Take Notes from Videos

*\*\*\*use with video about a good speech or a documentary video about an author\*\*\**

Frame the Lesson

As multimedia presentations, whether professionally or student produced, become a staple of many classes, it is essential that we use them as instructional tools, but in ways that make a difference. It is too easy to just turn off the lights and turn on the video; standards allow for none of this, anyway, as time as become so precious. This lesson examines how to use video and have students take notes in ways that will increase learning, accountability, and engagement with the content.

Gather and Prepare

In the model lesson, show a documentary film about an author and use the Video Notes tool to help students set a purpose for watching, taking effective notes, and use their notes to summarize and synthesize what they learned. You can use this method with any informational video that connects to your curriculum, or you can adapt the approach for video versions of literary texts (See Lesson 10: Examine Multiple Perspectives for ways to use visual media to enhance literature studies.)

* After reading the model lesson, use the Video Notes tool to assess the video you will show. Note ideas or vocabulary you want to explain or highlight. Decide where you will stop the video for students to take notes.
* Make copies of the **Video Notes** tool for each student.

Teach

Today we will be watching a video/some parts of a video about the life of Edgar Allan Poe (delivering an effective speech). Tomorrow we will read an article about Poe and the qualities that made him a unique writer. Today, though, we are looking at him from another perspective through a documentary produced by Biography.

I’m passing out a Video Notes tool that I want you to use while you watch the documentary. I’ll warn you now. We are not breaking out the popcorn and settling in to watch TV – I am going to interrupt the video a lot. We are watching in order to think, to use it for discussion. You need to take notes as we go, and you will have to use these notes when we finish to write a summary and respond to the video.

Before we start the video, take a look at the “Before Watching” section on the Video Notes. I want you to jot down what you know about Edgar Allan Poe. I also want you to jot down questions about him based on things you have heard.  *(Give them a few minutes to do this.)*

Based on the video title, I want you to do two last things: make some predictions about what this video will tell you about Poe, and create a purpose questions to answer by the end of the video. The title is XXXXX. What would be a good purpose question based on that?

*Allow students to come up with various questions.*

These are all good questions, and the video will address them all. For now, let’s choose XX PQ. Everyone write down (as you write on the board) “XXXXXXX” I like this because it seems like another way of asking one of the best questions you can ever ask when reading, watching, or listening to someone: So what? In other words, what is the big deal? Why is this so important?

Now we’re moving into the middle section of the Video Notes sheet. Keep your pencil in hand, and watch and listen for information that will help you answer the question on the board. PQs work just as well for videos as they do for textbook pages or newspaper articles: they help you determine what to listen for, what is relevant and important in light of your purpose. I’ll stop the video periodically to help you see some examples, but you have to pay attention on your own and not rely on me to tell you what to write down.

*Dim the lights and hit the play button, letting the video run for about one minute, the length of the lead-in that culminates in the title screen.*

Did you hear anything in that opening minutes or so that relates to our purpose question?

*Allow for students to answer…nugging them to come up with what would be good to put in their notes.*

Remember: when taking notes on a video, you have to move fast. It’s rolling and you have to keep listening. What kinds of tricks can you use to keep up?

*Students should answer with…abbreviations, acronyms, incomplete sentences, key words, bullets, even asking the teacher to stop the video or replay a segment.*

What does this opening section tell us?

*Allow for student answers…*

This is all great stuff. So what should we write down from what we have heard from each other?

*Students answer…but guide them to keep their purpose question in mind too….*

*Continue watching the video for about five minutes. Pause it and ask them to make a list of words used in that portion to describe Poe.*

What are some words you came up with? *(Jot them down on the board)* All good words…what you want to do is leave room around them in your notes so you can return and add more info about them. What would you want to add later on?

*Students provide answers…*

Perfect. Let’s watch a bit more and see where it gets us.

*After another segment, during which several quotations from or about Poe are featured pause it.*

With a person like Poe, whose writing and words are so important to literature, and us what he said and what people say about him is an important part of who he was and what made him a unique author. What did the narrator just say about him?

*Students answer…*

*When you reach the part of the video that discusses what Poe meant to people and what made him special, pause just before that part to prepare students.*

This last segment will sum up many details related to the question we are trying to answer today. Be prepared for it. If you hear something you already have written down, ignore it, knowing that you have it down; otherwise, add it to your notes. *(Finish the video.)*

The last step I want you to do today is to huddle up with others and talk about the purpose question we asked before the video. In your group, come up with an answer to the question and use evidence from your notes to support what you say.

Assess and Extend

**Write a Summary**

To work on writing, have students use their notes to write a detailed summary, including a response to what they learned or a connection to modern society. Student then can analyze and improve their responses.