

UNIT 5: NOTE TAKING

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Explain why you have to take notes and make summaries
2. Describe how to improve your listening skills in class
3. Name the characteristics of an active listener
4. Explain methods to take notes and to make summaries

Why do we take notes?

Taking notes is an important part of studying. There are two reasons why taking notes is important:

1. taking notes helps you concentrate.
2. Notes helps you remember what you have read or listened to.
3. ***To be able to take good notes you need to be able to listen actively.***

5.2 Improve your listening skills

Active listening is a skill that can be developed with practice. You can hear something without listening. Listening is an active process where you have made a decision to listen to and understand what is being said.

Tips to improve your listening skills in class

- Revise** your last set of notes before your next class
- Always take notes**, even if you do not need them. This will help you to stay focused. Listen for the main points and the related details
- Ignore distractions** (e.g. noisy outside, someone speaking or using a cell phone in class)
- Listen with an open mind**, setting aside your own biases e.g. “I do not like this module”

How to take notes

The Outline Method

The Outline Method can be used when you take notes of detailed facts. If you are a more systematic and organised person you would prefer using this method. A mistake people make is to take down too much information, rather than simple key words. To follow this method, split your notes into topics and then write key words under each topic and then facts under each key word. Use headings, numbers, symbols, colour...anything that works for you!

Outline Method illustration.

Study Skills

1. Note-taking

1.1 Outline Method

- (i) Best for detailed facts
- (ii) Use key words
- (iii) Use numbers, symbols, colour

1.2 Page Split Method

- (i) Cue/recall column
- (ii) Note taking column
- (iii) Summary

The Split Page Method

This method is a lot of writing, but if you do it well, you have work that is already summarised and ready to study from. The Split Page method makes it easy to read by separating the main topics and key words from the notes.⁵³ To make your note page, draw a line down the page about 10 centimetres from the left edge of your note paper. On the left side you write the topics. On the right side, you write your notes about each topic. After you have taken your notes on the right side of the line, you must write 1-3 word key words under the topic on the left side. Why is this useful? Because when you refer back to your notes to review for exams or assignments, you can quickly look at the keywords to remember what the topic was about. Here is an example:

Split page method example.

TOPIC 1 Keywords	This is where you will write down what you hear – think of it as a “river of words”
TOPIC 2 Keywords	You will go back later and write your keywords
TOPIC 3 Keywords	Try to write your own style of shorthand e.g. Drinking water will make you feel better Drnkg wtr wll mk u fl btr

Summarising you work

You have taken your notes and now you need to summarise what you learnt in class to make revision and studying for tests and exams easier. The good news is that you are half-way there already

The following examples are ways you can summarize your work .

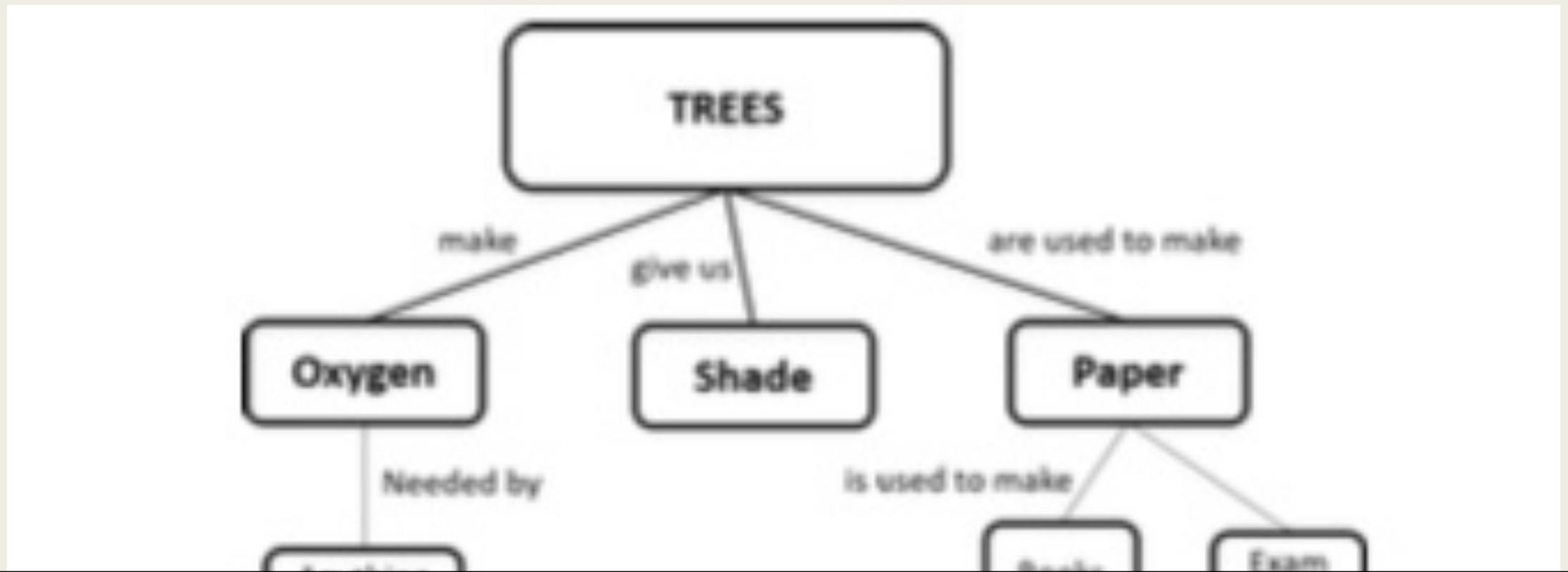
Mind Maps.



<https://app.mhdmup.com/map/new/1537260225010>

Concept Map

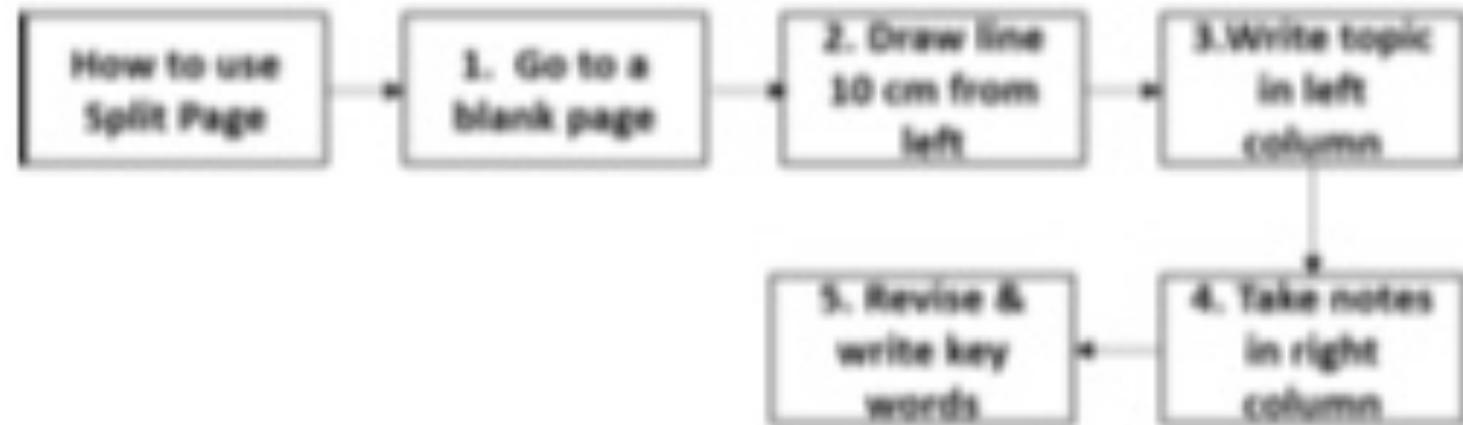
A concept map and a mind map differ in the sense that you have more freedom with a mind map, while concept maps are more structured and flow from top to bottom:



Process Diagrams

A process diagram is used to show either steps in a process

A process diagram is used to show either steps in a process. Let's look at an example:



Let's practice!