

SEQUENTIAL LEARNERS

Sequential learners best understand course material if their professor presents it in a logical, linear way with clear expectations. These learners thrive if they can follow a step-by-step path that completes the assignment (Felder & Silverman, 1988, p. 676).

Sequential learners need to see the trees first before they can understand the forest - the big picture idea. If your assignment only gives you the big picture, break it down into steps yourself!

STUDY HABITS OVERVIEW

1. **Create linear connections with concepts** – Most academic textbooks and assignments are already created in a sequential way! However, if you need to turn the materials into a sequential pattern, focus on learning the material from a simple to a more challenging version of the concept (Felder & Silverman, 1988, p. 679).
2. **Create a quiet, neat study environment** – Sequential learners prefer routine and order in their assignments, and they prefer to study in an orderly environment. Sequential learners study most effectively alone.
3. **Use effective study tools** – Organize and categorize your work in a notebook with tabs and dividers, on a white board, in Microsoft OneNote*, or a creative platform such as Canva.

*Visit www.regent.edu/office365 to access this software as a Regent student at no cost.

BRAINSTORMING: OUTLINING

Outlining provides sequential learners an easy path to follow when writing papers and enables them to overcome writer's block and procrastination. Here are two methods for outlining:

Outlining Strategy #1:

1. Create your paper's thesis statement and include a strong claim and organizing principle. See Thesis Statement Structure - Part One for more details.
2. Make a bullet point for each paragraph in your paper and organize it according to your thesis statement.
3. Write a one-sentence summary of each paragraph.
4. Place related sources and ideas under the corresponding summary.
5. Form the materials into paragraphs. Then, your draft will be complete!

Outlining Strategy #2:

1. Start with your paper's intended audience. Who are you writing for and why?
2. Then, begin grouping related ideas and sources together.
3. Decide the best order for your ideas. Is there a specific progression that will strengthen your argument?
4. Begin your draft and follow the structure you created.

NOTE-TAKING: CATEGORIZING

As a sequential learner, two of your main strengths are your organizational skills and your attention to detail. Use these strengths when creating your notes to increase your understanding and retention of the materials.

1. As you watch the lecture, try to identify the professor's key ideas and main points.
2. Write down or type out these ideas as you go along.
3. Afterward, reread your notes. Now that you've heard the whole lecture, reflect on these ideas and determine which ones are important.
4. Then, categorize these ideas. Write out the main ideas as the heading for a section.
5. Bullet point the main points for that idea underneath.
6. Create as many sections as you need.

TEST-TAKING: TIMELINES

In a timeline exercise, students place their study materials in a logical order. If you are also a verbal learner, write out your timeline step by step. If you are also a visual learner, draw out your timeline or include a visual for each piece.

By placing your materials in a timeline, you are creating a linear sequence for yourself whether you create this chronologically, write down the steps in a process, or note the steps to solve a problem (Fitzell 2022).

Chronological Timeline (Verbal Example):

Paul Revere's Ride

The British troops begin to gather at around 10 pm, which is the impetus for Revere's ride (Beck 2014).

Revere receives his orders by 10:20 pm. He crosses the Charles river & alerts the lantern lighters at Old North Church (Beck 2014).

Next, Revere headed toward Lexington. He had to take a back route though to avoid British troops (12.5 miles total).

He paused in Medford to awaken the Captain and his men and then headed for Rev. Clarke's house (Beck 2014).

Revere arrived by 12:30 am to the Rev.'s house. His mission was successfully completed.

