

Skill 8: Write Legibly

Students will be able to (SWBAT):

1. Define the skill **Write Legibly** and identify why the skill is important.
2. Develop a plan to improve their own proficiency in the skill **Write Legibly**.

Provided Materials:

- Skill 8: **Write Legibly** – Sample Notes 1
- Skill 8: **Write Legibly** – Sample Notes 2
- Skill 8: **Write Legibly** – Development Plan

Skill Definition: **Write Legibly** means recording or summarizing relevant information, read or heard, in a form that you will be able to use later.

Warm Up Brainstorm (5-10): Initiate a discussion with students about note taking. Ask students if they are conscious of how and why they take notes, if they use different kinds of note taking techniques for different classes or depending on the subject of their notes, where else they might have to take notes outside of school classrooms, etc. Jot down student thoughts and comments on the board for them to copy in their notes as well.

Write the provided skill definition on the board for students to copy.

Guided Activity (20-25 minutes): Provide students with the following scenario as well as copies of **Skill 8: Write Legibly – Sample Notes 1** and **Skill 8: Write Legibly – Sample Notes 2**. Allow them to work with a partner to answer the questions (note: you can make photocopies of the scenario and questions for students or show them on a projector/laptop):

Scenario:

Your history teacher has assigned you to write a paper about **the reasons why Europeans went to Africa**, but you missed a few days of school because of a death in your family and you do not have any notes from the lecture the teacher gave on early European contact with Africa. Your teacher tells you to borrow some notes from a classmate to complement your textbook reading so that you can do the paper. Two of your friends give you their notes to work from, but you notice that their notes are quite different. Read and answer the following questions to help you compare the two sets of notes (reminder: you don't actually have to write the paper!).

Questions:

1. What looks different about the two sets of notes?
2. What techniques or strategies did each note-taker use when taking notes?
3. What could each note-taker have done differently to make his/her notes more useful to you?
4. Which set of notes would you prefer to use to write the paper on the reasons why Europeans went to Africa? Why?
5. Which set of notes looks closest to the kind of notes YOU take? Why/how?

After answering the questions, ask students to share out a bit and discuss the two sets of notes. Ideally, everyone agrees that Sample 2 is a better set of notes because of a variety of strategies the note-taker used (outline form with numbers and bullets, abbreviations, minimizing words, bold/highlighting, dating their notes at the top with a title, etc.). Conclude with the question: **why** is it important to take usable notes and remind students that your notes have to be helpful to YOU but also to other people who might need them, particularly in a professional setting.

Independent Practice (5-10 minutes): Students complete the **Skill 8: Write Legibly Development Plan.**

Evaluation: Assess the quality of the plans completed by the students and provide feedback using Part Three of this manual; compare to the responses they gave for Skill 8 in their initial **Student Skills Assessment.**

Extension Activities:

- Consistently provide students with a variety of note-taking strategies and/or graphic organizers to use and, hopefully, figure out which ones help them the most. There are many websites that offer these, including:
 - http://data.bolton.ac.uk/bissto/studyskills/note/note_formats.htm
 - <http://www.mtsd.k12.wi.us/mtsdistric/msreading/PDFs/NoteTakingStrategies.pdf>
- Require that students submit their notes to be reviewed by you for big projects or exams so that you can see how their notes might be helping or hurting them.
- Create the “job” of “note taker” in your classroom and each day have a different student be responsible for taking double notes (or photocopying his/her own notes); keep the extra set of notes in a binder in the classroom so that if students are absent they can just go to the binder to copy the notes of what they missed.

Skill 8: Write Legibly – Sample Notes 1

Colonization of Africa -- were afraid to sail out. Afraid of sea monsters. But they liked the stories about gold in Africa. The Portuguese King Henry sailed south to find the gold mines and built a fort at Elmina. England and France want to trade with Africa. They begin trading. Competing with Portugal. These countries got into wars. They wanted to control Africa.

China had spices. They traded with Cairo and Venice. The Asians wanted gold, but the Islams stopped all trade. They fought wars about religion for hundreds of years. Fought over Jerusalem. The Pope called for a crusade. This was in the Middle Ages. Spices came from Asia. In Europe they were valuable because the kings used them to become rich. They also ate them.

The Portuguese wanted to explore Africa and make a way to India. Their boats couldn't get around until Bartholomew Diaz discovered the Cape of Good Hope in 1487. Most of all, the Portuguese wanted slaves. They shipped them back from Africa. Columbus took them after he discovered America (1492). The Pope made a line in the Atlantic Ocean so the Catholics wouldn't fight. The colonies needed slaves. They sent 15 million from 1502 to the 19th century. Slaves did the hard work. They got free later after the Civil War.

Immigrants go to Africa from Europe but they don't like the hot weather and they catch diseases. The Dutch set up their own country at the Cape. Then the English conquer them.

Source: <http://www.vigoschools.org/~mmc3/ana%20course/Study%20Skills/2%20-%20Note%20Taking.pdf>

Skill 8: Write Legibly – Sample Notes 2

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Topic: Early European Contact with Africa (AF)/Why Did Europeans Come to AF?

1. Desire for gold

- Medieval legends about gold in AF.
- Prince Henry (Portuguese navigator) sent men down coast of AF to find source of gold (also to gain direct access to gold trade controlled by Muslims).
- Portuguese built forts along coast. Their ships carried gold & ivory back to Portugal (16th century).
- Then the other European states came (England, Holland, France, Spain) to set up own trading posts.
- Competed with each other for AF trade (will talk about rivalry next week).

2. Wanted to trade with Asia and weaken the Muslims

(Muslims had created a large empire based on the religion of Islam.)

- Religious conflict between Christianity and Islam. Fought a religious war in the 11th-12th centuries – the Crusades.
- Muslims had expanded their empire when Europe was weak. In 15th century they controlled North AF & dominated trade in Mediterranean. Controlled the spices coming from Asia, which were in great demand in Europe: used to preserve meat and sometimes used as money.
- Catholic monarchs ruled Portugal and Spain. Very religious. The Catholic monarchs wanted to force the Muslims out of Europe. (They still held part of Spain.) Wanted to convert them to Christianity.
- Muslims controlled North Africa & Mediterranean trade. If Portuguese and Spanish could sail to the Indian Ocean directly, they could get goods from China and the Muslims could not stop them. The way to Asia was the sea route around Africa. **[IMPORTANT]**

3. The Europeans wanted slaves

- When Portuguese explored West Africa (15th century), they sent back the first slaves (around 1440).
- Spanish conquered the New World (Mexico, Peru, etc.). (Columbus made several trips for Queen Isabella I of Spain.)
- In America (the name for the New World), they needed slaves. Most slaves were sent to America.
- Native Americans died from diseases of white men. They were also killed in the wars. There was nobody to run the mines (gold and silver).
- Sugar plantations of the Caribbean (and Brazil) needed labor. Cotton plantations in the south of U.S. also. It was hard work and nobody wanted to do it. **[IMPORTANT]**
- At least 15 million (maybe as many as 40 million) slaves were brought to work the plantations starting in 1502 until mid-19th century.

Source: <http://www.vigoschools.org/~mmc3/ana%20course/Study%20Skills/2%20-%20Note%20Taking.pdf>

Skill 8: Write Legibly – Development Plan

Name: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Give yourself a rating of 1, 2, 3, or 4 in this skill, with 1 indicating poor proficiency and 4 indicating excellence in the skill. Provide evidence for your rating.

Rating: _____

Evidence:

Where do you want to be in six months and how will you measure your progress?

List academic and non-academic activities to help you achieve your goal in six months, using the back of this page if necessary. Each activity should be a specific academic experience, class, community service project, extra-curricular activity, internship or job. List them in order from the most important to the least important.
