Earth Science Students Prepare For Midterm Using OneNote Digital Notebook Technology

Stacey Brewer’s Newark High School Earth Science students have an advantage this week reviewing for their midterm exam January 24th they wouldn’t have had without the individual laptop tablets each NHS student was assigned last fall.

Using the Microsoft OneNote digital notebook program, they no longer have to rely just on notes they took in class each day last semester using pen and paper notebooks, but have access to a plethora of class notes compiled by their teacher, fellow students and themselves.

Typically on Wednesdays, Brewer goes over major points covered in class Mondays and Tuesdays with students. She compiles notes from the discussion that they then put in their OneNote folders, arranged by topics, that they can refer to throughout the year.

“I’m certainly do not consider myself ‘tech-savy’ but the ability to use OneNote has helped tremendously in having all notes available to all students in the class. It is very helpful when students are absent from class as they can easily access the notes,”

Brewer explained. “Many students still copy the notes into their own paper notebooks, which I encourage as the physical aspect of writing has proven to help students recall data. The other thing I really like about OneNote is that I can link relevant videos or images for students to look at during independent learning time, or whenever, for that matter. Some students seem to be more engaged through videos, so this is another way to access the learning content.”
To help her students prepare for the upcoming midterm exam, Brewer gave them a 70-question test to take during the recent holiday break.

“There were questions from each topic we had covered so far in the year,” she said. “I expected them to take the time to try to answer, look up information if they needed to, but to keep track of what they were unsure of. They were due January 10th. I graded them that week and then figured out what areas they were strongest and weakest in.

“From that point, they targeted their own review based on the question number and topic that they missed,” Brewer continued. “Students are able to copy the questions from the Content area, and paste it in their own section and then answer the questions. They also have the option of answering it on paper. Since the Earth Science midterm isn’t until Jan. 24th, students can use the Collaboration space to send me a question, or answer someone else’s to help them study. They can post vocabulary they think is important or other vocabulary terms that they want more clarification about.

“Hopefully, my classes will work on the questions as a way to review and practice for their midterm, as I won’t have them in class this week before their exam,” she said. “OneNote as enabled me to stay in contact with the students throughout the week in a way that I couldn’t before.”
As of the end of October, every single one of Newark Central School District’s 2,100 students was assigned a 1:1 computing device allowing offline access to class work, stored files and other educational materials, as well as pre-filtered use of the Internet. They also enable students to digitally communicate with their teachers and vice versa.

Pre-K through second graders at Perkins and Lincoln schools got iPads during the last school year and by the end of October, Kelley School, Newark Middle School and Newark High School students had all received their 2-in-1 laptop tablets complete with fold back screens and stylus pens that allow them to write or draw on them.