

*An Introduction to Note Taking 1: Noting Down the Key Words of a Lecture*

***The Secret to a Successful Vacation***

**Preparing to Take Notes**

**Strategy 1: Brainstorming**



*Look at the title of the talk and think about the topic before you listen to the lecture. This will help you become familiar with the topic and help you remember the topic (key) words. Use the following questions to help you brainstorm.*

**a.** Answer the following questions with your partner.

- What is the best part of going on vacation?
- What kind of things can go wrong when you are on vacation?
- Do you like packing and unpacking your suitcase?
- What strategies do you have for packing your suitcase? List your 3 best tips.

**b.** Look at the pictures below. Who will have a better vacation? Why?



## Strategy 2: Predicting what you will listen to



*Guessing about the content of what you will listen to will help you listen to the lecture more attentively. Also, it will give you a reason to listen. Be specific while guessing the content of the lecture.*

- c. Note down the possible topics or examples you may hear during the lecture. Then, share it with your partner/group.

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## Strategy 3: Knowing the topic vocabulary



*Study the topic vocabulary. Knowing the meaning of key vocabulary and how the words are pronounced will help you understand the speaker more easily and note down the words more quickly.*

- d. Practice pronouncing the words aloud with your partner. Use the dictionary to check their meanings and pronunciations if you need to.

review (v)    gather (v)    remove(v)    stuff (v)    item(n)  
mix and match (phrase)    crease (n)    layer (v)    roll up (v)

## While Taking Notes

### Strategy 4: Noticing the content words

*Remember, the speaker doesn't dictate you what to write. You need to choose what to note down and how to take notes. Remember, you cannot write down everything you hear! So, you should focus on noting down the content words. Content words are the words which carry meaning.*

- e. Look at the introduction of the short talk you will listen to and circle the content words. \*You may circle them with their collocations. i.e *on vacation*

*"Imagine that you are on vacation at the beach, and you open your suitcase to discover that you have forgotten your swimsuit!"*

**Strategy 5:** Noting down the key words

*Once you have figured out the content words, you can be even more selective about what you write down. Remember, you cannot note down everything you hear. You need to skip some words and note down others. Key words are the words that carry important messages.*

- f. Which words carry the most important messages in these sentences?  
Underline the words that are really important to remember when you are reading your notes later. These are the key words.

The text: ... *Imagine that you are on vacation at the beach, and you open your suitcase to discover that you have forgotten your swimsuit! You can avoid this and other disasters and inconveniences if you follow certain steps when packing your suitcase...*

- g. Look at the example note form of the text below. Does it make sense to you? Can you still understand the message of the speaker? The notes below are in short note form. If you can still understand the message, the notes are good. If you cannot understand the message, what else can you add or change to the short note form in order to help you remember the speaker's message?

Short note form: on vacation → open the suitcase → no swimsuit.

To avoid disasters → follow the steps when packing.

## **Note-Taking Sheet**

### **Strategy 6: Following the linkers**



*The note taking sheet is arranged to help you follow the text easily. The transition linkers will help you notice where the speaker is. So, if you get lost while you are listening, you can find your place and continue taking notes by following the linkers.*

- h.** Listen to the talk and try to note down the key words in the relevant spaces.

### ***The Secret to a Successful Vacation***

#### **Introduction:**

The first step →

Next →

Third →

Finally →

Conclusion →

## After Listening

### **Strategy 7:** Compare your notes

*While learning to take notes, it is always useful to compare your notes and your note taking strategies with your partners. You may learn something new from each other and you can improve your notes and your note-taking strategies.*

- i. Compare your notes with your partner and add the notes you have missed. Then, talk about the differences and compare the strategies you used.

## Comprehension questions



Now let's check your understanding of the lecture. Answer the following questions by using your notes. Are your notes helpful?

1. The first step is to \_\_\_\_\_ your travel plans.
2. Making a list is useful because you can
  - a. use it again
  - b. check your items
  - c. become more organized
3. Try to mix and match fewer pieces of clothing by \_\_\_\_\_.
4. One way to decrease the number of items is \_\_\_\_\_.
5. When packing, start with \_\_\_\_\_ such as shoes and books.
6. Fill in your shoes with \_\_\_\_\_ to save space.
7. To avoid wrinkles, layer \_\_\_\_\_ and roll them up.
8. Finally, put \_\_\_\_\_ into your suitcase.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ suitcase is the secret to a good travel experience.
10. Which of the steps do you use? Are the steps good or not? Why/not?

**Strategy 8** (optional). Noticing the repeated sections

*In most talks, speakers usually repeat or paraphrase the most important or difficult parts of the lecture in order to catch the listeners' attention or help the listener notice those parts. These repeated parts will also help you while taking notes because you may miss what the speaker said the first time but catch what the speaker said when the information is repeated.*

- j. Look at the tape script and underline the parts which are repeated or paraphrased. Then, check your notes and see if you also noted those parts twice. If yes, do you need to note them twice or is once enough? Why/why not?

**Reflection:** Which strategies did you use? Which ones did you find useful? Why? Why not?

Do you have any different strategies? Share with your partner/group.