

# Using Guided Notes to Improve Student Performance

Guided notes is a structured format that students use when listening to a lecture, reading from the text, or watching a demonstration. Teachers create the guided notes prior to the lesson.

This procedure helps students take accurate, effective, and meaningful notes. Note-taking then becomes a valuable process since notes become useful for discussion and review for tests.

## **Guided notes are teacher-made handouts that:**

- Provide a structured format for students to take notes.
- Follow the sequence of the lesson content.
- Enable students to capture the information the teacher wants them to learn.
- Apply to any instructional delivery method including lecture, reading of the text, and video presentations.

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## **Considerations for using guided notes:**

- Include the information students are expected to learn.
- Utilize consistent cues to indicate where, when, and how much to write.
- Limit the amount students need to write by using a short answer format.
- Computerize the guided notes for easy updating and readability.
- Fade out the use of guided notes to increase students' independent note-taking skills.

## **Benefits of guided notes:**

- Students are actively engaged in the learning experience by listening, reading, and writing information.
- Students are able to identify what they know and whether more information is needed.
- All students have a standard set of notes.
- Students' notes are accurate.
- Teachers are required to prepare and deliver lessons carefully.
- Teachers remain focused during the lesson delivery.

From: Heward, W. L. (1997). Four validated instructional strategies. In J. Crandall, J. Jacobson, & H. Sloane (eds.), *What Works in Education* (pp. 55-64). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies.



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rev. 5/18