

# STAR Notetaking Strategy

(How to become a "STAR" at taking lecture or book notes)

## **S = Set Up Paper**

- a. Put name, class, and date in upper right-hand corner.
- b. All notes need a title.
- c. Draw a line down the length of the paper about one-third of the way in (about three inches.)

## **T = Take Notes**

- a. PARAPHRASE the text or lecturer in the right-hand column.
- b. Use selective listening to decide important information. If the lecturer strays from the topic, don't be fooled.
- c. Use whatever it takes to cue your own memory system. You may, for example, use capitals, printing, underlining, arrows, or even pictures.
- d. Don't get hung up on spelling. If you know what you meant, that is all that counts. Later, if you include this information in an essay or other type of work, you will check a reference for proper spelling.
- e. Use abbreviations that work for you. Develop your own shorthand.

## **A = After Class**

- a. Within 5 minutes of class, or as soon as is humanly possible, edit your notes. Reread them looking for places to make additions, deletions, or clarifications.
- b. Work with a PARTNER whenever possible.
- c. Use a highlighter or underlining to emphasize important points.
- d. Note any points that need to be clarified with the lecturer the next session.
- e. NOW fill in the LEFT-HAND COLUMN with QUESTIONS, ICONS (SYMBOLS and PICTURES), and/or MEMORY KEYS.

## **R = Review Notes**

- a. Review notes regularly:
  - 1) After class
  - 2) At least weekly
  - 3) Before the test
- b. Cover the right column with blank paper. Either rewrite the right column, or review ALOUD.
- c. PARAPHRASE answers.
- d. Then REFLECT – summarize the notes, relating the subject to yourself and your personal experience.