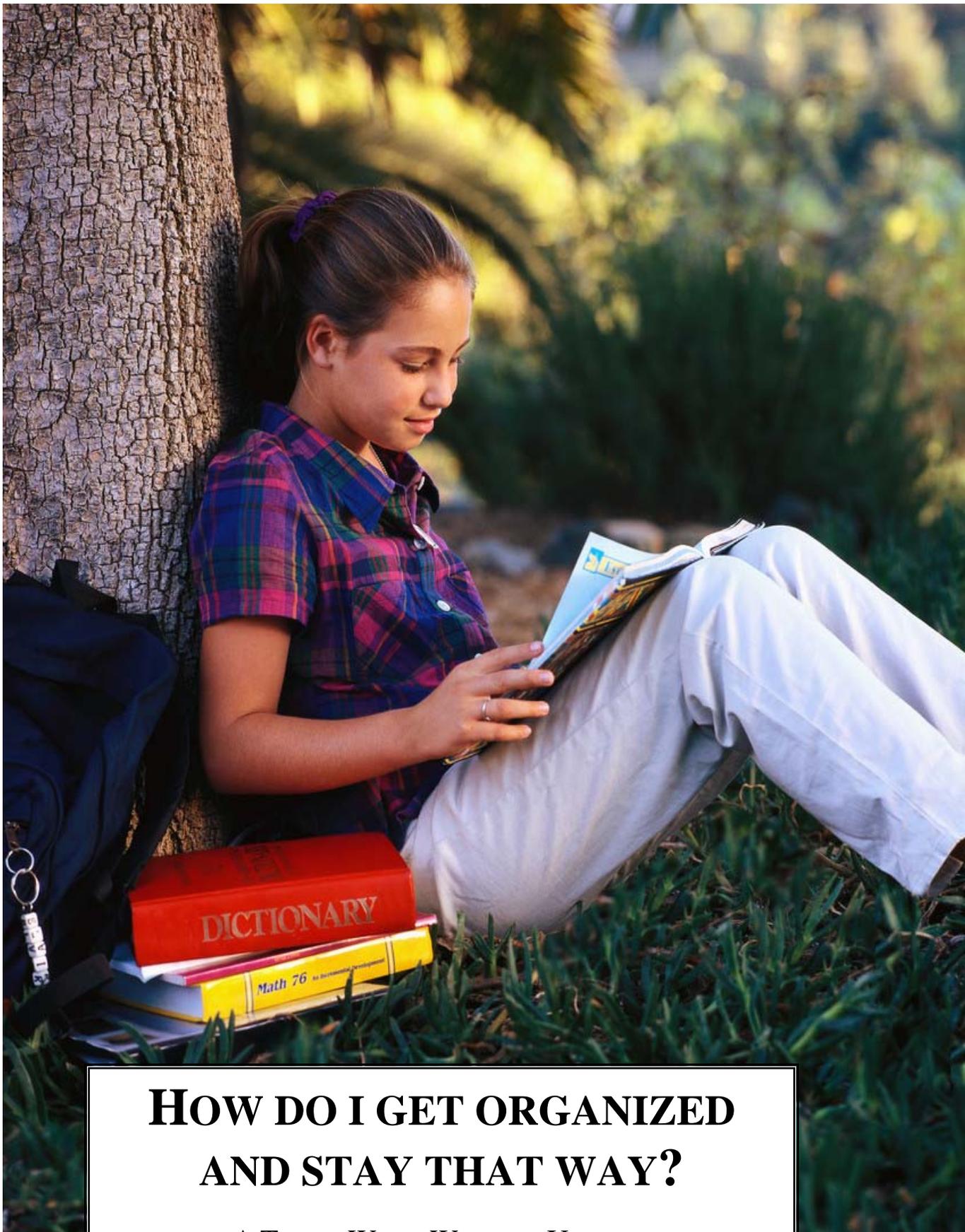




# DISTRICT 75: HIGH SCHOOL UNITS OF STUDY



## HOW DO I GET ORGANIZED AND STAY THAT WAY?

A THREE WEEK WRITING UNIT ON  
NOTE TAKING AND ORGANIZATION

## ***Acknowledgments***

The ***District 75 Units of Study for Grades K-12*** were created as a guideline for teachers implementing the Reader's and Writer's Workshop within their classrooms.

The mission of the District 75 Literacy Team is to enhance literacy programs in all District 75 schools so that students may become lifelong readers and writers. The District Literacy Team supports the implementation of the New York City Performance Standards in English Language Arts, the Department of Education's Scope and Sequence K-8 as well as the Balanced Literacy Initiative.

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**Middle School – Noveria Gillison, Kristine Gonzalez, Shelley Levy, Sandra Ramos-Alamo**

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# INTRODUCTION

## LETTER TO THE TEACHER

Most teachers in the content areas require students to take notes while they are reading or while they are listening to lectures, presentations or media. In high school, teachers must remember that these processes can be very difficult for students with learning disabilities and for students who are struggling as readers and writers. Teachers must be willing to provide students with consistent, explicit strategies that will help them learn to take notes in a variety of settings while maintaining a system of organization that will ensure success.

In *Writing Next*, the report issued by the Carnegie Corporation on the state of writing instruction for adolescents, the authors assert that because of the growing demands of the high school curriculum, over 7,000 students drop out every day. Since we can largely attribute this attrition rate to literacy levels, we must remember that writing is a significant part of literacy learning. Furthermore, students in our most restrictive settings require even more support to be successful in completing a high school diploma (Graham 2007).

This unit intends to provide a quick and meaningful introduction to note-taking and organization strategies that will allow students to complete academic tasks, track progress of their work and complete assignments in a timely manner. The enduring understanding, *How do I get organized and stay that way?*, structures the purpose of the learning and is meant to encourage self-management of learning.

## STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT

Through a variety of assessments, teachers will continually assess their students and plan meaningfully to meet the identified needs of their students. Assessments are incorporated throughout the unit to help establish a reflective and continuous assessment cycle. Suggested assessments include, but are not limited to, writing portfolios, Reader's and Writer's Notebooks, graphic organizers, rubrics, and the final published piece.

The following High School Standards for English Language Arts are addressed throughout this Unit of Study:

**Standard 1:** Students will read, write, listen and speak for information and understanding.

**Standard 2:** Students will read, write, listen and speak for literary response and expression.

**Standard 3:** Students will read, write, listen and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.

**Standard 4:** Students will read, write, listen and speak for social interaction.

Though the presentation of skills for ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade students with disabilities may be similar, the actual choice of mentor texts remains up to the teacher. Suggested adaptations, including booklists, assure that this unit can be incorporated into a high school credit-bearing course in American Literature, World Literature or British Literature.

## **SUPPORTS FOR STRUGGLING WRITERS**

One of the research-based methods that work well for struggling writers is the use of appropriate graphic organizers to structure thoughts. In this unit, graphic organizers are used to support the note taking process. Remember one of the most important parts of taking notes is the reflection and summarization steps. Students should always reflect on the importance of the notes that they took as well as practice summarizing the information contained in their notes. A few levels of support are offered in this document so that different means of taking notes can be used for students who have varying degrees of sophistication with the materials.

### **TWO COLUMN NOTES AND THREE COLUMN NOTES**

Here is a method advanced by Sharon Faber that offers a variation of the Cornell Note-taking method. This graphic organizer can be given out with the columns pre-labeled or teachers can encourage students to label the columns based on the material presented. The three column notes would be for more sophisticated students who could hold the meanings of the three columns without decreasing the fluency of their note taking.

## TWO COLUMN NOTES



**Name:**

**Date:**

Column One	Column Two



## Three Column Notes

Name:

Date:

Column One	Column Two	Column Three

## COMMON NOTE TAKING SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

### SYMBOLS

The following chart is a list of common symbols and abbreviations used while taking notes. They are by no means an exhaustive list containing every kind of abbreviation. The most important part of taking notes is to use symbols that you as an individual can understand and interpret. Feel free to create your own!

#### Symbols

÷	statement/answer is correct
X	statement/answer is wrong
?	question; is the statement correct?
/	or (this/that = this or that)
& or +	and/plus
-	a dash (often used to join ideas and replace words or punctuation marks that have been omitted), also used to put notes in a list
" "	ditto (means the same as the words immediately above the ditto marks)
≠	does not equal, differs from, is the opposite of
=	Is/are/have/has>equals
\$	dollars or money
#	Number
! or *	very important
<	less than
>	greater than/more than
→	leads to/causes
()	note to reader
@	At
{	Contains/all things within/under same category

## ABBREVIATIONS

Many of the common general abbreviations are found in an appendix in a dictionary; however, some of these are listed below:

### **Abbreviations**

e.g. or ex.	for example
i.e.	that is
etc.	etcetera: and so on
c.(or ca.)	about/approximately
N.B.	Note
1920s	i.e. 1920-1929; similarly 1970s etc.
approx.	Approximately
bec.	Because
Dept	Department
diff.(s)	difficult(y)(-ies)
excl.	Excluding
govt.	Government
imp.	important/importance
incl.	Including
info.	Information
lang.	Language
Ltd	Limited
max.	Maximum
min.	Minimum
1 <sup>st</sup>	First
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Second
3 <sup>rd</sup>	third etc.
Q.	Question
A.	Answer
no.	Number
p./pp.	page/pages
poss.	possible/possibly
prob.	probable/probably

probs.	Problems
re-	with reference to/concerning
tho'	Though
Thro'	Through
s/t	Something
s/o	Someone
hist.	History
lit	literature/ELA
sci.	Science
math	Mathematics
ch.	Chapter
bk.	Book

**Modified from** James, K., Jordan, R.R. and Matthews, A.J. (1991), *Listening Comprehension and Note-Taking Skills*, Collins ELT, London.

## CURRICULUM MAP

### *READING THE CURRICULUM MAP*

Much work has been done to create curriculum maps, but little time is spent on how to look at them. Each week of the curriculum map is divided into sections as follows:

<b>WEEK ONE:</b>  WHAT TOOLS CAN WE USE TO GATHER INFORMATION ON CHARACTERS?	Readers begin to approach elements of character by recording character traits from familiar video or visual aides.	Readers experience characterization through music with lyrics. Record character traits on graphic organizer.	Readers read and record notes about their character on a graphic organizer while reading.	<b>Readers practice protocols, roles and responsibilities for Book Clubs.</b>	Readers in book clubs preview the book to examine text features.
	Writers formalize a schedule for writing, review their writing portfolio checklist and read their rubrics.		Writers illustrate and personalize their portfolio.		Writers setup and organize their Book Clubs while reviewing their criteria.

- The first line lets you know which week this chart is referencing. In addition, the unit is presented in a specific order, but should not be seen as prescriptive.
- Following the week number is the week title phrased in the form of an essential question. Each teacher should adapt the lessons to meet the needs of their students.
- The first row of the table highlights the Reader’s Workshop teaching points for the week.
- The second row shows the Writer’s Workshop teaching points for the week. The second row is shaded to differentiate it from the first.
- The teaching points in bold are developed more fully in the lessons to support the unit of study.

<p><b>WEEK ONE:</b></p> <p>HOW DO I ORGANIZE MY MATERIALS FOR SCHOOL SYSTEMATICALLY?</p>	<p>Students, in cooperation with teacher, develop a system for organizing their materials daily into a three-ring binder.</p>	<p>Students will list materials that they should bring to school on a daily basis.</p>	<p>Students will use an assignment calendar to mark when they must complete all of their assignments and projects.</p>	<p>Students and teacher will create a contract person for daily homework assignments.</p>	<p><b>Students will check their assignments for a heading, organization and neatness.</b></p>
--	---	--	--	---	---

**The goals of the first week of this unit include:**

- Developing a system for organizing materials into a three ring binder
- Listing materials that students will bring to school
- Using an assignment calendar
- Creating a homework contract
- Checking for heading, organization and neatness in assignments

<p><b>WEEK TWO:</b></p> <p>HOW DO I TAKE NOTES WHILE LISTENING?</p>	<p>Students will practice vertical jotting while listening to a familiar story or song.</p>	<p><b>Students will practice using the 5W's and an H (who, what, when, where, why, how) with short texts.</b></p>	<p>Students will learn how to create and use established abbreviations while taking notes.</p>	<p>Students will write short descriptions of common objects, pair up, read the description, and have his/her partner retell the text.</p>
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**The goals of the second week of this unit include:**

- Practicing vertical jotting
- Taking notes while listening
- Using the 5W's chart to take notes
- Creating and using established abbreviations for note taking
- Retelling a story from notes

<p><b>WEEK THREE:</b></p> <p>HOW DO I TAKE NOTES WHILE READING?</p>	<p>Students preview texts while noting text features: captions, headings, fonts, bolding, italicizing, glossaries, tables of contents, indices, etc.</p>	<p><b>Students will practice outlining notes while reading using a specific template.</b></p>	<p>Students will practice taking notes from a newspaper article and practice retelling the article to a peer.</p>	<p>Students will complete a graphic organizer outlining how to take notes while listening and reading.</p>
---	--	---	---	--

**The goals of the third week of this unit include:**

- Previewing text features
- Practicing the *trash and treasure* method of note taking
- Practicing retelling from notes
- Reflecting and sharing on how to take notes while reading and listening

**Unit of Study: Note taking and organization**

**Date:**

**Title of Minilesson:** Students will check for a heading, organization and neatness in their assignments.

**Intention:** Students will learn to pair/edit for the above criteria with a reading partner.

**Materials:** Chart paper or overhead, markers, templates for students, student writing assignments to correct

**Connection:** *This week we have been learning how to organize our materials and keep track of our class work and homework. Today we will look more specifically at three criteria for our written work.*

**Teaching:** *Today, we will learn to use a list of prompts to check each of our assignments for the following:*

Heading  
Organization  
Neatness

*Let's look at the list of prompts I placed on your desk. Teacher has same on OH and reviews with whole class. Teacher emphasizes the importance of using the questions which prompt student to check work. Students are guided to keep in a safe place.*

**Active Engagement:** *Today, you will work with your writing partner to check one of your assignments for the necessary criteria. You will need the list of prompts and one of your non-fiction writing assignments. Students review criteria together and then use the prompts as a rubric to analyze each paper collaboratively.*

**Link:** *As I go around the room I want to remind everybody to use the question prompts thoroughly with each writing piece. These are your guides to success. Each partnership should have completed two rubrics; one for each of your essays.*

**Debrief:** *Using this procedure has given each of you an excellent tool to begin checking your assignments for completion. Please continue to use this strategy until it becomes a habit. Also, your partner is an objective source to help you if you have a problem so continue to collaborate with one another. Great work!*

## QUESTIONS THAT HELP YOU CHECK YOUR WORK

Question	Yes/No	Correction
Is my name and date on my paper?		
Is the subject/assignment made clear?		
Have I included a title?		
Are my pages in the correct order and numbered?		
Does my essay have correct form? (Introduction, Body, Conclusion)		
Are my sentences complete?		
Do I have topic sentences?		
Do I include details to support my topic sentences?		
When I answer questions do I write complete sentences?		
Is my handwriting legible?		
Is my work written in ink?		
Do I cross out or white out words?		
Am I practicing word processing skills?		

**Unit of Study: Note taking and organization**

**Date:**

**Title of Minilesson:** Students will practice using the 5W's (who, what, when, where, why, how) with short texts.

**Intention:** Students will be able to use the 5W's + H to aid in retelling and summarizing important information from short texts.

**Materials:** Chart paper or overhead, markers, copies of recording sheets.

**Connection:** *This week we have been learning how to take notes while listening. We already understand that writing down every word someone says is not possible. When we have to take notes, many times we have to search for specific information to help us make sense of what we are hearing and reading. Many people use the five W's + H as a strategy to help them.*

**Teaching:** *Today I am going to read a short text to you and I want you to answer the 5 W's + H. But, before I start I want to remind you of what the 5 W's and H stand for: who, what, when, where, why and how.*

\*See attached text (adapt the text if needed to meet students needs)

*In my chart I made the following notes: for **who**, I wrote down that Angelina Jolie was the most important who. As for the **what**, I wrote down that Angelina Jolie had completed humanitarian work around the world. In terms of **when**, I wrote down the present because Angelina Jolie lives right now with us and is working on these issues. For **where**, I wrote that Angelina's work has happened all over the world – at the UN, in refugee camps and in Kenya. And the why and the how? Well, my response to **why** addresses multiple questions: why was the event held for Angelina Jolie? Why is she important? Because of her ability to combine her talents for acting with her humanitarian goals. The **how** she does it: she does it by contributing money and raising awareness for human rights issues.*

**Active Engagement:** *You will work with your reading partner to analyze your own short text that is read aloud by your partner. While your partner is reading you should be taking notes using the 5 W's + H chart. I will be coming around to answer questions.*

**Link:** *Remember using the 5 W's + H chart is a way of taking notes while listening or reading and it helps us determine importance.*

**Debrief:** *The 5 W's + H is a useful strategy to help you make sense of what you read. It also helps you remember the most important features of a text. When I was walking around today, I noticed that many of you were able to highlight the important accomplishments of the figures discussed in your articles. Keep using the 5W's and an H chart as a note-taking tool!*

## **Angelina Jolie**

Jolie first became personally aware of worldwide humanitarian crises while filming Tomb Raider in poverty-stricken and widely mined Cambodia. According to Jolie, "I discovered things about what's happening in the world... Cambodia was really eye opening for me." Deeply affected by these experiences, she eventually turned to UNHCR for more information on international trouble spots. In the following months she agreed to visit different refugee camps around the world to learn more about the situation and the conditions in these areas. In February 2001, Jolie went on her first field visit, an 18-day mission to Sierra Leone and Tanzania; she later expressed her shock at what she had witnessed. In the coming months she returned to Cambodia for two weeks and later visited Afghan refugees in Pakistan where she donated \$1 million for Afghan refugees in response to an international UNHCR emergency appeal. She insisted on covering all costs related to her missions and shared the same rudimentary working and living conditions as UNHCR field staff on all of her visits. Impressed by her interest and devotion in the subject, UNHCR named her a Goodwill Ambassador on August 27, 2001 at UNHCR headquarters in Geneva, despite her warning that her controversial public image might shed a negative light on the U.N. In a press conference Jolie explained her motives for joining the refugee agency:

'We cannot close ourselves off to information and ignore the fact that millions of people are out there suffering. I honestly want to help. I don't believe I feel differently from other people. I think we all want justice and equality, a chance for a life with meaning. All of us would like to believe that if we were in a bad situation someone would help us.'

During her first three years as Goodwill Ambassador Jolie concentrated her efforts on field missions, visiting refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) all around the world. Asked what she hoped to accomplish, she stated, "Awareness of the plight of these people. I think they should be commended for what they have survived, not looked down upon." In 2002, Jolie visited Tham Hin refugee camp in Thailand and Colombian refugees in Ecuador to take a closer look at the "Western Hemisphere's most severe humanitarian crisis". She and US Secretary of State Colin Powell opened events to celebrate World Refugee Day 2002 on June 20 in Washington, D.C. Jolie then went to various UNHCR facilities in Kosovo

and paid a visit to Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya with refugees mainly from Sudan. UNHCR's Representative to Kenya, George Okoth-Obbo, praised her “presence, just to bring some joy into what is undoubtedly a hard life for many of the people here”. She also visited Angolan refugees while she was filming *Beyond Borders* in Namibia.

In 2003, Jolie embarked on a six-day mission to Tanzania where she traveled to western border camps, hosting Congolese refugees and she paid a week-long visit to Sri Lanka, where she saw the post-war conditions in northern Sri Lanka. Jolie again attended World Refugee Day on June 20 in Washington, D.C., and later concluded a four-day mission to Russia as she traveled to North Caucasus to learn about all aspects of UNHCR's operations in the region. Concurrently with the release of her movie *Beyond Borders* in October 2003 she published *Notes from My Travels*, a collection of journal entries that chronicle her early field missions (2001-2002). All her proceeds from the book went to UNHCR. During a private stay in Jordan in December 2003 she asked to visit Ruwaished camp in Jordan's remote eastern desert, 70 km from the Iraqi border. The camp hosted some 800 people who had fled Iraq during the U.S.-led invasion and later that month she visited Sudanese refugees near the Egyptian capital in Kilo Arbaa We Nus.

On her first U.N. trip within the United States, Jolie went to Arizona in 2004, visiting detained asylum seekers at three facilities and the Southwest Key Program, a facility for unaccompanied children in Phoenix. With the humanitarian situation in Sudan worsening, she flew to Chad in June 2004, paying a visit to border sites and camps for refugees who had fled fighting in western Sudan's Darfur region. Four months later she returned to the region, this time going directly into West Darfur to learn about the situation of thousands of IDPs. She stressed the need for security and access to displaced people's home villages at a press conference in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum. On June 18, 2004 she and US Secretary of State Colin Powell met again in Washington to launch the three day events of World Refugee Day. Also in 2004 Jolie visited Afghan refugees in Thailand and on a private stay to Lebanon during the Christmas holidays she visited UNHCR's regional office in Beirut, as well as some young refugees and cancer patients in the Lebanese capital.

With increasing experience, Jolie became more involved in promoting humanitarian causes on a political level. Since 2005 she has attended the

World Economic Forum in Davos, announcing the formation of a Council of Business Leaders with UNHCR's Deputy High Commissioner, Wendy Chamberlin, in 2005, and participated in the panel discussion Human Rights: Reduced to Charity? in 2006. Jolie also began lobbying humanitarian interests in Washington, D.C. where she met with congressmen and senators at least 20 times from 2003. She explained in Forbes:

“ As much as I would love to never have to visit Washington, that's the way to move the ball.”

Among others, she pushed for The Unaccompanied Alien Child Protection Act in reaction to her previous visit to facilities for asylum seekers in Arizona. On March 8, 2005 Jolie took part at a National Press Club luncheon in Washington, D.C. where she promoted the bill and in support of it announced the founding of the National Center for Refugee and Immigrant Children, an organization that provides free legal-aid to asylum-seeking children with no legal representation which Jolie personally funded with a donation of \$500,000 for its first two years. The Unaccompanied Alien Child Protection Act eventually passed in December 2005. Jolie also pushed for a bill to aid 70 million vulnerable children in the Third World which was signed by President Bush in November 2005, but so far no funding has been granted. In addition to her political involvement, Jolie began using the public's interest in her to promote humanitarian causes through the mass media. In May 2005 Jolie filmed a MTV special, *The Diary Of Angelina Jolie & Dr. Jeffrey Sachs in Africa*, portraying her and noted economist Dr. Jeffrey Sachs on their trip to Sauri, a remote group of villages in Western Kenya. There, Sachs's United Nations Millennium Project team is working with locals to end poverty, hunger and disease. In September 2006 Jolie announced the founding of the Jolie/Pitt Foundation which made initial donations to Global Action for Children and Doctors Without Borders of \$1 million each.

Jolie visited Pakistani camps containing Afghan refugees, in May 2005 and she also met with Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz. She returned to Pakistan with Brad Pitt during the Thanksgiving weekend in November to see the impact of the October 8 Kashmir earthquake. They met many quake victims as well as President Musharraf. In 2006 Jolie and Pitt flew to Haiti and visited a school supported by Yéle Haïti, a charity founded by Haitian-born hip hop musician Wyclef Jean. Jolie also arranged a deal with People allowing them to print

the first picture showing her visibly pregnant in exchange for a \$500,000 donation to Yéle Haïti. In November 2006, while filming *A Mighty Heart* in India, she visited Afghan and Burmese refugees in New Delhi and met the Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma, praising India's longstanding hospitality to refugees. Jolie spent Christmas Day with Colombian refugees in San José, Costa Rica where she handed out presents and met with Costa Rican officials. In February 2007, Jolie returned to Chad for a two-day mission to assess the deteriorating security situation for refugees from the Darfur region of Sudan. In an op-ed for the *Washington Post* she stressed the need for justice and the increased involvement of the International Criminal Court to establish an enduring peace. In May, Jolie and Pitt donated \$1 million to three relief organizations in Darfur and neighbouring Chad.

Jolie has received wide recognition for her humanitarian work. On October 24, 2003 she was the first recipient of the new created Citizen of the World Award by the United Nations Correspondents Association. Cambodia's King Norodom Sihamoni awarded Jolie Cambodian citizenship for her conservation work in the country on August 12, 2005; she has pledged \$5 million to set up a wildlife sanctuary in the north-western province of Battambang and owns property there. On October 12, 2005, Jolie was awarded the Global Humanitarian Award by the UNA-USA. In February 2007, she was accepted by the bipartisan think tank Council on Foreign Relations for a special five-year term designed to "nurture the next generation of foreign policy makers".

(Wikipedia 2007)

**Unit of Study: Note Taking and Organization**

**Date:**

**Title of Minilesson:** Students will practice outlining notes from reading using a specific template.

**Intention:** Writers will practice determining important facts from reading text and record these facts on a template.

**Materials:** chart paper or overhead, markers, templates for students, reading material

**Connection:** *For the last several weeks we have been learning strategies to help us organize our materials, as well as, take notes. At this point we should understand how to keep an assignment calendar up to date and keep current with HW assignments. We have also begun learning strategies to help us take notes.*

**Teaching:** *Today, we will practice outlining notes from reading using a specific template. We will practice the process together to begin learning how to do this. Teacher distributes, Smoking’s Health Toll and Price tag, from Step Up to Writing as an example.*

Steps:

- Read selection silently
- Read selection aloud
- Writers use a green highlighter to underline the 2 main ideas.
- Writers use a yellow highlighter to select 2 details to support each main idea.
- Now, writers transfer this information onto the graphic organizer.

Teacher/ writers work together as teacher models.

**Helpful Main Idea Strategy** (adapted from Kaplan K12 Learning Services):

**2Ws - Who/what is the text mostly about? (subject)**  
**What action is mainly taking place? (verb)**

**Active Engagement:** *Now, you will have an opportunity to practice this strategy with your writing partner. This strategy can work with a selection, a text book or with your independent reading book. It is a great way to prepare for writing a well organized essay. Let’s see what you can do.*

*Choose a writing partner and work on the same selection individually. Then, compare your results and discuss. Are you in agreement? If not, see me.*

**Link:** *As I watch you read and take notes, I see how this process can be very useful. I want to remind you to follow the steps outlined above and do not skip steps as you work.*

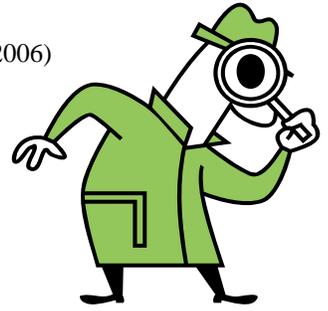
**Debrief:** *We want to create a new habit in your mind that will serve you throughout your schooling in all subject areas. This strategy will give you the foundation for essay writing.*

## SMOKING'S HEALTH TOLL AND PRICE TAG

Although smoking may seem cool, it is very unhealthy and expensive. Many people die from smoking related problems such as cancer, heart disease etc. every year. According to *World Book Encyclopedia* during the mid-1980s smoking contributed to 30% of all deaths from cancer and heart disease in the United States of America. Furthermore, cigarette smoking was associated with 85% of all cases of lung cancer. Secondly, smoking very expensive. If someone smoked one pack of cigarettes every day that cost \$3.00 for 50 years, it would cost them \$54,750.00, which is enough money to buy an expensive and luxurious car. On the contrary, if someone put \$3.00 a day into a bank or investment institution they would be making hundreds of dollars in only a few years because of the interest they are collecting. Clearly, smoking is very unhealthy and very expensive too, so don't start smoking until you have considered all the negative effects.



## RECORDING INFORMATION FROM SHORT TEXT (Auman 2006)



### Directions:

When you read, record important information in the spaces below:

**Title -**

**Author -**

**WHO** 1.

*clue: names of characters* 2.

3.

**WHAT** 1.

*clue: central ideas/story* 2.

3.

**WHEN** 1.

*clue: dates/numbers* 2.

3.

**WHERE** 1.

*clue: settings/places* 2.

3.

**WHY** 1.

*clue: underlying reasons//motivations* 2.

3.

**HOW** 1.

*clue: process/procedure/sequence* 2.

3.

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