

Graphic Organizers

Description

Graphic organizers are visual representations of knowledge. They come in a variety of forms such as charts, diagrams, and data collection sheets. Graphic organizers are useful tools in helping students record their observations and ideas.

Purpose

Learning is enhanced when students see how concepts are connected. Graphic organizers give students a place to organize data, information, and ideas in an orderly fashion. The framework not only organizes prior and learned knowledge; but also, provides order to connect new information. For visual learners, key information is easier to remember when it is graphically organized.

Connection to Inquiry and Standards:

Students process and record prior knowledge, newly acquired knowledge, observations, and ideas in an orderly manner. Attention is focused on key elements such as predictions, hypotheses, observations, and results. Discussion can be easily focused on these elements. Pennsylvania Standards for Reading/Writing/Speaking/Listening connections include 1.1 Learning to Read Independently and 1.3 Reading, Analyzing and Interpreting Literature (comprehension and interpretation), 1.5 Quality of Writing (organization), and 1.8 Research (organization).

Materials

Graphic organizer designed for the specific task. Examples include: T-charts, Compare and Contrast Diagrams, Information Organizers, and What You Need to Know Charts

Procedure

The procedures depend upon the activity and the graphic organizer. In general, the teacher handouts the graphic organizer and explains how it is to be used to record information. Students complete the activity and complete the graphic organizer. The completed graphic organizer can be used to aid follow-up discussion of the activity. Many graphic organizers can also serve as assessment tools, so the teacher may want to collect them.

Resources

- Bromley, K., Irwin-Devitis, L., & Modlo, M. (1995). Graphic Organizers. New York: Scholastic.
- Hyerle, D. (1996). Visual Tools for Constructing Knowledge. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.