**Active Learning**

**A. Active Reading**

Active reading means reading something with a determination to understand and evaluate it for its relevance to your needs. You can actively read by doing the following steps:

* Underline the most important fact in the paragraph you are reading. Only underline ONE fact in the paragraph.
* Put a question mark (?) next to something you do not understand or a word you don’t know.

**B. Note Taking**

Note taking is an art – you are to decide what method works best for you, keeping the following in mind:

* Always write the overarching theme or unit
* Always write the date so you can keep your notes organized
* Skip lines in between ideas so you have space to add information
* Underline words the teacher uses often
* Don’t write down everything that you read or hear. Be alert and attentive to the main points.
* Notes should consist of key words, or very short sentences. Omit descriptions and full explanations. Keep your notes short and to the point. Condense your material so you can grasp it rapidly.
* Use a rough outline format – Using letters and numbers.

Example:

Theme: Populism – Farmers have brains! Rural discontent

The era leading up to this one was…the political influence on this outline era is clear because of…

I. Economic Circumstances

A. Causes of Depression and Political Shifts

 1. Billion Dollar Congress: first time in U.S. History that Congress passed a billion dollar

 budget. President Harrison; government corruption; small steps to fix public concern.

 2. Currency issues:

1. The “haves” and the “have nots” Coxey’s Army – protest against creditors (related to strikes and trade).
2. Farmer debt b/c of over extended loans, couldn’t see enough to get $ back.
3. Gov’t sticks to gold standard (dollars backed up by gold) b/c they think it will hold up better against inflation (more $ in circulation, therefore decrease in value).
4. Demands for silver $ increases; would make more money available to more people; could enable farmers to save their farms and pay banks back.
5. Tariff issue – foreign imports – Civil War Repub. Enacted high tariff to protect U.S. industry.

 3. Major Legislation:

1. McKinley Tariff of 1890 – raised tax on foreign products to a peacetime high of over 48%
2. Civil War Vet increase pensions
3. Sherman Antitrust Act – outlaws “combinations” that restrain trade.
4. Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890 – increased coinage of silver…does not solve problem/make farmers happy.
5. Voting rights protection bill for African Americans – passed in House but defeated in Senate.
6. Dingley Tariff protects manufacturing.

**C. Checklist For Note Taking**

Have you …

* Written the theme or unit
* Divided major sections; addresses economic, social/cultural, and political issues
* Kept a consistent format
* Shows cause and effect where possible
* Includes details –key terms, key leaders/players, relevant vocabulary; does not just write the term but *explains it* – briefly but clearly.
* Written in a manner that conveys clarity of understanding (not copying exactly what the teacher said).