

Lesson Plan for an Eighth Grade Literature Class

Developing a Study Strategy

Verbatim Split Page Procedure (VSPP)

(Note: See *Literacy and Learning, Verbatim Split Page Procedure (VSPP) and Study Guides* video lesson for an illustration of this lesson in action.)

Topic: Use of the Thesaurus

Objectives: The student will

1. take notes on how to use a thesaurus by completing the 40% side of the paper in the 60/40 format.
2. enhance the original note taking (40% part) by completing the 60% side of the paper.
3. identify the main ideas and details of the lecture by discussing them in the cooperative groups and writing them down on the 60% side of the paper.
4. complete the thesaurus activities in cooperative groups.
5. use knowledge about the thesaurus to revise and enhance an essay.

Set Induction: Ask the students how they take notes in other classes or in this class. Do they have any specific strategies that help them focus on the content of the lecture?

Activities:

Note: For this lesson, students initially work independently as they take notes from a lecture in the classroom. Then they are assembled in small cooperative groups. Students have previously been introduced to the cooperative group method framework.

1. Students are asked to create the 60/40 strategy paper by folding the paper in two parts with the left side representing 40% of the page and the right side representing 60% of the page.
2. Students listen to a lecture on using a thesaurus and write down what they think are the main ideas of the lecture. They are to jot down the ideas on the 40% side of the paper. Students are to listen actively and only jot down ideas.
3. Students then take time to complete the 60% side of the paper to clarify the notes just taken from the lecture.
4. Afterwards, students meet in cooperative groups to help fill in the 60% side of the note-taking paper. They discuss main ideas on how to use the thesaurus, what kinds of words are in the thesaurus, and how to apply the thesaurus in their writing.



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Closure:

Ask students to share their thoughts about the 60/40 note-taking strategy. Questions may include, “Did you find the VSPP strategy helpful in taking notes?” “What do you find useful in this study strategy?” or “You have been able to work with others to clarify your notes; how do you think this will help you become independent in your future use of the 60/40 strategy?”

Evaluation Suggestions:

Group work, students will use their knowledge of the thesaurus to enhance the writing in an essay assignment.

Resources and Materials:

Paper for taking notes, thesaurus, draft of individual essay

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Other Applications

This note taking strategy is easily integrated into instruction for any content area. While it will be most useful for students to acquire this strategy by practicing, it is actually more important for students to use it as they take notes in a variety of content area courses.

Teachers using the *Literacy and Learning* series as an opportunity for job-embedded professional development may consider the VSPP strategy as one they will target early in the academic year. In this way, students will acquire the strategy early and become proficient in using it throughout the year. Teachers could also monitor the effectiveness of student use across content areas as they engage in study groups that focus on effective literacy strategies.

