

Dear Students and Parents,

We will be using something called an interactive notebook this year in seventh grade science. Interactive notebooks allow you to record information and process it in different ways to improve your level of understanding. As you learn new ideas, you will use several types of writing and graphic organizer techniques to record information. Then you will apply or use that information to make the learning your own. This process will encourage you to use critical-thinking skills to organize and process information. From this process, you can become more creative, more independent thinking, and you will have a deeper understanding of what you are learning and how you are learning.

Why do we do this?

Copying down notes does not mean that you have learned the information. You must actively do something with that information to really start to understand it. Research shows that interactive notebooking helps improve executive functioning skills, and is good for social emotional learning. Interactive notebooks will be used for class notes as well as for other activities where you will be asked to express your own ideas and process the information presented in this class. Your notebook provides opportunities to use many different learning styles and Multiple Intelligences as we work through material. As you work with the notebook, it becomes a portfolio of your work and thoughts, and a great resource for reviewing information before tests and quizzes. By the end of the year, students are very proud of the notebooks they have created, and amazed at how big they get!

When will we use them?

We will use our interactive notebooks a lot! They will be used any time we introduce a new topic, to process a topic we are going through, to learn vocabulary, to write lab conclusions, and to review for tests and quizzes. If you are absent from school, please ask me what pages you need to make up, or check the Interactive Notebook crate.

How are they graded?

Interactive notebooks will be a part of your work habits grade. Notebook Checks will be done about every 2-3 weeks. They are always announced ahead of time, and I will always list the pages that should be included, so that you know what I am looking for. Notebook checks will be graded on several factors, including completeness, neatness, correct order of pages, and extra effort.

Where do these live?

I have bins for students to leave their interactive notebooks in the classroom. I know how heavy backpacks can be, and I do not want to add any more weight to that! That being said, students are always welcome to take their notebooks home to review or make up pages, as long as they are brought back to school each day.

What type of notebook?

You will need a composition book. We use these Interactive Notebooks a lot, and they need to be able to stand up to months of page-turning, carrying, and getting out and putting away. From my experience in previous years, here are some things to keep in mind:

- You need a 100 page composition book. 80 page books do not have enough pages for the whole year.
- NO spiral notebooks. They are not as sturdy and pages WILL fall out early in the year.
- Please get a cardboard bound composition book; not one that has a plastic-type cover.
- Look for the books that have sewn-in pages. The kind that are glued into the binding like a traditional book are not as sturdy and the pages WILL fall out.

Please return the signed form on the next page. If you have any questions, please reach out. I am looking forward to an amazing year!

~Mrs. Colvin