How to Make a Timeline

0:00 Owl: Welcome to How to Make a Timeline, an instructional video on reading comprehension brought to you by the Excelsior College Online Writing Lab.

0:13 As you read, you may come across passages that narrate when or how events unfold.
0:19 One way to process this information is by creating a Timeline.
0:24 A Timeline is a record of information organized chronologically.
0:29 That means it lists information according to when it happened, usually from first to last.
0:36 A Timeline can be useful for keeping track of several different kinds of information.
0:42 Most obvious are historical events, which unfold over time and thus can be tracked chronologically on a timeline.
0:49 Fictional events can also be tracked using a timeline.
0:53 For instance, you can record the stages of a story’s plot on a timeline.
0:59 Additionally, timelines can be used for tracking the steps of a process or procedure.
1:05 For instance, if you’re reading a chemistry textbook, you might use a timeline to break down the steps of a chemical reaction.
1:12 A timeline can be constructed using a simple list on a sheet of paper.
1:18 However, for this example, we’ll use a more visual method for displaying information.
1:24 This method involves displaying information chronologically from left to right using event boxes to record each step.
1:32 Now, let’s practice making a timeline from something you’ve read.
1:36 Imagine you’ve just read an interesting article online about the history of the electric guitar.
1:42 You would like to remember the most important information by placing it into a timeline that you can use as a reference after you read.
1:50 Using a blank timeline template, we’ll start by writing down an appropriate title.
1:55 Let’s call it “Evolution of the Electric Guitar.”
1:58 Then, fill in each box with a different event in the evolution of the electric guitar.
2:04 Make sure to organize your information chronologically and write it down from left to right.
2:09 You will need to alternate between the top and bottom row of boxes.
2:14 The first electric guitar was the Rickenbacker “Frying Pan,” which was created in 1931.
2:21 Next came the Les Paul “Log” in 1941, followed by the Fender Broadcaster in 1948.
2:28 In 1952, Gibson released its legendary Les Paul guitar, and Fender released its legendary Stratocaster guitar shortly thereafter in 1954.
2:39 1979 saw the birth of the Van Halen “Frankenstrat.”
2:43 It was closely followed by the Jackson Randy Rhoads “Flying V” in 1982.
2:49 In 1994 Ibanez released its 7-String Guitar.
Finally, 2008 saw the rise of virtual guitars with the production of the Guitar Hero Controller for the popular video game Guitar Hero.

That’s it!

Our timeline for the evolution of the electric guitar is complete!

Creating a timeline from the information you read is an excellent way to organize and remember information the next time you need it.

You can download a timeline template here.

Thanks for listening to this instructional video on How to Make a Timeline!

Visit the Excelsior College Online Writing Lab for more support with reading and writing skills.