



Literacy connects

A Content Literacy Newsletter from Regional Professional Development Program-Issue III



Cornell Note-Taking With a Twist

Effective note taking is one of the most important skills that students can develop. The actual recording of the notes, however, is only part of the process; the real value lies in returning to the notes: summarizing, reflecting, reacting, adding, organizing, and using them in some way. This strategy will allow students to organize lecture or reading material and summarize or react to the material while it is still fresh. If this strategy is used during class in a lecture/notes activity, the time you allow the students to summarize and react, can lead to connections and questions during the lecture while the information is still hot.

1. Have students fold their paper lengthwise (1/3 on the left; 2/3 on the right).
2. Have them listen to the lecture or read the text. (1) Use the left column for main ideas, vocabulary, concepts, or questions; (2) Use the right column for details, definitions, descriptors, answers, diagrams, or drawings.
3. Lecture for no more than 10 minutes (or tell them to read up to a logical stopping point) and then give the students 3 minutes to summarize, react, reflect, or question what was said. At this point, students can also orally ask questions to clarify or expand on your lecture.
4. Have students write summaries, reactions, questions, etc. at the bottom of the page or on the adjacent notebook page, depending on the length of lecture notes.
5. Notes can be used for studying or any writing assignment.

Main points, key words, vocabulary words	Details, examples, facts that explain and illustrate, vocabulary definitions, diagrams, graphs, or drawings.
Summarize, question, react, reflect, associate, analyze... OR ...do this on a separate sheet of paper.	