



This tool gives students the opportunity to record their perception of a key concept or idea about a lesson topic while it is still fresh in their minds.

## Stop and Jot

**H**ow many times a day do you stop and quickly write yourself a note to be sure that you don't forget something important? How often do you stop what you're doing and ask "Alexa" for information you seemingly forgot? Do you recall as a student writing an important reminder on your hand about something you need to bring to school the next day? In our daily lives, all of us find moments almost every day when we need to stop and quickly write something down that we want to remember. The process of writing down our thoughts and ideas helps us to store and internalize the information.

In the same way, students need time to summarize and record key pieces of information in order to have it make sense to them and to help them remember it. **Stop and Jot is a processing activity that gives students the opportunity to record their perception of a key concept or idea about a lesson topic or a passage that they are reading.** This technique allows students to take time to process new information that they are learning, and to make sense of it for themselves, before moving on in the lesson. It also helps students to highlight which information is most critical to their understanding.

Stop and Jot can also be a valuable assessment tool for teachers. As you view the "jots" of your students, you will be able to identify areas that students clearly understand and common misunderstandings that you can use to design lessons for re-teaching key concepts. Most importantly, you can use "jot" notes to identify struggling learners who are confused or lacking key information for follow-up individual tutoring or supplemental instruction.

### How to Use Stop and Jot


#### 1. Stop

At key points in the lesson, provide your students with a Stop and Jot page or ask students to draw a rectangle on the paper where they are taking notes for the day. This will serve as their "stop box." It is helpful if these stop boxes are outlined with a bright color to call students' attention back to the key points of a lesson when reviewing this material later.


Pose an important question regarding a key point about the material just covered.

- ♦ Identify the key issue related to \_\_\_\_\_.
- ♦ What are your thoughts about \_\_\_\_\_?
- ♦ Do you agree or disagree with the statement, "\_\_\_\_\_." Explain your response.
- ♦ What comes next? Identify the next step of the process.
- ♦ What still feels unclear?

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## Stop and Jot



Stop and Jot #1	Stop and Jot #2
Stop and Jot #3	Stop and Jot #4
Stop and Jot #5	Stop and Jot #6



## Stop and Jot (continued)

### 2. Jot

Give students a short period of time to write an answer in their Stop Box to your question. You will want to remind them that a “jot” is just a few short sentences to capture their most important ideas regarding the topic. It will be helpful for you to plan these “jot” moments ahead of time, based on which points in the lesson are most critical for students to understand in order to move forward or which points in the lesson are most often difficult for students to grasp.

### 3. Share

Reconvene the class and ask volunteers to share one or two responses with the whole class. It is always helpful for you to model your own thinking about the topic and share it with the class. Be sure to clarify any common misunderstandings expressed by students at this point. Encourage students to fill in any missing key information in their boxes as they listen to responses. Stop and Jot boxes also help students later by serving as a study tool, highlighting important information about the topic.

### When to Use Stop and Jot

Use Stop and Jot at any point in the lesson to provide processing time and note-taking assistance for students:

- ♦ Before introducing new material to activate prior knowledge
- ♦ Before a new lesson to help assess what students already know
- ♦ During a lesson as a check for understanding to provide feedback to you for future instruction
- ♦ During a lesson to provide “wait time” for processing of information
- ♦ During a lesson to provide time for students to create a written summary statement of auditory material
- ♦ During a lesson to act as a transition from one part of the lesson to the next
- ♦ After the lesson to provide closure and to check for understanding
- ♦ After the lesson to clarify any misunderstandings
- ♦ After the lesson to clarify key ideas or critical pieces of information
- ♦ After the lesson to allow students to make connections to previously learned material
- ♦ After a lesson to allow students to find personal relevance

### Stop and Jot Variations

#### Jot-Pair-Share

Similar to “Think-Pair-Share,” students jot their own thoughts, pair with a partner to exchange ideas, and then partners share the ideas with the rest of the class. Allowing students to first put their thoughts in writing may enrich the discussion by giving students a more formal opportunity to gather their own thoughts before discussion with another student.

#### Quick Jot

Students are given between sixty to ninety seconds to respond to a given question or statement posed by the teacher. This activity gives students time to process auditory information. Teachers may choose to ask students to include key vocabulary terms in their Quick Jot, allowing you to assess students’ understanding of these key words. Because the activity is timed and very short, even reluctant writers are usually willing to participate.



## Stop and Jot (continued)

### Stop and Fill

If it is important that key points or important words are noted in the material as students listen to auditory materials or read written material as they work independently, a Stop and Jot sheet with blanks to be filled in might be the best way to make sure that students capture this key information. Using a Stop and Fill sheet with key information that you want students to notice will make sure that students are focusing their attention on the most critical pieces of information.

### Group Jot

After completing the original Stop and Jot activity, ask students to compare their jots with a small group of students. Students discuss their Jots and add information to their notes based on this discussion. The group then presents a summary of their thoughts to the class during discussion.

### Jot Survey

Instead of drawing a Stop Box on their note-taking paper, students write their jots on sticky notes. Students then take their sticky note jots and post them on posters around the room. Posters may be made for individual questions or topics based on the content being covered. The teacher then sends the students around the room in small groups to survey the jots written by their classmates, making notes and additions to their own bank of information.

## Value of Using Stop and Jot

- ♦ Helps all students to process and make sense of what they are learning
- ♦ Is particularly helpful to struggling learners because it gives them more time to process what they are hearing
- ♦ Allows students to put information into writing which makes it more memorable
- ♦ Assists students in sorting information so that they can see which pieces of information are most important
- ♦ Allows students who work more slowly to have a moment to catch up before the teacher moves on
- ♦ Allows reluctant writers time to practice their writing skills in short time segments
- ♦ Provides valuable information to the teacher about students' level of understanding about key pieces of information
- ♦ Provides a way for students to make sense of key information in their own words

Stop and Jot is a tool that is especially helpful for struggling students who need more time to process the information that they are learning. By embedding Stop and Jot in daily teaching and learning, you are able to engage learners in deeper processing and provide yourself with quick and ongoing assessments of your students, thereby informing your instruction during each step of the lesson cycle.