



Notemaking and Studying

INTRO

Why bother?

Quick Tips Alert

- you will have a useful summary of your work
- this summary will be in an easily understood form
- making notes imprints information on your mind so that you remember it better

The following slides provide examples for several different ways to make notes. Review each method carefully and select the ones that help you most.

You may find that different notemaking methods are appropriate for different notemaking environments and different subjects: home vs. classroom, history vs. English

TOPIC/SUB-TOPIC NOTE FORMAT

- this is the typical point form notemaking method
- good for text learners (verbal, logical/mathematical intelligence)
- list your points down or across (shown below) the page

Topic title

1st major point

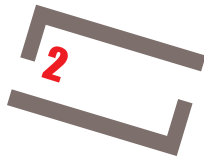
- details
- illustration
- example

2nd major point

- list
- diagram

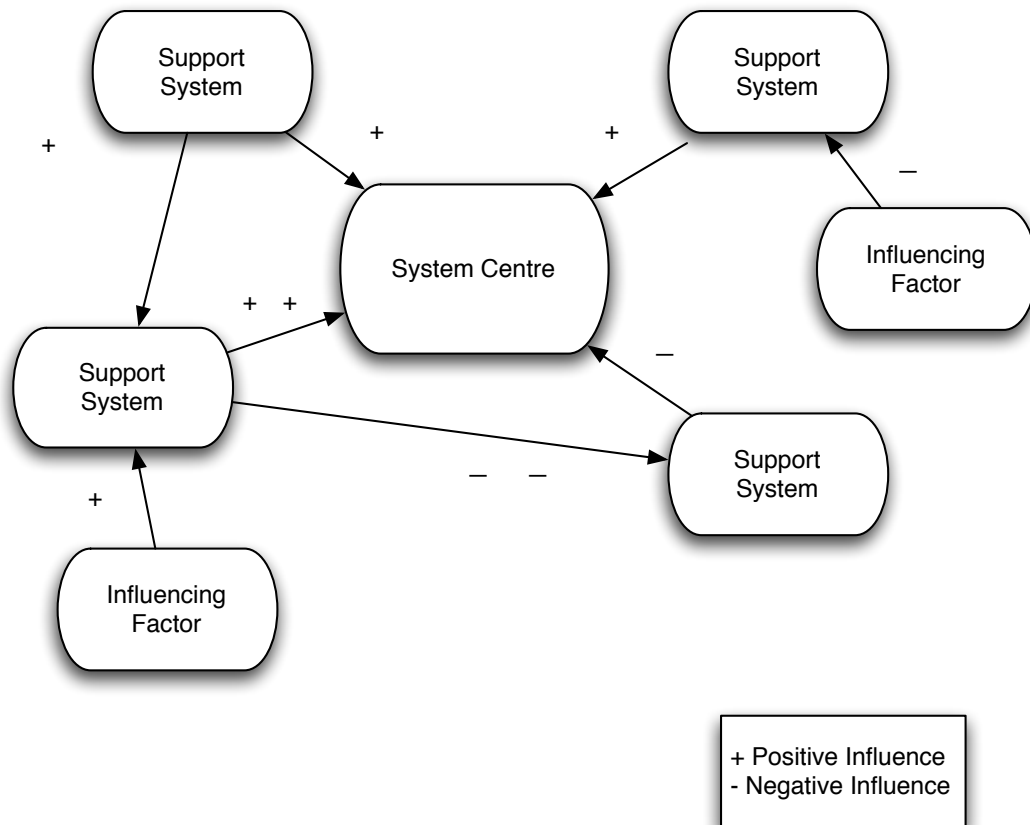
3rd major point

- etc.



FUZZY MAPS

- fuzzy maps explain systems and how each part of the system relates to the whole system and to the other parts
- the system is the relationship among its parts
- the system centre is in the middle
- the amount of influence of each of the parts on the centre and on each other are described by arrows and +/- signs
- fuzzy maps are a good choice for those with visual/spatial and logical/mathematical intelligence

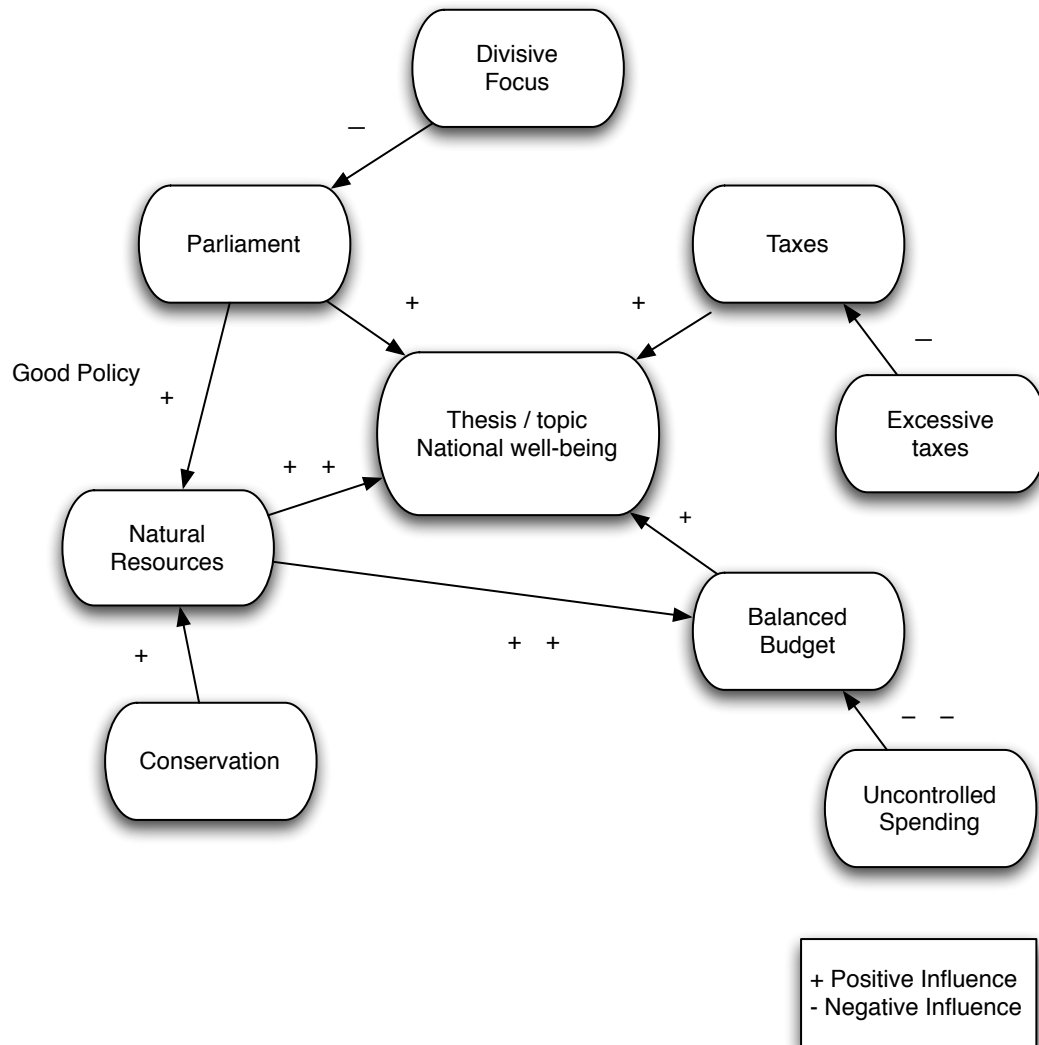


Note that this notemaking format uses “pads”, arrow lines, and +/- signs to show the relationships and the degrees of influence on the system centre and on each part. Watch how this works on the next step for a history topic.



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Examples: History/Politics

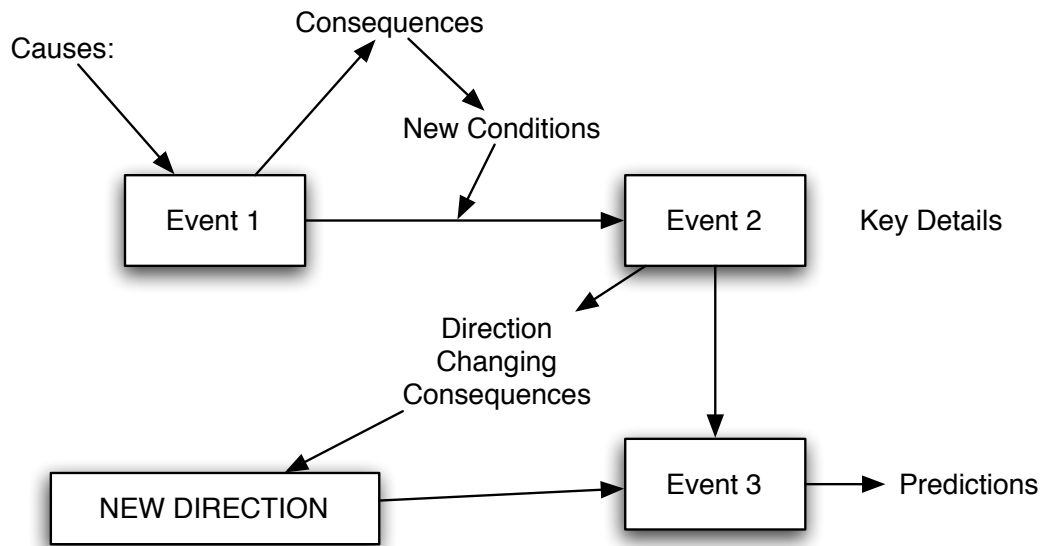


- in the History/Politics fuzzy map, national well-being/strength of the country is at the centre of the system because it is the main topic under consideration.
- note the main influences surrounding the centre and the examples surrounding the main influences.
- see how the arrows and signs describe whether there is a positive or negative impact
- now, figure out the example for Geography/Science in the next example.



SEQUENCE CHART NOTE FORMAT

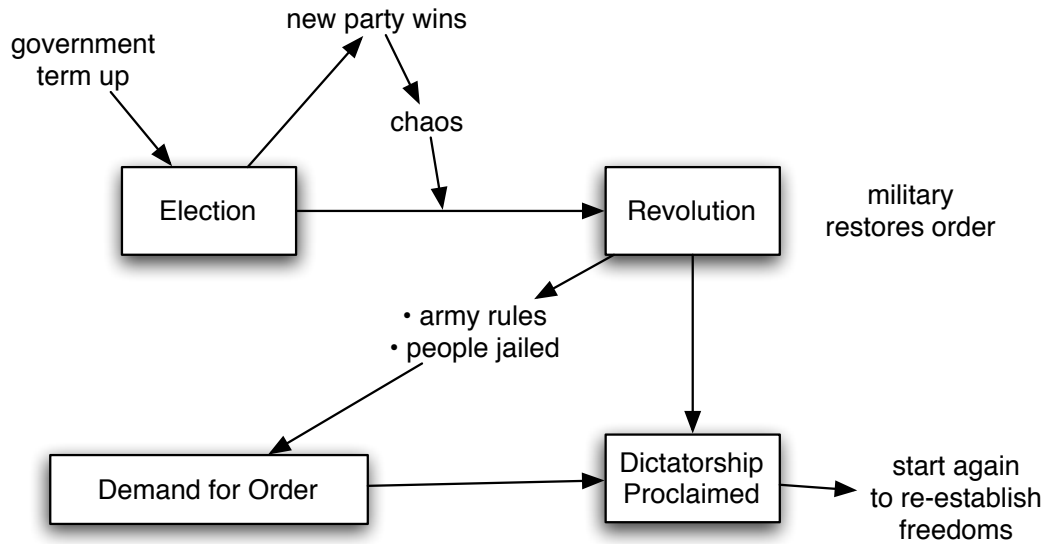
- good for linear sequencing
- allows movement from event to event
- allows directions to change as events dictate
- good for visual/spatial intelligence
- see next diagram for the general scheme of a sequence chart





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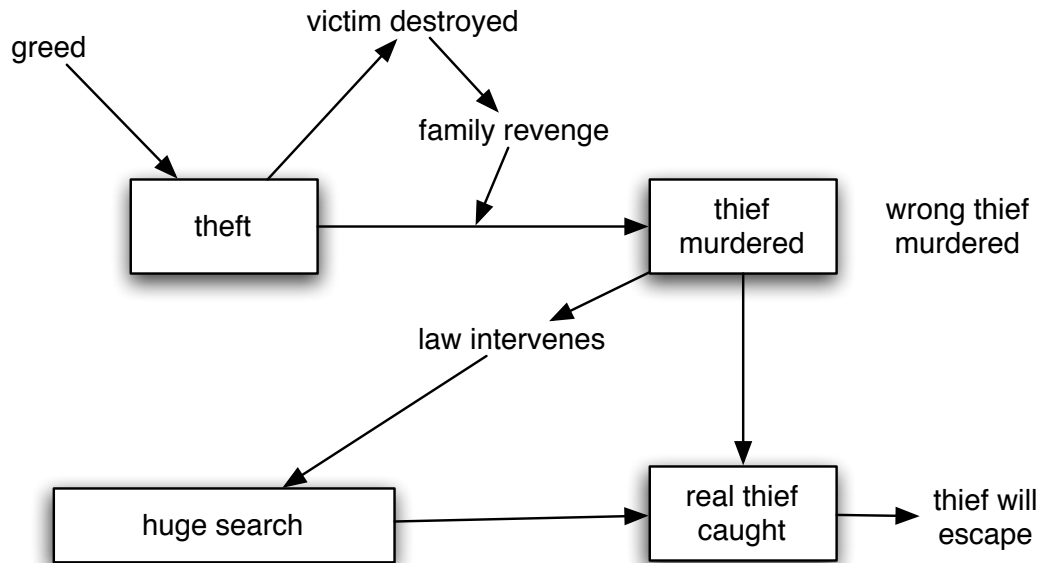
Examples: History



If you understand the example for history, move on to the next example which applies this method to a novel. If you have troubles with this method, either work with a partner to help you or use another method.



Examples: Novel



Now you try a sequence chart with your work.

HIGHLIGHTING/UNDERLINING TEXT, MARGIN NOTES AND MARKERS

- these are preparations for making notes
- AVOID: highlighting everything - no point
- highlight what you don't know
- colour-code to distinguish main points from key details
- jot down key words in the margins
- mark off key passages
- NOW: make your notes



Notemaking and Studying

AUDIO NOTES

- if you learn by listening, record your notes on tape and play them back to study
- if you are kinesthetically intelligent, play your tape while walking, running, rollerblading, etc.

STUDYING

- studying is about recall
- recall is about memory and/or association through your personal notemaking formats
- for tests and exams, you need specific examples and details in your answers in order to get better marks

How do you know if you know it?

Weak Answer

- "I've reviewed it all five times."
- "I've been studying it for 10 hours."
- "I think I know it."

Strong Answer

- "I can explain all major points, with some examples, without referring to my notes, and in a form that is acceptable to the examiner."



Notemaking and Studying

TEST AND EXAM WRITING

If you read something and can't remember anything about it right after - then you didn't read it. Same thing goes for studying: if you study and can't remember anything about it - then you didn't study it.

Preparation for tests and exams

1. Your favourite note format should be a major memory aid. This is the chief substance for marks on your tests and exams.
2. Skim your test or exam for a question that is easy for you. Start with this question so that your confidence will build. This question may not be Number 1 - be sure to use the correct number on the exam paper !!
3. Read the instructions: there may be a choice - be sure to answer the correct number of questions.
4. Read each question very carefully and break it up into parts - be sure that you answer the question being asked and each of its parts.

Unlocking mental block or freeze

- mental blocks during exams arise from being under-prepared and/or extremely anxious
- you can't think when you are anxious, you can only react - a relaxed state is a thinking state
- so: do your relax and focus routine before/during an exam, particularly when you are frozen
- once relaxed -write down words, formulas, anything you can remember to rebuild your confidence
- AVOID: pre-exam chatter with classmates -- it will only raise your anxiety

SUMMARY

- put getting better grades in the top 2 or 3 of your major priorities
- use these tools to help you build the skills to do it
- treat yourself for earning higher marks

