

**Getting Ready for Your Research Paper
Step Four – Note-Taking**

Effective notes have less to do with the method you choose and more to do with organization.

To Write Effective Notes:

- Write one item per note to facilitate the shuffling and rearranging of the data as you compile/ draft the paper at each stage.
- Several notes can be kept in a computer file— just make sure they are clearly marked for yourself.
- List the source with name, year, and page for in-text citations.
- Label each note (for example, “objective view,” “pro-argument,” “con-argument”).
- Write complete notes for each source in well-developed sentences.
- Keep everything (photocopies, personal notes) in order to authenticate dates, page numbers/ location of info, or full names.
- Label your personal notes clearly with “my idea” “note to self” etc. to distinguish them from the sources.

Lester, James D. and James D. Lester, Jr. *Writing Research Papers; A Complete Guide*. Tenth Edition. New York: Longman, 2002.