

Overview for Interactive Notebook

Left Side Student Process New Ideas	Right Side Teacher Provides New Information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reorganize new information in creative formats • Express opinions and feelings • Explore new ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class notes • Discussion notes • Reading notes • Handouts with new information

Materials Needed – colored pencils and markers, scissors, glue stick, rulers, etc.

Interactive Notebook

Notebooks have a “left-side, right-side” orientation to help students record, organize, and process new information. Much of the classroom and homework will be done in the interactive notebook.

Left-Hand Side	Right-Hand Side
<p>The left side of the notebook (the “output” side) is primarily used for processing new ideas. Students work out an understanding of new material by using illustrations, diagrams, flow charts, poetry, colors, matrices, cartoons, etc. Students explore their opinions and clarify their values on controversial issues, wonder about “what if” hypothetical situations, and ask questions about new ideas. They also express their feelings and reactions to activities that tap into intrapersonal learning. And they review what they have learned and preview what they will learning. By doing so, students are encouraged to see how individual lessons fit into the larger context of a unit.</p> <p>The left side of the notebook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stresses that writing down lecture notes does not mean students have learned the information. They must actively <i>do</i> something with the information before the internalize it. • Clearly indicates which ideas are the teacher’s and which are the student’s. Everything on the left side is are student ideas and belong to the student. • Gives students permission to be playful and experimental since they know the left side is their page and they will not be interfering with class notes. • Allows students to use various learning styles to process social studies information. 	<p>The right side of the notebook (the “input” side) is used for recording class notes, discussion notes, and reading notes. Typically, all “testable” information is found here. Historical information can be organized in the form of traditional outline notes. However, the right side of the notebook is also an excellent place for the teacher to model how to think graphically by using illustrated outlines, flow charts, annotated slides, T-charts, and other graphic organizers. Handouts with new information also go on the right side.</p> <p>The right side of the notebook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is where the teacher organizes a common set of information that all students must know. • Gives students the “essentials” of the social studies content. • Provides the teacher with an opportunity to model for students how to think graphically. There are many visual ways to organize historical information that enhance understanding.

Why Interactive Notebooks engage students:

- ***Students use both their visual and linguistic intelligences.*** The left side of the notebooks allows visual learners to use their best medium to explore and share ideas, and encourages nonvisual learners to become more proficient with graphic approaches in a nonthreatening way. Both types of learners will work with their writing skills.
- ***Note taking becomes an active process.*** These notebooks invite students to become engaged in their learning. Students will spend some time passively recording ideas from a lecture or the board, but most of their time doing something with ideas-putting them into their own words, searching for implication or assumptions, transforming words into visuals, finding the main point of a political cartoon, etc. This is especially true of the left side of the notebook, which is reserved for their active exploration of social studies ideas.
- ***Notebooks help students to systematically organize as they learn.*** With the teacher's encouragement, students can use their notebooks to record ideas about every activity they engage in during a unit. Have them use a variety of organization techniques-topic headings, colored highlights, different writing styles-to synthesize historical concepts and make coherence of what they learn. The notebook permits assignments to be kept together in a regular place and in logical order.
- ***Notebooks become a portfolio on individual learning.*** These personal, creative notebooks become a record of each student's growth. The teacher, students, and even parents can review a student's progress in writing, illustrating, recording, thinking, and organization skills.

Components of Interactive Notebooks:

- **Cover** – encourage students to create colorful covers that reflect the topics and themes that are being learned. This makes the notebooks their own creation that they can take pride in; it also reduces the number of lost notebooks throughout the school year.
- **Student Guidelines** – decide in advance what students should have in their notebooks and clearly communicate those expectations. Most teachers create a list of criteria, e.g. when the notebooks will be graded, the criteria for grading, what percentage the notebook will count for the social studies grade will be by the notebook. Ask students to attach that list to the inside cover of their notebooks. Some teachers also include directions for specific types of notebook assignments, class rules, and their grading policy.
- **Table of Contents** – have students create a running table of contents for their notebooks. In addition to the list of assignments they have to complete, the teacher may also add comments or scores for each assignment. This will help the teacher when it comes time to grade the notebooks.
- **Author Page** – let students create a page about themselves at the front of their notebooks. The author page could include a photograph and personal information such as age, height, favorite foods, and family members. Personalizing the notebooks helps to ensure that very few will get lost.
- **Work in Progress** – ask students to tape or staple a manila envelope to the inside of the back cover of the notebooks as a place to keep “work in progress.” Once an assignment is completed, then it can be placed in the appropriate place in the notebook.
- **Grading** – create a system that allows the teacher to easily grade the notebooks every grading period.
- **Lost and Found** – keep a master copy so that if a student does lose a notebook, he can review the master notebook so determine what needs to be redone. The master copy can also be used by students who were absent or pulled out of class during the class period.