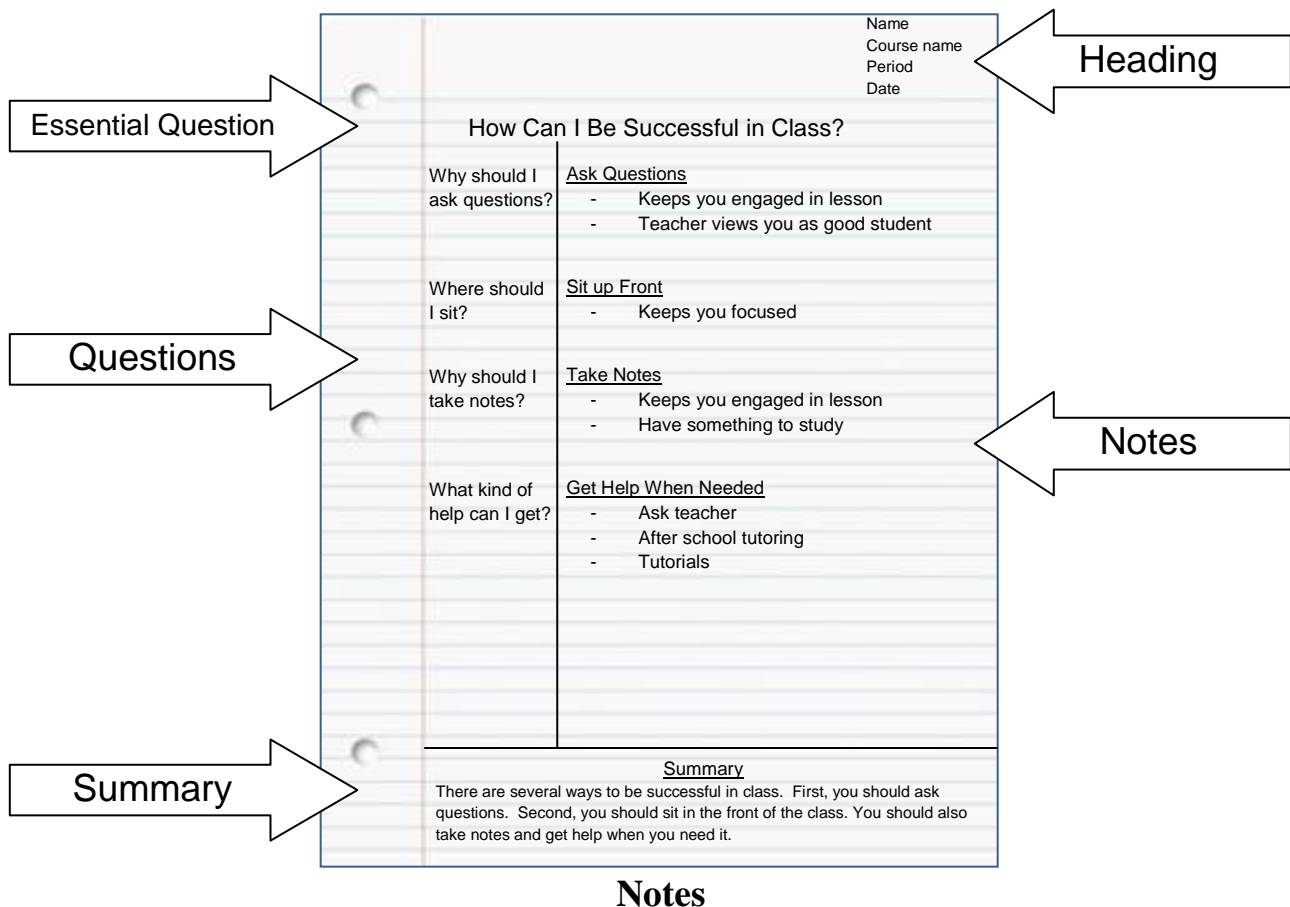


CORNELL NOTES

Why take notes? Research indicates that unrehearsed information is forgotten in as little as 20 seconds and almost ½ of what is learned is forgotten within an hour. Taking notes using the Cornell method is a great way to capture the most important information while reading texts or listening to a lecture. Furthermore, it helps you retain more of what you learn. Cornell notes were originally developed by Walter Pauk at Cornell University in the 1950's in response to his student failing his classes. By changing the way students were required to take notes in his class, Pauk was able to help his students improve their grades. Cornell notes include a section for **questions**, **notes**, and a **summary**.

Setting Up Your Paper

The first step is to set up your paper as seen in the diagram below. Either draw a line vertically from top to bottom about 2 inches from the left side of the notebook paper or fold the paper instead of drawing the line. Write the topic of the notes (in the form of an essential question) at the top of the page. Write a heading with your name, course name, period, and date.



In the *notes* section, consider writing the following:

- Answers to the questions written in the “question” section
- Vocabulary words and definitions
- Main ideas and details from reading
- Main ideas and details from lectures
- New concepts
- Facts
- Bolded or italicized information
- Tables, diagrams, charts, illustrations, or pictures to clarify reading or lecture material

Tips for writing notes:

- While reading, take notes one section at a time.
- Look away from the text and take notes from memory.
- Use your own words
- Use as few words as possible
- Leave at least three blank lines in your notes between main ideas so that you can add details later if necessary
- Use symbols, graphic organizers, or sketches

Questions

In the *questions* section, consider writing the following within 24 hours of taking notes from a text or lecture:

- Boldfaced headings in textbooks or main ideas from class lectures turned into questions
- Main ideas from class lectures turned into questions
- Vocabulary words turned into questions
- New concepts turned into questions
- Facts turned into questions

Summary

In the *summary* section, consider:

- Turning the essential question of your notes into a topic sentence for your summary.
- Turning each main idea written in the *notes* section into complete sentences in the *summary* section. Taking time to do this gives you one more opportunity to interact with your notes which will help you increase your retention of the content. Do this within 24 hours of taking the notes.

Studying Your Cornell Notes

- Fold your notes so that the questions are on one side and the main ideas and details are on the flip side.
- Read the question. Try to answer the question without looking at the *notes* section. Once you answer the question, flip to the *notes* section to check your answer. If you answered completely, move to the next question. If you did not answer the question completely, mark the question so that you know you need to spend more time on it.
- Repeat the step above for each question.
- Short, fast, and frequent review of notes is better than studying them once for a long period of time.