

G T O Y

Georgia Teachers of the Year Association

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“Promising Practices Classroom Activity”

Title of Activity: __Science Interactive Notebooks_____

Recommended to use with this number of students: __Whole Class_____

Content Area: __Life Science_____ Grade Level(s): ____7th_____

Match to Georgia Standard(s): ____It can be used for all standards_____

Note: Use the remainder of this page and up to one additional page for describing the activity

In my science class, we use interactive notebooks to keep track of all notes, labs, journal entries and manipulative. There is even an orange clasp 6 ½ x 9 ½ envelope that students have glued into the cover of their notebook. This envelope is used to keep track of all of their vocabulary for each unit. These notebooks range from spiral bound to the typical composition notebook. Composition works best because students are less likely to tear out pages and tear up whereas the spiral notebooks are easily destroyed.

Students will put all of their Thinking Maps, notes, labs and journal entries. Our school system uses Thinking Maps district-wide so students understand how and when to use the maps. Each lesson has a Thinking Map attached to it and those notes will go into the student's notebooks. Students are easily able to go back through their notebook to find their notes especially for homework purposes. Also, if there is every an issue where a parent is unsure of

information, I always refer them to their students notebooks. I have not had one parent complain yet and this is year three of using them. All of our lab write-ups begin inside the notebook. In our Characteristics of the Standards, the state asks us to “write clear, step-by-step instructions for conducting particular scientific”. Using the notebooks allows students to act like scientist in during their lab process.

The notebooks are not just for Thinking Maps and written notes, but we also create foldables for different topics. These are either glued in or taped into their notebooks. This alleviates the headache of trying to find their foldable in their binder because it could not be hole-punched or it doesn't go straight to the bottom of the book bag to never be seen again.

The best part of this practice is that everything is in one spot. Their vocabulary, notes, foldables and labs are all together. One way to add some order to the notebook is to have students create a table of contents. My students know that when we start a new page, their first three steps are to 1) label the page, 2) number the page 3)add label to the table of contents. This way if we are looking for a specific foldable or map we can see what page to go to from the table of contents.

One last thing to note, the students really do hold on to these. I have had maybe 2 or three from last year that lost their notebook at some point during the year. Otherwise, I have not had an issue with students holding on to them and bringing them to class on a daily basis.