Below are quotes from a student’s Project Notes, meant to act as examples of THOUGHTFULLY taking notes on our course readings:

In our instructions project, my team included a numbered list, as a list is helpful in that it shows the reader exactly where to look for the next step in the instructions. “Lists help readers by breaking up complex statements, allowing key ideas to stand out, and they allow the reader to see specific items, questions or directions” (Anderson, 2003, p. 322). Lists are helpful especially to beginners because it helps break down what would be complex instructions.

Another positive attribute that my team used in our instructions project was bolded words. According to Schriver (1997), “The contrast among parts of the text in it makes the headings ‘pop’ right out allowing the readers to pick out the sections faster” (p.69). When using the instructions, it is helpful that the key words are bolded because they allow users to quickly read the key words to navigate through the task. Schriver (1997) described contrast (such as bolding) as “establishing a hierarchy of importance or to focus the readers’ attention, [therefore] you must make some things look different than the others” (p. 299). Being a society that tends not to read instructions, the bolded words are very helpful not only as an initial read through but also as a quick reference.