

## 2.8: The Cornell Way

# Tips for the Cornell Way

### I. NOTE-TAKING:

Reading or listening to information for the first time while jotting down and organizing key points to be used later as a learning tool

## C *Create Format*

#### Step 1:

#### Create Cornell notes format and complete heading.

If Cornell notepaper is not 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.
- 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.
  - It is unrealistic and inappropriate to summarize every individual page.
  - There should be a summary at the bottom of the page at the closing of a lesson, concept, topic, etc.
- 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.

Audience	Tips for this Step of the Cornell Way
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create Cornell note format before going to class.</li> <li>• If your teacher does not provide you with an Essential Question, collaborate with classmates to create one from the posted topic, standard and/or objective.</li> </ul>
Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide samples of Cornell notes taken from college courses.</li> </ul>
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide Cornell notepaper to students.</li> <li>• Model to students how to set up their own paper in the Cornell note format.</li> <li>• Create school site Cornell notepaper and include school's mascot; upload onto the school's website for students to download from home.</li> <li>• Have student write the heading in pen to ensure current notes are submitted weekly.</li> </ul>
Site Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Color code Cornell notepaper for each content subject to assist students in organizing their notes in binder.</li> <li>• Post topic, standard and/or objective for students; assist students in using the standard/objective to create the essential question for the lesson.</li> </ul>

## I. NOTE-TAKING:

Reading or listening to information for the first time while jotting down and organizing key points to be used later as a learning tool

### **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.

Audience	Tips for this Step of the Cornell Way
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the abbreviations list before taking notes.</li> <li>• Create symbols/abbreviations for words you might need to use in each content class.</li> <li>• Sit next to AVID classmates in content classes to support each other in the note-taking process.</li> <li>• Anytime information is delivered, you should be taking notes even if the teacher does not explicitly ask you to do so.</li> <li>• Some situations when note-taking is appropriate are: giving directions, watching a video, reading a textbook/novel, listening to a guest speaker, during a lab, during a PowerPoint presentation, etc.</li> </ul>
Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When reviewing student notes, indicate places where students can speed up their note-taking by using abbreviations, bullets and/or lists.</li> </ul>
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide time each class meeting for students to work independently and collaboratively to review and refine notes.</li> <li>• Coach content area teachers to provide time for students to compare notes at the end of class.</li> <li>• Teach AVID students how to turn any teacher-generated resource (PowerPoint, worksheet, reading log, lesson) into Cornell notes by refining notes, adding questions and a summary.</li> </ul>
Site Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide students with an abbreviations list for each content subject.</li> <li>• Teach personal cues such as: pacing, phrasing, repetition to assist students in knowing what is important.</li> <li>• Incorporate your own style of note-taking into the Cornell note format; teach students how to use the right side to record information for content.</li> </ul>

## 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:

#### Review and revise notes.

- Use the “Cornell Note Revision Checklist” to 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.

Audience	Tips for this Step of the Cornell Way
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with a partner from your content class to use the “Cornell Note Revision Checklist” to revise and refine notes.</li> <li>• Seek clarification about confusing information.</li> </ul>
Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review student revision during tutorials as students use Cornell notes from content classes to support questions during the session.</li> </ul>
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use students’ Cornell notes to teach the revision process of identifying main ideas, paraphrasing information and asking for clarification from peer/teacher.</li> <li>• Review and model the use of the “Cornell Note Revision Checklist” multiple times so students see the value and can repeat the process independently.</li> </ul>
Site Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create model Cornell notes of certain lessons so that students can check their notes against the model notes.</li> <li>• Provide time at the end of class daily for students to review and refine notes by working in pairs, using class resources and seeking clarification from the teacher.</li> </ul>

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### 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.

Audience	Tips for this Step of the Cornell Way
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the end of day, review revised notes and create a question for each chunk.</li> <li>• Use the Levels of Thinking Handout to assist in creating higher-level questions.</li> </ul>
Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review questions created and assist students in changing lower-level questions into higher-level questions.</li> </ul>
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Bloom’s/Costa’s Levels of Thinking with students.</li> <li>• Explicitly teach the key vocabulary for each level.</li> </ul>
Site Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When creating lessons, activities and assessments, use higher-level questions as a way of modeling higher-level thinking/inquiry to students.</li> <li>• Have students generate one higher-level question based on the lesson and share with class prior to exiting the classroom.</li> </ul>

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### E *Exchange Ideas*

**Step 5:**

**Exchange ideas by collaborating.**

- Collaborate with a peer(s), as a small group, in your tutorial group, as a 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.

Audience	Tips for this Step of the Cornell Way
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with a study buddy or peer to review/fill in gaps in the notes you have taken in each academic content class.</li> </ul>
Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend an academic class that most AVID students are struggling in, and take Cornell notes along with the students.</li> <li>• Share your notes with the AVID students in the AVID Elective class, and provide opportunity for them to exchange strategies for successful note-taking.</li> </ul>
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide students with time in the AVID Elective class to fill in gaps with their peers for each academic content area.</li> <li>• Model inquiry to expose missing information in notes, and assist students in filling in this information.</li> </ul>
Site Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow students time to review their notes with a peer/small group after taking them.</li> <li>• Create word walls with the key academic vocabulary from the lesson for students to reference in their note-taking.</li> </ul>

### 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 *Link Learning*

**Step 6:**

**Link learning to create a synthesized summary.**

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

Audience	Tips for this Step of the Cornell Way
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to each higher-level question written on the left side in your summary.</li> <li>• Write a one-sentence GIST for each chunk and record it in the summary section.</li> </ul>
Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When there is extra time on a tutorial day, have students read aloud their summaries from their content class notes so that tutorial group members can provide feedback.</li> </ul>
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the GIST strategy to help students create succinct summaries.</li> <li>• Lecture using the 10 and 2 note-taking model = lecture for ten minutes and provide two minutes for students to process and summarize information. Train staff on the 10 and 2 note-taking model.</li> </ul>
Site Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before students take notes, review the Essential Question based on the standard of the lesson.</li> <li>• Before students write the summary, review the Essential Question based on the standard of the lesson. Have students respond to the Essential Question in their summary.</li> <li>• Provide opportunity for students to create a summary sentence throughout the note-taking process.</li> </ul>

### 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 *Learning Tool*

**Step 7:**

**Use completed Cornell notes as a learning tool.**

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

Audience	Tips for this Step of the Cornell Way
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fold Cornell notepaper on the crease or line in order test yourself and check your answers.</li> <li>• Review notes and create questions for tutorial.</li> </ul>
Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review student notes from a class he or she is struggling in, and use the notes to create higher-level questions for the student to answer.</li> <li>• Ask students, "How are you using your Cornell notes?"</li> </ul>
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have students bring in content class notes and test each prior to a class test.</li> <li>• Have students create test questions based on their notes.</li> </ul>
Site Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use Cornell notes to play a class game (Jeopardy, etc.) to review for an upcoming test.</li> <li>• Allow students who have revised their notes to use them during a test/quiz.</li> </ul>

## IV. NOTE-REFLECTING:

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

### **W** *Written Feedback*

**Step 8:**

**Provide written feedback.**

- Submit Cornell notes weekly to be checked for **quality** using the Cornell notes rubric or checklist, and/or for **quantity** in a binder check.
- 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.

Audience	Tips for this Step of the Cornell Way
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take time to review feedback received on notes and make the necessary changes.</li> <li>• Ask questions to clarify what the feedback comments and notes mean to fully understand what the comments mean.</li> </ul>
Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request to see notes of students who struggle with Cornell notes prior to the student turning in the notes.</li> <li>• Check for the quantity of notes during binder checks.</li> </ul>
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the Constructive Feedback Handout to give quality comments that students can use to make positive changes in their notes.</li> <li>• Provide extra credit/points for students who choose to revise/refine their notes based on the feedback they receive.</li> <li>• Check for the quality of Cornell notes using the Die Grading Activity.</li> </ul>
Site Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with Site Team to create quantity and quality guidelines for students to follow.</li> <li>• Coordinate collection dates so that students can receive credit in both the AVID and content classes.</li> </ul>



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

### A *Address Feedback*

- Step 9:**
- Address written feedback.**
- Address feedback by using “Cornell Note Focus Goal Activity” to create a goal for improvement in future note-taking.
  - 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.

Audience	Tips for this Step of the Cornell Way
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review focus goals prior to the next week’s note-taking.</li> <li>• Select one area for improvement of the Cornell notes. Focus only on this while taking notes.</li> </ul>
Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students what they are working on this week based on the “Cornell Note Focus Goal Activity.”</li> </ul>
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have students use the “Cornell Note Focus Goal Activity” weekly so that students can reflect on their areas for growth.</li> <li>• Based on the tracking sheet, provide direct instruction on curriculum days to improve on the noted areas.</li> <li>• Use a tutorial day to have tutors work with students in completing their “Cornell Note Focus Goal Activity.”</li> </ul>
Site Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with the AVID Elective teacher to discuss the areas that students are struggling in. Decide as a team which areas to work on in the content class to reinforce good note-taking.</li> </ul>

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### **Y** *Your Reflection*

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- Step 10:**
- Gather all Cornell notes on the topic, concept, standard, objective, essay, etc.
- Reflect on your learning.**
- 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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Audience	Tips for this Step of the Cornell Way
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep notes for your content class in an organized fashion to be ready to complete “Cornell Note Reflective Log” and be ready to study all material for any upcoming tests/quizzes.</li> </ul>
Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the “Cornell Note Reflective Log” to assist on tutorial days.</li> </ul>
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide content teachers with professional development on using the “Cornell Note Reflective Log” in their classrooms.</li> <li>• Provide time on Fridays for students to bring in all their Cornell notes on a particular topic in order to complete the “Cornell Note Reflective Log” for their content class.</li> </ul>
Site Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have students complete the “Cornell Note Reflective Log” in the content class to use as a culminating activity for a unit of study and a way to support the AVID class.</li> </ul>