Guided Notes

Instead of posting complete lecture notes or handing out your PowerPoint slides, try this technique. It guides your students through the presentation, but allows them to be taking their own notes. Students will learn and remember better if they are the ones producing the notes, especially if they are handwriting them.

Try any of the following ways to provide a lecture guide:

1. **Headings**: See how many "sections" your lecture has. Name each section appropriately. When you get to that part, write the section name on the board or overhead or in your PPT. Tell students to copy it down, indicating you are now moving to another major point. [why? Students get lost in the details, can't determine the significance of anecdotes or case studies, and do not see the large divisions in your lecture the way you do. This provides them with some structure so they can arrange the details of their notes more appropriately. It helps them see the "bigger picture."]

Example*: "Life in the South before northern migration," Factors that encouraged African Americans to move north to Chicago," and "Life in Chicago for African Americans" might be three main points that you put on the board. Student then can see the connections of the details you discuss to the main point. (*from Buehl, Doug. (2001) *Classroom Strategies for Interactive Learning.* Newark, Delaware. International Reading Association.)

2. **Objectives:** Keep reminding your students what your course outcomes are by identifying how today's lecture addresses them.
   a. Example: This is simply the list of topics that will be covered from the course syllabus. From that, the instructor can easily identify the teaching/learning outcomes that match the day's topic. (Listing the components or categories that are in the topic would be a great start.)

| Introduction of the American Business System |
| --- |
| Types of Competition and Market Structures |
| Economic Fundamentals of Business |
| Economic Policy and Business |
| International Trade and Exchange Rates |

   b. Example: These are two outcomes for an anatomy course. For each day, the instructor can show which sub points s/he will be addressing.

- Students will acquire a thorough knowledge of the structural *(80% Anatomical)* organization of the human body and become proficient in describing the functional *(20% Physiological)* aspects of anatomy and histological structure.
- Students will understand humans as functioning organisms and will be able to interpret human anatomy as a particular set of solutions to problems imposed by

the environment; they will understand the structural relationships between individual parts that form an integrated whole.

3. **Organization:** If your lecture follows a certain pattern of organization, your guide can emphasize it so that students notice it and derive meaning from it. Some typical patterns we use in lecture are **chronology, classification, cause/effect, compare/contrast, and process** (steps to follow). Maybe the entire lecture isn't organized in one way, but sections of it might be.
    a. **Example:** A plot diagram can be useful in literature. It not only keeps track of all events, it also helps students see critical events.
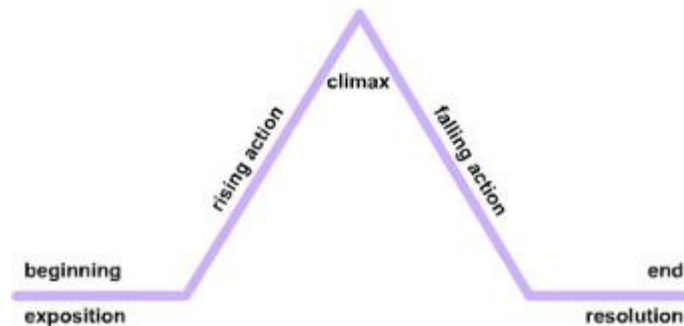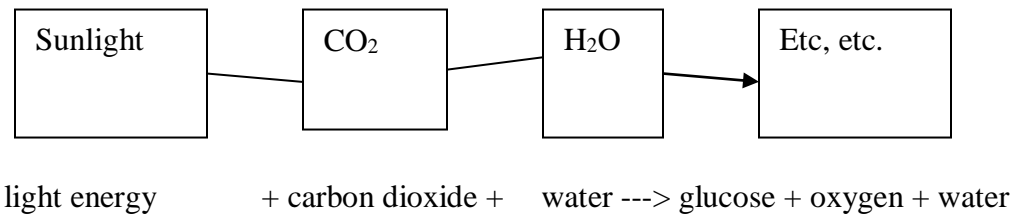

- The *exposition* or the introduction introduces the characters, describes the setting and establishes the problem in the story.
- The *rising action* is where the suspense builds and the problem gets worse and becomes more complicated. There are often multiple steps or parts in the rising action.
- The *climax* is the turning point in the story. It is usually the most exciting part in the story and the part that makes the reader want to keep reading.
- The *falling action* is the events that happen after the climax that lead to a resolution or ending to the story.
- The *resolution* is the outcome of the story. It is how things end up or turn out for the characters. (from https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-a-plot-diagram-definition-examples-quiz.html)

    b. **Example:** Theories of anthropology (this is just a sample) could be the framework for a table (it also serves to compare and contrast those theories). It is best for learning if students fill in the table on their own. The grid with headings can be provided; the students complete it either during lecture or after. This helps them learn to see the salient points when comparing theories.

	Functionalism	Structuralism	Social evolutionism	Etc.
Dates				

Leading figures				
Basic premise				
Major contributions				

c. **Example**: A flowchart can help students track changes, follow sequences of events, and view multiple causes and effects. You could fill in some of the items and leave the rest for students to complete on their own. Of course, it would have more detail that the one below shows!

Sunlight	→	CO_2	→	H_2O	→	Etc, etc.

light energy   + carbon dioxide +   water ---> glucose + oxygen + water

These examples are just a few of the ways you can provide your students with guidance in their note taking without taking away their responsibility to take thorough notes of their own. Students do better when they have some assistance, but not too much.