

# Cornell or Two Column Note Taking

## Reading and Learning Strategy



During and After Reading Strategy

## Note Taking

### **Purpose of Cornell Note Taking:**

The Cornell or the Two Column Note Taking strategy (Pauk 2001) helps students determine importance and to self-question as they read, comprehension strategies that effective readers use to make sense of text. The strategy provides students with a system for organising information in a useful format. Students identify the main ideas and important information of a topic, a prerequisite to developing insight, by writing the main points in one column and supporting or essential details in a second column. Underneath these columns students then write a one or two sentence summary to encapsulate the main ideas. These notes then act as a study guide for students.

### **Explicitly teaching the Note Taking method:**

#### **Step 1**

Explain that Cornell or Two Column Note Taking is a useful tool for recording notes and learning key information. Demonstrate how it is divided into three parts— main ideas or questions, details and summary. Select text and model how to skim the text to note the headings and subheadings. Discuss that subheadings, etc. often point to the main idea of the passage/chapter. Read the text, underline /highlight information and jot down important details on the right side of the board. Only write words and phrases, not sentences or word-for-word copying. Also explain that the first and last sentences of a paragraph can point to the main idea. Read back over these notes and pick out main ideas and keywords/concepts. Note these on the left side of the board. Finally, write a summary of the text based on the notes. *(The left column can be used for main ideas, key concepts, key words, steps, etc. and also questions. For example change subheadings into questions, write these in the left column and note answers to these questions in the right column, as you read).*

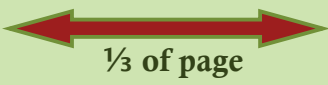

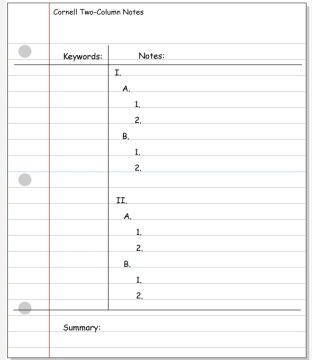
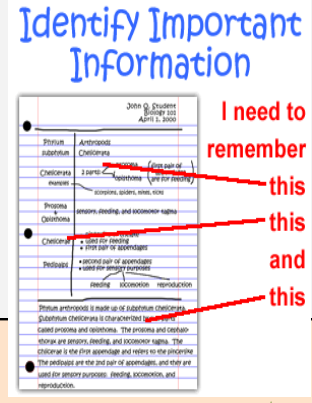

#### **Step 2**

Students now work in pairs to practice the strategy. Remind students to follow the same method you have modeled. Pairs feedback and you note the information that is repeated from the different groups. This confirms that they have identified the main ideas and correctly focused on the important information (you can also provide the main ideas in advance and students then concentrate on finding the detail that support these main ideas). Finally, ask students to write a 2/3-sentence summary. Continue to provide support until students can use the strategy independently

\* Cornell notes can also be used as a study sheet e.g. students can fold the paper and use the main ideas to recall the details, as well as use the details to generate the main ideas.

# Note Taking Layout

Read one paragraph at a time and in pairs go back to identify the main points within it. Then decide the important details you have underlined. Work together and discuss why some details might be more important to note than others. Finally, create a 2/3 sentence summary using the main ideas and important details.

Cues	Notes
<p><b>Record one or more of the following in this column.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main Ideas (e.g. pull the main ideas, concepts, terms, places, dates, and people from the right column)</li> <li>Categories</li> <li>Key points</li> <li>Key concepts/words</li> <li>Diagrams/Steps</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(After reading)</i></p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  <p><b>1/3 of page</b></p> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– During reading or lesson record the main ideas and concepts in the notes column or record answers to questions.</li> <li>– Note important details related to main ideas.</li> <li>– Use own words, phrases, abbreviations, symbols.</li> <li>– Use bullets point, lists, indent related points, etc.</li> <li>– Skip lots of space between points.</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  <p><b>2/3 of page</b></p> </div> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;">  </div> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;"><b>Summary</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(After reading)</i></p>	<p>Use the notes above to create a main ideas summary (Use the main ideas in sentences and add key details as support).</p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;">  <p><b>6cm</b></p> </div>

# Note Taking Layout

## Cues

Turn headings and subheadings into questions before reading e.g.

What are the parts of a cell?

## Details

Read to find the details that answer the questions.

Remember to look at bolded words, information in boxes or with a symbol/icon and diagrams.

## Summary

Write a summary of the topic using the notes above e.g. the five most important points.

Keywords:	Notes:
Solids	<b>Types of Matter</b> I. Solids A. Have a definite shape B. Have a definite volume
Liquids	II. Liquids A. Do not have a definite shape B. Have a definite volume
Gases	III. Gases A. Do not have a definite shape B. Do not have a definite volume
Summary: (Insert summary of lecture after class.)	

# Two Column Notes

- List the main ideas, topics and keywords on the left.
- List information and essential details on the right.
- Indent and leave space between important details.
- Use only words and phrases.

<i>Main Ideas / Questions</i>	<i>Important Details / Answers</i>
	1.
	-
	-
	2.
	-
	-
	-
	3.
	-
	-

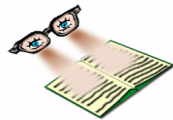
# Two Column Notes Bookmark (front)

## TWO COLUMN NOTES

1. Preview what you are about to read.

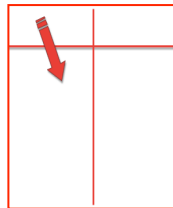


2. Carefully read the text selection.



3. Go back and find the main ideas. Use the text features to help e.g. headings, sub headings, bolded words, etc.

4. Write the main ideas on the left-hand side of the T chart.



5. On the right-hand side use bullet points or numbered lists for the important details you need to remember.

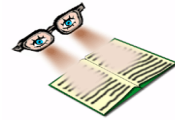


## TWO COLUMN NOTES

1. Preview what you are about to read.

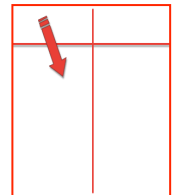


2. Carefully read the text selection.



3. Go back and find the main ideas. Use the text features to help e.g. headings and sub headings, bolded words, etc.

4. Write the main ideas on the left-hand side of the T chart.



5. On the right-hand side use bullet points or numbered lists for the important details you need to remember.



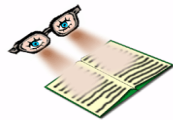
# Two Column Notes Bookmark (back)

## TWO COLUMN NOTES

1. Preview what you are about to read.

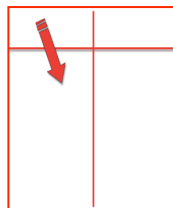


2. Carefully read the text selection.



3. Go back and find the main ideas. Use the text features to help e.g. headings, sub headings, bolded words, etc.

4. Write the main ideas on the left-hand side of the T chart.



5. On the right-hand side use bullet points or numbered lists for the important details you need to remember.

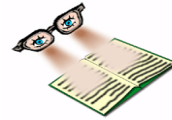


## TWO COLUMN NOTES

1. Preview what you are about to read.

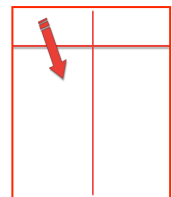


2. Carefully read the text selection.

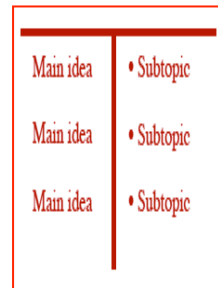


3. Go back and find the main ideas. Use the text features to help e.g. headings and sub headings, bolded words, etc.

4. Write the main ideas on the left-hand side of the T chart.



5. On the right-hand side use bullet points or numbered lists for the important details you need to remember.



# Note Taking

MAIN IDEAS	IMPORTANT DETAILS

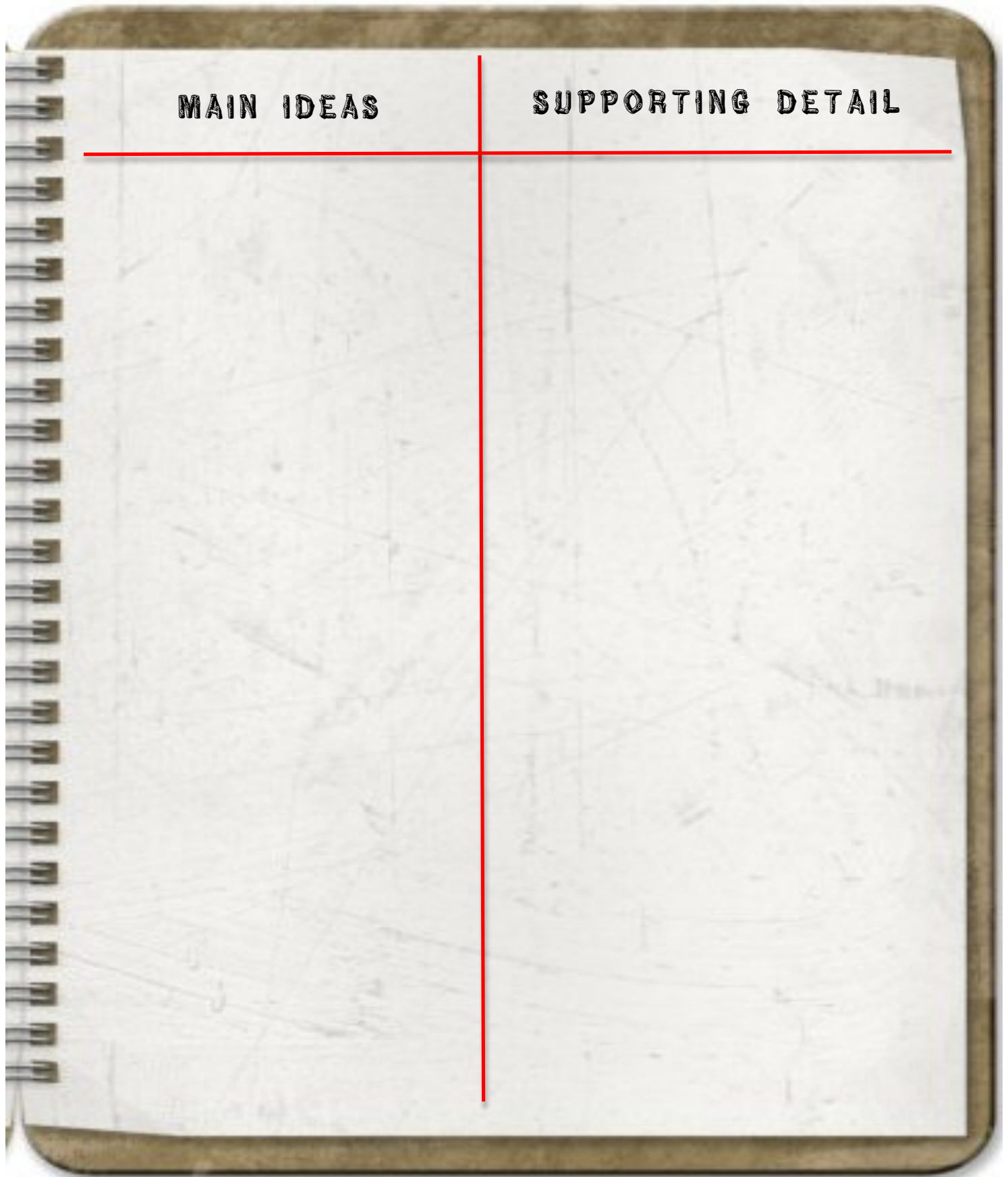
**SUMMARY:**

# Note Taking

<b>Main Ideas/Keywords</b>	<b>Important Details</b>
<b>Summary:</b>	



# Two Column Notes





National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS)

Navan Education Centre

Athlumney

Navan

Co. Meath

**Telephone:** +353 46 909 3355

**Fax:** +353 46 909 3354

**Email:** [nbss@ecnavan.ie](mailto:nbss@ecnavan.ie)

**Web:** [www.nbss.ie](http://www.nbss.ie)