

Cornell Notes

Teacher Tips

- ◆ Give students a lecture on “How to take Notes”, using the Cornell format on an overhead, modeling effective notes, and having all students record the information.
- ◆ Students can practice abbreviating their words while you give a brief lecture share notes after the lecture to compare abbreviations.
- ◆ Consider running off Cornell format paper, front and back, in various colors.
- ◆ Allow students to select a color for each academic content class, keep all notes for that class in the same color to foster organization.
- ◆ Give an open-notes quiz on How to Take Notes and/or other topics.
- ◆ Encourage students to think about which class it might be easiest for them to take notes, and start there. Remind students that when they are focusing intently on taking good notes, for a short time their focus on the class content will be less. This is natural and happens whenever we learn something new. With practice, taking notes will become second nature as they focus on the class content.
- ◆ Explain to students that the in-class portion of note-taking accounts for only a part of the learning time. It is important to review their notes within 24 hours, compare lecture notes to book notes, look for inaccuracies and/or incomplete notes, write questions to help them study (Questions will be discussed in detail in the next section), keep their notes organized, and review their notes periodically.
- ◆ Have students practice taking Cornell notes only at first, then teach how to write questions separately, then teach how to write summaries separately.
- ◆ Each of these concepts takes some time to master, so be patient and look for improvement.
- ◆ Display examples of quality notes on the overhead. Display examples of incomplete or inaccurate notes for students to brainstorm how to review/revise notes.
- ◆ Display examples of quality reflections/ summaries on the overhead, preferably from your class. Display examples of poor quality, limited, or incorrect reflections/ summaries and have students give suggestions on how to improve. At a staff meeting, teach all teachers Cornell note style, encourage note-taking schoolwide.