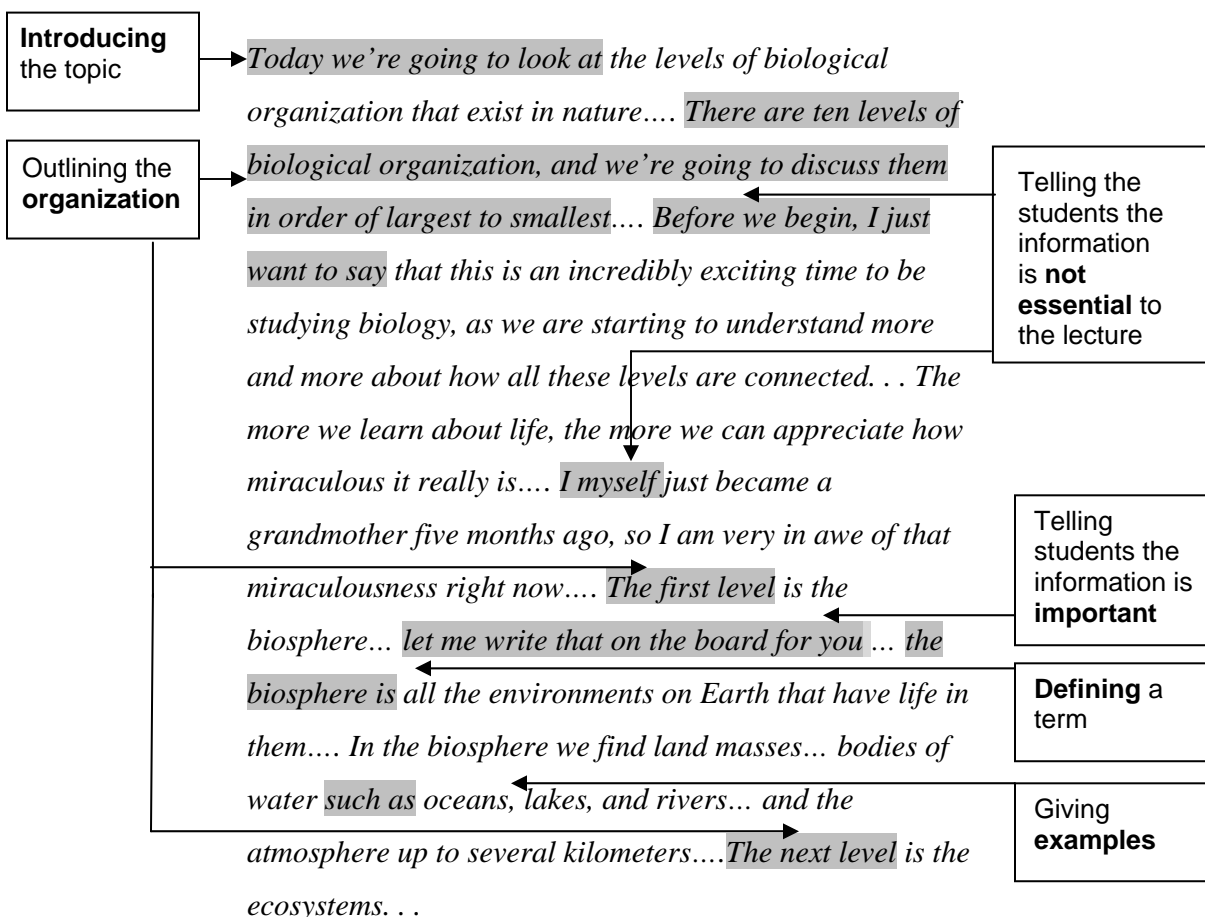


5. TAKING LECTURE NOTES

When you are taking notes during a lecture, it is good to listen and watch for “cues” or signs that tell you what information is important and how the lecture is organized. Cues can be words, phrases or actions (such as the professor writing on the board).

- Look at the lecture transcript from a biology class below.
- Notice the cues the professor uses to tell the students how the lecture is organized and what information is important.



N. A. Campbell and J. B. Reece, *Biology*, 7th ed. (New York: Pearson Education, Inc., 2005).

R. S. Lebauer *Learn To Listen / Listen to Learn*, 2nd ed. (White Plains, NY: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc., 2000).

EXERCISE:

Here are some cues that let you know what the professor is doing during the lecture, and what you should note down.

Use the last column to add other cues that your professors use.

| The professor is ... | Verbal cues | Non-verbal cues | Add other "cues" your professors use |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| Introducing the topic | <i>Today, we're going to look at / discuss...</i> <i>What we're going to focus on today is...</i> <i>What I'd like to discuss today is...</i> | The professor begins to write on the board The professor turns towards the class to talk. | |
| Outlining the information | <i>First, second, next...</i> <i>Another _____ is ...</i> <i>An additional _____ is...</i> <i>A further _____ is...</i> <i>Not only X, but also _____.</i> | | |
| Emphasizing important information | <i>This is important.</i> <i>It's important that you know...</i> <i>You should be aware that...</i> <i>You should write this down.</i> | The professor writes or points to something on the board. The professor asks a question. The professor passes out information. | |
| Indicating less essential information | <i>Before we begin...</i> <i>As a side note...</i> <i>I myself...</i> <i>This is a bit off the topic, but...</i> <i>This is somewhat unrelated, but...</i> <i>By the way...</i> | The professor puts down her notes, and starts talking more informally. | |
| Defining a term | <i>X is...</i> <i>X means ...</i> <i>Another word for X is...</i> <i>X is defined as/by...</i> | The professor pauses or speaks more slowly to explain a word. | |
| Giving examples | <i>For example...</i> <i>An example of this is...</i> <i>Like..., such as...</i> <i>To illustrate this...</i> | | |
| Restating or concluding | <i>So ...</i> <i>To review what we've just discussed...</i> <i>So, what were the main points we discussed today?</i> | | |