independently



Note taking is the process of engaging information to capture key ideas and concepts in written form (Ingel, et al.)

Note taking improves learning outcomes

1. Recall and retention
2. Comprehension
 1. Clarify meaning
 2. Reveal relationships
3. Analysis and synthesis
4. Critique of evidence and logic
5. Application (meta-strategy)



Note taking is the process of engaging information to capture key ideas and concepts in written form (Ingel, et al.)

Note taking teaches critical skill sets

1. Identifying essential information (Donohoo)
2. Excluding nonessential information
3. Attribution
4. Information literacy
5. Summarizing and paraphrasing (Donohoo)
6. Meta-cognition (Garcia-Mila and Andersen)
7. Meta-strategy

Note taking is the process of engaging information to capture key ideas and concepts in written form (Ingel, et al.)

Best practices

OPTIONS TESTED

1. **Encoding**
take notes/no review
- ★ 2. **Encoding plus storage**
take notes/review notes
3. **External storage**
absent self from
lecture/review borrowed
notes (Kiewra et al.)

BEST RESULTS

Note taking is the process of engaging information to capture key ideas and concepts in written form (Ingel, et al.)

Best practices

IN ORDER OF EFFECTIVENESS

★ **1. Encoding plus storage**
take notes/review notes

2. Encoding
take notes/no review

3. External storage
absent self from
lecture/review borrowed
notes (Kiewra et al.)

IN PRACTICE

- ✓ Guided and encouraged by faculty
- ✓ Use a template
- ✓ Mostly summarize and paraphrase, not copy and paste/quote
- ✓ Notate SUM, PARA, Q, and ME/MINE
- ✓ Review notes later

Note taking is the process of engaging information to capture key ideas and concepts in written form (Ingel, et al.)

Best practices

- Keep your reading notes **separate** from your writing document.

Notes LastName1_Short Title1.docx

Notes LastName2_Short Title2.docx

LastName_NS3023_Final Paper_**Doc**.docx

- Record **complete bibliographic details** in each notes template.

- Code borrowed ideas, words, and data by **how** you transferred them into your template:

QUOTE: “Their exact words.” (p. x)

PARA: Their ideas or data in your own words. (p. x)

SUM: Their data, main idea, or conclusion in your own words. (p. x)

- Code notes to yourself in your **template**:

ME: or **MINE:** Your own ideas, reactions, questions, analysis to their material.

Or **[put between brackets for your own ideas, reactions, questions, analysis]**.

- Write in your **document file**, transferring source content—with citations—from your **templates** as you develop your paper.

SO MUCH READING, SO LITTLE TIME!

STRATEGIC READING I

Adapted from Chapter One of *Grad School Essentials* by Dr. Zachary Shore,
University of California Press, 2016 (8-39)

Identify
and
Summarize



WHAT IS STRATEGIC READING?

This is an active reading method that shows how to quickly extract an author's argument and structure from a text. It develops reading comprehension, enhances critical thinking skills, and saves time!

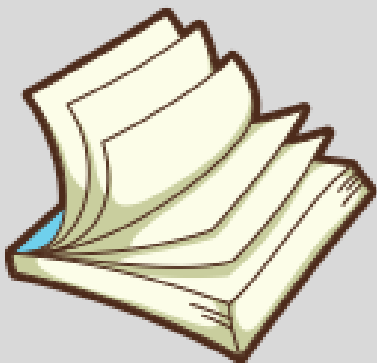
SO MUCH READING, SO LITTLE TIME!

STRATEGIC READING I

Adapted from Chapter One of *Grad School Essentials* by Dr. Zachary Shore,
University of California Press, 2016 (8-39)

STEP 1: ANALYZE TITLE(S) FOR CLUES TO THE ARGUMENT

This may include the main title, subtitle, section headings, and/or table of contents. Do these titles give clues that "preview" the topic and the author's main idea?



STEP 2: READ THE CONCLUSION FIRST

Read the conclusion for clues to the argument. **Read, restate, and write down** the last paragraph or sentence of the conclusion. Next, go to the beginning of the conclusion and read from there. This will give you an idea of the author's main point.

SO MUCH READING, SO LITTLE TIME!

STRATEGIC READING I

Adapted from Chapter One of *Grad School Essentials* by Dr. Zachary Shore,
University of California Press, 2016 (8-39)

STEP 3: CHECK THE INTRODUCTION

Go to the introduction. Based on what you found in the conclusion, is your understanding of the main point correct in the introduction? If so, great! If not, keep looking.



STEP 4: READ AND RESTATE THE OPENING SENTENCES AS YOU SKIM

Read, restate, and write down the opening sentences of paragraphs or sections that you need to skim. This step determines whether or not to spend time reading the entire paragraph.



SO MUCH READING, SO LITTLE TIME!

STRATEGIC READING II

Adapted from Chapter Two of *Grad School Essentials* by Dr. Zachary Shore,
University of California Press, 2016 (40–55)

Analyze
and
Critique



OBJECTIVE: CRITIQUE A TEXT

A critique is "a rigorous, probing test of the soundness of the author's claims" (Shore 2016, 41). Follow these steps to identify how authors support their arguments and to help develop your own critical response.

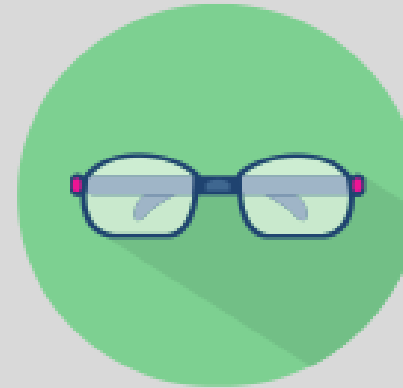
SO MUCH READING, SO LITTLE TIME!

STRATEGIC READING II

Adapted from Chapter Two of *Grad School Essentials* by Dr. Zachary Shore,
University of California Press, 2016 (40–55)

STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE ARGUMENT

Use the Strategic Reading I steps to identify the argument. What main points form the basis of the author's conclusion? These main points are called the **premises**. Restate and write down the premises and conclusion clearly and concisely.



STEP 2: CRITIQUE EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

Identify the author's key **evidence** and sources of that evidence. Question whether the author's evidence—such as cases, data, and sources—is accurate and relevant to the premises. Does this evidence support the argument?

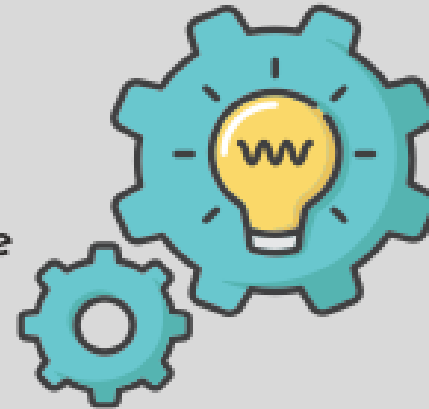


STRATEGIC READING II

Adapted from Chapter Two of *Grad School Essentials* by Dr. Zachary Shore,
University of California Press, 2016 (40–55)

STEP 3: CRITIQUE THE LOGIC

Identify the **assumptions**—underlying beliefs about how things work and what's true—upon which each premise rests. Are the assumptions valid? Given the author's assumptions, does the argument follow logically? Could X reasonably cause Y?



STEP 4: REASSESS THE AUTHOR'S THESIS

Double-check: do the premises support the argument? If so, you've verified that the author has a strong argument. If not, explain the weaknesses in the author's reasoning and/or evidence.

Template requirements and options

Exercise 1

1. Bibliographic information
2. Other source information
3. Keywords
4. Research question
5. Main argument
6. Sub-arguments
7. Results
8. Problem being addressed
9. Scope
10. Evidence: a) presented and b) assessed
11. Methodology
12. Assumptions
13. Weaknesses of logic, methods, data
14. Counter-arguments
15. Significance—theoretical or applied
16. Key theories and concepts
17. How related to your research
18. Useful new sources
19. Did results change your thinking?
20. Agree with author? Why or why not?

Which are required?	Which are optional?

Test drive a template

Exercise 2



Use ARTICLE

Theresa Machemer, "Zoom fatigue' may be with us for years. Here's how we'll cope," *National Geographic*, April 13, 2021.

Use

TEMPLATE 1

One- to Two-Page Article Summary Template (Defense Analysis)

Citation
 [Full bibliographic information]

Executive summary
 [Brief (2-3 sentence) summary of the article "at a glance." Write this after you've completed the rest of this template]

Research question
 [What is the core question the author is asking?]

Logical argument
 [How do the authors "tell the story" that leads to their conclusions? What assumptions are made?]

Evidence and methodology
 [What evidence do the authors use?]

Key ideas that the author uses
 [What are key or topics, theories, models, and concepts, if any?]

Key findings
 [What do the authors come away with after their analysis? What causes are believed to generate or contribute to the outcome being explained?]

How this relates to my research project
 [How can this help you in your own research? Can you build off these findings, perhaps by testing them against other cases or explaining other contributors to the outcome being explained?]

Outgoing questions
 [What questions does this article leave you with? Are there concepts or ideas they use that you're unfamiliar with? Are there holes in their logic or evidence?]

Useful new sources
 [I like to grab at least one new source from an article's bibliography, especially one that may answer questions the article leaves me with. This can help you build a chain of research that explores concepts in more depth.]

or

Reading Notes Template for Security Studies

1. Complete bibliographic information (see library.aps.edu/citation) or otherwise record:
 - a. Is there anything worth noting about the author (well known in the field? military experience?), publisher (academic, gov't, think tank?), or source type?
2. Main question—What are they trying to understand?
3. Primary argument—State in one sentence, usually claiming that X (inputs) contributes to Y (an outcome).
4. Secondary argument(s), if any—Other factors contributing to the outcome, other conditions that need to be present to see the outcome.
5. Related to broad topic (e.g., counterinsurgency, terrorism, great power competition, US-China relations, diplomacy, international organization)
6. Theories, frameworks, and/or major concepts applied or tested? (e.g., social mobilization framework, neorealism, bandwagoning, patron-client relations, natural resource dependence, democratization, civil-military relations)
7. What's the scope of the work? What cases did the author examine? (e.g., US military-Afghanistan local leader collaboration, 2005-2010, is one case related to understanding the broad topic of counterterrorism strategies)

Optional but useful to think about:

 - a. Do the cases seem applicable to representation of the research question being asked?
 - b. Do you think the findings may be applicable to other cases? If so, which ones?
8. Evidence presented? (e.g., for US-Afghanistan collaboration, the paper might describe sharing of intel, weapons, transportation, other resources; frequency of meetings; between actors; nature and frequency of fighting or training together).

Optional but very useful to think about:

 - a. Was the evidence adequate (enough)?
 - b. Is it reliable?
 - c. Is it convincing and reasonable, meaning logically connected?
 - d. Are you thinking of evidence that "something" that would better answer the question or support the conclusion?
9. Any other data or background provided? (e.g., Afghanistan election results from 2007, history of conflict dating back to Cold War, population or troop statistics—not the details, necessarily, but the type of data, so you're easily reminded where to find it)
10. Do the conclusions change your understanding of the topic? If so, how?
11. Do you agree with the author? Why or why not?

TEMPLATE 2

Lessons learned during test drive: Exercise 2

Insights from the group:

1. Template heading prompts and number are influenced by purpose, audience, and phase in class
2. Shorter is better, but hard to do
3. Can add follow-on questions through in-class discussion or even asynch discussion boards
4. Need description, but headings can really drive critical thinking



Creating Your Template

Exercise 3

1. Bibliographic information
2. Other source information
3. Keywords
4. Research question
5. Main argument
6. Sub-arguments
7. Results
8. Problem being addressed
9. Scope
10. Evidence: a) presented and b) assessed
11. Methodology
12. Assumptions
13. Weaknesses of logic, methods, data
14. Counter arguments
15. Significance—theoretical or applied
16. Key theories and concepts
17. How related to your research
18. Useful new sources
19. Did results change your thinking?
20. Agree with author? Why or why not?

TOOLS

- Your familiar article
- Your list of requirements and options
- Template 1 **or** Template 2 to customize

Shared template tips:

Exercise 3

Other possibilities from the group for heading prompts not on either sample template:

1. Executive summary
2. Instructional period/class name
3. Terms defined
4. Strengths of argument
5. Counterarguments
6. How this applies to my previous experience
7. How this is new to me
8. How I think I may apply this in the future



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[Strategic Reading I](#) (infographic), Graduate Writing Center, Naval Postgraduate School, 2021.

[Strategic Reading II](#) (infographic), Graduate Writing Center, Naval Postgraduate School, 2021.

Additional Readings

Boch, Françoise and Annie Piolat. "Note Taking and Learning: A Summary of Research," *The WAC Journal*, 16 (Sept. 2005), 101-113.

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