



## The Betty East Tutoring Center at Victoria College

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### **Listening and Note Taking**

We think about four times faster than we speak. Effective listening requires energy, so you have to actively try to listen. Taking notes is a great way to enhance listening and remembering the content of lectures.

#### Before Class

- Have a mind-set geared toward listening
- Test yourself over the previous lecture while waiting for the next one to begin.
- Skim relevant reading assignments for main ideas, new technical terms, etc.
- To be physically and mentally alert, eat before class; sit in the front or center of the room; and focus.
- Using separate, full size notebooks for each class will enhance your note taking skills.

#### During Class

- Listen for the structure and information in the lecture.
- Resist distractions, emotional reactions, or boredom.
- Pay attention to the speaker for verbal, postural, and visual clues to what's important.
- Label important points and organizational clues: main points, examples, etc.
- If your lecturer has an accent you find hard to understand or has mannerisms you find distracting, relax and attend even more carefully to the content of the lecture. Focus on their mouth as they speak, not they're gestures.
- When possible, put the lecture into your own words, but if you can't, don't let it worry and distract you.
- Be consistent in your use of form, abbreviation, etc.
- If you feel you don't take enough notes, divide your page into 5 sections and try to fill each part every 10 minutes (or work out your own time line).
- Ask questions if you don't understand.
- Instead of closing your notebook early and getting ready to leave, listen carefully to information given towards the end of class; summary statements may be useful to highlight main points and there may be possible quiz questions.

#### After Class

- Clear up any questions raised by the lecture by asking the teacher or classmates.
- Fill in missing points or misunderstood terms from the text or other sources.
- Edit your notes by labeling main points, adding recall clues, and questions to be answered. Key points in the notes can be highlighted with different colors of ink or highlighters.
- Make note of your ideas and reflections, keeping them separate from those of the speaker.

#### Periodically

- Review your notes: glance at your recall clues and see how much you can remember before rereading the notes.
- Look for themes, main concepts, and methods of presentation over the course of several lectures.
- Make up and answer possible test questions.