

Get Set for Middle School:

A guide to Preparing Students for Middle School from an Occupational Therapy Perspective

2. Taking Notes in Class

a) Writing at the speed of speech can be daunting even for an adult. These tips may help your student as he develops his own system:

- Keep all notes for each subject/class together and always take notes in specific notebook or binder section for each class.
- Start a new page for each new class each day.
- Date every page when beginning to utilize it.
- Leave space between topics or ideas so you can scan the page more easily later.
- Designate important points or concepts in upper case letters or by using an asterisk* in the left hand margin.
- Don't erase or write over. Use one line to strike out error and move on.
- Copy all written directions/assignments from board immediately upon instruction from teacher to avoid missing verbal instructions or class notes.

b) Take down key words and concepts, not sentences.

- Don't try to copy every word. Try to use short phrases or some key words that summarize the points being discussed.
- Raise your hand and ask to have the concept repeated if the teacher is going too fast.
- Develop your own system of abbreviations or symbols (such as w/ for "with" or math symbols such as > or =) to take down key points.
- Here are some [abbreviations](#) to get you started from the [English-Zone](#) Web site.

c) Listen for word clues from the teacher.

- Teachers often signal what's important to note, using phrases such as "the three incidents that led to the War of 1812 were... .."
- Here are some [examples](#) of word clues.

d) Review notes after class to make sure they're accurate and complete.

- Doing this just before starting homework in a particular subject can help a student focus on the topic at hand.

e) Other Strategies can be found using the below links:

- http://kidshealth.org/teen/school_jobs/