

## Outlining Instructions

*When providing the best possible answer to the following questions please apply all learned scientific techniques and procedures, do not use abbreviations, use proper scientific terminology, show work for all mathematical calculations, use all significant figure and scientific notation rules, apply S.E.E.C. writing strategies, and note that at all times spelling counts. Your ability to meet these and all established classroom expectations, including labeling of BINs, providing heading information, and your ability to follow directions may be included in computation of grade.*

- An outline presents a picture of the main ideas and the supporting ideas of a paragraph.
- The skill of outlining will help you organize and remember what you read.
- Outlining means to write information in order, from the most important to the least important. Main topics, subtopics and details are the important parts of an outline.
- Outlining will help you learn how to take notes and remember the main ideas of what you've read. However, it is very important that you take the time to really understand the material you are outlining. If you simply copy chunks of words from the text you will learn very little. Remember; take one chapter at a time and one section in each chapter at a time.
- *Realize that if you outline it properly, this will be the last time you read this chapter. You're making your life easier when the test comes.*

## Grading for Outlines

Outlines will be graded on both **format** and **content**.

- Proper format (using correct labels for points and subpoints.)
- Indenting to start each new level (not too much, not too little)
- “Run on lines” start in correct space – below words above – no out to red line!
- Chunking – good use of space – breaking information into bite size pieces for your brain
- Spacing – good spacing between chunks – not too much, not too little
- Putting information into your own words
- Including the appropriate amount of information – not too much, not too little
- Handwriting is legible
- \*\*\* you are able to add missing/additional or skipped information to margins and empty spaces as needed!

# Basic Outline Form

**Title:** always include a title to your outline. The title should tell what the outline is about. If the outline is from a book it is helpful to identify the chapter and the section in the title.

I. **MAIN IDEA** – Main ideas use roman numerals. (I,II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X) Include as many as needed.

A. **Supporting idea to main idea I:** sub-points under each main idea take capital letters and are indented.

B. Supporting idea to first main idea

1. **Supporting idea to B:** sub-points under capital letters use Arabic numbers and are further indented. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6...). Include as many as needed.

2. Supporting idea to B

3. Supporting idea to B

a. **Supporting idea to 3:** sub-points under Arabic numbers use lowercase letters and are further indented. (a, b, c, d,...). Include as many as needed.

b. Supporting idea to 3

i. **Supporting idea to b:** sub-points under lowercase letters use lowercase Roman numerals and are further indented. (i, ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii, viii, ix, x). Include as many as needed.

ii. Supporting idea to b

• **Supporting idea to ii:** sub-points under lowercase Roman numerals can use bullets and are further indented. Include as many as needed.

II. **MAIN IDEA**

A. Supporting idea to main idea II

1.Supporting idea to A

a. Supporting idea to 1.

i. Supporting idea to a

III. **MAIN IDEA**

A. Supporting idea to main idea II

1.Supporting idea to A

2.Supporting idea to A

a. Supporting idea to 1.

i. Supporting idea to a

b. Supporting idea to 1.

i. Supporting idea to b

ii. Supporting idea to b

## Step by Step Outlining Instructions

1. Skim the textbook chapter for a few minutes, looking at the headings and any bold or italic words. Also look at any tables, charts, diagrams, figures or graphs. Having a basic idea of the chapter content and keywords will help you follow the structure of the chapter better and prepare you for outlining.
2. Read the chapter. Don't start writing your outline yet, but feel free to write down any particularly interesting points or page numbers as you go.
3. Begin your outline. Many textbook chapters have introductory paragraphs that give a good outline for the chapter. For example, in a history textbook, a chapter introduction may say it will discuss the lead up to the Vietnam War, the war itself and the aftermath. For the Vietnam War chapter, you might choose three main headings: Before the War, During the War and After the War.
4. Adhere to the outline format. Outlines typically have several different levels; one of the most common formats has heading titles preceded by I, II, III. Subheadings begin with capital letter headings, followed by Arabic numeral headings (1, 2, 3), followed by lowercase Roman numeral headings (i, ii, iii). Label each level of heading and content with both a number or letter and a title, key word, or sentence, and indent each successive level of headings more than the previous level. Use the structure your instructor prefers, if given.
5. Search for the main ideas and subjects as you re-read the chapter and write your outline. Under each main heading, add subheadings that elaborate on the subject, giving additional facts and details. Don't forget to include information from tables, charts, graphs, figures and diagrams. Ideas that are part of a main idea should be indented and labeled as a subheading of that idea. Keep indenting for additional supporting sub-details, etc.
6. Skim the chapter once more when you have finished re-reading the chapter and constructing your outline to check that you have not missed any important information. Remember to check all figures, charts, diagrams, tables, and graphs!