Note taking
"Study smarter not harder"

Project Nr. 2022-1-FR01-KA220-VET-000086996

DI-STRUCT!

Subjects:
All subjects

Grades:
9th - 11th grade (1st to 3rd high school year)

Observations:
- Students lack autonomy in their studies.
- Difficulty organizing study time.
- Poor digital skills.
- Inclusion of students with special needs.

Learning objectives:
- Students will be able to identify key points and main ideas in class lectures and readings.
- Students will be able to take effective notes using various methods.
- Students will be able to create a personalized study plan for different subjects.
- Students will be able to utilize digital tools to enhance their note-taking and study organization.

Expected results:
- Improved student performance through effective note-taking and study habits.
- Increased student autonomy and organization skills.
- Enhanced engagement with learning materials through digital tools.

Content of the unit:
- Different note-taking methods (Cornell Method, Mind Mapping, Outlining).
- Identifying key points and main ideas.
- Active listening skills.
- Time management techniques (creating a study schedule).
- Digital tools for note-taking and organization (e.g., note-taking apps, mind mapping software).

How will I motivate students? :

Real-world application: Emphasize how effective note-taking and study skills will benefit them throughout their academic career and future professions.

Choice and differentiation: Offer students the opportunity to choose their preferred note-taking method and digital tools that cater to their learning styles and needs.

Gamification: Incorporate elements of gamification, such as points and badges, to encourage participation and active learning.

Peer collaboration: Facilitate peer learning activities during note-taking practice to build confidence and share effective strategies.

Structure your learning unit:

Activity 1: The Power of Note-Taking (1 Session)

Learning Flow: Teacher to Learners
Description: Introduce the concept of note-taking and its importance in learning. Discuss the challenges students face and the benefits of effective note-taking.
Digital Tool: Use an online presentation tool (e.g., Google Slides) to present real-life examples of how note-taking skills have benefited professionals in various fields.
Student Contribution: Students brainstorm situations where effective note-taking would be helpful (e.g., lectures, meetings, research).

Activity 2: Exploring Note-Taking Methods (2 Sessions)

Learning Flow: Teacher to Learners, Learners to Learners
Description: Introduce three different note-taking methods (Cornell Method, Mind Mapping, Outlining). Dedicate one session to each method, explaining its key principles and providing examples.
Digital Tool: Create instructional videos showcasing each note-taking method using screen recording software.
Student Contribution: Students practice each method in small groups using a short lecture video or reading passage. Afterward, students share their notes and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each method.

Activity 3: Active Listening and Identifying Key Points (1 Session)

Learning Flow: Teacher to Learners, Learners to Learners
Description: Discuss active listening skills and strategies for identifying key points in lectures and texts. Provide students with a list of "cue words" that signal important information.
Digital Tool: Use an online collaborative whiteboard tool (e.g., Miro) to create a mind map together, brainstorming strategies for active listening and identifying key points.
Student Contribution: Students analyze a short lecture or reading passage together, highlighting key points and using the mind map to organize the information.

Activity 4: Digital Tools for Note-Taking and Organization (1 Session)

Learning Flow: Teacher to Learners, Learners to Learners
Description: Introduce various digital tools for note-taking and organization (e.g., Evernote, OneNote, MindMeister). Discuss the advantages of digital note-taking and explore accessibility features for students with special needs.
Digital Tool: Create a short tutorial video demonstrating how to use a popular note-taking app (e.g., Evernote).
Student Contribution: Students explore different digital tools in pairs and evaluate their features for personal use. Students with special needs research accessibility features of specific apps and share their findings with the class.

Activity 5: Building a Personalized Study Plan (2 Sessions)

Digital Tool: Provide a template for a study plan that can be printed or used within a digital note-taking app. Alternatively, introduce a digital study planner app (e.g., Focus Keeper) and demonstrate its functionalities.
Student Contribution: Students brainstorm individually about their upcoming academic commitments and learning goals. Then, they use the template or app to build their personalized study plan. In the second session, students share their plans with a partner and receive feedback. The teacher facilitates a class discussion about effective time management strategies for studying.

Activity 6: Putting It All Together (1 Session)

Learning Flow: Learners to Learners, Learners to Teacher

Description: Students revisit the different note-taking methods, active listening skills, and time management techniques learned throughout the unit. They then practice applying these skills to a real-world scenario, such as taking notes during a mock lecture or creating a study plan for an upcoming test.

Digital Tool: Students can use their chosen digital note-taking app to practice taking notes during the mock lecture.

Student Contribution: Students present their notes and study plans to the class, explaining their thought process and chosen methods. The class offers constructive feedback, and the teacher addresses any lingering questions or challenges.

Assessment:

Observe students' participation in class activities and discussions.

Collect students' completed note-taking exercises and study plans, providing personalized feedback.

Conduct a short quiz to assess students' understanding of key points from the unit, such as identifying key features of different note-taking methods and active listening strategies.

Differentiation:

Provide alternative formats for note-taking exercises (e.g., graphic organizers, audio recordings) for students with special needs or struggling with traditional note-taking methods.

Offer additional support for students who need help using digital tools.

Allow students who excel to explore more advanced note-taking techniques or research productivity apps.

Note: This is a flexible learning unit, and the number of sessions can be adjusted based on the students' needs and available time.

Assign a tool to each step:

Here are some online tools that can be used throughout the different activities in your learning unit:

For all activities

Presentation Tools:
Google Slides (https://www.google.com/slides/about/)
Canva: A user-friendly tool for creating engaging presentations to introduce the unit and showcase real-world applications of note-taking.

Activity 2: Exploring Note-Taking Methods:

Screen Recording Software: Loom (https://www.loom.com/) or Screencastify (https://www.screencastify.com/): Create instructional videos demonstrating each note-taking method (Cornell, Mind Mapping, Outlining) with clear visuals and explanations.

Activity 3: Active Listening and Identifying Key Points:

Collaborative Whiteboard Tool: Miro (https://miro.com/): An interactive platform for brainstorming strategies for active listening and identifying key points together as a class. Students can contribute ideas and visually organize information on the whiteboard.

Activity 4: Digital Tools for Note-Taking and Organization:

Tutorial Video Creation Tool: Screencastify or Loom (mentioned above): Create a short tutorial demonstrating how to use a popular note-taking app (e.g., Evernote (https://www.evernote.com/) to familiarize students with its functionalities.

Activity 5: Building a Personalized Study Plan:

Option 1 - Printable Template:

Provide a downloadable PDF template for a study plan that students can use in any note-taking app or print for physical use.

Option 2 - Digital Study Planner App:

Focus Keeper (https://focuskeeper.co/): A time management app with features like the Pomodoro Technique (timed work intervals) to help students schedule dedicated study sessions. Other options include Trello (https://trello.com/) or Todoist (https://todoist.com/) for task management and organization.

Differentiation:

Graphic Organizers: Canva (https://www.canva.com/) or Lucidchart (https://www.lucidchart.com/pages/): These online design platforms offer pre-made graphic organizer templates for students who prefer visual note-taking formats.
Text-to-Speech Software: Natural Reader (https://www.naturalreaders.com/) or Microsoft Immersive Reader (built-in to many Microsoft products): These tools can be helpful for students with reading difficulties by converting text into audio for them to listen to while taking notes.

Additional Considerations:
Accessibility Features: When choosing digital tools, consider their built-in accessibility features, such as text-to-speech, screen readers, and adjustable font sizes. This is crucial for supporting students with special needs.
School LMS Integration: Check if your school uses a Learning Management System (LMS) that integrates with any of the suggested tools. This can streamline access and management for both students and teachers.
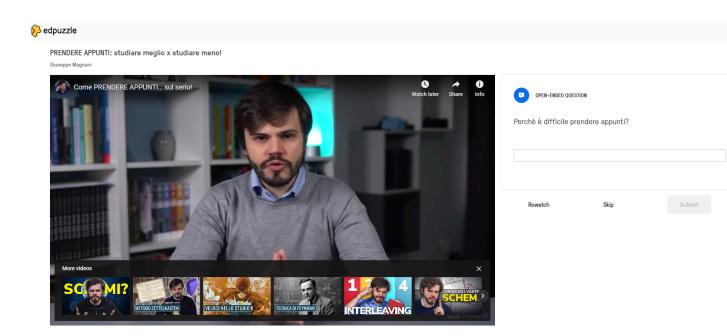
Explain why you chose the digital tools:
The tool is secondary; each student may eventually choose the tool most comfortable for their peculiar situation.

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Create the digital content and link it here:

https://edpuzzle.com/media/661d43de7970eb856e728069
(Italian speakers)

Cornell templates
https://www.wps.com/blog/10-free-cornell-notes-templates-in-pdf/

"It is not important what you know, but what you do with what you know."

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