

Note-taking Time Savers

Keeping up with a lecture while taking notes in class is difficult to impossible for learners who try to write down *every word*. Notetaking is more effective if learners practice a few simple Time Savers designed to make taking notes faster and easier.

To help you refine your condensing and abbreviation skills, complete the exercise below. It may be slow at first but you will pick up speed as you practice.

Time Saver #1: Don't Try to Record Every Word – take notes on this information using abbreviations

“Today we are going to talk about Behavioral Learning Theories of which there are three. In general, Behavioral Theorists focus on observable behavior. One theory of learning based on behavior is Pavlovian conditioning or Classical Conditioning. This involves a reflexive response associated with a new stimulus. For example, a reflexive response of a dog when he sees food is to salivate. In Classical Pavlovian Conditioning, we can teach a dog to salivate when a bell rings, a new stimulus, by teaching a dog to associate a ringing bell with food.

Another Behavioral Learning Theory is Observational Learning. This occurs when behavior is imitated by another. This behavior is easily seen in children as they imitate parental behavior whether it is desired behavior or not. For example, if children hear parents swear in a moment of anger, it is not unusual to hear children add those words to their burgeoning vocabulary.

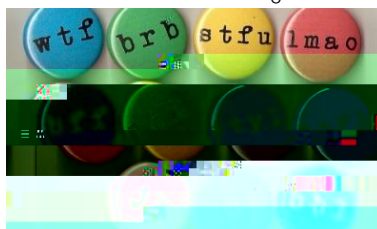
A third Behavioral Learning Theory is called Operant Conditioning. This involves taking a voluntary response, desired behavior, and strengthen it using reinforcements. Potty training a child as an example. Parents will praise a child, offer candy or other rewards to encourage repeated toilet use.”

Learners can keep up with a lecture by eliminating unnecessary words. Below is an example of how the above lecture could be condensed, organized, and recorded:

CH 3 - Behav. Lrng theories

1. Pavlovian/Classical - assoc. Reflexive resp. w/ new stim.
Ex - dog salivates when hears bell = assoc. W/food
2. Observational - imitate others we see.
Ex. - dad swears and son picks it up.
3. Operant - volun. Resp. (desired behav.) strengthen w/rein.
Ex - toilet training

It is easier and faster to write 50 words using abbreviations & short phrases than it is to write 196 whole words in complete sentences. Learners also have more time to listen & focus on understanding lectures when they use abbreviations & shortcuts when taking or rewriting their notes.





Time Saver #2: Record Words as They Sound Using as Few Letters as Possible

Record the words below **as they sound**. Omit unneeded vowels and consonants. Then, find 10 words from a course you are taking and abbreviate them below **as they sound**. Here are some examples you try it..

1. ready	rdy		
2. enough	enuf		
3. because	b/c		

Time Saver #3: Use Common Shorter Forms

Record the words below using common shorter forms used by college students. Then, find 10 commonly used words from a course you are taking now and record those words below a common shorter form. If you cannot find a commonly used shorter form, create an abbreviation using Time Saver #1.

Time Saver #4: Substitute Letters or #'s for Syllables

Record the words listed below using letters or numbers in place of syllables instead of writing out the whole word. Then, find 10 commonly used words from a course you are taking now and record those words below using **numbers or letters in place of syllables**.

Time Saver #5: Use Standard Abbreviations

Record the words listed below using abbreviations considered standard in business/ industry/education instead of writing out the whole word. Then, fill in abbreviations for 10 commonly used words below from a course you are taking now **using standard abbreviations**.

Time Saver #6: Use Common Symbols to Replace Words

Below, use common symbols to save time and effort in notetaking instead of writing out whole words. Then, find 10 commonly used words from a course you are taking now and record the symbols (existing symbols or your own) below for **using this rule**.

Time Saver #7: Use the 1st or 1st Few Letters Only

For specialized terms repeated frequently in lectures and textbooks, spell them out the 1st time you record it. Thereafter, use only the abbreviation to save time. Then, fill in abbreviations for the 10 commonly used words below in your major or for a course you are taking now **using this rule**.

Time Saver #8: Take or Re-Write Notes Using as Few Words as Possible

Many words add little or nothing to notes if included. These words can be safely eliminated without losing the meaning of ideas when re-writing and reorganizing notes. To help you understand this, follow the directions when you are rewriting your notes – try it now with one of your notes:

- Cross out as many words as possible** without losing the meaning.
- Cross out any remaining words for which abbreviations can be used** and write an abbreviation above the word.
- Finally, **re-write your new condensed sentence** and **write the total number of words** you now have...howmany less words are there?