

# Note Taking Lesson 1 out of 4: Listening Skills

English 1, LaGuardia Arts High School  
Mr. Moore, [classjump.com/moore](http://classjump.com/moore)

*Revised for 2008-2009*

## **Data from 2007-2008: Final Results**

### **Baseline Assessment 2008-09:**

1- Accuracy:	2.8/5
1- Focus:	4.1/5
1- Organization:	2.4/5
1- Deeper Meaning:	2.8/5

### **Honors Students 2007-08:**

Keywords vs. Copying:	3.5/4
Relevance:	3.09/4
Organization:	2.5/4
Use of Notes:	3/4

### **Reading Workshop Students 2007-08:**

Keywords vs. Copying:	3.65/4
Relevance:	2.6/4
Organization:	2.35/4
Use of Notes:	2.1/4

## ***Analysis of Data:***

### **How I used this year's data:**

#### **Baseline Assessment 2008-09:**

The Baseline Assessment showed me that students were coming into the class with an impressive ability to identify salient points. The most obvious weakness was in organization, with ability to synthesize information and use notes to construct analyses also lacking. In addition, accuracy was an issue that needed to be addressed. With the problems with listening comprehension that are suggested by the low accuracy score, I decided to change my instructional practices in order to better meet students' needs.

1- Accuracy:	2.8/5
1- Focus:	4.1/5
1- Organization:	2.4/5
1- Deeper Meaning:	2.8/5

### **How I used last year's data:**

#### **Summative/Formative Assessment 2007-08:**

**Keywords vs. Copying 2007-08:** Most students ultimately used keywords effectively rather than copying notes verbatim. Reading workshop students even outperformed their counterparts in the honors class in this category. Honors: 3.5 Reading Workshop: 3.65

**Relevance 2007-08:** Many students focused on the assigned topic while taking notes, recording information with a purpose. Honors: 3.09 Reading Workshop: 2.6

**Organization 2007-08:** Despite our efforts, students' notes were not nearly as well organized as we had hoped. Honors: 2.5 Reading Workshop: 2.35

**Use of Notes 2007-08:** This was also a weak category. Honors students made some use of their notes while writing their short syntheses, but Reading Workshop students used few specific examples of quotations from their notes when producing the writing sample.

**Decision Making:** This year's project deals with regular-track students. This means that results from both Honors and Reading Workshop will be worth keeping in mind.

In addition to revisions to the four lesson plans, larger systemic changes must be implemented within the class. Students will be allowed to use their notes on certain tests and essays as a way of rewarding them for taking excellent notes. In addition, notebooks will be checked with greater frequency both formally and informally. Students with superb notebooks will pass them around the class so that all can see examples of exemplary notes. I will regularly thank students for taking the time to take good notes. I will put questions on tests that are only related to class discussion, further rewarding students for taking good notes. I will sometimes ask students to take notes on a separate sheet of paper that is submitted and graded. I am using the data from last year's study to make decisions about how to best meet my students' needs.

Regarding the first lesson, substandard "relevance" marks among the Reading Workshop students suggest to me that weaker students may need more explicit instruction about what information is important to transfer to notes. I made the following changes to this year's plan:

- I had students restate the listening rules on our worksheet in their own words and debate whether they were indeed helpful guidelines.
- I had students record in their notebooks opinions regarding improving listening skills for note taking.
- I repeated the key ideas because I have learned that saying something once is not enough.
- I used a reading passage that relates to what we are currently studying.
- I paused after keywords so that students could hear clearly what was most important.

I hope that these changes will improve students' "focus on task" scores. (This is what we have renamed "relevance" on the revised rubric.) Please note that the note taking rules are photocopied from an excellent text called *Writers INC*.



**Aim:** What should I write down in my notes?

**Instructional Objectives:**

- Students will be taught strategies for identifying key topics and ideas from a spoken lecture or discussion.
- Students will be motivated to take notes as they learn about the correlation between good note taking skills and outstanding academic performance.

**Performance Objectives:**

- Students will submit their notes and writing sample on the *On Cannibals* reading passage.
- Students will be take notes throughout class and participate.

**Materials:** *On Cannibals* reading, note taking reference sheet from *Writers INC*

**Procedure:**

Hook	5 minutes	Lead a discussion on listening and note taking during which the questions are discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does taking notes help a person earn higher grades?</li> <li>• What is the best way to take notes?</li> <li>• How do I know what I should write in my notes?</li> </ul>
Mini-lesson	5 minutes	Distribute the note taking listening reference sheet. Ask students to take turns reading aloud strategies for note taking (focus on 3, 5, 7). Ask <i>different students</i> from those who read them to paraphrase the rules after reading them. Ask each student to write in his or her notebook whether the rule is worth following as we proceed.
Reading Passage	10 minutes	Tell students that they will explain why Montaigne believes native people are superior to Europeans. Encourage them to remember the listening strategies that we just reviewed. Read the short passage twice, and pause after important passages.
Journal Entry	15 minutes	Students write a two-paragraph response to the question, “According to Michel de Montaigne’s 1580 text <i>On Cannibals</i> , in what ways are native people superior to Europeans?” They are encouraged to use the notes that they just took while writing their piece
Summary	5 minutes	The teacher leads a discussion on the following topic: How do you know when the information that your teacher conveys to you is worth writing down in your notes? Which of the strategies were you able to apply as you listened to the passage? What ideas did you write down?

**Homework:** Review your notes for our class so far. Use your highlighter to mark the most salient points.

## HANDOUT:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Remember to keep the goal in mind as you listen. In addition, pay attention to signals that may indicate that information is important.

Write your two paragraph response to the following question on the back of this sheet: "According to Michel de Montaigne's 1580 text *On Cannibals*, in what ways are native people superior to Europeans?"