



All About Adolescent Literacy

Structured Notetaking

What it is...

Structured notetaking is a strategy that helps students become more effective note takers. Using graphic organizers specific to a particular text, structured notes assist students in understanding the content of their reading.

Initially teachers create the graphic organizers, but as students become more comfortable with using structured notes they are able to construct their own, matching the structure of their graphic organizer to the structure of the texts they read.

Why it's so great...

Structured notes are really helpful when students are faced with interpreting complex text structures. The notes give students a reading guide to use as they navigate through difficult text, and act as a model of how students should organize their ideas as they are reading.

How to create it...

1. Review the text and create a graphic organizer that matches the structure of the text. Provide each student with a copy of the organizer and the text they will read.
2. Review the structure of the organizer and how it relates to the structure of the text your students will read.
3. As students read and complete the organizer, remind them to review their responses and reflect on the connections being made between concepts.
4. Have students discuss their responses as a whole group or within their small groups. Remind students to focus their discussion on any questions where student answers differed.
5. At the completion of the reading, discuss how you created the graphic organizer and why you chose a particular structure for it. You may want to help students understand some of the common ways that information is organized (Buehl, 2000).
 - a. Cause/effect
 - b. Proposition/support
 - c. Goal/action/outcome
 - d. Compare/contrast
 - e. Problem/solution
 - f. Concept/definition

Buehl, D. (2000). *Classroom Strategies for Interactive Learning* (2nd Ed.) Newark, DE: IRA

Smith, P., & Tompkins, G. (1988). "Structured Notetaking: A new strategy for content area teachers." *Journal of Reading*, 32, 46-53.

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