

SAY – MEAN – MATTER

Say – Mean – Matter is a note-taking technique designed to help students keep track of details from the text, to clarify confusing elements of the text, and a way for students to practice summarization and analysis.

Directions: Students fold paper into thirds and divide the paper into three columns. Write column titles at the top of each column: say, mean, and matter. In the “say” column students write down important quotations or unclear passages, sentences, or phrases from the reading. In the “mean” column, students paraphrase the quotation or passage in their own words. In the “matter” column, students write a reflection of the significance or importance of the phrase, sentence, or passage.

Sample:

Reading: “Acting White is a Burden for Black Students”

SAY	MEAN	MATTER
1) Max, who is black, “puts brakes” on his academic efforts because his friends feel that to take school seriously is to “act white”.	Max doesn’t want his friends to think he is frontin’ so he doesn’t try as hard as he could in school.	Racism is so ingrained that academic success is perceived as a white paradigm.
2) ...the racism of the wider society has also created an adolescent culture that undercuts academic efforts.	Teens interpret the world into black and white and behave accordingly.	Racism operates in people’s psyches, and is insidious and self-defeating.