LEARNING TECHNIQUES

LESSON 10-6 ▲ TEST PREPARATION

**LEARNING GOALS/OUTCOMES**

* Identify 10th grade tests required by the state.
* Use effective note-taking techniques to gather key information from a lecture or assigned reading.
* Identify points from class notes or assigned reading that are likely to be covered on a test.

**MATERIALS NEEDED**

* **Student Handouts:**
* High School Testing Requirements Scavenger Hunt
* Note-Taking Tips
* Journal Page
* **A short article about a local issue from a newspaper or magazine**, reproduced for your students. The article should be one with a clear thesis and conclusion and some reliance on supporting information.
* **Information about your state’s requirements for high school proficiency or graduation exams.** If possible, have this available in handout form, and ensure that it answers the questions asked in the student scavenger hunt.

**CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

1. **Students go on a scavenger hunt to learn about state-required graduation exams.** Divide students into pairs or triads and give each group of copy of the *High School Testing Requirements Scavenger Hunt* handout. Tell students they must find the information needed to complete every space on the handout. If possible, give each group an information sheet about your state’s high school graduation exam requirements that contains the information they need. Alternatively, arrange for your students to be able to ask staff in your central office or counseling office.
2. **Students review effective search techniques.** Ask the top groups to share how they found the information so quickly. In particular, ask if there were clues on the information sheet that alerted them that some pieces of information were more important than others. Note that the techniques they used for identifying key points of information from assigned reading or from an adult are central to effective note-taking.
3. **Students** **identify 10th grade tests required by the state.** Using information provided by your school administration, review with students what your state requires them to do in terms of proficiency testing to graduate from high school. Use the *High School Testing Requirements Scavenger Hunt* handout responses to go over each point. Review the details of any required graduation or proficiency exam, focusing on those that are required during 10th grade, and explain when students will take the exam(s). If possible, distribute detailed information about high school graduation exams for students to share with their families. Call on students to reiterate this information so that you are certain they understand.
4. **Students use effective note-taking techniques to gather key information from an assigned reading.** Ask students how they know what is important when they are doing assigned reading for class. How do they take notes? How do they know what information is important and might be covered on a test? Ask for volunteers to share their ideas. Write their answers on the board. Tell them they are going to work together to identify important information from a short reading using a technique that will be helpful in their classes.

Ask students to remain in their pairs or triads and distribute a short article you have copied from a newspaper or magazine. Also distribute *Note-Taking Tips* handout. Ask students to read the article and take notes on the article in one (or both) of two ways: by answering the questions on the handout or by taking notes in their own notebook. Tell them that focusing on identifying the three things asked for in the handout will always help them identify what is important. Those three things are: (1) central thesis (main point); (2) supporting facts; and (3) conclusion. Suggest that students might want to try using the “Cornell” method to take notes (described briefly on the handout). After several minutes of reading and note-taking, ask students to compare their notes with the other students in their pair or triad.

1. **Students identify points from an assigned reading that are likely to be covered on a test.** Ask students to return to their seats and ask for volunteers to share each of the three things they were asked to find: (1) central thesis (main point), (2) supporting facts, and (3) conclusion. Compare students’ answers and help them go back to the reading to identify how to find the most important information. If you wish, ask students who have correctly identified key information to share their notes (if you have a classroom projector). Discuss how students can combine finding the correct information with taking well-organized notes so that they can identify what information is important enough to be on a test and can find that information in their notes when they study.
2. **Students reflect on how they can improve their note-taking in a specific class.** Ask students to think about a specific class in which they would like to improve. Then have them answer the following questions on their Journal Page.

* How can I take better notes from class?
* How can I take better notes on assigned reading?
* How can I organize my notes better?

**STUDENT PRODUCTS**

* **Completed *Journal Page*,** reflecting on students’ own note-taking capabilities.

LEARNING TECHNIQUES

LESSON 10-6 STUDENT HANDOUT

HIGH SCHOOL TESTING REQUIREMENTS SCAVENGER HUNT

**Directions: *You and a partner must find the following information. This information may be on a handout provided by your advisor, or you may find it in your principal’s office or school counseling office.***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What is the name of the test(s) required by your state for students to graduate from high school?** |  |
| **When do students take the test(s)?** |  |
| **Where do students take the test(s)?** |  |
| **What subjects are covered on the test(s)?** |  |
| **What is the format for the test(s)?  *(Multiple choice, essay, short answer, etc.)*** |  |
| **What is the scoring system and what defines a passing score? *(Scored from 1-100, from 1-4, etc.)*** |  |
| **What can students do if they don’t pass?** |  |

LEARNING TECHNIQUES

LESSON 10-6 STUDENT HANDOUT

NOTE-TAKING TIPS

When you read something that is assigned for class, how can you determine what is most important? How can you know what might be on a test?

Read the article assigned by your advisor. Take notes, writing down points you think are important and might be asked on a test if about the article.

Many students find that a good way to take notes is by using the “Cornell” method. Mark a line down your paper, about 1/3 of the way from the left margin. Use the right-hand side of the paper to take your notes. Then write summary comments about your notes on the left hand side.

As you take notes, answer the following questions either on another piece of paper (trying the Cornell method if you wish) or on the lines below. Answering these questions will help you identify important information that might be on a test.

**What is the author’s thesis (main point)?**

**What supporting facts does the author use to support the thesis?**

**What is the conclusion of the article?**

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LESSON 10-6 STUDENT HANDOUT

JOURNAL PAGE

**DATE:**

**Lesson 10-6 | *TEST PREPARATION***

***Q1:*** How can I take better notes from class?

***Q1:*** How can I take better notes on assigned reading?

***Q1:*** How can I organize my notes better?

***Answers:***