Note Taking Tips for Reading and Class

Like everything else, to get better at note taking, you need to develop a technique. It may require additional effort on your part, but will hopefully pay dividends in the end with success on tests and quizzes.

**Reading Notes**

1. Pre-reading strategies
   1. Quickly skim the reading. Try to figure out the theme of the reading selection. Think about what knowledge you already have of the material.
   2. If you are preparing for a quiz, that about the type of questions might the teacher ask? Pay attention to section headings and bold type words.
   3. Have your study guide handy to identify terms on that sheet that are in the reading. You can pay closer attention to them when you begin reading.
2. Reading strategies
   1. Read a section (red headings) – write the section heading in the notes. Summarize the section in a couple of sentences.
      1. Record important persons, places or things
      2. Again – pay special attention to bolded type and study sheet terms.
      3. Understand…
         1. How something came to be (background)
         2. What a term is
         3. Why it’s significant
      4. Also, try to understand relationships between these bolded text or study sheet terms.
         1. Some guys like to use graphic organizers. If you are a visual learner, this might be a good strategy
3. Post-reading strategies
   1. Review your notes and see if they make sense. Write questions in the margin to when something is confusing or you don’t understand how ideas connect to one another. Ask the teacher your questions.

**Class Notes**

1. Don’t simply write what is on the PowerPoint. Listen to what the teacher and other students say to add depth to your notes. Always think … what it is that we’re discussing and why is it significant.
2. Pay attention to your class mates. They are smart guys. Write down their responses.
3. Review your notes in the evening. Spend 10 minutes a night skimming that day’s discussion. Do the notes make sense? Can you retell the story based on your notes?
   1. Fill in any gaps based on what you remembered from class
   2. Write questions in the notes that you can ask the teacher the next day in order to clarify points.
   3. Think about how this day’s topic related to the previous day. What connections can you make?