



# Two-Column Notes: Tools for Reflection While Reading, Writing, and Observing

# Two-Column Notes: Introduction

It's hard to know who to credit for the incredibly useful two-column note tool. While two-column notes are definitely a kissing cousin to the Cornell Note-Taking System (Pauk, 1974), in recent years the tool's popularity has grown with teachers because of the work of the Denver Public Education and Business Coalition (PEBC) in reading strategy instruction.

The design couldn't be more simple or easy to master – factual notes are made on the lefthand side of the page, describing what is read (or quoting the material), observed (in a classroom or video), or experienced (in a workshop setting). The righthand side of the page is reserved for questions or reflection. The system encourages the note-taker to move continually and systematically between observations and reflection, with a goal of helping the learner pause and make sense in the midst of a new experience.

The sixteen sample two-column note-taking forms that follow are a starting point for adaptations of your own. They can be used in study group settings, with mentor teams, in classroom observation settings, or as part of a workshop on note-taking. We've also included a few three-column variations. Many users also enjoy having a space reserved at the bottom for general thoughts or observations after completing the activity.

## Reference

Pauk, W. 1974. *How to Study in College*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Quote from Reading	What It Makes Me Think About

**Verbal Cues from Teacher to Students**

**Nonverbal Cues**

<b>Quote from Mentor's Writing</b>	<b>What It Makes Me Think About</b>

**Student Behaviors I Notice**

**How Teacher Responds**

**What I'd Like to Try in My Classroom**

**What Might Keep Me from Making the Change**

**Rules, Routines, and Procedures  
in the Classroom**

**How Are These Reinforced?**



<b>Resources I Notice</b>	<b>How Might I Use the Resource in My Teaching?</b>

**Similarities to My Classroom**

**Differences**

<b>I Disagree with These Quotes from the Author</b>	<b>Why I Disagree</b>

**Teacher's Role**

**Student Role**

**What the Teacher Says**

**What It Makes Me Think About**

**What I Saw**

**Questions I Have**

Group	Lesson Highlights	How Teacher Differentiates Instruction

**Additional Notes:**

Teacher Says...	Student Responds...	What It Makes Me Think About...



Student Says...	Teacher Responds...	What It Makes Me Think About...

Resource	How It is Used	How I Might Adapt and Use It in My Classroom

