

# Inquiry Mini-Lessons

## Making Jot Notes Using Sticky Notes

An important step in researching is being able to make jot notes to record important information.

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Materials:**

- a sample non-fiction text from *Animals in Our Lives*, *Water Works!*, or *Inside a Story*, or one of your own
- large sticky notes

**Grouping:** whole class

### Procedure:

1. Tell students that when writers are gathering information from books, the Internet, or other sources they write notes to remind themselves of what they have read. These notes are ideas which will become sentences in their own writing later on.
2. Choose a non-fiction text from one of the inquiry units, e.g., *Explore! Magazine* from the *Water Works!* inquiry unit.

3. Model how to look for the big ideas in the text by looking at the table of contents and skimming through the text.

*I'm trying to make sure that this text has the facts that I'm looking for to answer my inquiry question, "How we can help everyone to have clean water?" The text seems to have lots of good facts about water—where it comes from, how it becomes polluted, and keeping it clean. I think we'll find lots of information to answer our question.*

4. Explain to students that you are going to use sticky notes to make jot notes about the information you find.

*I'm going to use sticky notes to make my jot notes because later I'll be able to organize them.*

**Teaching Tip:** Students can use a variety of graphic organizers to organize their notes. See the "Using Graphic Organizers to Organize Information" mini-lesson for other suggestions.

5. Model how to take notes, using bullets for big ideas and dashes for details.

*I'm going to read pages 16 and 17 to learn about what we can do to keep our water clean.*

6. Explain the title and introductory paragraph.

*The title of this section is "Keeping It Clean at Every Stage." When I read the first paragraph, I realize the author is talking about different steps that everyone can take to keep water clean for animals and people. I'll write down "How we can keep water clean" on one sticky note because this is the big idea.*

7. Read on and explain your thinking.
8. Read on and model how you would continue making notes for these two pages. After you have finished, remind students to write the title of the text and the author (if applicable) at the bottom of the note so that you can credit the source later on.

*Skimming the text, I see that different people are mentioned—factory owners, drivers, families, and communities. I'm going to write each of these down on a separate sticky note, and then make a few notes about each one.*

**Teaching Tip:** If students are researching in small groups, pairs, or individually, provide them with sticky notes. Support students as needed as they make jot notes during their research.