# How to take notes in class

In our learning journey, most of us attend classes to learn various topics. How do we sieve through the information we receive to decide on the important points? Can we retrieve and locate the information easily at any time? An easy way to achieve these goals is to take notes in class!

## What is note-taking?

Note-taking involves writing down important points from the lesson. The notes should be able to help you process and understand the content in a more effective manner.

## Why should you take notes?

- You will be forced to listen to the teacher carefully
- To retain information better
- Helps to recap and review what was taught in class
- Notes taken can be used as study material for exams

## Steps to note-taking:

### 1. BEFORE A LESSON

**☑ Be prepared**
- Look through the outline of the lecture and get a rough idea of the important concepts
- Get ready to listen out for them during class

**☑ Highlight unfamiliar terms**
- Think about terms and concepts that you are unsure of
- Get ready to clarify these during class

### 2. DURING A LESSON

**☑ Keep organised**
- Always make sure you start on a new page for each lesson
- Date and title your notes
- Number all chapters or pages

**☑ Be objective**
- Keep in mind the purpose of the lesson. This prevents cluttering your notes with unnecessary information

**☑ Listen attentively**
- Listen for keywords, note down only important information, not everything

**☑ Write legibly**
- Keep notes short and brief, use symbols, shorthand or visual aids
- Leave extra space for additional comments when you review your notes after the lesson

### 3. AFTER A LESSON

**☑ Review**
- Identify and clean up parts that are not clear or illegible
- Fill in further facts and examples to clear concepts

**☑ Evaluate**
- Check that the information you have is accurate against other sources such as a textbook
- Consult your teacher if you are still unclear

**☑ Summarise**
- Highlight keywords and important points that should be memorised

**☑ Store**
- Store your notes (whether physical or digital version) in a safe place for easy retrieval.
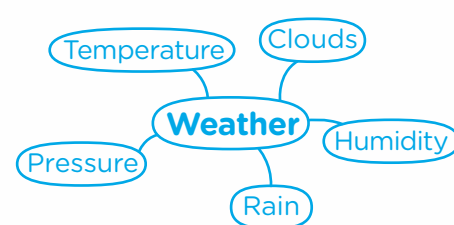
## NOTE-TAKING AIDS:

Use the following aids to organise information

### SYMBOLS & SHORTCUTS

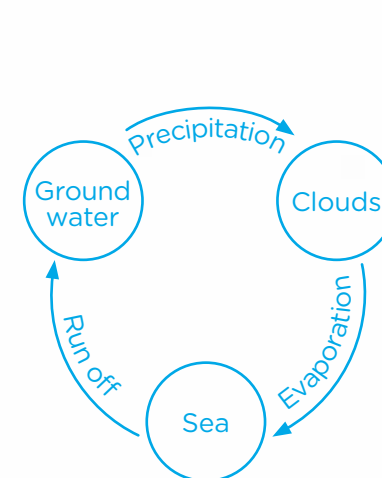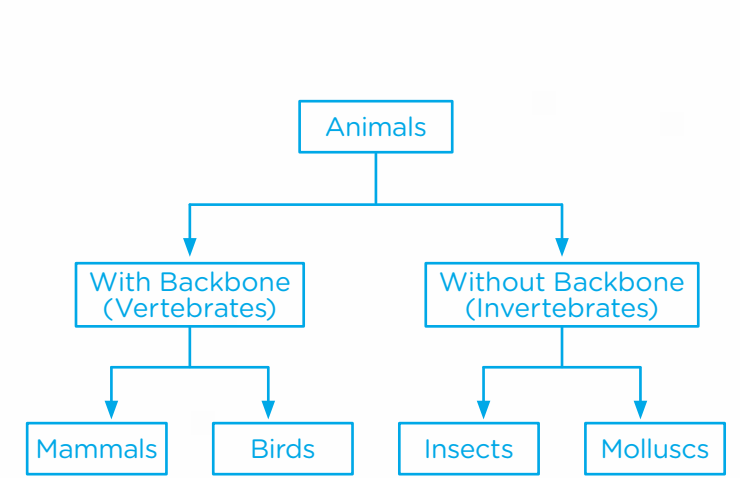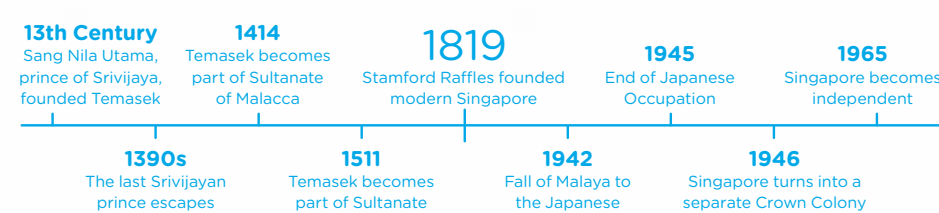| Symbol | Description/meaning |
|---|---|
| [ ] or ( ) | Information that belongs together |
| ⟶ | Leads to, becomes |
| c.f. | compare |
| ∵ | because |
| ∴ | therefore |
| decrg | Use g to represent ing endings e.g. decrg (decreasing), ckg (checking) |
| s/t or s/o | something or someone |

### MAPS & DIAGRAMS

**Concept map**

Temperature — Clouds — Weather — Humidity — Pressure — Rain

**T-charts**

| Advantage | Disadvantage |
|---|---|

**Process diagrams**

Ground water → Precipitation → Clouds → Evaporation → Sea → Run off → Ground water

**Branching diagrams**

Animals
- With Backbone (Vertebrates)
  - Mammals
  - Birds
- Without Backbone (Invertebrates)
  - Insects
  - Molluscs

**Time lines**

- **13th Century** Sang Nila Utama, prince of Srivijaya, founded Temasek
- **1390s** The last Srivijayan prince escapes to Temasek
- **1414** Temasek becomes part of Sultanate of Malacca
- **1511** Temasek becomes part of Sultanate of Johor
- **1819** Stamford Raffles founded modern Singapore
- **1942** Fall of Malaya to the Japanese
- **1945** End of Japanese Occupation
- **1946** Singapore turns into a separate Crown Colony
- **1965** Singapore becomes independent

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www.nlb.gov.sg/sure

**Source** Look at its origins. Is it trustworthy?

**Understand** Know what you're reading. Search for clarity.

**Research** Dig deeper. Go beyond the initial source.

**Evaluate** Find the balance. Exercise fair judgement.

s.u.r.e.
Source · Understand · Research · Evaluate