Toronto
District
School
Board

# STUDENT TIP SLIPS

## FROM LISTENING TO EFFECTIVE NOTE-TAKING

1. Prepare ahead so you can preview the main points of what the teacher will cover in class. Base your listening and note-taking on what you have already read.

2. Date your notes and record the name of the class on your sheet. Leave at least a half-dozen lines between each day's notes.

3. Leave wide margins on each sheet for personal notes to yourself.

4. Record only the main ideas a teacher emphasizes. Students are often tempted to write down everything, but the purpose of note-taking is to focus on main points. Here's a quick reminder of what to listen for:

   ❑ Pay close attention to opening and closing comments.

   ❑ Listen for "buzz" words.

   ❑ Write down any idea your teacher keeps repeating.

   ❑ Watch for gestures and listen for changes in your teacher's tone of voice.

   ❑ Take notes on any material your teacher writes on the board. Always copy diagrams, charts, or graphs from the board. Teachers generally do not go to the trouble of writing things out unless they consider the information important.

5. Restate and summarize your teacher's main ideas in the fewest possible words, those which clearly convey the idea. To explain the ideas, use your own words. This helps you think about what the statements really mean.

6. Arrange main ideas under headings. You can do this in outline form or according to a workable system you develop yourself.

7. If you have time, write down at least one example your teacher provides to show how an idea works. When you read your notes later on, one or two specific examples will refresh your memory of the main point.

8. Call attention to important words with your own personal symbols. Use boxes, capital letters, underlining, circles, stars, dots, question marks or exclamation marks to highlight really major points.

9. Use abbreviations or other shorthand symbols only if you understand them. Here are a few shorthand symbols you might want to use:

   | | | | |
   |---|---|---|---|
   | + plus | e.g. for example | > greater than | \ therefore |
   | < less than | info information | - minus | = equal |
   | re regarding | avg average | w/ with | w/o without |

10. Always get someone else's notes if you missed a class or can't read your own.

**GUIDANCE PROGRAM & SERVICES DEPARTMENT**