



## A Circus of Thinking Skills

*Go To*

*Sample 1*

*Sample 2*

*Sample 3*

*Sample 4*

*Sample 5*

*Sample 6*

*Sample 7*

*Sample 8*

*Sample 9*

*Beginning*

Welcome to a Circus of Thinking Skills! This material is a copy of the handout for a workshop on Inspiration, presented at Closing The Gap '97. Inspiration, a software product for Mac or Windows, is a powerful visual learning tool that inspires students to organize their thinking. Students use Inspiration's Diagram view to dynamically create and modify concept maps, webs and other graphical organizers. The integrated Outline view enables students to quickly prioritize and rearrange ideas, helping them create clear, concise writing. The ability to manage information in the diagram mode, which is graphic extensive and dynamic, and then have the information immediately placed in a conventional text outline format provides students who have problems dealing with text a bridge to a text intensive society. It also allows individuals who deal strictly with text a method of providing input to projects that will eventually be created in the diagram mode.

The following activities include a sample of Florida's Sunshine State Standards Benchmarks, a learning strategy with description and how to use it, also from the Florida Sunshine State Standards materials, and the benefits of using that strategy. Each activity could be used with a variety of graphic organizer designs, and any of the learning strategies could be used in any of the activities.



# The Great American Novel

- Benefits*
- provides opportunities for the visual learner to recall the connections for later use*
  - helps students use and share their prior knowledge*
  - helps students identify patterns of information*
- Go To*
- Sample 1*
  - Sample 2*
  - Sample 3*
  - Sample 4*
  - Sample 5*
  - Sample 6*
  - Sample 7*
  - Sample 8*
  - Sample 9*
  - Beginning*

## Benchmark

Grades PreK-2 - Language Arts - LA.B.1.1.1

The student makes a plan for writing that includes a central idea and related ideas.

Grades 3-5 - Language Arts - LA.B.1.2.1

The student prepares for writing by recording thoughts, focusing on a central idea, grouping related ideas, and identifying the purpose for writing.

## Learning Strategy

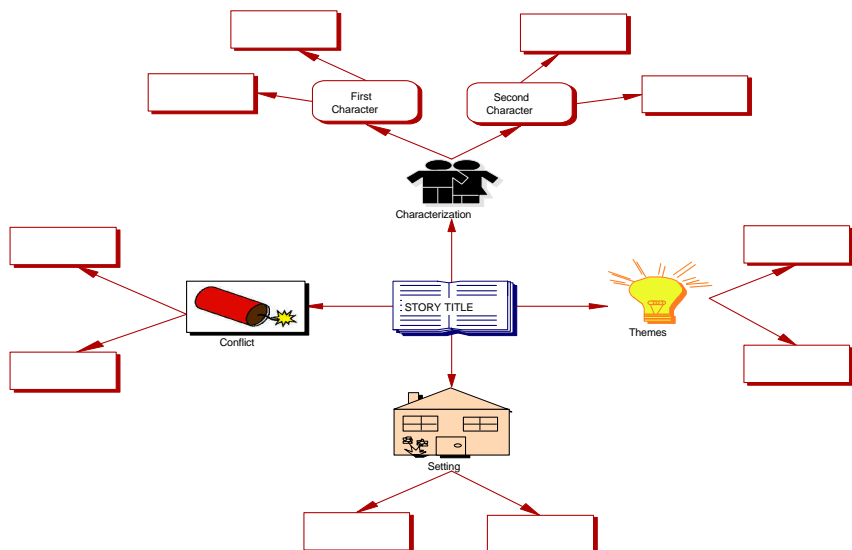
### Webbing

A graphic organizer strategy that provides a visual picture of how words or phrases connect to a topic.

### How to Use It

The teacher lists a topic and builds a web-like structure of words or phrases that students call out as being connected to a topic. Students can also use the strategy individually in planning writing or in studying for a test.

## Example





# Alternate Realities

## Benefits

*reveals background information and knowledge of a topic*

*discloses misconceptions*

*helps students relate existing knowledge to content*

*strengthens listening skills*

*stimulates creating thinking*

## Benchmark

Grades 6-8 - History - SS.A.2.3.2

The student knows how major historical developments have had an impact on the development of civilizations.

## Learning Strategy

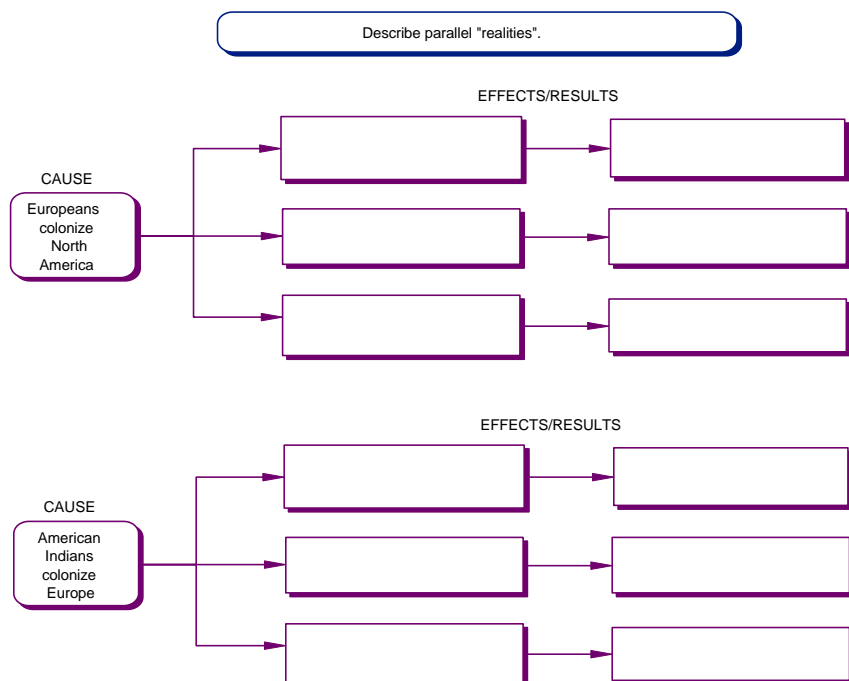
Brainstorming

A strategy for electing ideas from a group.

How to Use It

Students contribute ideas related to a topic. All contributions are accepted without initial comment. After the list of ideas is finalized, students categorize, prioritize, and defend selections.

## Example





# Minnesota Apples

## Benefits

*develops organizational and planning skills*

*develops observational skills*

*gives students an authentic educational experience*

## Benchmark

Grades PreK-2 - Language Arts - LA.B.2.1.1

The student writes questions and observations about familiar topics, stories, or new experiences.

## Learning Strategy

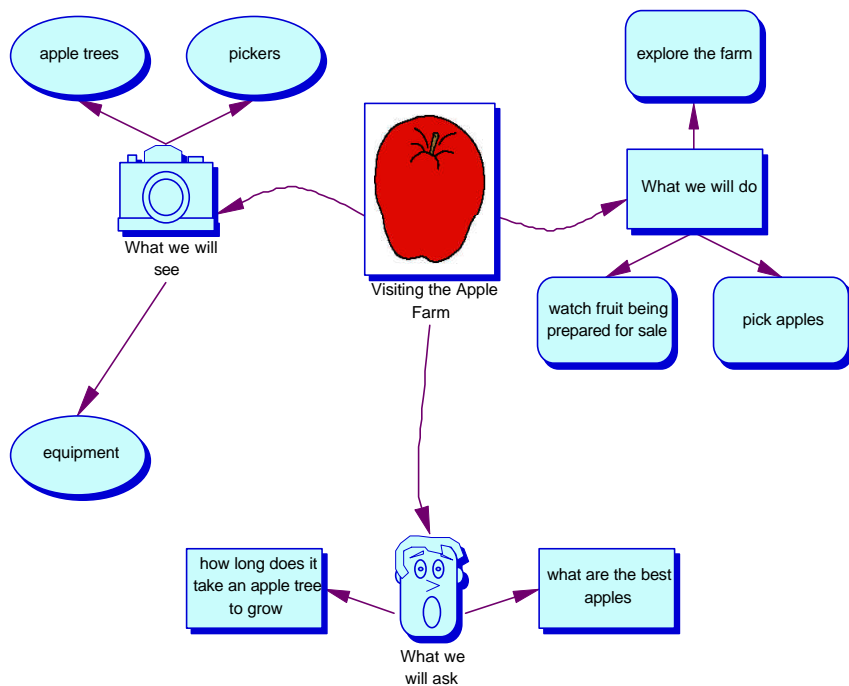
### Field Experience

A planned learning experience for students to observe, study and participate in a setting off the school grounds, using the community as a laboratory.

### How to Use It

Teachers and students plan and structure the experience before the visit and engage in follow-up activities after the trip.

## Example





# Electricity, Electricity

## Benefits

*builds on prior knowledge*

*develops predicting skills*

*provides a structure for learning*

*develops research skills*

*develops communication skills in cooperative groups*

*strengthens teamwork skills*

## Benchmark

Grades 3-5 - Science - SC.B.1.2.2

The student recognizes various forms of energy (e.g., heat, light, and electricity).

## Learning Strategy

K-W-L (Know-Want To Know-Learned)

An introductory strategy that provides a structure for recalling what students know regarding a topic, noting what students want to know, and finally listing what has been learned and is yet to be learned.

### How to Use It

Before engaging in an activity, the teacher lists on the board under the heading "What We Know" all the information students know or think they know about a topic. Then the teacher lists all the information the student want to know about a topic under "What We Want to Know." While engaging in the planned activity, the student research and read about the topic, keeping in mind the information they had listed under "What We Want to Know."

After completing the activity, the students confirm the accuracy of what was listed and identify what they learned, contrasting it with what they wanted to know. The teacher lists what the students learned under "What We Learned."

## Example

Write main concept here		
Things we know	Things we want to find out	Things we discovered
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4



# Magic Vocabulary Words

## Benefits

*builds depth of knowledge*

*discloses a student's own understanding and resolves misunderstanding*

*builds on conceptual understanding*

*develops teamwork and cooperative working skills*

## Benchmark

Grades PreK-2 - Language Arts - L.A.A.2.1.1

The student determines the main idea or essential message from text and identifies supporting information.

## Learning Strategy

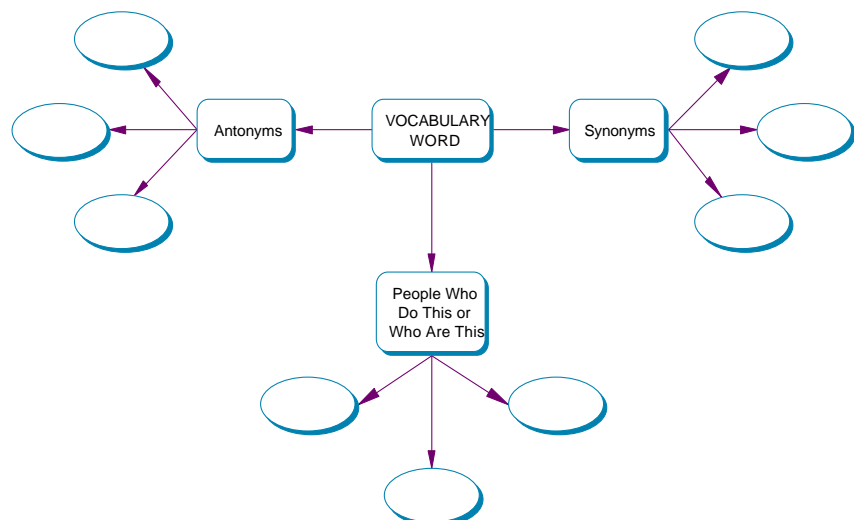
### Jigsawing

A cooperative learning strategy in which everyone becomes an "expert" and shares his or her learning so that eventually all group members know the content.

### How to Use It

The teacher divides student into groups; each group member is assigned a numbered section or a part of the material being studied. Each student meets with the students from other groups who have the same number. This new group learns together, develops expertise on their material, and then plans how to teach the material to members of their original groups. Students return to their original groups and teach their area of expertise to the other group members.

## Example





# Shaping History

## Benefits

*elicits diverse points of view*

*develops communication skills, especially listening and taking turns*

*allows opportunities for shy students to function positively in small groups*

## Benchmark

Grades 6-8 - History - SS.A.3.3.2

The student understands the historical events that have shaped the development of cultures throughout the world.

## Learning Strategy

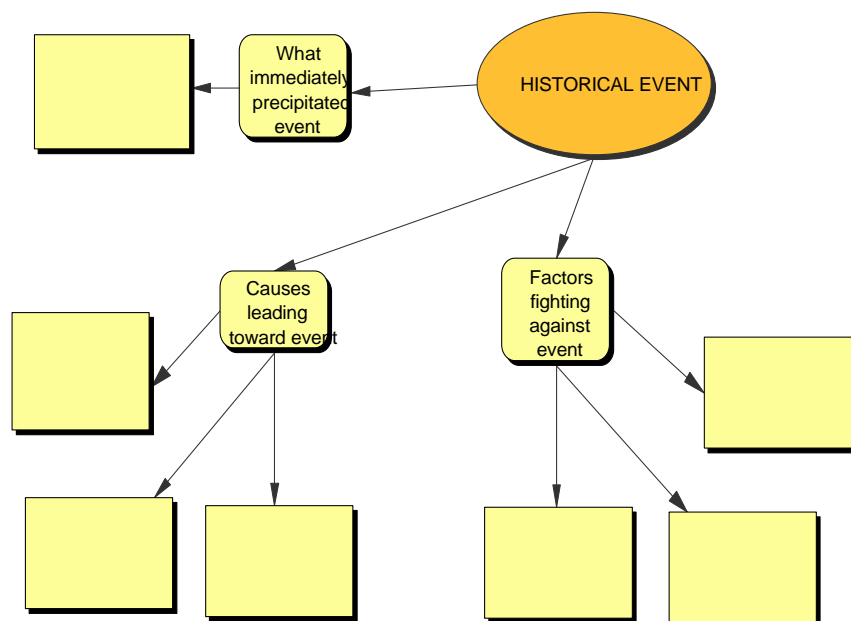
### Corners

A cooperative learning strategy, similar to jigsawing, for learning about a topic and sharing that learning.

### How to Use It

The teacher assigns small groups of students to different corners of the room to examine a particular topic. They discuss various points of view concerning the topic. Corner teams discuss conclusions, determine the best way to present their findings to the class, and practice their presentation.

## Example





# Compare/Contrast Story Characters

## Benefits

helps develop conceptual understanding of a topic

develops the ability to filter information and draw one's own conclusions

develops the ability to consider other points of view

## Benchmark

Grades 6-8 - Language Arts - L.A.A.1.3.4

Student uses strategies to clarify meaning, such as rereading, note taking, summarizing, outlining, and writing a grade-level-appropriate report.

## Learning Strategy

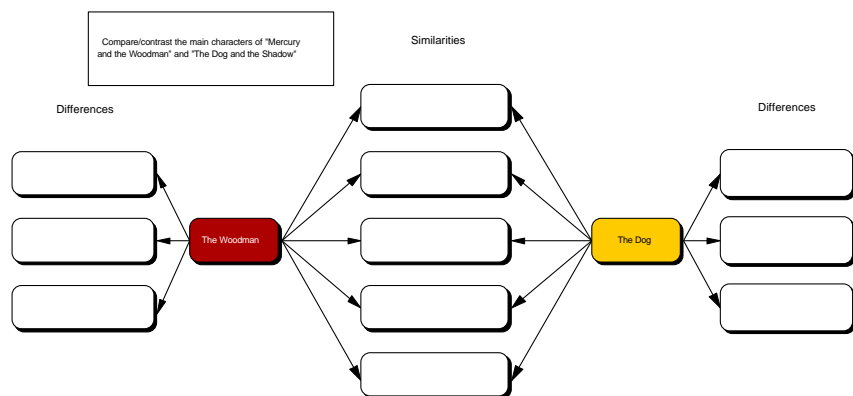
### Think, Pair, and Share

A cooperative learning strategy for helping students develop their own ideas and build on the ideas of co-learners.

### How to Use It

Students reflect on a topic and then pair up to discuss, review, and revise their ideas. They share their ideas with the class.

## Example





# How We Take Care Of Each Other

## Benefits

facilitates understanding of conceptual ideas

## Benchmark

Grades PreK-2 - Health Literacy - H.E.A.1.1.3

The student understand the various responsibilities of family members (e.g., mother, father, aunt, grandparent, guardian, and sister) for health promotion and disease prevention.

## Learning Strategy

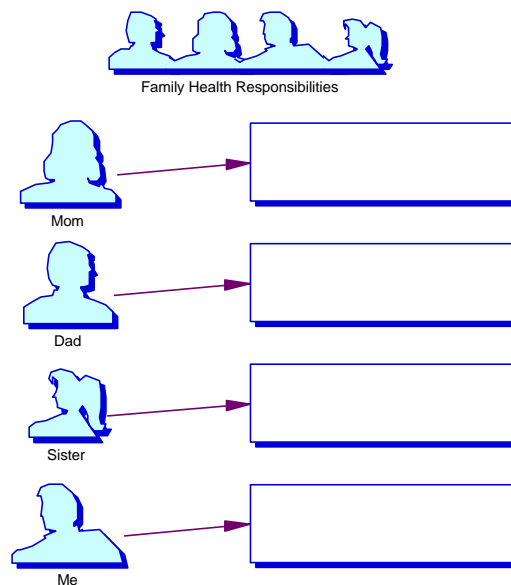
### Models

A simplified representation of a concept. It may be concrete, such as a map of Huckleberry Finn's travels and important places he visited along the Mississippi River, or abstract like a model of the relationships between characters in a mystery story.

### How to Use It

Student create a concrete product that represents an abstract idea or a simplified representation of an abstract idea.

## Example





# Our Deserts

## Benefits

helps students visualize how ideas are connected and how knowledge is organized

improves comprehension and problem-solving skills

useful as a note taking and study tool

## Benchmark

Grades 3-5 - Geography - SS.B.1.2.2

The student knows how regions are constructed according to physical criteria and human criteria.

## Learning Strategy

### Concept Mapping

A graphic organizer strategy that show the relationships among concepts. Usually the concepts are circled and the relationships are shown by connecting lines with short explanations.

### How to Use It

The teacher selects a main idea. Then the teacher and students identify a set of concepts associated with a main idea. Concepts are ranked in related groups from most general to most specific. Related concepts are connected and the links labeled with verbs or short phrases.

## Example

