The Cornell Note Taking System

CACC Training Aid 4-T-2
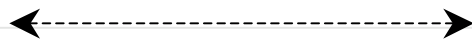Last modified 6 Jan 06

THE CORNELL NOTE TAKING SYSTEM

Step #1: Prepare

Recall Column

Record Column

←-------------------------→

--2 Inches--

←--→

--6 Inches--

Record the lectures as fully as possible.

Reduce ideas
after class into
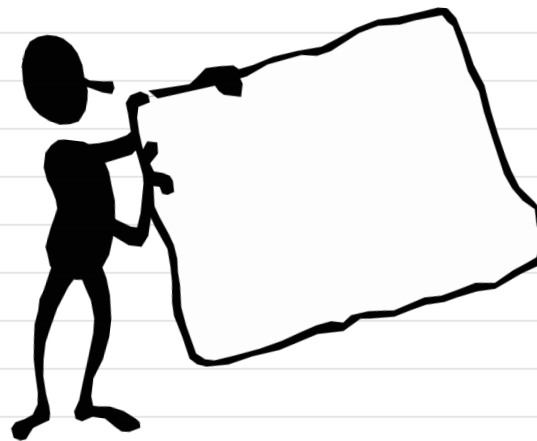a few words.

--2 1/2 Inches--

Reduce Column

Reduce the main
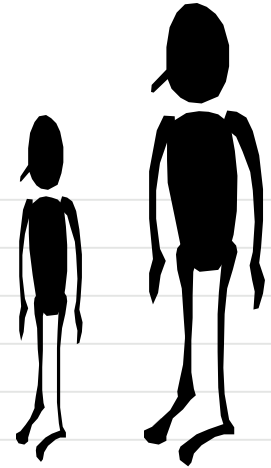points of this page of
your lecture notes.

Step #2: Record

Record in Class

- During the lecture, write as many facts as you can.
  - Use shorthand to get the full idea.
  - Leave spaces between ideas so you can fill in more later.

Step #3: Reduce

Reduce after class

- As soon after class as possible, summarize these ideas and facts in as *few* words as possible in the Reduce Column.

  - Helps show relationships between points & strengthens memory.

 - Prepares you for exams gradually & ahead of time.

Step #4: Recall

- Recalling what your wrote in your notes, write questions in the Recall column of your notes to quiz yourself on the material.

  - Write your questions as close as possible to the beginning of the section in your notes you are quizzing yourself on.
  - Write a question for each new idea presented in your notes.
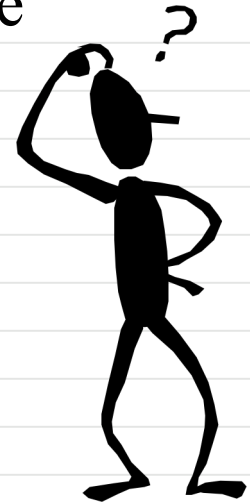
Step #4: Recall, Continued

- The questions you write in the Recall column will become your best method for checking what you have learned!
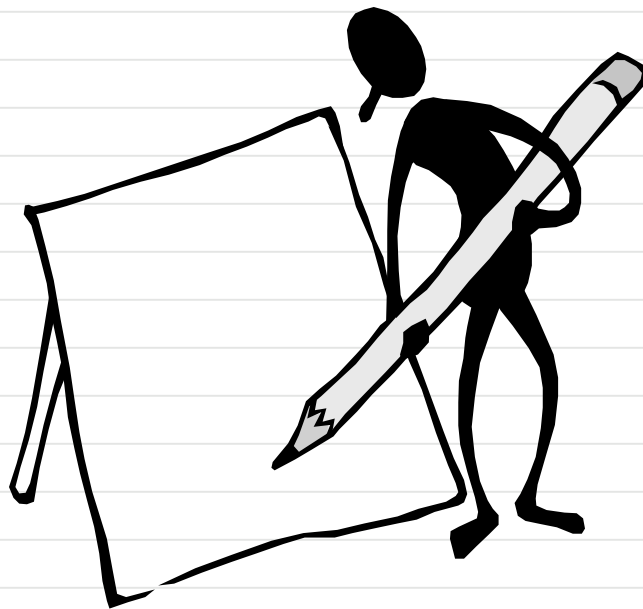
Step #5: Recite

## Recite from the Recall Column.

- Cover the Record Column.

- Using only the words in the Recall Column, say over the facts as fully as you can *in your own words*!

- Then, uncover your notes and check what you have said against the facts.

  – This will help transfer ideas to your

    long-term memory!
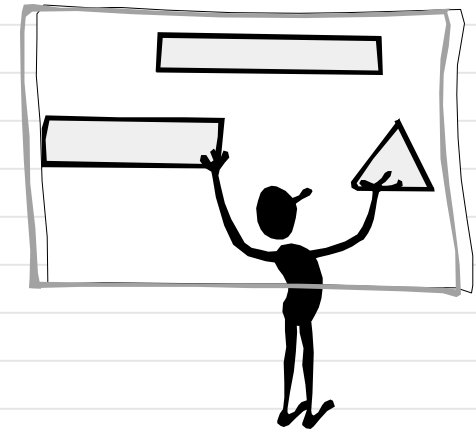
Step #6: Reflect

- **<u>Reflect on possible test questions and mark unclear points.</u>**

- Helps in making sense of your notes by finding relationships and order in the material.

- Try to put ideas in categories & tie old material to the new.

- Think about which points will appear on tests & highlight any unclear points so you can ask questions about them *before* the next lecture.
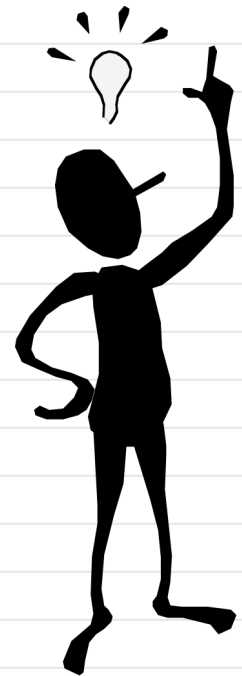
Step #7: Review

Review to improve your memory.

- If you will spend ten (10) minutes every week or so in a quick review of these old notes, you will retain most of what you have learned and you will relate the facts and ideas to present lectures or readings.

Notetaking Tips

- Keep a separate section of your notebook or binder for each course.

- Notes for each lecture should begin on a new page.

- Date your lecture notes and number all pages.

- Never use a sentence when you can use a phrase, or a phrase when you can use a word.

Notetaking Tips, Cont.

- Use indentations to distinguish between major and minor points.

- Put most notes in your own words. However, the following should be noted exactly:
  - Formulas , Definitions, and Specific facts
- Use abbreviations and symbols wherever possible. Note down unfamiliar vocabulary and unclear areas.

- If you should miss something completely, leave a blank space and get it later.

Notetaking Tips, Cont.

- Develop a code system of note-marking to indicate questions, comments, important points, due dates of assignments, etc.

- Make sure you can understand what you have written and if needed, make corrections.

- Clear up misunderstandings or fill in missing information by consulting the lecturer, TA, classmates, the texts, or additional readings

The End!