



**CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2014 PROJECT SUMMARY**

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Project Title Note Taking: Necessary or Nuisance?	
Objectives/Goals The ability to take good notes is crucial for learning and succeeding in school. Based on research, if the number of skills to understand passages is increased, then the comprehension and retention of the passage improves leading to higher test scores. The objective of my project is to investigate if note-taking actually helps with comprehension, retention, and test-taking at the middle school level and whether the test scores improved with the increase in number of skills used to comprehend the information.	
Abstract Methods/Materials Ten test subjects were selected from my eight-grade science class. Nine passages with the short quiz containing 7 to 8 questions were selected for the experiment. The experiment was designed in three parts. Each part consisted of three tests and each part used an increasing number skills. Each test was conducted such that the test environment was the same. In the first part, students were asked to read a passage. After 25 minutes, they were given the short quiz associated with the passage. The entire process was repeated two more times with different passages. In the second part, the same procedure was repeated with three different passages but the test subjects were asked to follow along with the passages read to them. It was again repeated two more times. The last part of my procedure involved students following along and taking notes as the passage was read to them. This was repeated two more times with different passages. The students answered the same number of questions for each part.	
Results After each of the tests were scored, the average percentage of correct answers for the first, second, and third set was computed. The data was also analyzed by using the box-and-whiskers plot. The average percent of correct answers and the range of scores were plotted against the number of skills used. The scores improved remarkably from 22% where students read the passage only to 64% where they took notes along with reading and listening. The median score of the class also improved significantly.	
Conclusions/Discussion The data that was collected and the results of this experiment demonstrated a gradual improvement in the test scores as more and more skills were used. The significant improvement from 22% to 64% supported my hypothesis that taking notes in class reinforces understanding and helps recalling information when required.	
Summary Statement The project is about investigating whether the process of taking notes in class helps middle school students improve their comprehension and retention of information.	
Help Received Mrs. Sarkar helped guide the project. Parents helped with the display board. Mr. Berwald helped conduct the experiment with his students.	