Study Strategies: Write to Learn

Writing to learn is a strategy for building understanding of new information by thinking more deeply about a concept. Rather than copying information word for word, when you **write to learn** you are keeping a record or log of your observations, ideas, opinions, and predictions about a topic. Writing to learn can be used when you're studying on your own, or during a class lecture. This strategy requires reflecting on the material. Although it is informal writing, ideas should be clear and logically composed

Examples:

◊ Summarize a section from your textbook or class lecture in your own words. Elaborate and connect the information to other experiences.

◊ List what you notice about the topic. This could include descriptions, definitions, and significant details. Are there patterns in what you notice? Also, what contradictions or surprises do you notice?

◊ Write questions you have, propose applications of this material, and/or, make predictions.

◊ When describing an operation or procedure, create a flowchart to show sequence of events or steps involved. Include if/then scenarios when appropriate.

◊ Choose terms to guide your reflection or summary such as:

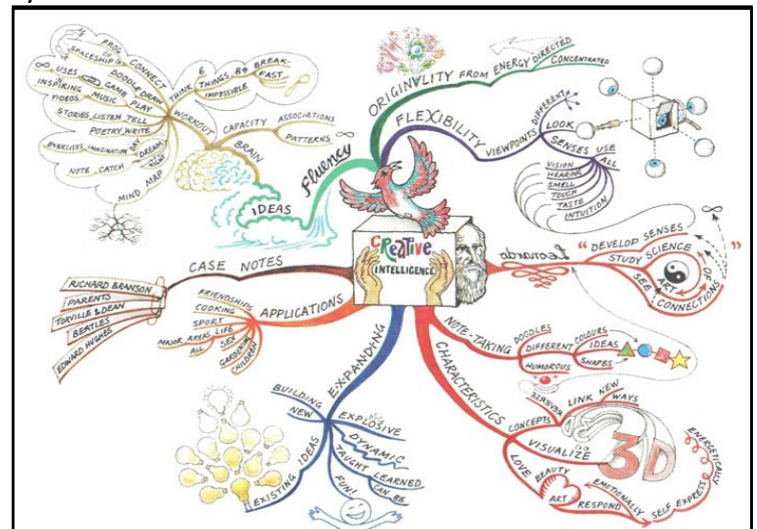⇒ *diagram, differentiate, categorize,* or *classify*

⇒ *explain/teach, compare/contrast,*

⇒ *suggest, revise, reorganize*

⇒ *predict, infer*

⇒ *judge, rank,* or *evaluate*

⇒ *form an opinion, support your position*

Even if you aren't an artist, you can add sketches or graphics to illustrate your writing and enhance your understanding of the topic.

Sources:

Brown, et al. *Make it Stick: The Science of Successful Learning.* Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014.

Mind-map notetaking jpg. www.litemind.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/08/creative-intelligence-mindmap.jpg. Accessed 15 May 2017.