How to Take Notes of Videos

While viewing a video for class, the most important thing to keep in mind is to be aware of the theme of the course, theme of the week, the focus of the class, and anything the instructor says to pay attention. Common mistakes that students make are: 1) write excessive notes, 2) not write enough or any notes, or 3) not understand the video. Here are three methods you can try.

- **Method 1: Watch the video and write notes afterwards.**

  It is best to watch the film and pay close attention to it. Paying close attention to a film will allow you to remember scenes that are memorable, quotes that stood out for you, character behavior and development, and other key moments that may be of importance. **The one thing you have to make sure is to write (or type) everything that you remember about the film after you have viewed it.** This will allow you to think thoroughly and be very descriptive about the film.

  **Advantage:** If you were assigned to write an essay about the film, you could use your notes as the start of the essay.

- **Method 2: While watching the video, take notes of scenes that interests you or scenes that look important to you.**

  Sometimes we forget scenes or key moments after watching a video. The best approach in this case is to write short notes of scenes or key moments that appear important. **Do not write notes constantly, as this will defeat the purpose of watching the video.** You want to be able to view the video and write notes seamlessly. Another approach to this is to write notes every 5-10 minutes about how the video has progressed.

  **Advantage:** Taking notes every 5-10 minutes allows you to create a timeline of events. It can help you pinpoint significant scenes of interest.

- **Method 3: Research the video prior to viewing it. Check out the video from the Library/or rent it for a second viewing.**

  Assuming the instructor announces the video on the syllabus or the class before, **watch the movie trailer and read reviews about the film prior to viewing it in class.** This will give you a better sense of what you are about to see. An alternative or addition to this is **viewing the film a second time outside of class.** You can watch it and take notes at your own pace by stopping, rewinding, forwarding, or replaying scenes of interest.

  **Advantage:** Doing research prior to the video and/or viewing the video a second time can help you better understand the story plot or specific elements to the video that may be important for an assignment or the class itself.