English II – WVHS Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Guide Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

A Guide on Note-taking

Education has entailed for multiple years, the traditional lecture/note-taking system. The “information presented in class often contains the central concepts of the course and the material most likely to be included on exams.” Unfortunately, most students do not realize how important note-taking and listening are within the classroom. Lecture notes are critical in preparing for exams.

*Why Take Notes?*

* Taking notes “force you to listen carefully” as well as, “test your understanding of the material” presented by your instructor.
* If the information is presented by your instructor, it is important. This allows you to determine key points rather than get caught up in every detail within the text and/or material.
* “Personal notes are easier to remember” than the text itself.
* According to researchers, you have a 34% chance of remembering through note-taking. Those who do not take notes only have a 5% chance of remembering the information. (Howe 1970 in Longman and Atkinson 1999).

*Pay Attention to…*

There are key things you should pay attention to as your instructor lectures. This would include the following:

1. Repetition of words and/or phrases.

2. Material written on the blackboard or within a presentation.

3. Emphasis – through voice, tone, gesture, and/or the number of examples presented.

4. Word signals such as “in conclusion,” “the third reason,” “two causes of this,” etc. Listen for these

signals.

5. Diagrams, charts, graphs, illustrations and/or any other visual aids pointed out by the instructor.

6. Questions and/or answers provided by the lecture.

*How to Take Notes*?

* Make your notes **brief** and **to the point**. Do not write full sentences when you can use phrases instead. Abbreviate when you can and/or develop your own symbol system that will simplify the notes.
* Put your notes in **your own words.** Note word-for-word, however formulas, definitions, and specific facts.
* Use outlining form through a bulleting system, numbering system, etc. This will make your notes easier to follow. Show the importance by “indenting.” Leave white-space for additions you wish to make at a later time.
* Do **not** try to write the lecture given by the instructor word-for-word. Should you try doing this, you will not be able to keep up with the lecture and feel overwhelmed. “Be alert to **main points**.”
* If you miss something stated in the lecture, simply leave a blank, write down keys words and/or make a note to yourself so you can go back to your instructor and ask following class.

*After Note-Taking*

Once you have completed notes from a lecture, you will need to:

1. **Rework** your notes. This means answer any questions you may have placed within the notes, adding further explanation where necessary, and/or clear up any confusing information.

2. **Summarize** the information in your own words. This will tell you if you understand the information.

3. **Review regularly**. The information given to you is most likely because you will see it again in the future of the class. You will most likely be tested on this in the form of an exam. The more you review the notes, the more you will retain.

4. **24 hours are essential**. It is best to review these notes within a 24-hour period to decrease the likelihood of forgetting what was presented in the lecture.

Source: Dartmouth College 2011 – Academic Center.