

SUGGESTIONS FOR TAKING NOTES FROM TEXTBOOKS

TAKING NOTES FROM YOUR TEXTBOOK

Here are a few guidelines for you to consider when making notes from your text. Check off the ones that you already do, and plan to incorporate the rest.

- Always put down the title of the book, the title of the chapter, and the page numbers that your notes cover.
- Write the main ideas of the passage as your major headings, and list the minor ideas or facts found under them.
- Let the writing pattern of the author help you write your notes. If the author defines a term, make certain your notes contain a good definition of the term. If the author compares and contrasts two items, make sure your notes compare and contrast them.
- Avoid using the exact words of the text. Write your notes in your own words.
- Make a list of the words you don't know so you can look them up later. If you have trouble taking notes because the vocabulary is too difficult, look up the words as you write your notes.

ANNOTATING YOUR TEXTBOOK



Use annotation as a way to document your thoughts as you are reading. Consider annotating your textbook in order to summarize important ideas in your own words, add examples, define new words, mark passages that are confusing, write questions in the margin, or draw pictures to make a visual connection. Below are some suggestions that might help you develop a system for marking your textbook. The key is to create a system of annotation that works for you.

- Read to understand the material first, and then mark the primary points.
- Be selective when you annotate. If you mark too much, then the process becomes useless.
- Use a pen or highlighter, not a pencil. Pencil marks fade and smear. Make sure the ink color stands out clearly.
- Use brackets in the margin to mark several lines of text.
- Underline or highlight the main ideas in a paragraph, and circle important words or phrases.
- Underline minor but important facts or statistics with broken lines.

- Use numbers to indicate chronology or a series of items.
- Draw rectangles around names of persons or places that may be important for assessments.
- Use the margins to write summaries and reactions to the text.
- Write questions you have about the material in the book so you will remember to ask the instructor about them.
- Annotate charts, graphs, or boxed inserts as well.

An Example of Textbook Annotation

The Cover Letter *what should be in it?*

To get your resume noticed, you'll need an ace cover letter that accompanies your resume. You might think the best cover letter would contain a curling arrow and a boldface message reading "Resume Below," followed by a full line of exclamation points. *quick synopsis*

That might not be such a bad idea, but unfortunately this is not the kind of cover letter most employers have come to expect. ~~The cover letter is not the domain of the abstract-expressionist avantgarde existentialist career hunter.~~ *meaning?* Not as of this writing, anyway. 1. 2.

Basically, **a cover letter lets you do two things: herald your resume and lock down the interview.** *great way to take up resume* By taking your highlights and personalizing them, a good cover letter convinces the reader to pay attention to your resume. Therefore, take just as much care in preparing it as you do your resume. To make your cover letter visually appealing, print it on personalized stationery or at least good quality paper. Then briefly state your most compelling qualifications and **request an interview.** Also, be sure to mention the reason **why you'd like to work for the company.** *great idea!*

In short, the goals of your cover letter are:

1. To express interest in the **company and a specific position.**
2. To engage the **reader's interest** so he or she is compelled to read your resume. *3 goals for CL*
3. To mention a **specific date when you will contact** the employer, if he or she doesn't contact you.

Of equal importance, the cover letter provides you with the opportunity to discuss the company to which you're applying. Mention something specifically appealing to you about the prospective employer. This lets the "personal approach" work in two directions—yours and theirs. And it makes things much more interesting.

Source: This excerpt taken from *Majoring in the Rest of Your Life: Career Secrets for College Students*, by Carol Carter, published by LifeBound. Used by permission.