Note-Taking Technology Options

Low to High Tech Options and Considerations for Note-Taking with Assistive Technologies

Tool	Low Mid High Tech	Process	Pros / Cons	Modalities Collection of Notes→ Finished Product
Highlighters *various*	Low	Student reads text, locates important information and highlights it for further study with device. Can use different colored highlighters for different kinds of information.	Student must be able to recognize most important or different categories of information. Many students tend to over highlight. Inexpensive option. Student must "own" book.	**V/K→V**
Highlighter tape *Lee Products*	Low	Student reads text, locates important information and places tape over it for further study. Tapes are moved and removed as needed. Can use different colored highlighters for different kinds of information.	Student must be able to recognize most important information. Many students tend to over highlight. More expensive unless tapes are re-used. Standard tapes cover more than one line in small print text books.	**V/K→V**
Erasable highlighters *various*	Low	Student reads text, locates important information and highlights it for further study with device. Highlighted marks can be "erased" with other side of device.	Student must be able to recognize most important information. Many students tend to over highlight. Inexpensive option. Erasing leaves a residue that looks clear. Eraser tip is actually bleach if it touches clothing.	**V/K→V**
NCR notebooks *Mayer Education*	Low	Two part, college ruled notebooks with NCR paper so that peer can give student with note-taking needs a copy of his or her notes. Some schools make their own NCR notebooks by having shop classes drill 3 holes per page and then binding pages into a notebook.	Expensive option for the low tech area. Two part use with need to remember to put "stop" behind each set of pages. Second copy (NCR) may be more difficult to read. Therefore, most of the time the student with special needs gets the original.	**V/K→V**

Hand held Note Scanning Pen *Iris Pen II* Executive version for auditory	Mid	Scanning pen attaches to computer. Scans into the *Iris* program (read out loud only) or also into a word processor like *Word.* Text is read back as scanned by the *Iris* program. Text sent to word processor can be saved.	Scanning does not require perfectly straight movement because the power of the computer processor is taking movement (called skewing) into account. Software is beginning to be able to scan handwriting (numbers now). Software accurately scans many different language and alphabets and transfers them to the word processor. Software can also read several most popular languages.	**V/K➔A/V**
Audio taped lectures and discussions *Sony, Panasonic, etc.*	Mid	Student places cassette recorder near teacher / lecturer or a microphone is worn by the teacher. Later the student listens to the notes to study from or the notes are transcribed into writing from the tape.	Need for high quality microphone. Many teachers refuse to be taped. Many class notes are visual. Transcription or studying from tapes is problematic for some students.	**A➔A (V possible with transcription)**
Pulse Smart Pen *LIvescribe*	Mid	Student uses special papers and the pen to take notes. The actual written notes are captured with the pen's camera as well as what the teacher is saying in the digital recorder. Later the student can access the notes in the notebook or on the computer (through a simple download). He touches the written part of the notes with the pen or cursor and then hears what was being said when he was taking those notes. Students need not write to capture the audio of what the teacher is saying. making small marks on the note-taking paper can break up the audio into parts.	Audio and visual of student notes from class are tied together. Students can be doodling and the audio is still recorded. Notes taken by a para or teacher can be sent to all students who need them via email. There are four different notebooks (with different background dots patterns). Using the same numbered notebooks can confuse the pen in retrieving audio notes. Some teachers are unwilling to have their class lectures or discussions recorded and then shared over the internet.	**A/V/K➔A/V (additional minor kinesthetic required to touch or click on notes to be heard)**
Portable word processors *Various Including Neo, Dana, Fusion*	Mid	Student opens files and types notes from board and/or from lectures and discussions. Fusion would allow teachers to enter a word bank so that students could see the most important words that should end up in their notes. As they put them in the notes, they are checked off in the list	Text notes ONLY. no graphics, arrows, math problems, tables, etc. can be included. Student typing speed of 45 wpm with good accuracy absolutely required. Some students don't want to use technology when no one else in class is using it.	**V/A/K➔V**

iPhone Cell Phone	Mid	Students send themselves a cell phone message with short, important notes or assignments. Apps for note-taking allow students to type in (regular text or texting shorthand) notes. Students can also use portable or virtual keyboards with the device to enter notes more rapidly / accurately. Short notes can also be stored as digital recorded messages. Free apps such as the Dragon App allow these short oral notes to be sent to the student's email.	Many schools do not allow cell phones in class. Students speaking notes or assignments out loud may actually distract others. Students need excellent typing or texting speed to keep up with notes.	**A/K➔V/A**
iPad	Mid	Students use specialized apps to take and keep track of notes. Notes are entered via onscreen keyboard (landscape view allows touch typing). Short notes can also be stored as digital recorded messages. Free apps such as the Dragon App allow these short oral notes to be sent to the student's email.	Expensive and fragile device. Recording of notes from the student not feasible in class.	**V/A/K➔A/V**
Kindle	Mid	Selecting text in a book being read saves this section by line number with the book title. These notes can be accessed on the Kindle or at the Amazon / Kindle website. Here the notes can be copied and pasted to other applications (such as Word).	Book must be available from Kindle. Student must be able to determine what parts of the book are important notes.	**V/K➔V**
Smart Board Mimeo Board, etc. *Various manufacturers*	High to file or paper	What teacher writes on board or does on the computer attached to the board is captured by the software as notes that can be emailed or shared as a file. Some devices copy the notes as a movie with sound. Notes can be sent as file or on printed to paper.	Price is prohibitive for some schools. Teacher training required for use of board and software. Some teachers are unwilling to have their lectures recorded.	**A/V➔A/V**
Text Reading with Drag and Drop *various including Read OutLoud*	High	Digital text from one window can be selected by the student, dragged and dropped into another open window.	Text must be in editable format (e.g. text file). Notes can read back to students in text reading programs. Notes can be added to by typing and rearranged by cut and paste.	**V/K➔V/A**

Tablet PCs	High	Handwritten notes are turned into editable text within specialized software programs. Students can also add their own diagrams and pictures, arrows, circles, etc.	Expensive and can be fragile. Very popular at the college level.	**V/A/K➔V**
Graphic Web or Outline *Various including programs like Inspiration*	High to file or paper	Teachers pre-create their lecture notes with programs in either the outline or graphic web format. Certain key elements are left as blanks in the outline or web so that the student must listen key information and add it to the web. Students with spelling or auditory issues may also require a word bank of terms and words that will need to be inserted into the blank areas.	Teacher time for preparation is significant. Excellent option for students who are good listeners but who are consistently behind in note-taking. Word banks may be necessary. This strategy involves students more than straight taping of notes and provides immediate visual representations of the teacher's organization of the class / lecture.	**V/K➔V**
Scanned teacher notes with areas whited out (Active Listening Notes) ***Various including Adobe Acrobat Reader***	High to file or paper	Teacher scans a print copy of his or her notes. These are then turned into a PDF and TypeWriter enabled. Important words and phrases are whited out (Comment and Markup toolbar with the box tool set to white line and white background). This is done with Adobe Professional Student follows the teacher's notes with Adobe Reader. Clicks and types in whited-out areas and adds information as seen/heard in class from teacher. Can also be used for taking book notes.	Teacher must have a hard copy of their notes. Even handwritten notes can be scanned and digitized for student use. Students get an exact copy of teacher notes, including any diagrams, pictures, etc.	**V/K➔V**
PowerPoint notes	High to file or paper	Teacher who uses PowerPoint to lecture produces Slide Notes (3 per page with lines) so that student can have copy of slides and space for additional notes. If the student needs the note area digitized, then the teacher can turn this into a PDF and TypeWriter Enable it.	Teachers need to use PowerPoint for lecture notes. Student must be able to take notes from class discussion, lecture or board in the small space provided for each slide.	**V/A/K➔V**