

Notebook: Lesson Plan

- Purpose:** Do you have students who are clearly working hard, but whose lack of organization skills prevent them from succeeding? This binder activity will provide your students with the basic framework to organize their paperwork in a course binder. This binder will help your students order and prioritize their course work in an easily accessible manner.
- Timing:** 20 minutes for the initial presentation /first week of the semester.
- Description:** Students will be directed to create and maintain a three ring binder. This course binder will adhere to the very specific guidelines outlined in this assignment and students will be required to submit it to the instructor as a graded assignment at various points in the semester.
- Materials:** One three ring binder & dividers
- Objective:** There is a clear and well-established correlation between a student's success in a math course and his/her ability to maintain their course material neat and well organized. Although some college students already possess this particular skill, it is clear many at risk students do not. Therefore, it is well worth an instructor's effort to help students acquire this skill by incorporating a course binder as a graded component of their course pedagogy. A course binder will improve learning and increase the success rates of any math course.
- Procedure:** This assignment must be an ongoing component of the course during the semester. It is recommended that the instructor attach the "Course Binder" assignment instructions to the course syllabus and distribute it to students on the first day of the semester. If applicable, the instructions should also be made available through any online course resources available to students; such as Blackboard, MyMathLab, Course Websites, etc. On the first day of class, the instructor will present the assignment to students, discuss the values of a course binder so as to get students to "buy into the idea", and show them a completed sample binder. It is also very important for the instructor to detail how and when this binder will be graded.
- Assessment:** It is strongly recommended that instructors make this assignment a key component of the cumulative course grade. This will legitimize the assignment for students and reinforce its validity.

Notebook Assignment

Description: This course will require that you keep an organized 3-ring binder that follows the outline detailed below. Your instructor will periodically examine and evaluate your binder for neatness and completeness.

Purpose: The reason for the binder assignment is that most students who succeed in Math courses do so, in part, by being organized, doing some work every day and keeping a record of that work. This binder will serve as a study aid for this class and as a reference aid for the next class.

Materials Required:

- 1) One 1-inch three-ring binder (nothing fancy, a basic simple one will do just fine)
- 2) 1 set of 5 dividers with tabs
- 3) A 3-hole puncher

Binder Outline: This binder must be organized in the following way.

- Section 1:
- 1) Cover Page (including the following: the course title, meeting and room information and the student's name and contact information)
 - 2) Course calendar
 - 3) Course Syllabus
 - 4) Course Binder Assignment (This page)

Tab Number 1, (Labeled "NOTES")

Section 2: **Notes** -- The section on notes should contain dated class notes in chronological order. Be sure to highlight any information that your professor emphasizes. For example, if your professor says, "I really like this type of question" or "This is very important", then you should make sure it is highlighted in your notes so that you look at it after class.

Tab Number 2, (Labeled "CHAPTER SUMMARY")

Section 3: **Chapter Summary**-- You must write a summary of each chapter that will contain the following three components:

- 1) List and define in your own words all vocabulary words and mathematical terminology defined in that chapter.

2) Write all equations and formulas defined in that chapter along with a brief description of why and how that formula could be applied.

3) A reflection paragraph describing the chapter. It should include a description of what you found most challenging, helpful, or confusing. Feel free to also include anything else you wish to share. A paragraph is a cohesive, well thought out structure. One sentence will not be sufficient to get you credit on this part.

Tab Number 3, (Labeled "CLASS ACTIVITIES")

Section 4: **Class activities** -- You will be given activities frequently. You should date and keep them in your binder. They are a good source for test questions and should be looked at when studying for a test.

Tab Number 4, (Labeled "HOMEWORK")

Section 5: **Homework**-- This section must contain your labeled and dated homework assignments. If your class utilizes an online homework system read the following.

On-line homework and quizzes - Online homework assignments must be supported by written work. Traditionally, you write down the problems, solve them by showing your work, and submit the assignment for evaluation and feedback. The same process should be followed for online homework and quizzes. You will label the homework assignment or quiz, write each exercise, and solve it showing all your steps on paper. Then you will enter your answer *online* and *submit it for evaluation and feedback*. Keep all completed homework papers in this section of the binder.

There are only a few significant differences between online and traditional homework assignments and quizzes:

1. Solutions are written twice - once in the binder, once in the computer.
2. Online homework assignments and quizzes will be graded within seconds, with feedback and completely worked out solutions immediately available.
3. While working on your assignment, if you require additional help, you can refer to the online tutorial as well as your beautifully well-organized course binder.

Tab Number 5, (Labeled "EXAMS & QUIZZES")

Section 6: **In class Quizzes and Exams**-- Keeping a record of your progress is a good way to take ownership of your developing math skills. Hold onto all quizzes and exams in this section so that you can refer back to them.