

Visual Notetaking

Visual note taking can be a great way to synthesize and understand your notes. Some students like to take notes during lecture or when reading using techniques for visual organization (e.g., charts) or graphic-representation (e.g., pictures). The types of notes you take depend upon the content you are capturing and your purpose for taking notes. Visual note taking is also a strategy that students can incorporate into exam preparation by reorganizing information into new study notes or by adding pictures and colour to existing notes.

The Benefits of Graphic Organizers

- Visual notes can help you make connections and understand concepts:
 - Understanding improves by seeing connections within the big picture; ◦ Making connections makes information easier to recall.
- Establishing meaningful connections between the information and your prior knowledge and experiences enhances learning:
 - You use higher order thinking skills by evaluating the information to create an image associated with it; therefore, you are thinking about what you are learning in a new way that will help you understand and recall information easily.
- Thinking in pictures helps you analyze and interpret information using your abilities to recall and understand:
 - Pictures and visuals expand your understanding and allow you to analyze and interpret information (Pauk, 2001, p. 323).
 - Thinking visually increases understanding and remembering of information because you use both sides of your brain (Pauk, 2001, p. 326).

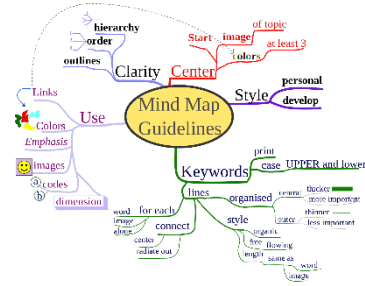
How to Start Taking Visual Notes

- Convert the sentences you've read or heard into a diagram or graph.
- Use concept maps to summarize key concepts or redraw the map to include new concepts and more information.
- Link new ideas in your map to ones you already know or redraw your map to gain a different view of the information.
- Don't be afraid to use colours, symbols, shapes, different font sizes and types.
- Focus on main ideas and keep information concise.
- Be creative with your notes!

Types of Visual Note Taking Techniques

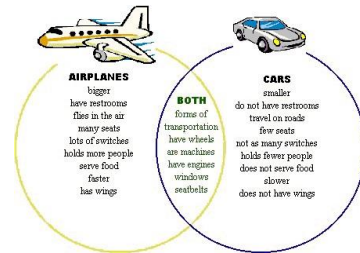
Concept Map or Mind Map

- Used to show how concepts relate to a main idea.
- Helps to cement important ideas, concepts and their relationships in your memory.



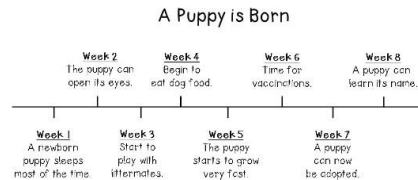
Venn Diagram

- Used for comparing and contrasting concepts.



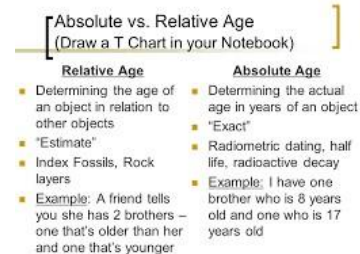
Timeline

- Used to understand a sequence of events.



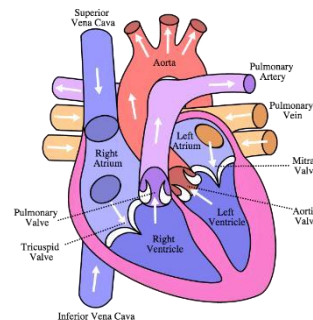
T-Chart

- Used for comparison between concepts.



Diagram

- Used to understand how an object works or the different components of an object.



Andrade, J. (2010). What does doodling do? *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 24(1), 100-106.
Pauk, W. (2001). *How to study in college*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.