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For the Classroom Organizational Skills: Note Taking

Discussion Questions

- What is the purpose of taking notes?
- Why is it important to keep your notes organized and clean?

Activity: Organizing Your Notes

Students will demonstrate their knowledge on how to properly execute note taking.

PROCEDURE

1. Have students take out a piece of paper and a pencil, and title the paper: Note Taking Strategies. Write the following tips for note taking on the board and request that students copy these tips onto their paper. (Discuss each tip before moving on.)
 - Write a title and date at top of paper to indicate what information will follow and when it was written.
 - Do not write down everything. Simplify and only write down the important information.
 - Write neat, clear and easy-to-read notes.
 - Use abbreviations and symbols to keep notes simple and to save time.
 - Highlight important parts of your notes.
 - Keep all notes in notebook/binder. Avoid any loose papers.
 - Use different colors to categorize information.
2. Explain to students that there are many different ways to take notes. Today we are going to explore a strategy adapted from the *Cornell Note-taking System*. Ask that students take out another sheet of paper and complete the following instructions:
 - Put a title and date at the top of the page.
 - Draw a vertical line 1/3 of the way from the left margin. Draw a horizontal line 1/3 of the way from the bottom of the page.
 - In the left hand side of the page, write the following at the top of the column: Key terms, headings and Main Ideas.
 - In the right hand side of the page, write the following at the top of the column: Definitions, details, examples, diagrams, lists and explanations.
 - In the bottom portion of the page, write a summary of the lesson. Use abbreviations to save room.
3. Next, tell students that we are going to practice this note taking technique and compare the outcomes. Ask each to take out a relevant book that they all may have (History, Science, English, etc.) and ask that they open it to the same page. Have students read

- chapter silently, and take notes on the section based on what strategies they just learned.
4. When time is up, have students pair up to compare their notes. (If students finish reading and note taking early, have them review their notes.)
 5. Bring the class together to review different strategies of note taking and why it is important to keep notes neat and organized.
 6. Have students file away their notes into proper binder.