

USING NOTE CARDS TO LEARN & REMEMBER

Creating note cards requires you to select and store information in neural networks through multiple modalities (seeing, saying, and writing), so storage is much more powerful than simply looking at the same information in the text or in your notes. These strong connections make retrieval much easier, especially during testing situations.

The note card examples below are arranged from simple to complex using four different levels of learning. Your ability to accurately predict not only the content but also the level of learning at which you will be expected to perform dictates the complexity and sophistication of the cards you produce. You may even choose to use different colors of cards or ink to organize the information by topics.

Remember: Identification note card

Person, event, circumstance

Nelson R. Mandela

Data and their importance

Born: July 18, 1918; near Umtata
Aspired to become a lawyer
Joined African Nat'l Congress 1942
Formed ANC youth league 1944
Apartheid created 1948 when Nat'l Party
won elections
ANC campaign—Defiance of Unjust Laws 1952
Nat'l Party outlawed ANC 1960
Sentenced to life in prison 1961
Freed from prison Feb. 11, 1990
Won Nobel Peace Prize 1993
Elected president of S. Africa on April 27, 1994

Remember: Simple diagram note card

Name of diagram

Arthropod body plan

Labeled diagram



Segmented body plan,
exoskeleton jointed appendages

Remember: Formula note card

Name of formula/theorem

Pythagorean theorem

Formula and definition

$$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$$

The sum of the squares of the sides (legs) of a right triangle is equal to the square of the hypotenuse.

Understand: Concept note card

Concept

Utilitarianism

Parts, components

- Theory of ethics—idea that the ultimate goal of any moral action is the achievement of the greatest good for the greatest number
- Should be the aim of all legislation
- Opposed to idea that one person's conscience determines good/evil since good/evil aren't determined by an individual alone
- Outlined by Wm. Paley in Principles of moral and political philosophy (1785) & by Jeremy Bentham in Introduction to the principles of morals and legislation (1789)

Understand: Example note card
(declarative knowledge)

Data

Proportional representation

Definition and example

- Electoral system meant to produce a legislative body where # of seats a party holds is proportional to # of votes received in most recent election
- 1st used in Denmark in 1855
 - Used in early/mid 20th century in several US cities (NY & Cincinnati) that hoped to prevent machine politics & ensure minority representation
 - Now used in many European democracies

Understand: Example note card
(procedural knowledge)
Procedure

Do Loop
(Process for advancing
numerical value)

Steps of the procedure

1. Do While (condition is true)
 2. (process statements)
 3. Loop
- Note: Avoid infinite loops
Remember indents

Ex: Prints #'s 0-9
Dim n as integer
n = 0
Do while n < 10
 picBox. Print n
 n = n + 1
Loop

Application: Practicing a problem note card
Problem

Completing the Square
Problem:
 $x^2 + 4x + 3 = 0$

Solution

1. Subtract 3 from both sides.
 $x^2 + 4x = -3$
2. Divide the coefficient of x by 2
and to both sides.

$$x^2 + 4x + \left(\frac{4}{2}\right)^2 = -3 + \left(\frac{4}{2}\right)^2$$

3. Factor
 $(x + 2)^2 = 1$ A perfect square

Analyze: Predict essay test question note card
Hypothesized essay question

What ways do American
literature consist of a dialog
between Puritanism and
Transcendentalism?

Main points

1. The way they see the relationship between the individual and the community
2. How they relate to nature
3. The role and definition of religion in each school
4. The concept of America in each school
5. The difference between each school's concept of Fate

Analyze: Simple comparison/contrast note card
Name

2 x 2 or 2 x 3 matrix

The Ear Anatomical divisions and functions	Anatomical division	Function
	Outer ear (auricle & EAM)	Protection resonance transmission
	Middle ear (drum & ossicles)	Impedance matching
	Inner ear (vestibular system & cochlea)	Transduction of mechanical & hydrodynamic energy into neural impulses

Why invest the time to make note cards?

- Identifying important information for note cards improves your ability to predict test questions.
- As you make note cards, the material becomes fixed in your memory. Each time you review your note cards, the material is repeatedly refreshed.
- Note cards are portable and convenient to review during breaks.
- The ability to shuffle or rearrange note cards allows you to review the least known information more frequently.
- Flipping your stack of note cards over and recalling the more detailed information on the opposite side prepares you for short answer (recall) test questions as well as multiple choice/true-false/matching (recognition) test questions.

Source: Sellers, D., Dochen, C.W., & Hodges, R. (2005). *Academic transformation*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

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