

SAMPLE: TWO-COLUMN NOTES

Using two-column notes, have students outline the benefits and challenges that historians face when using testimony as an historical source.

<i>Benefits</i>	<i>Challenges</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Unlike most documents, personal stories restore individual identities to victims of the Holocaust. Testimony re-humanizes people by allowing us to hear their stories in their voices.</i> • <i>Learning about the Holocaust from people who actually experienced this period helps to make those events more tangible and realistic.</i> • <i>Listening to a survivor’s testimony is one way to encourage social responsibility and an obligation to remember. We have to prepare for an era in which there will be no one left to recount the Holocaust in the first person.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Never will two people who shared an experience remember it in the same manner. The human memory is influenced by various elements that shape it: beliefs, personality traits, life experiences, knowledge gained after the fact, repression.</i> • <i>Discrepancies between a testimony given shortly after an event and another testimony by the same witness years later are quite common. Inaccuracies in dates and details are also common challenges in testimony.</i> • <i>Stories about personal experiences are recounted by those who survived. For example, it is important to remember that each camp was different. When one hears the testimonies of former prisoners, one may easily fixate on the account of “life in the camp” and forget that life would have been different at another camp.</i>