

Concept Cards

Note card side 1

Name/Term/Idea/Vocabulary Word

Note card side 2

3-5 brief concepts
about the term or idea

- 1 What
- 2 How
- 3 Why

(Write in your own words and keep it brief)

Directions:

1. Purchase several packs of small to medium sized note cards. (With larger ones, you'll be tempted to write too much and won't be able to review them effectively).
2. Write the name, term concept or vocabulary word on the front side of the card.
3. On the back side write three to five concepts about the term on the front using your own words. Answering what, how, and why is a good way to keep the card brief and meaningful.
 - a. What? Define the term in your own words
 - b. How? Think of an example
 - c. Why? Why is this important to the big picture?
4. Review on your own. Trade and quiz classmates during group study sessions.

- **Concept Cards vs. Flash Cards:** Concept cards are for more complex ideas; in addition, flash cards require little thinking during their construction, while concept cards require that the student get the big picture of an idea and condense it in one's own words.)
- Elegance of this strategy is that (1) if you can give a definition in your own words, you're demonstrating your **comprehension** of a concept; (2) if you can give an example of that concept, you're demonstrating that you can **apply** it; and if you can explain how this concept fits in the larger scheme of ideas, you understand the **organization** of it.

Concept cards, then, help us to prepare for tests at the higher levels of thinking!

(Source: University of Northern Iowa, Dr. Karen Agee)