

Improving Two-Column Notes

- ☒ Fold the left-hand edge of the paper (with holes) over until it meets the pink line on the right-hand side of the paper (about 1 inch from the edge). This results in a small left column for writing main ideas, which don't take up a lot of space. The large, right column is for writing supporting details where more room is needed.
- ☒ Using a colored marker, ask students to draw a capital T to separate the two columns as well as provide a title line. This extra step helps students use more of their senses, which ultimately helps them remember longer.
- ☒ Get students in the habit of adding a title to their T-Notes. This reinforcement will help when they study from their notes as well as when they use their notes in a longer piece of writing. They should be taught to write in large print on top of the capital T:



Topic = _____

- ☒ Initially, teach the students to find a main idea for each paragraph they read. Setting a specific goal like this helps students manage their time. It also makes the task less daunting by giving them small, incremental steps to complete. Model the skill of finding a main idea per paragraph on a short piece of high interest text.
- ☒ When you move into taking notes from textbooks, the “one main idea per paragraph” rule changes. Instead move students into the use of the bold-faced headings that most textbooks rely on. Have the students consider this one chunk of text from which to find a main idea. Usually the bold-faced heading itself can serve as a predictor of what the main idea might be.

Topic = Improving Two-Column Notes

Folding paper	- give more space to the right-hand side
Drawing the T	- take time to trace the T with a marker
Writing a Title	- write down the topic for the notes at the top
The ¶ Rule	- find one main idea per ¶
Textbook Notes	- use bold-faced headings in textbooks to find main ideas

Tips retrieved from *Maureen Auman's Practical Writing Series*. Videotapes available through the MS Literacy Lending Library. Contact Amy Goodman at 267-0221 to check these out.

http://www.readwriteconnect.com/flash/products_SUW_PWS_videos.html