

Introduction to the Interactive Notebook

Introduction: Most student notebooks are drab repositories of information filled with uninspired, unconnected, and poorly understood ideas. Typically, students dutifully write down class notes without ever considering what they are writing. As a result, students most often take notes when required to do so and then regurgitate, with little retention, that information on a test.

Interactive Student Notebooks allow students to record information about history in an engaging way. Students combine both colorful graphics and words in their notebooks. Ideas are taught and represented in different modes. Students develop graphic thinking skills. This spurs many kids who are alienated in the conventional classroom to understand and express their ideas in various ways.

To further understand, let's use the example of a traditional history class. Assessment in a traditional history class revolves around worksheets, periodic quizzes, and traditional multiple-choice tests. Seldom are students encouraged to demonstrate subject mastery in meaningful ways. The Interactive Notebook does away with this outdated thinking and assessment strategy.

"Left side", "Right side" Orientation for Notebooks: Interactive Student Notebooks encourage students not only to record history in an organized logical fashion, but also to work with and process the information in ways that help them better understand social studies. The "left side" of the notebook is used for recording class notes, discussion notes, and reading notes. This is the "input" side of the notebook. The "right side" of the notebook is used primarily for students to process new ideas. This is the "output side" for their ideas. Each page will include a drawing either from the text or from their imagination. Drawings should reflect what the section means to you.

***For US Government Only:** Blank areas of the right side will be used to answer the **Main Idea** question from your text. It is always question #1 and can be found at the end of each section.

***For Economics Only:** In Economics, we will do the "key terms" on the right side as well as a drawing that I will assign for each section. Templates for these drawings will be provided by me.

***Special Note:** My hope for you is that make your notebook your own. Really create a notebook that you are proud of. I will see this when I grade your notebook. I want to encourage you to get into the habit of self-assessment. Look over every page of your notebook before you turn it in. Make sure it is something you are proud of!

-Ms. Taja