



Why I Created this Note/Template

Most of the Notes in the Gallery for Notability are lengthy and complicated. Many notes put an entire course of study for all courses in one Note. Although notes like these well-made, and the use of tabs with links within them is impressive, in my view these notes are too complicated and detailed for actual use. My Note/Template is designed to have a few forms that are useful and which can be copied as the need arises. One Note/Template will be used for each course.

Forms in the Note/Template

Most of the Notes in the Gallery use a variation of the Cornell note-taking method (CNTM). Several formats of the Cornell note-taking form are included. However, the CNTM is primarily designed for taking notes from reading material. Taking notes during a live lecture requires different strategies and methods and does not lend itself to the use of the CNTM. Therefore, a different form is likely more useful for live lectures.

I have included two articles from Harvard University and Buck County Community College that describe the best methods for taking notes.

This Note/Template's Concept

This Note/Template is designed to operate by using one Note/Template for each course of study, rather than one Note for all the courses.

The Note/Template includes examples of Cornell forms, as well as forms that are more suitable for live lectures. A user decides which forms they want to use and deletes the rest. When a new page is needed, it is duplicated. Since notes in Notability can be searched, adding a date and a specific title of the subject of the lecture should be sufficient for finding the appropriate note without the need for hyperlinks.

The Forms include:

1. A few Cornell note taking forms. Chose the ones you like best.
2. A second page for taking notes from a lecture if using Cornell note forms.
3. A form not a Cornell form that can be used to take notes from a lecture.
4. A simple homework assignment form.

How to use the Note/Template (Best Practices)

I created nine (9) identical applications each with a different color cover page. In addition to naming the application as a note (e.g., "Math"), putting the name of the course in

the white rectangle helps identify the application pages when it is printed. Adding your

initials in the banner also helps identify the printout. The naming and color help identify each course.

Delete the note-taking forms you don't want or need and delete these instructions and the Note-Taking Strategies sections, below. The start of the course notes should be the calendar followed by the note taking forms you have chosen.

Use one Note/Template for each course.

There are two ways to use one Note/Template per course:

- Use one Note/Template for each course by making each Note/Template a single subject without using a divider. Each course is listed as a single subject or note along with any other notes that you are using in Notability.
- A second method is to create a divider with a name, such as "Ninth Grade" or (First Semester 2025) and then adding one Note/Template for each course as a "Subject" under the divider.

Summary

1. Use one Note/Application per course.
2. Delete these instructions and the articles on note taking so that the yearly calendar is the first note after the cover.
3. Chose the forms you want to use to take your notes.
4. Copy or duplicate a form as you need them.

Note-Taking Strategies from Various Sources

Note-Taking

Categories: Engaging with Courses

A student writing notes with a pencil and a student typing on a laptop.

Think about how you take notes during class. Do you use a specific system? Do you feel that system is working for you? What could be improved? How might taking notes during a lecture, section, or seminar be different online versus in the classroom?

Adjust how you take notes during synchronous vs. asynchronous learning (slightly).

First, let's distinguish between synchronous and asynchronous instruction. Synchronous classes are held live with the instructor and students together, and asynchronous classes are recorded by the professor for students to view at their convenience. Sometimes asynchronous instruction may include a recording of a live Zoom session with the instructor and students.

With this distinction in mind, here are some tips on how to take notes during both types of instruction:

Taking notes during live classes (synchronous instruction).

During a live class, jot down notes as the lecture or discussion progresses. Try to do so during pauses in the lecture or discussion so that you don't miss the next piece of information. This form of note-taking is something that you're probably already used to doing in the classroom.

Taking notes when watching recorded classes (asynchronous instruction).

Recorded lectures and class discussions can be paused, but we suggest you try to watch videos all the way through the first time without stopping them. This method allows you to see the whole arc of the material as you take notes and will prevent you from being tempted to write down every word the instructor says (which is typically less useful for studying than notes where you've processed the instructor's words as you listened). You can write down the time marker if you think you'll need to return to fill in a gap, which you may find is unnecessary once you've seen the video the whole way through. We also encourage you to watch videos at their regular speed, as if you were sitting in a synchronous lecture or discussion. Then, you can take notes as you normally would during those activities. If you do increase the speed, note that research shows that benefits diminish beyond 1.25x.

Check in with yourself.

When viewing recordings, check in with yourself and your level of attention frequently as you watch. Are you really listening deeply? Are you absorbing the material? Do you need a break? When deciding when to view asynchronous material, make sure you budget enough time to view videos, take notes, and give yourself breaks. An ARC Academic Coach can help customize a plan for you if you're having trouble

figuring out how much time to allot for this.

If available, annotate lecture slides during lecture.

Whether you are participating in a live class or viewing a recording, you can annotate lecture notes or slides during lecture if they are available. Having the slides as a foundation makes it easier to jot down information that you learn during lecture and add your own questions or clarifications in context. These notes can be useful to take to section and office hours, allowing you to clarify any confusion you have about the material.

Consider writing notes by hand.

Typing notes on your computer is convenient, but consider that research has shown – for those who are able to do so – that we learn better when we write notes by hand. When we write notes by hand, we transcribe less and interpret more. In other words, we do not write down the instructor's words verbatim, but rather we put the concepts in our own words, which indicates that learning is already taking place. Some students find it helpful to type up their handwritten notes during review, expanding on what they have written. Others add to their handwritten notes.

Review your notes.

Plan to review your class notes regularly. Write a check mark next to the material you understand really well, and put a question mark where you need to review or expand on your own or with the help of an instructor. You can also use color-coding to label these categories. Looking at your notes right after lecture is a good way to mark any areas of confusion you are immediately aware of, but make sure to return to them sometime after your lecture to see if you've retained your understanding of the material. Looking over class notes right before section can be a great way to prepare for those sessions, while also allowing you to locate any parts of lecture you need clarified when section meets or when you go to office hours.

Write down questions.

During the lesson and during review, write down questions that you can research yourself or ask to the instructor, a friend, or a tutor. Asking questions allows you to synthesize your knowledge of the material and expand your learning by observing areas of confusion or misunderstanding.

Common note-taking techniques

Cornell Notes

The Cornell Method for note-taking is designed to help you keep an eye on the broader concepts being explored in your course while also taking specific notes on what your lecturer or section leader is saying. Typically done by hand, the Cornell Method involves drawing a line down the edge of your paper and devoting one side to taking notes as you normally would, and the other to including questions, connections, key terms, patterns, and other guiding information that is meant to help you organize your thinking when reviewing the material. You can also use this space to keep track of related textbook pages or p-set questions.

Outlining

Outlining is the note-taking method most students intuitively use. It involves writing down information as if you are recreating the professor's outline for the lecture as you listen. Your aim is to construct bullet points for each idea and to organize them so that major concepts serve as headings with the related subpoints flowing from them. The downside of this method is that it works best when students are easily able to identify the major concepts in a course and less well when the material is not naturally organizing itself in that way.

Mapping

Mapping involves creating a concept map out of the ideas presented in lecture. It can work well for spatial learners or in situations where the main concepts of lecture can be simply condensed and organized. It may be less useful in complex lectures, since it focuses primarily on central ideas (typically, there's not a lot of room to provide detail in a concept map!). You might also try using mapping for STEM courses where processes or cycles are studied.

Sentence

Sentence note-taking involves simply writing an individual sentence for each point you want to register in a lecture. It works well in situations where you cannot outline because you don't intuitively understand the structure of the material and can't distinguish major ideas from subpoints based on the lecturer's style. Typically, this method works best if you have the time afterward to go back and organize your sentences more clearly based on having heard the entire lecture.

Note-Taking, Study Skills, Time Management Skills, and Test-Taking Strategies

Note-Taking

Take good class notes. In order to succeed in a class, you often need to take good notes. A professor's lecture often provides you with key information for the course. Staying organized while taking notes is just as important as note-taking itself because if you have good notes to study from you will be more likely to do well. There are several strategies that will help you stay organized and take good notes.

Use the Cornell method. Leave a 2.5-inch margin on the left side of your paper, using the remaining space on the right to take notes. Skip a few lines in between each point your professor makes. After class, write study questions in the 2.5-inch margin on the left. This will be useful when you review or study for an exam: cover your notes with an additional sheet of paper, leaving only your study questions uncovered. Answer your study questions to the best of your ability. The following is an example of the Cornell method used in a science class:

Class:	Date:
Leave 2.5" margin on left for questions to study from later	Leave approximately 6" here for notes. Do not worry about complete sentences, spelling, or grammar. Just write enough to spark your memory later.
What are the 5 phases in mitosis?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Interphase2. Prophase3. Metaphase4. Anaphase5. Telophase
What happens in interphase?	Chromatin Spreads into indistinct mass
What happens in prophase?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Chromosomes condense into sets of chromatids.2. Nucleolus and nuclear envelope disappear.3. Spindle microtubules appear.
Summary: In your own words, recount the information you took down.	

Other Methods of Note-Taking

Use abbreviations and shorthand to condense the amount of time it takes to write down information. This will ensure that you are able to write more quickly and thus take down more information. Another strategy is to organize your notes into an outline or a bulleted list, which will help you stay organized.

Study Skills

It is important to establish good study skills and habits. Doing so will help you retain more material, be more prepared for tests and papers, and stay caught up in your classes.

Have a positive attitude. Your attitude can affect how well you learn and retain information. You can shut out information if you consider it boring or if you don't like the subject. To avoid this, set learning goals before you begin to study.

Find a good location for studying. A lot of time can be wasted by distractions. There are many quiet, comfortable study areas on campus, including the library. Designating a location for studying will help you keep your mind focused on studying.

Join a study group. Meet with classmates and discuss what you are doing in class. You will be very helpful to each other, especially if you work with each other's strengths and weaknesses.

Review your work. This is one of the best ways to study for a test, especially if you have taken good notes in class. Do some activities that will help you recall the information, such as creating a study guide with questions and answers. Another useful review method is to repeat the information until you overlearn it. Involve multiple senses: read it aloud, write it down, and say it in your own words. This will increase your likelihood of remembering the information. Even if you've already learned something, go over it one more time.

Keep your memory fresh. If you wait to review the information until the night before your test, you will have forgotten a great deal of the material and will have to study longer. Reviewing the information on a regular basis after you have learned it will decrease your study time and help you remember material much more easily.

Use the SQ4R Method

- **SURVEY** the chapter before you begin to read it (focus on titles, graphs, charts).
- Turn the information into **QUESTIONS**. Read all QUESTIONS in the chapter.
- **READ** the chapter looking for the answers to the questions you developed. Reread any sections that aren't clear.
- **RECITE** the information in your own words; test yourself and how much you remember and can explain to another person.
- **RELATE** the information to something you already know. RELATING the information to information you already know greatly increases your chance of remembering it.
- **REVIEW** the information by skimming the chapter or your notes periodically.

Use Your Memory

Use elaboration strategies such as summarizing, questioning, and using visual organizers. This will help you process information in a way that assists and ensures understanding. As a result, your brain will be able to file and retrieve information more easily.

Visualize. For many people, a mental picture is clearer and easier to remember than words. For each major concept you want to remember, create a mental picture and then look at it carefully for a few seconds. Once you've seen it clearly, you'll probably be able to recall it.

Relax! Don't forget to spend time with family and friends or doing something you enjoy. It is important to take occasional breaks from studying. If you don't relax, then your schoolwork will seem more challenging.

Time Management Skills

Plan your time. A lot of students have other responsibilities outside of school, including jobs and families. Be sure to set aside a few hours per day for schoolwork so that you don't fall behind in your classes. It is a good idea to keep a calendar for assignments and a daily "To Do" list.

Create flash cards. These will allow you to review or study anywhere, at any time. Carry your flash cards around and study between classes, while on the train or a bus, or at a friend's house. Making the flash cards will help reinforce information, and review will help you remember it. This process will make studying for a test easier.

Keep on top of the work in progress. Be sure to do all assignments and readings when they are given to you (and make up what you missed if you were away). Be prepared from the very first day of class!

Beat procrastination. The key to controlling and ultimately combating this destructive habit is to recognize when you start procrastinating, understand why it happens, and take active steps to better manage your time and outcomes. Break the project into a set of smaller, more manageable tasks. You may find it helpful to create an outline or a map like the one below.

Set goals. Decide what you want to achieve in your classes. Is a good grade important to you? Do you want to improve certain skills? Make a plan to reach these goals. Setting deadlines and reasonable tasks are good ideas.

Be realistic about the times you can study. Many college students study at night because that's the only time they could study while attending high school. However, college students have chunks of non-class time during the day. If possible, retrain yourself to utilize this new time as best as possible. Know yourself and the times you are most awake.

Test-Taking Strategies

Know exam terms. See the Academic Success Center for a handout detailing words commonly used on a test, such as *compare*, *analyze*, and *examine*. Learning precisely what these words mean will ensure that you always know exactly what a test question is asking.

Budget your time. When you first receive your test, do a quick survey of the entire test so that you know how to efficiently use your time.

If you don't know an answer, skip the question. Go on with the rest of the test and come back to it later (if possible). Other parts of the test may have information that will help you with that question.

If you have time left when you are finished, look over your test. Make sure that you have answered all of the questions. Only change an answer if you misread or misinterpreted the question. Watch out for careless mistakes, and proofread any essay and/or short answer questions.

Analyze past tests. Look for patterns.

- What kinds of questions were most difficult and why?
- Was there any difficulty understanding what was being asked?
- Make a list of things such as, which information is most important to know, or sections of material that may need more time dedicated to them.

Use campus resources.

There are a number of places for you to turn if you need help academically:

Talk to your professor. Whenever you have a question about a class or the work you are doing, ask your professor. They are the best people to turn to for further explanation and answers.

The Academic Success Center, located at all three Campuses (Newtown – Library 121), can offer a student help with Writing, Reading, AESL, Study Skills, Math, Computer Science, Spanish, Economics, Accounting, Chemistry, Biology, and Nursing classes.

The Library houses a number of books, magazines, and articles that a student may find useful. The Library staff offers help with research projects, reference guidance, and online access to CD-ROM databases and CD-ROMs.

Academic Advisors will help you to set goals, plan your education, and make decisions for your time at Bucks. Advisors can also help you become familiar with other campus resources.

The Accessibility Office can assist you in securing access to an equal education at Bucks for students with disabilities. If you need special assistance, please contact their offices in Rollins, Rooms 11, 12, & 14.

Student Planning Counselors aid you with transfer planning, career and major exploration, job search, understanding college policy and procedures, setting and working toward educational and life goals, and responding effectively when personal issues—such as family crises or depression—interfere with academics.

Example of using Cornell Notes for AP History

AP European History	Name
Chapter and Section	Section Title
<p data-bbox="131 293 201 325">Cues</p> <p data-bbox="131 368 513 544">1. Jot down one to two words that are the main idea/vocab/etc of a passage. Leave space between each one.</p> <p data-bbox="131 587 529 1012">2. Questions: As soon after the reading as possible, formulate questions based on the notes in the right-hand column. Write one under each cue word. Writing questions helps to clarify meanings, reveal relationships, establish continuity, and strengthen memory. Also, the writing of questions sets up a perfect stage for exam-studying later.</p>	<p data-bbox="557 293 808 325">Notetaking Column</p> <p data-bbox="557 368 1503 474">1. Record: While reading use the notetaking column to record the supporting facts, ideas, dates, etc using telegraphic sentences.</p> <p data-bbox="557 549 1479 687">3. Recite: Cover the notetaking column with a sheet of paper. Then, looking at the questions or cue-words in the question and cue column only, say aloud, in your own words, the answers to the questions, facts, or ideas indicated by the cue-words.</p> <p data-bbox="557 804 1458 942">4. Reflect: Reflect on the material by asking yourself questions, for example: "What's the significance of these facts? What principle are they based on? How can I apply them? How do they fit in with what I already know? What's beyond them?"</p> <p data-bbox="557 1091 1458 1198">5. Review: Spend at least ten minutes every week reviewing all your previous notes. If you do, you'll retain a great deal for current use, as well as, for the exam.</p>
<p data-bbox="131 1736 256 1768">Summary</p>	<p data-bbox="557 1736 1455 1800">Use this space to write a two or three sentence summary of what you just read.</p>

Yearly Calendar

2025 - 2026

JULY

WK	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1		1	2	3	4	5	6
2	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
3	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
4	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
5	28	29	30	31			

AUGUST

WK	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
5					1	2	3
6	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
8	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

SEPTEMBER

WK	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
12	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
13	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
14	29	30					

OCTOBER

WK	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
14			1	2	3	4	5
15	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
16	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
17	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
18	27	28	29	30	31		

NOVEMBER

WK	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
18						1	2
19	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
20	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
21	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
22	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

DECEMBER

WK	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
23	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
25	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
26	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	29	30	31				

JANUARY

WK	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
27				1	2	3	4
28	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
29	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
30	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
31	26	27	28	29	30	31	

FEBRUARY

WK	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
31							1
32	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
33	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
34	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
35	23	24	25	26	27	28	

MARCH

WK	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
35							1
36	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
37	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
38	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
39	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
40	30	31					

APRIL

WK	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
40			1	2	3	4	5
41	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
42	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
43	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
44	27	28	29	30			

MAY

WK	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
44					1	2	3
45	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
46	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
47	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
48	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

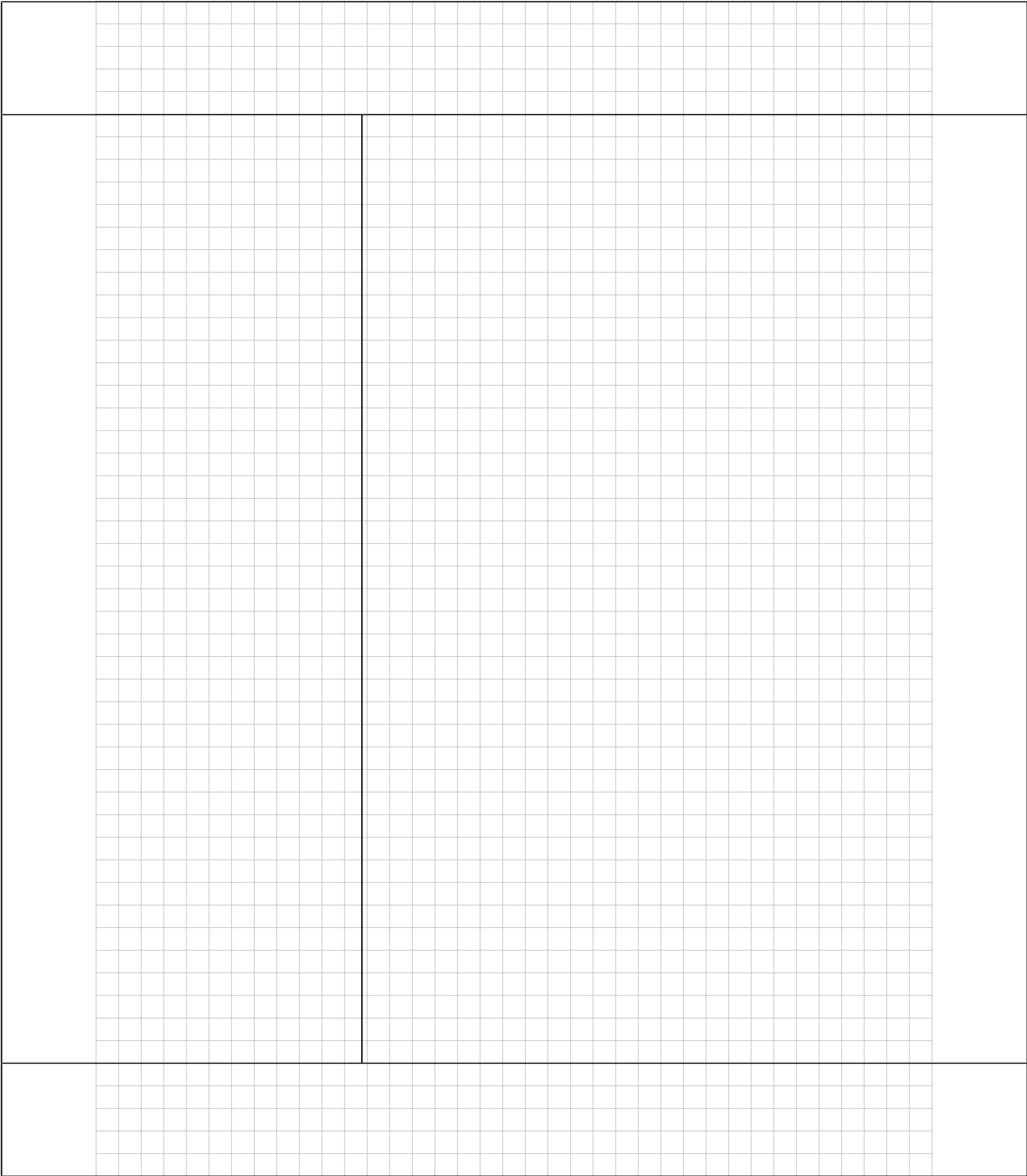
JUNE

WK	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
49	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
51	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
52	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
53	29	30					

Homework Assignments

Name of Course:

Monday	Assignment:	Date Due
Tuesday	Assignment:	Date Due
Wednesday	Assignment:	Date Due
Thursday	Assignment:	Date Due
Friday	Assignment:	Date Due



Cornell Notes	Topic/ Objective:	Name: Class/Period: Date:
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Essential Question:

Questions:	Notes:
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Summary:



DATE:

SUBJECT OF LECTURE:

DATE:

SUBJECT OF LECTURE:

DATE:

SUBJECT OF LECTURE:



Notes Continued From Previous Page

Date:

Course:
Lecture Topic:

Form for live lecture not a Cornell note.
