

Lesson Plan: English for Academic Purposes: Note Making and Summary Writing Using Climate Literature

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As a **high school** or **undergraduate English** teacher, you can use a climate change related spoken text to help you in teaching note making and summary writing, as part of **English for Academic Purposes (EAP)**. The lesson involves training students to **listen to an academic talk** carefully, **make notes**, and then turn the **notes into a summary**. This talk titled 'How to Transform Apocalyptic Fatigue into Action on Global Warming' by Per Espen Stoknes is about **climate change communication**.

Thus, the use of this lesson plan allows you to integrate the teaching of a climate science topic with a core topic in **English Language, English for Academic Purposes (EAP)** or **Functional English**.

Use this lesson plan to help your students find answers to:

- How do you make notes from a spoken text?
- How do you write a summary from notes from an academic talk?
- What, according to the speaker, are the primary obstacles to communicating about and engaging with climate change?
- What strategies can we use to communicate climate change more effectively and get people more involved?

[About the Lesson Plan](#)

Grade Level: High School, Undergraduate

Discipline: English Language, Functional English, English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

Topic(s) in Discipline: Note Making Skills, Summary Writing, Climate Change Communication, Rhetorical or Persuasive Strategies in Communication

Climate Topic: Introduction to Climate Change

Location: Global

Access: Online, Offline

Language(s): English

Approximate Time Required: 75-90 min

1 Contents

1. Readings (20 min)

- A brief introduction of Per Espen Stoknes, the speaker of the TED talk, 'How to Transform Apocalyptic Fatigue into Action on Global Warming', which is the primary spoken text used as teaching material for note making and summary writing in this lesson plan.

This can be accessed at:

https://www.ted.com/speakers/per_espen_stoknes

- A reading to introduce note making, and how it can be done for a spoken text.

This can be accessed at:

https://library.leeds.ac.uk/info/1401/academic_skills/85/note_making/1

- A reading to explain how a summary can be written from notes.

This can be accessed at:

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/englishcomp1v2xmaster/chapter/how-to-write-a-summary/>

2. Video (25 min)

A TED talk by Per Espen Stoknes, to analyze using note making skills first, followed by summary writing skills.

The talk can be accessed at:

https://www.ted.com/talks/per_espen_stoknes_how_to_transform_apocalypse_fatigue_into_action_on_global_warming#t-887995

3. Classroom Activity (30-45 minutes)

A classroom activity of summary writing using the notes prepared from listening carefully to the Per Espen Stoknes' talk mentioned above. This will be followed by a classroom discussion using a set of questions.

4. Suggested questions/assignments for learning evaluation

Use the tools and the concepts learned so far to discuss and determine answers to the following questions.

- How do you make notes from a spoken text?
- How do you write a summary from notes from an academic talk?
- What, according to the speaker, are the primary obstacles to communicating about, and engaging with climate change?
- What strategies can we use to communicate climate change more effectively, and get people more involved?

2 Step-by-step User Guide

Here is a step-by-step guide to using this lesson plan in the classroom/laboratory. We have suggested these steps as a possible plan of action. You may customize the lesson plan according to your preferences and requirements.

1. Topic introduction and discussion

- Begin with an open discussion in your class to make it easier for them to understand the context and content of the talk to be examined. Use the following questions for your discussion:
 - a. What do you understand by climate change?
 - b. What kind of news or stories do you encounter regarding climate change?
 - c. As an individual, if you wish to convince someone of your point of view, what strategies do you employ?

Use this discussion to help your students understand that the talk pertains to climate change communication, and that rhetorical or persuasive strategies in communication will also be discussed.

- Next, use the brief account, '[Per Espen Stoknes](#)' by TED.com to introduce the speaker whose TED talk, 'How to Transform Apocalyptic Fatigue into Action on Global Warming', will be studied for note making and summary writing. Stoknes is a psychologist and an economist, and a member of the Green Party in Norway. He is the author of the book, 'What We Think About When We Try Not To Think About Global Warming' (2015).

This can be accessed at:

https://www.ted.com/speakers/per_espen_stoknes

- Now, use the resource, '[Note making](#)' by University of Leeds, to introduce your students to the concept of note making. Begin with an explanation of what note making is, and how to do it for a spoken text. Explain that notes are not complete sentences, but key words linked together so that the outline can retrospectively give the note maker a good sense of the entire talk. Further, explain that to prepare notes from a talk, they will have to listen carefully to the talk being examined; identify key terms, and the order of ideas; and note them in an abbreviated manner.

This can be accessed at:

https://library.leeds.ac.uk/info/1401/academic_skills/85/note_making/1

- Finally, use the tool, '[How to Write a Summary](#)' by Lumen Learning, to introduce the topic of summary writing. Explain to your students what a summary is- it is a paragraphed text that recapitulates, in one's own words, the main points and illustrative examples of the original text. Explain to your students that they are supposed to capture what the original text says in the summarizer's own words but without commentary or opinion. The summary should include the title of the talk, the speaker's name, and the topic, along with the key points, critical arguments, and illustrative examples. It should answer questions such as the what, why, and how of the text. Use the enumerated points in the text to further explain the salient features of a summary and discuss the format in which a summary is written.

This can be accessed at:

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/englishcomp1v2xmaster/chapter/how-to-write-a-summary/>

2. Watch the TED talk, 'How to Transform Apocalyptic Fatigue into Action on Global Warming' and make notes

Play the video, 'How to Transform Apocalyptic Fatigue into Action on Global Warming' by Per Espen Stoknes, in 4 parts. The reason for breaking this into parts is that each part forms one subsection of the talk, and the talk itself is about 15 minutes long, so for them to take notes for the entire talk at one go may be overwhelming. If your students are not very comfortable with the accent of the speaker or with the English language itself, you can slow the speed of the talk using the speed button on the link.

Part 1: 00:00 – 02:00 minutes

Part 2: 02:01 – 07:19 minutes

Part 3: 07:20 – 11:25 minutes

Part 4: 11:26 – 15:00 minutes

Between each sub-section, take 3-5 minutes to check with the students if they can understand the talk and discuss what they are taking down in the form of notes. It is important to remind them to write down key words as they appear on screen, a few words to help them remember an example, and the primary argument being made in that subsection. If they have not understood a term, you may need to explain it. You may

also put down these key points on the board in note form. This subsection-wise discussion should help them to fill in the gaps that they might have had from their own listening.

The talk can be accessed at:

https://www.ted.com/talks/per_espen_stoknes_how_to_transform_apocalypse_fatigue_into_action_on_global_warming#t-887995;

3. Summary Writing and Classroom Discussion

Play the video once more, but this time without any breaks. This will help them fill any gaps that they might have when they watched the video the first time or questions that did not get answered during the discussions. Once done, ask them to go over their notes. Then revise with them what a summary is. Now, ask them to refer to their notes and write a summary of the talk. For this video's length, the summary will be about 600-700 words. It will be split into four parts (parallel to the breaks above), and therefore, will have a minimum of four paragraphs.

Initiate a classroom discussion, using the following set of questions. During the discussion, encourage your students to make notes again.

- Why do we need more effective communication skills when it comes to climate change?
- What useful strategies does the speaker suggest for effectively communicating about, and engaging with, climate change?
- What is the significance of stories, according to the speaker?
- Do you agree with the strategies that Per Espen Stoknes suggests? Do you think these would be successful in other communication contexts?
- What does this talk tell us about human beings and their minds?

Homework assignment: Ask your students to write short summaries that cover the above points, using their prepared notes.

4. Suggested questions/assignments for learning evaluation

Use the tools and the concepts learned so far to discuss and determine answers to the following questions:

- How do you make notes from a spoken text?
- How do you write a summary from notes from an academic talk?

- What, according to the speaker, are the primary obstacles to communicating about, and engaging with climate change?
- What strategies can we use to communicate climate change more effectively, and get people more involved?

3 Learning Outcomes

The tools in this lesson plan will enable students to:

- make notes from a spoken text (video with some visual cues)
- create a summary based on notes
- understand the obstacles in communicating about and engaging with climate change
- discuss strategies for better communication of topics such as climate change

4 Additional Resources

If you or your students would like to explore the topic further, these additional resources will be useful.

1. Reading; 'How to Take Notes: 5 Effective Note Taking Methods'

A webpage to explore 5 different ways of effective note taking.

This can be accessed at:

<https://www.oxfordlearning.com/5-effective-note-taking-methods/>

2. Reading; 'Summarizing: Five Keys to Writing Effective Summaries'

A reading to emphasize on the important aspects of summary -writing.

This can be accessed at:

https://write.siu.edu/_common/documents/handouts/summarizing.pdf

3. Website; 'Yale Program on Climate Change Communication'

A website to study ways of climate change communication.

This can be accessed at:

<https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/>

4. Website; 'The Climate Communication Project'

Another website to explore for climate change communication.

This can be accessed at:

<https://theclimatecommsproject.org/>

5 Credits/Copyrights

All the teaching tools in our collated list are owned by the corresponding creators/authors/organizations as listed on their websites. Please view the individual copyright and ownership details for each tool by following the individual links provided.

We have selected and analyzed the tools that align with the overall objective of our project and have provided the corresponding links. We do not claim ownership of or responsibility/liability for any of the listed tools.

1. Reading; 'Per Espen Stoknes'

Published by [TED.com](#).

2. Reading; 'Note Making'

By [University of Leeds](#).

3. Reading; 'How to Write a Summary'

By [Lumen Learning](#).

4. Video; 'How to Transform Apocalypse Fatigue into Action on Global Warming'

Hosted by [TED.com](#).

5. Additional Resources

[Oxford Learning](#)

[Southern Illinois University Carbondale \(SIUC\)](#)

[Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies](#)

[The Climate Communication Project](#)