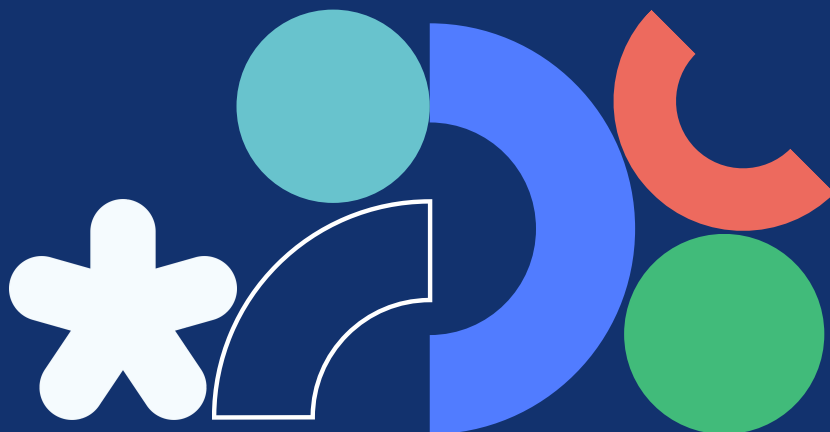




The Expert Note-Taking Shorthand Guide





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Effective note-taking is essentially creating an "answer key" before you even see the questions. In the 2026 environment, where audio is only played once and reading passages are becoming denser, a structured shorthand is critical.

Universal Symbols for Speed

- $\uparrow / \downarrow$: Increase/Improvement or Decrease/Decline.
- $\longrightarrow$: Leads to, causes, or results in.
- $\neq$: Contrast, however, or "on the other hand".
- $? / !$: Use for "Speaker is confused" or "Speaker is surprised/emphasizing".
- $+ / w/$: Use for "and," "also," or "with".



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Section-Specific Grid Shorthand

1. The Two-Column Conversation Split (Listening Part 3 & 5)

This strategy is used for tasks involving two or more people talking. Instead of writing a list of sentences, you divide your scratch paper into two vertical halves to separate viewpoints or speakers.

P1: Sarah (Manager)	P2: Tom (Employee)
Topic: New office tech	
Wants upgrade → speed	Tech is "buggy"
Budget = \$10k	Needs training 1st
Deadline: Friday	≠ enough time

Why it works: Many questions focus on speaker intent (e.g., "Why does Tom disagree?"). This layout helps you see at a glance who said what without mixing up their positions.



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2. The "Person-Point" Grid (Reading Part 3)

In Part 3, you must match specific statements to the correct paragraph. Instead of re-reading every paragraph for every question, you create an "anchor point" map after your first skim.

Example Map:

- **Para A (Smith):** Historical context; why it failed in the past.
- **Para B (Jones):** Economic impact; costs and budget.
- **Para C (Green):** Social benefits; impact on local residents.
- **Para E:** Point not mentioned in the text.

Strategy in Action: If a question asks about "financial repercussions," you check your grid, see "Jones/Money" next to Para B, and go directly to that paragraph to confirm the details. This prevents you from re-reading the whole text when a question asks for a specific viewpoint.



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3. The "5-Second Prep" Framework (Speaking)

With only 30-60 seconds to prepare a 90-second response, you cannot write full sentences. This framework ensures you have a logical flow without freezing.

Example Prompt: "Advise a friend on moving overseas for a job."

Shorthand Note: *Intro* → *P1: Growth* → *P2: Experience* → *Conclusion*.

How to Speak from these Notes:

- **Intro:** "Hi Sarah! I heard about the job offer..."
- **P1 (Growth):** "Firstly, this is a massive chance for your career..."
- **P2 (Experience):** "Additionally, living abroad will give you a new perspective..."
- **Conclusion:** "Overall, I think you should go for it. Good luck!"

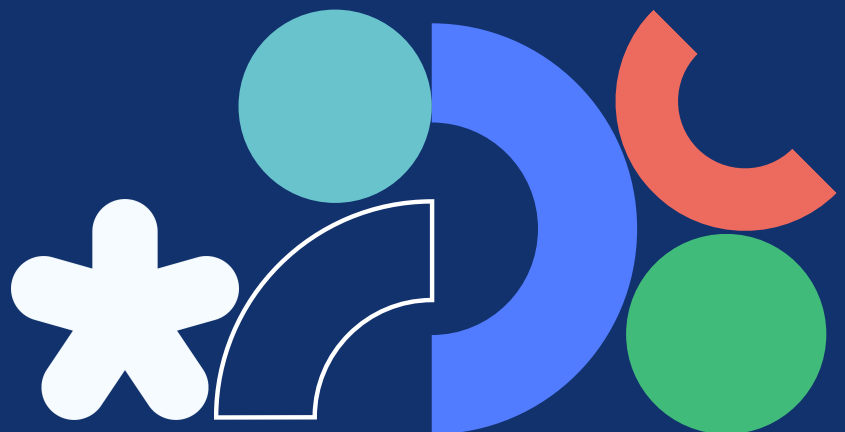
By writing just these four "anchors," you spend your prep time thinking of high-level vocabulary rather than scribbling out basic sentences.



CLB 10-12

"Pro"

Synonym List





CLB 10-12 "Pro" Synonym List

Standard vocabulary like "good," "bad," or "and" will keep you at a CLB 7 or 8. To hit the 10-12 range, raters look for "sophisticated control" and a "broad range of figures of speech".

Basic Word	"Pro" Synonym (CLB 10-12)	Best Use Case
And	Additionally, Furthermore, Moreover	Writing Task 1 & 2 transitions.
Bad	Detrimental, Adverse, Injurious	Describing survey downsides.
Good	Beneficial, Advantageous, Exemplary	Giving advice or praise in emails.
Important	Crucial, Paramount, Indispensable	Highlighting a main point.
Problem	Complication, Dilemma, Predicament	Describing a "Difficult Situation."
But	Conversely, Nevertheless, Notwithstanding	Opposing the other side in a survey.
Show	Illustrate, Demonstrate, Exemplify	Referring to the picture/diagram.
Big/Many	Substantial, A plethora of, Numerous	Describing quantities or impact.
Think	Contend, Assert, Contemplate	Expressing opinions formally.
Small	Negligible, Insignificant, Minute	Downplaying a minor disadvantage.

Pro Tip: Choose only 4 or 5 "Pro" words that you find natural and practice using them until you can use them instinctively under pressure. Using complex words that sound "off" in a sentence can actually lower a score, so natural flow is the priority.