Research Friday: The Pen is Mightier than the Keyboard

Learning Objective: Continue building your skills in analyzing scientific research by identifying key components of the study (predictions, methodology, findings, and discussion). Evaluate its implications for learning and apply the findings to your own note-taking strategies. Today, we're working on T*he Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking* by Mueller & Oppenheimer (2014).

Breaking It Down: Structure and Contents of a Journal Article

Abstract

What is the main research question addressed in the study?	
What were the key findings?	
Summarize the abstract in 2 sentences, using your own words.	

Introduction

What previous research do the authors mention to support their study?	
What are the authors' main hypotheses?	

Method

How many participants were there, and who were they?	
What was the experimental design? List out the variables and the conditions or measurement of each variable. (How was learning assessed? What types of test questions were used?)	
What materials (e.g., TED Talks, questionnaires) did they use?	

Results

How did laptop note-taking compare to longhand note-taking in terms of learning outcomes?	
What was the role of verbatim transcription in student performance?	

Discussion

How do the authors explain their findings?	
What implications does this study have for students and educators?	
Did the study have any limitations? (Hint: The answer is YES.) If so, what were they?	

Making Sense of It All: Critical Thinking and Application

Personal Reflection

Do the findings surprise you? Why or why not?	

Applying the Research

Based on the findings from this study, what changes might you make to your own study habits?	
How could teachers or professors encourage students to take better notes?	

Identifying Key Takeaways

In one sentence, summarize the key message of this study.	
What is one new insight you learned from this article that you think is important for students to know?	