

Ten Steps of the Cornell Way

I. NOTE-TAKING:

While reading or listening to information for the first time, jot down and organize key points to be used later as a learning tool.

C *Create Format*

Step 1:

Create Cornell notes format and complete heading.

Write name, class, period, date, topic, and standard/objective in heading.

- Create an essential question based on the standard/objective to be addressed in the notes and in the summary.
- Leave 1/3 of the paper on the left for questions and 2/3 on the right for notes.
- Leave 2 inches on the bottom of each page for summary.
- Be prepared to actively listen and take notes.

If Cornell notepaper is provided, upon entering the classroom:

- Write name, class, period, date, topic, and standard/objective in heading.
 - Create an essential question based on the standard/objective to be addressed in the notes and in the summary.
 - Be prepared to actively listen and take notes.
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O *Organize Notes*

Step 2:

Organize notes on right side.

- Take notes while listening to a lecture from the teacher, reading a textbook or novel, watching a video, solving a math problem, participating in a science lab, engaging in Socratic Seminar, participating in tutorials, etc.
 - Listen and take notes in your own words—paraphrase what you hear.
 - Leave spaces for revisions by skipping lines between ideas.
 - Abbreviate words and use symbols, when appropriate.
 - Write in phrases (not complete sentences).
 - Use bullets or lists, when possible.
 - Change pen colors to indicate change in concept.
 - Use indentation to show relationships between ideas.
 - Know what to write—important information vs. trivial information.
 - Recognize cues, “This is important...,” “This may be on the next test...,” and repeated information.
 - Incorporate teacher’s note-taking style/requirements on the right side—outline style, diagrams, graphs, illustrations, etc.
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II. NOTE-MAKING:

Within 24 hours of taking the notes, revise these notes, generate questions, and use collaboration to create meaning.

R *Review and Revise*

Step 3:

Use the “Cornell Note Revision Checklist” to revise notes.

Review and revise notes.

- Separate main ideas from details by underlining.
- Keep important information by highlighting or color coding.
- Delete unimportant information by drawing a line through it or not highlighting.
- Add your own thinking/fill in details to clarify, complete, or create greater meaning and understanding.
- Paraphrase information.
- Identify information that needs clarification using a question mark to indicate the need to check with a partner or teacher.
- Add references from/to other materials as they come to mind or make connections to other concepts/content.
- Use symbols (star, checkmark, etc.) to indicate what is significant.
- Use * for information that may be used on a test, essay, tutorial day, etc.
- Create a visual or symbol to represent and help recall information.

N *Note Key Ideas*

Step 4:

Note key ideas to create questions.

- Use inquiry on the left side that connects to the key ideas.
- Review the main ideas highlighted on the right side.
- Determine the purpose of the lecture, reading, or activity.
- Read aloud the highlighted main ideas on the page, and create a question that is answered with each main idea.
- Develop questions on the left side that identify the main ideas on the right side by interacting with the information through the revision process in Step 3:

Lower-Level Questions: Some material in the note section may not lend itself to generating higher-level questions. In this case, link notes to a previously learned concept to write a higher-level question, or develop additional notes adding personal meaning and details to create ownership of the material.

Higher-Level Questions: It is important for the Cornell notes to create higher-level questions by applying Bloom’s or Costa’s vocabulary. It is necessary to understand the meaning of the words used and how to use the terminology accurately to ask a higher-level question. Adding “How do you...” does not create a higher-level question.

E *Exchange Ideas*

Step 5:

Exchange ideas by collaborating.

- Collaborate with a peer(s), as a small group, in your tutorial group, whole class, outside of class, etc., to compare, enhance, and revise your notes.
- Using a different color pen, fill in any gaps, and clarify any points of confusion in writing to complete your notes.
- Brainstorm a list of key vocabulary from the lesson to be included in the summary.

III. NOTE-INTERACTING:

Interact with notes taken by creating a synthesized summary. Use Cornell notes as a learning tool to increase content class achievement.

L *Linked Learning*

Step 6: Review notes taken, questions developed on the left, and prior knowledge to identify the main ideas to be used in the summary.

Link learning to create a synthesized summary.

- Address the essential question of the lesson in the summary.
- Use the notes of the right side as support to write the summary.
- Synthesize, or combine main ideas together, to internalize learning from the questions/ notes.
- Answer the higher-level questions from the left side in the summary to tie together the main ideas.

Creating a summary provides the opportunity to connect and make sense of the information from the lesson and identify any remaining points to be clarified.

- As the summary is written, there may be a need to address any remaining points of confusion with new questions on the left side to ask teacher, tutor, or classmate.

Leave the right side blank until this discussion has happened.

Document the clarification in the blank space on the right side, after the discussion.

L *Learning Tool*

Step 7: Review notes taken, questions developed, and summary; this may also be done in a study group.

Use completed Cornell notes as a learning tool.

- Apply new learning to increase performance in content classes by using notes to study for a test, to write an essay, as a reference during tutorial, or to prepare for a presentation, Socratic Seminar, Philosophical Chairs, etc.
- Interact with material by taking notes, writing questions, and summarizing to internalize material to increase new learning.
- Using the notes as a learning tool provides the opportunity for students to transfer knowledge to long-term memory by making meaning of the notes and forming connections.

IV. NOTE-REFLECTING:

Use written feedback to address areas of challenge by setting focus goals to improve future notes.

W *Written Feedback*

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| Step 8: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submit Cornell notes weekly to be checked for quality using the Cornell notes rubric or checklist, and/or for quantity in a binder check. |
| Provide written feedback. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review, revise, and improve notes, questions, and summary based on feedback.• Written feedback and suggestions for improvement may be provided by a peer, tutor, or teacher. |
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A *Address Feedback*

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| Step 9: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address feedback by using “Cornell Note Focus Goal Activity” to create a goal for improvement in future note-taking. |
| Address written feedback. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use the feedback provided; identify an area of challenge.• Write a focus goal to improve this area.• Identify specific actions to address this challenge in future note-taking. |
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Y *Your Reflection*

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| Step 10: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gather all Cornell notes on the topic, concept, standard, objective, essay, etc. |
| Reflect on your learning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review notes, questions, and summaries on all Cornell note pages.• Reflect on the learning by completing a “Cornell Note Reflective Log” to show how you mastered and/or applied your new knowledge. |
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