

## Chicago Teaching Partners DePaul Center for Urban Education

# Keep it simple, Smarty.

### **Mainstream Effective Methods of Special Education**

- ✓ Chunk the content.
- ✓ Give clear directions both in writing and orally.
- ✓ Use pictures and graphic organizers so students see what they are learning.
- ✓ Have students start with basics and expand knowledge and skills.
- ✓ Give students “scaffolds” to organize their learning.

This guide contains resources to clear topic-focused learning in which students “think by the week” and move from introduction through fluency. The resources were developed by the DePaul Center for Urban Education through Chicago Teacher Collaborative, sponsored by the US Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs, and the Teacher Leadership Network, sponsored by the Polk Bros. Foundation, and are provided for use in Chicago Teaching Partners, a collaboration with the Chicago Public Schools Office of Specialized Services.

These resources are useful for all subjects.

They are adaptable to all grade levels and subjects.

The tools in this guide will be particularly helpful to increase student competency to:

- > Read non-fiction text
- > Write with focus and support about current learning
- > Prepare for tests and continue to learn important content.

They correlate with State Standards, ISAT, ITBS, and Prairie State.

## Resources for activities from beginning with basics through completion with communication.

- Page 3: The Teacher's Challenge
- Page 4: Map the Month
- Page 5: Teacher's Topic Toolkit Planner
- Page 6: Independent Learning Sequence
- Page 7: Structure for a Progressive Learning Week  
Monday: Make it clear.  
Tuesday: Take it, use It.  
Wednesday: Work with it.  
Thursday: Think it through.  
Friday: Finish with fluency.
- Page 8: Keep the Focus Clear—use all week to keep the focus clear
- Pages 9-12: Start with Clear Vocabulary and Listen/Read with Focus and Vision
- Pages 13-15: Collect and Classify Important Knowledge
- Pages 16-31: Graphic Organizers to Make It Clear
- Pages 32-36: Question Makers—students make up/answer them
- Pages 37-42: Writing Guides to Get It Together and Get It Across

# The Teacher's Challenge

1. Chunk your content.
2. Choose varied activities.
3. Coach the learners.
4. Check the learning.
5. Check your teaching:  
Was I clear?  
Did I give directions in more than one way?  
Did I give example?  
Did I ask students to re-state directions?  
Did I ...
6. Choose responses to individual needs:

--re-model *differently*  
--use *different* model (other learners)  
-- \_\_\_\_\_  
-- \_\_\_\_\_

## Map the Month

**Focus:** \_\_\_\_\_

	M	T	W	T	F
<i>Topic of the Week</i>					
<i>Topic of the Week</i>					
<i>Topic of the Week</i>					
<i>Topic of the Week</i>					

Unit Assessment—Students can demonstrate learning in several ways:

- Make a presentation
- Write your own booklet
- Make a display
- Write a poem
- Draw illustrations

Make up your own assessment—provide questions and answers.

## Teacher's Topic Teaching Toolkit

*What's Important to teach your students next week?*

*Choose an important topic you plan to teach.*

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

What kinds of things do they need to learn about it?

You can use the chart on the next page as a framework for one week's integrated learning.

1. It develops goals 1, 3, 5, and 4, as well as the goal for the content area you will teach.
2. All students will gain from having the teacher read aloud so that unfamiliar vocabulary is pronounced accurately.
3. It's visual so that students have the chance to see—and show—what the content looks like.
4. It's progressive so that the students start with basics, organize them, think them through, and put them together and get them across in their own writing.
5. Students become "fluent" in the topic so by the end of the week they read aloud from their own writing.

It develops the P, Q, R, O, S, T structure

**P**review, **Q**uestion, **R**ead/**R**eason, **O**rganize, **S**ynthesize, **T**ell

## Independent Learning Sequence

### *Preview and Ask a BIG Question*

#### Begin with Focus ➡

- ✓ Establish a purpose
- ✓ Focus on the learning
- ✓ In reading, skim a text to identify patterns and kinds of content

### *Read/Reason*

#### Get It Clear ⇨

- ✓ Check understanding
- ✓ Ask yourself questions as you learn
- ✓ Paraphrase
- ✓ Make mental pictures as you learn
- ✓ In reading, adjust reading rate to level of text difficulty
- ✓ Look for important ideas—use structure of the presentation/text to help find them
- ✓ Re-read/re-view to find information, check meaning

### *Organize*

#### Think It Through ⇨

- ✓ Evaluate information and ideas

### *Summarize/Synthesize*

#### Get It Together ❖

- ✓ Connect ideas and information.

### *Tell*

#### Get It Across ⇨

- ✓ Share what you learn
- ✓ Keep it—write what's important in your own words.

**TOPIC** \_\_\_\_\_

This week students develop competencies for: Goal 5 (research), Goal 1 (read with fluency), Goal 3 (write clearly to communicate), Goal 4 (listen and speak articulately), and

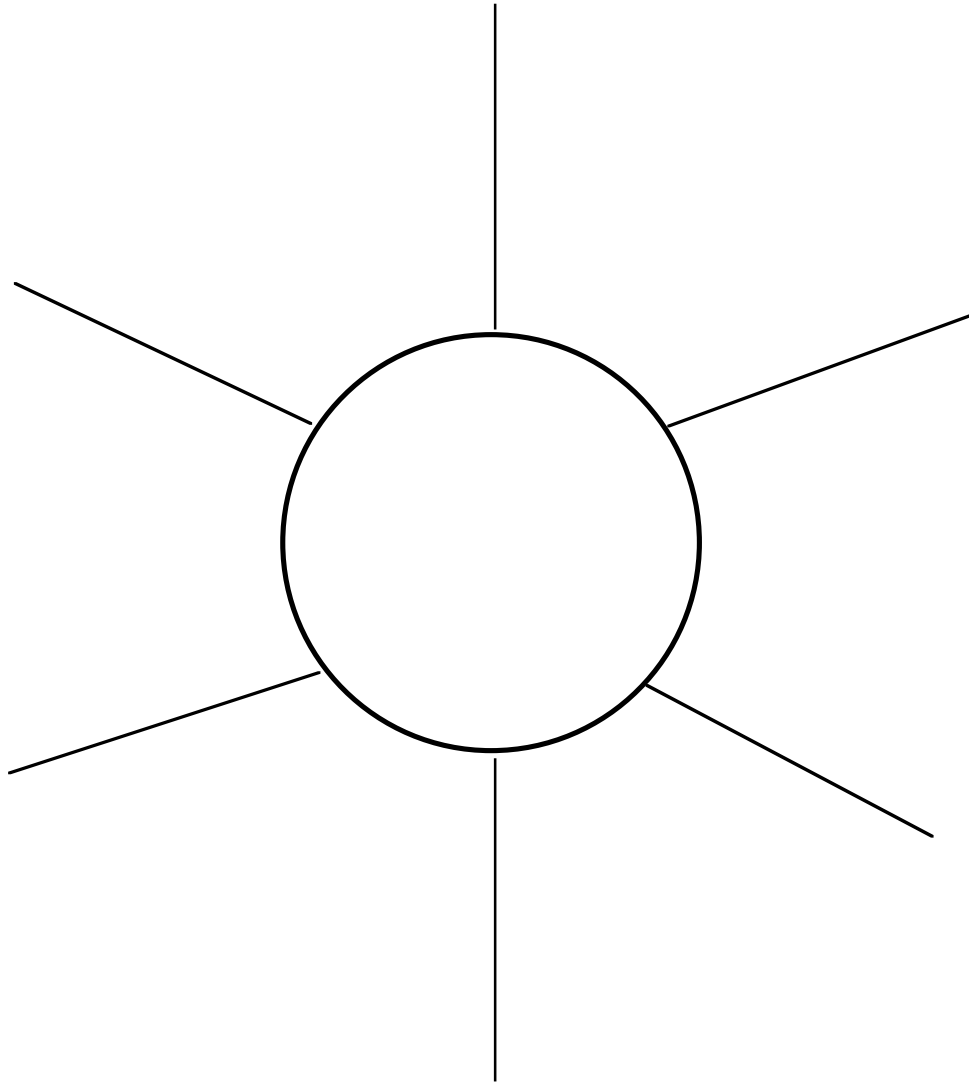
\_\_\_\_\_ (content goal/s).

**Vocabulary**

What will students read? \_\_\_\_\_

PQ	R	O	S	T
Monday <b>Get It Clear.</b>	Tuesday <b>Take it, use It.</b>	Wednesday <b>Work with It.</b>	Thursday: <b>Think More.</b>	Friday <b>Finish Fluently</b>
<p><b>Focus</b>                      ___ Teacher Models                      ___ Student explains                      ___ K-W-L                      _____</p> <p><b>Activities</b>  <b>WORD KNOWLEDGE</b>                      T: Read aloud                      _____</p> <p>S: Draw what you hear</p> <p>S: Start a glossary of this week's words. (Option: Make it a picture glossary.)                      S. Write your own questions you will answer this week.</p> <p><b>Report</b>                      ___ kwL ___ Learning Log                      ___ Think, Pair, Share                      ___ Student explains                      _____</p> <p>Homework                      Add more words to your glossary. Use them to write sentences about your topic.</p>	<p><b>Focus</b>                      ___ Teacher Models                      ___ Student explains                      ___ Homework Connect                      _____</p> <p><b>Activities</b>  <b>COMPREHENSION</b>                      Read                      _____                      and Collect Facts</p> <p>___ list facts                      ___ picture facts                      ___ classify facts                      _____</p> <p><b>Math: Do _____ and note steps.</b></p> <p><b>Report</b>                      ___ kwL ___ Learning Log                      ___ Think, Pair, Share                      ___ Student explains                      _____</p> <p>Homework                      Make a "top ten" list of your favorite facts.</p>	<p><b>Focus</b>                      ___ Teacher Models                      ___ Student explains                      ___ Homework Connect                      _____</p> <p><b>Activities</b>  <b>COMPREHENSION</b>                      Use graphic organizer—make a                      _____                      to show                      _____</p> <p>Make up questions for other students to answer.</p> <p><b>Report</b>                      ___ kwL ___ Learning Log                      ___ Think, Pair, Share                      ___ Student explains                      _____</p> <p>Homework                      Make up more questions.</p>	<p><b>Focus</b>                      ___ Teacher Models                      ___ Student explains                      ___ Homework Connect                      _____</p> <p><b>Activities</b>  <b>WRITING</b>                      Take quiz—use the Wednesday questions.                      _____</p> <p>Make it interesting.                      Write a...                      ___ poem ___ story                      ___ paragraph ___ diary                      ___ news report ___ ad                      ___ fable ___ history                      ___ guide ___ letter                      ___ alphabet book                      _____</p> <p><b>Report</b>                      ___ kwL ___ Learning Log                      ___ Think, Pair, Share                      ___ Student explains                      _____</p> <p>Homework                      Write more about this topic.</p>	<p><b>Focus</b>                      ___ Teacher Models                      ___ Student explains                      ___ Homework Connect                      _____</p> <p><b>Activities</b>  <b>FLUENCY</b>                      Complete your writing. Present to the class or another class</p> <p><b>Report</b>                      ___ kwL ___ Learning Log                      ___ Think, Pair, Share                      ___ Student explains                      _____</p> <p>Homework                      Take your writing home and share it with your family.</p>

# This Week's Topic Learning





# WORD BANK

TOPIC: \_\_\_\_\_

WORD	Show what it means. Draw a picture.	Write another word that tells about this word.

Keep adding to your word bank as you learn more words about this topic. You can cut your words and pictures apart and then turn this into a “Smart Pack” —a set of words and pictures you use as a matching game or flash cards. Write with the words.

## Read or Listen To any Story or History or News Report

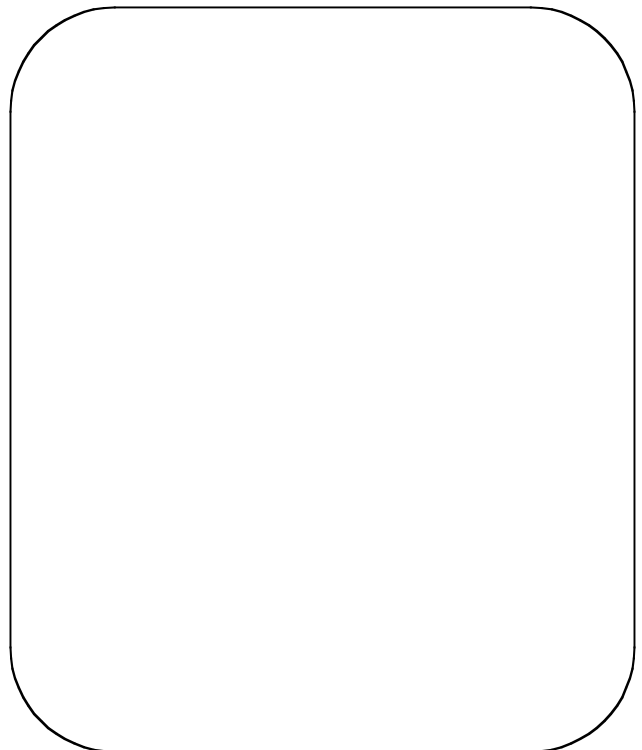
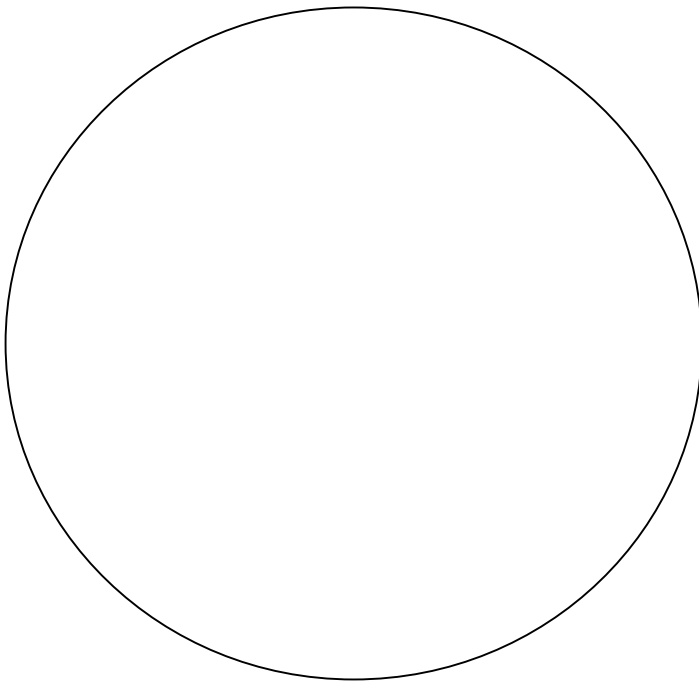
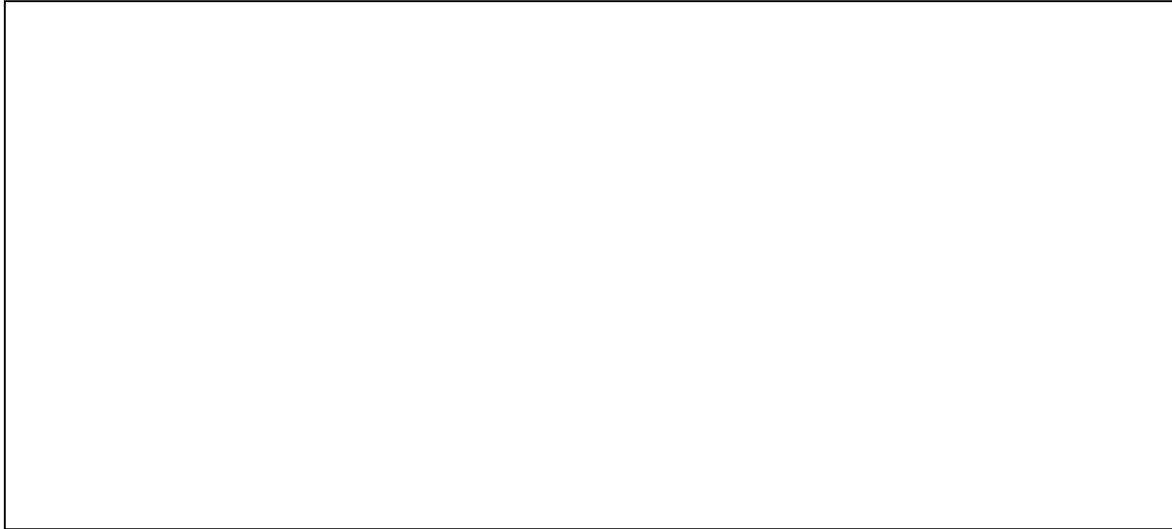
Draw pictures to show this situation. (*Good readers visualize what they read.*)

***Write about this situation as if you were there.  
Include the following information in your writing:***

- ✓ *Who are you?*
  
- ✓ *What's important to you?*
  
- ✓ *What do you think about this situation?*

**LISTEN AND SEE: Draw what you hear!**

As you listen, figure out three important parts. Then re-read the text yourself and draw pictures that how what each part means.



*Write a title that fits all three parts.*

### Words Make Meaning

*Place this page next to your book. After you read each paragraph, note the words that are most important in that paragraph.*

Paragraph 1
Paragraph 2
Paragraph 3

### **What's the main idea of this page?**

Reread the words in your chart.  
Then write the main idea.

# Learning Log

*Each day, write three important ideas you learn.*

M	
T	
W	
T	
F	

## Knowledge Collector: List What's Important

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

*List your Top Ten facts.*


1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

*Which is the most important fact? Circle that number.  
Then explain why it is most important.*

## Information Organizer: **Chart**

A chart is a way to see different lists at the same time.

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

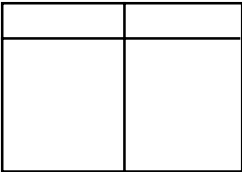
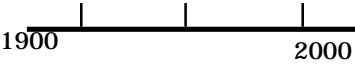
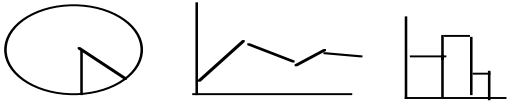
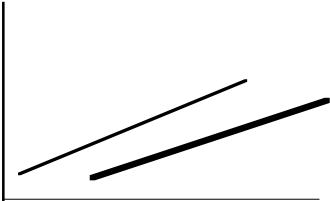
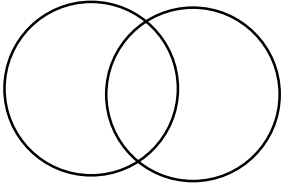
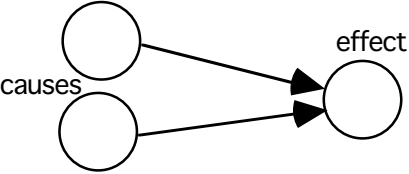

 *Summarize what your chart shows.*

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## MAKE IT CLEAR

Graphic Organizers are tools to **locate, organize, interpret, analyze** and **evaluate** information and ideas. *The organizers are useful in every subject*

- to organize learning
- to clarify learning
- to assess learning

<p><b>LISTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p><b>OUTLINES</b></p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ _____</li> <li>❖ _____</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ _____</li> <li>❖ _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>CHARTS</b></p> 	<p><b>TIME LINES</b></p> 
<p><b>GRAPHS</b></p>  	<p><b>DIAGRAMS</b></p> <p>Venn Diagram</p>  



## Graphic Organizers Increase Learning: THE RESEARCH BASE

Underlying graphic organizers is the theoretical construct that the visual and verbal organizational structure of the diagram consolidates information into a meaningful whole so students do not have the impression that they are being taught a series of unrelated terms, facts, or concepts. In effect, the diagram itself acts as a nonverbal, visuospatial referent that alerts the student to the interrelationships between ideas and their logical connections to superordinate, equal, or subordinate pieces of information.

This article investigates the effectiveness of graphic organizers for three classifications of secondary students enrolled in content area classes: students with learning disabilities, remedial student, and students in regular education. The results of three separate experiments indicated that graphic organizers, whether teacher-directed, student-directed with text references, or student-directed with clues, produced significantly higher performance than self-study for each group of students.

One teacher noted that he was able to move through textual material at a faster pace using graphic organizers because they effectively combined reading, studying, and evaluation within one class period. Another beneficial aspect of using a written protocol is that, in the event of teacher absence, a substitute teacher can implement the lesson without detriment to the quality of instruction. Hence, the economic utilization of classroom time and the standardization of classroom procedures may be considered positive manifestations of the manner in which graphic organizers were implemented in this research.

Bergerud, Lovitt, and Horton (1988) reported that high school students classified as learning disabled and remedial recalled a greater number of facts from a life science text when material was presented graphically than when presented by using a study guide or when learned through self-study.

Darch and Carnine (1986) demonstrated that elementary-aged students with a learning disability learned significantly more social studies and science content when taught with visual displays than when taught by a teacher-directed activity involving reading and discussing text.

S. V. Horton, T. C. Lovitt, and D. Bergerud, "The Effectiveness of Graphic Organizers for Three Classifications of Secondary Student in Content Area Class", Journal of Learning Disabilities, January 1990 Volume 23, Number 1, p. 13, 22

## Thinking Organizer: ***Time Line***

Date

Event

Outcome

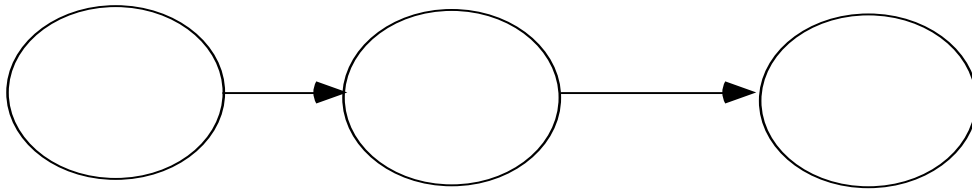
Date	Event	Outcome

💡 *Which event is most important?*

*Why?*

## Thinking Organizer: *Diagram Maker*

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

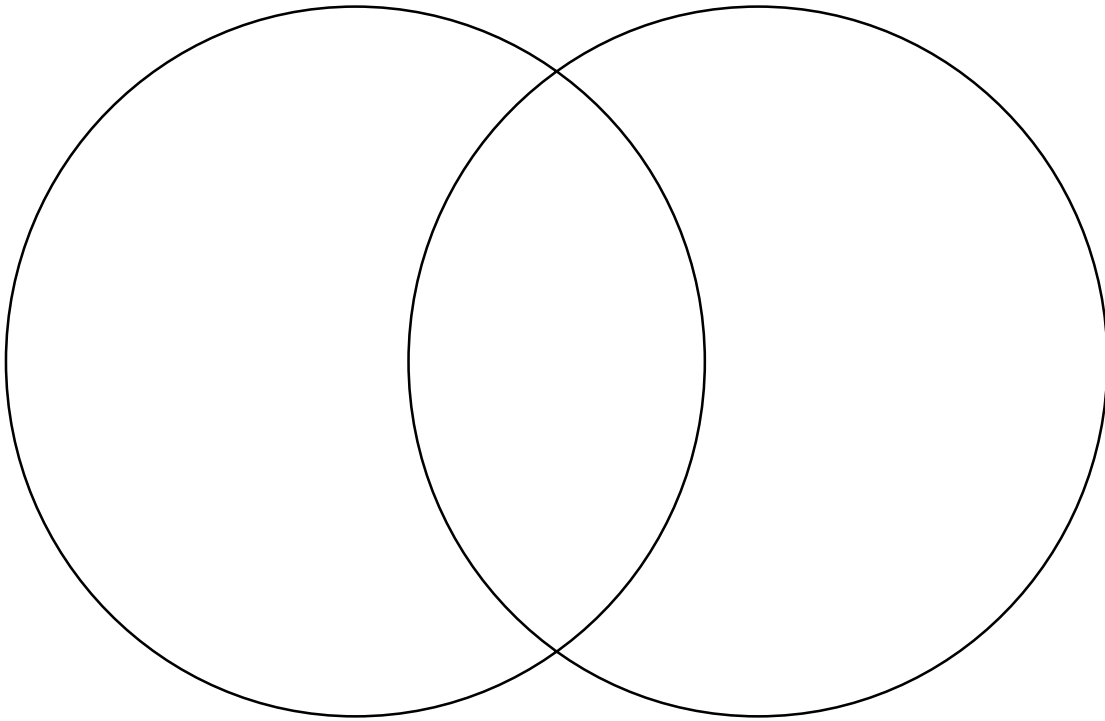


💡 Explain what your diagram shows.

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## Thinking Organizer: Compare and Contrast

Title: \_\_\_\_\_




💡 *Explain what your diagram shows.*

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## Thinking Organizer: **Graph Maker**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_


 Explain what the graph shows.

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# BAR GRAPH

1. Locate and collect information about a situation. Put it on a table.

2. Use that information to make a bar graph.

**Title of the Graph:** \_\_\_\_\_



**What My Graph Shows:**

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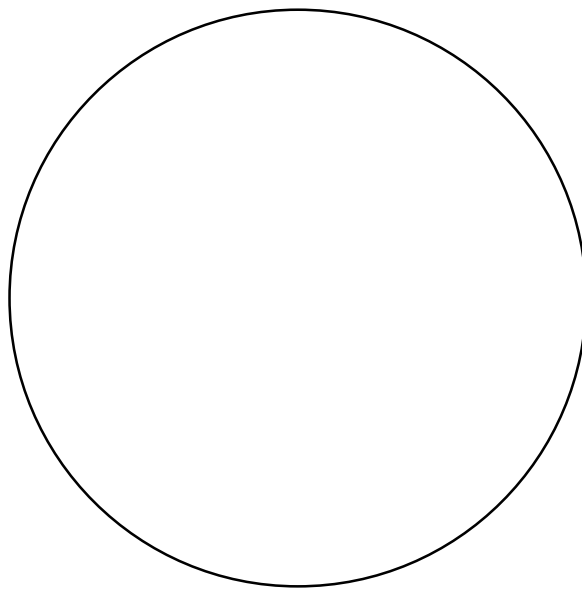
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# CIRCLE GRAPH

1. *Locate and collect information about a situation. Put it on a table.*
2. *Use that information to make a circle graph.*

**Title of the Graph:** \_\_\_\_\_



**What My Graph Shows:**

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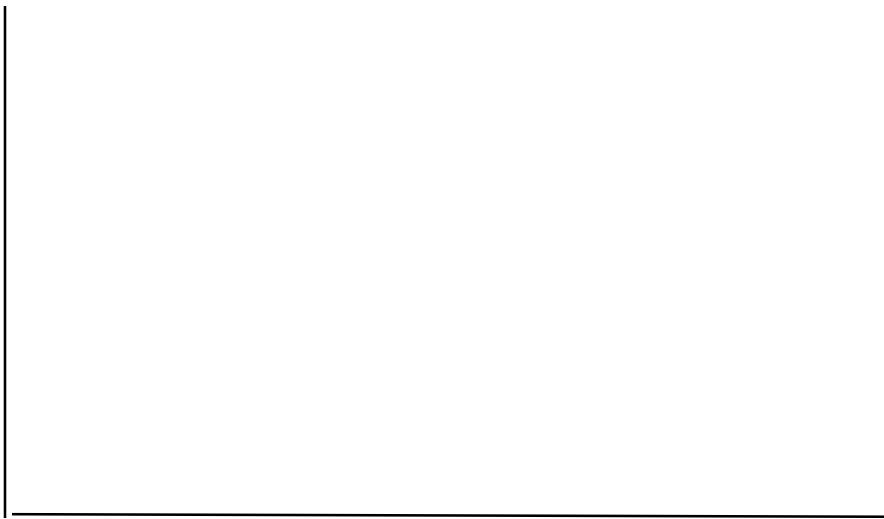
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# LINE GRAPH

1. Locate and collect information about a situation **that changes over time.**
2. Use that information to make a line graph.

**Title of the Graph:** \_\_\_\_\_



**What My Graph Shows:**

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## Math Path

*Solve your problem on the left side of the arrow.*

*Then write an explanation of the steps on the right side.*



Words you need to make this math clear:

# Map Maker

Make a map to show a place.

1. Give the map a title that tells about the place..
2. Write the name of the place on the map.
3. Draw the outline of the border on the map.
4. Write the names and locations of other places on the map.
5. What makes this place special? Tell about the kind of land, kind of plants, or land use.

Write one word to tell about it in the Key.

Then use the symbol in the box in that part of the Key to show this feature in the map.

Add more symbols.

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

A large empty rectangular box for drawing a map. In the bottom right corner of this box, there is a smaller rectangular box labeled 'KEY:' for defining symbols used in the map.

**Make more maps to show more about the place.**

For example, make a transportation map.

## Clarify with a Thinking Chart

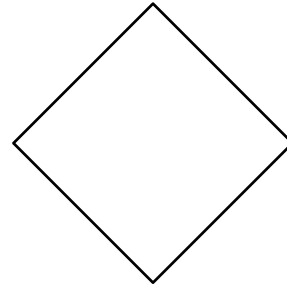
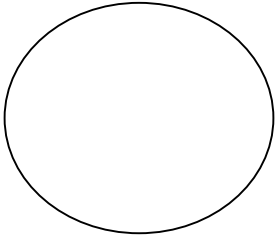
Category	<b>LITERAL</b> Stated in text	<b>INFERENTIAL</b> Based on text
Where: <i>characteristics of the place</i>		
What: <i>action</i>		
Who Takes that action Characteristics of a person		

What's next?

Support your prediction.

## Story/History Reader

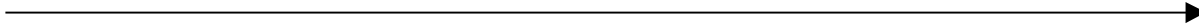
Draw three persons who are in it.



Map the place.



Sequence the Events.



Write what those persons might have said about one of those events.

# Their Words

Choose a part of a story or history: \_\_\_\_\_

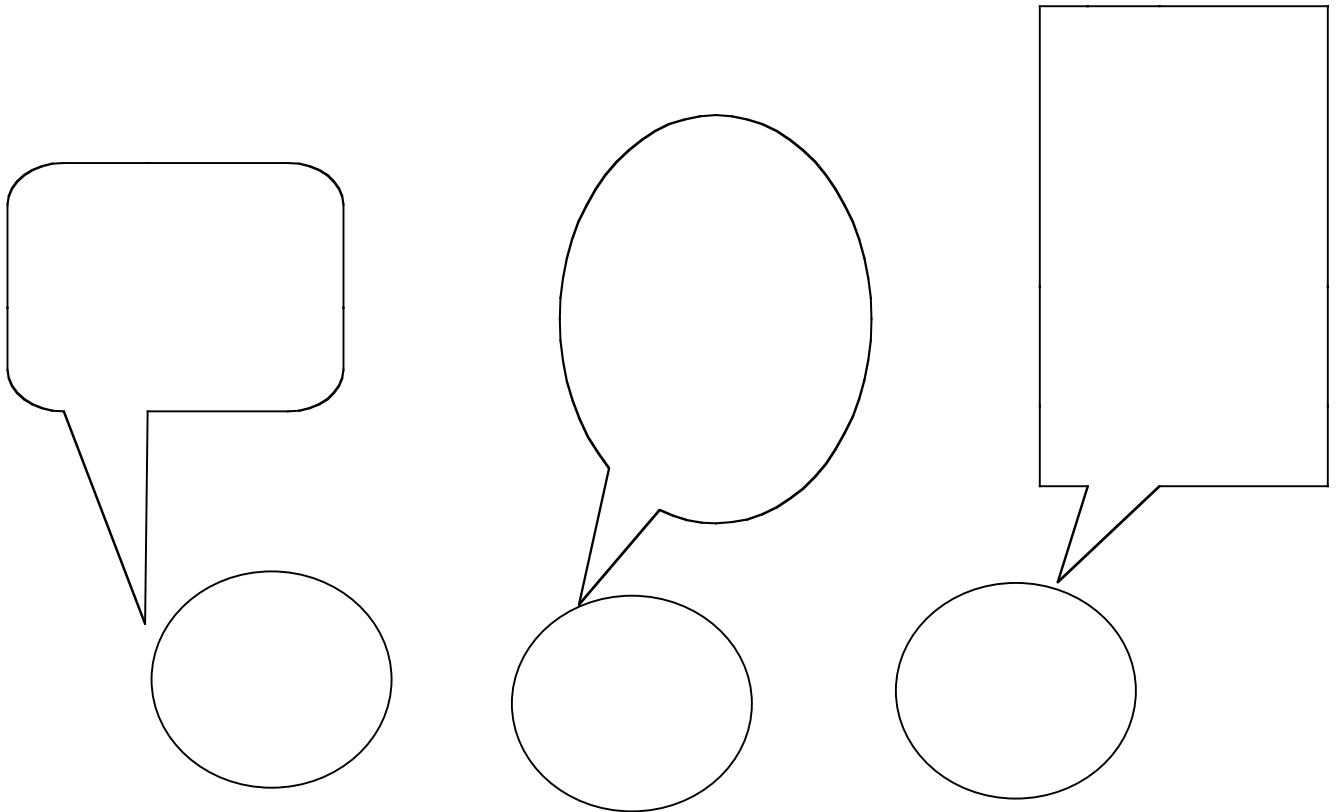
List three different persons who were part of that situation.

1> \_\_\_\_\_

2> \_\_\_\_\_

3> \_\_\_\_\_

For each person, write what they actually said or what you think they said during that situation. Write a few sentences for each of them—a dialogue.



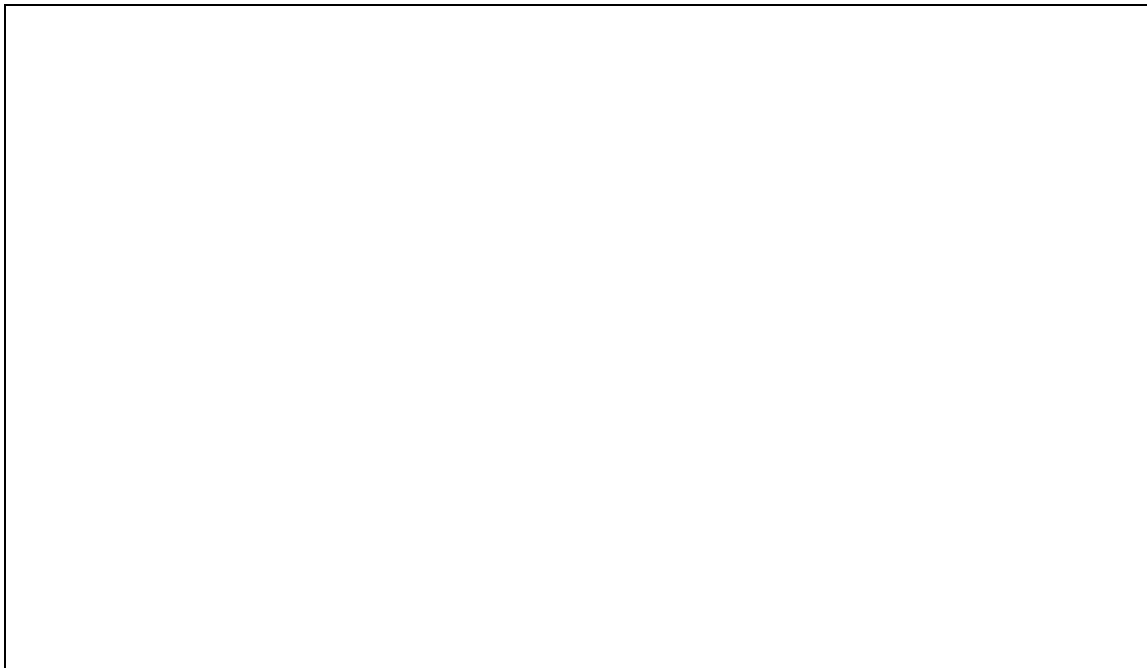
Read this dialogue aloud with other students.

## Science Reporter: Communicate in Words and Pictures

Draw three parts.



Draw a diagram. Show how they fit together.



Write about this science as if you were part of it.

**Use Graphic Organizers to Assess Comprehension**

**CLASSIFY AND INFER CHARACTERISTICS**

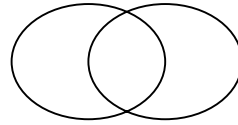
Complete this chart for a character in the story:

Literal	Inference

- ✓ *Include at least two inferences.*

**COMPARE/CONTRAST PLACES**

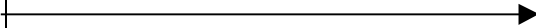
Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast two places



- ✓ *Provide important information about each place .*

**SEQUENCE EVENTS**

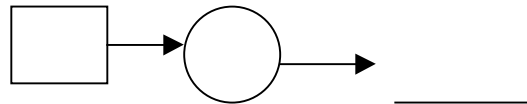
Complete this time-line for the history.



- ✓ *Include important events.*
- ✓ *Put them in correct order*

**CAUSE-EFFECT and PREDICTION**

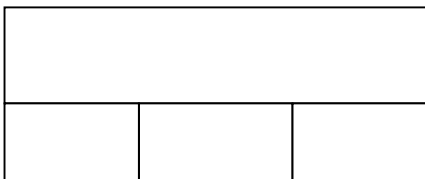
Complete this diagram to show cause-effect—and your prediction of what will happen



- ✓ *Include enough information so that someone else will see your idea clearly*

**MAIN IDEA**

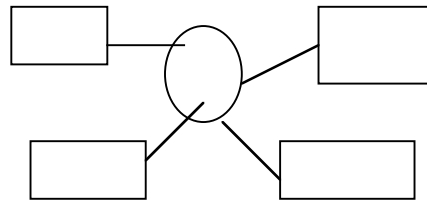
Identify the main idea and three supporting facts.



- ✓ *State your idea clearly*
- ✓ *Support it with important facts*

**IDENTIFY RELATIONSHIPS**

Complete this diagram to show how the main character relates to the others.



- ✓ *Include all the important characters*
- ✓ *Explain how they relate.*

## LEVELS OF QUESTIONS GUIDE GREATER LEARNING.

### GET IT

Literal questions ask you to find or remember an answer in the information provided.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➡ When?</li> <li>➡ Where?</li> <li>➡ Who?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➡ What?</li> <li>➡ Define _____.</li> <li>➡ List the _____.</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

### GET IT CLEAR

Analytic questions ask you to look closely and think thoroughly--to organize the information so you see patterns and can explain the situation.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇨ Classify _____.</li> <li>⇨ Compare and contrast _____.</li> <li>⇨ Give an example of _____.</li> <li>⇨ Give the opposite of _____.</li> <li>⇨ Draw a picture to illustrate this page.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇨ In what sequence did _____ happen?</li> <li>⇨ Explain how _____ works.</li> <li>⇨ Use a time-line, chart, diagram, graph, or map to explain _____.</li> <li>⇨ How do the parts relate to each other?</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

### THINK MORE

Inferential questions ask you to make an educated guess—to think about and *beyond* the information given.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Predict what will happen when _____.</li> <li>➤ What is the main idea of _____.</li> <li>➤ Figure out the meaning of this word from context.</li> <li>➤ What might have caused this change?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What is the best title for this _____.</li> <li>➤ What is the missing part?</li> <li>➤ What was the author's point of view?</li> <li>➤ If _____ changed, what would happen?</li> <li>➤ Which person might have said this?</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

### THINK IT THROUGH

Evaluative questions ask you to make your position clear, to make a thoughtful judgment.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What is the most important fact? Why?</li> <li>➤ What makes this a good book?</li> <li>➤ Is this fact or opinion?</li> <li>➤ <u>What is your evidence?</u></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Which is the best answer? Why?</li> <li>➤ Give and justify your opinion on _____.</li> <li>➤ Which part is most important?</li> <li>➤ <u>Why do you make this choice?</u></li> </ul> |
|--|---|

Questions from the Chicago Public School guide to test preparation. Additional questions and structure provided by the DePaul Center for Urban Education.



## Entiéndelo

Las preguntas literales te piden que lo **Entiendas**-que halles o recuerdes información y la presentes en diferentes palabras.

→ ¿Cuándo?	→ ¿Qué?
→ ¿Dónde?	→ ¿Cómo?(Como se menciona en el texto)
→ ¿Quién?	→ Define _____.
→ ¿Porqué?(Como se menciona en el texto)	→ Enumera los/as _____.

## Entiéndelo Claramente

Las preguntas analíticas te piden que lo **Entiendas Claramente**-que observes y pienses detenidamente- para organizar la información y puedas explicar la situación cuando encuentres patrones o similitudes.

⇒ ¿Cuál es un tipo de _____?	⇒ ¿En qué secuencia sucedió _____?
⇒ ¿Cómo _____ parecido a _____?	⇒ ¿Cómo es _____ diferente de _____?
⇒ ¿Cuál es un ejemplo de _____?	⇒ ¿Cuál explica lo _____ sucedido?
⇒ ¿Cuál es lo opuesto de _____?	⇒ ¿Cuál de estos es parecido?
⇒ ¿De acuerdo con el texto, cuál de estos eventos causa _____ esto suceda?	⇒ ¿Cuál es la última cosa que sucede?
⇒ ¿Cómo inició _____?	⇒ ¿En qué _____ relación a _____?

## Piensa Más

Las preguntas de deducción te piden que **Pienses Más**- para hacer una suposición inteligente- para pensar acerca de y más allá de la información recibida.

➡ Predice lo que sucedera cuando _____.	➡ ¿Cuál es el título más adecuado para esto _____?
➡ ¿Cuál es la idea principal de _____?	➡ ¿Cuál es la sección faltante?
➡ ¿Cuál es el significado de esta palabra en el contexto en el que se encuentra?	➡ ¿Cuál era el punto de vista del autor?
➡ ¿Qué significado tiene _____?	➡ ¿Si _____ cambiara, qué sucedería?
➡ ¿Qué podría haber causado este cambio?	➡ ¿Qué persona pudo haber dicho esto?
➡ ¿Porqué escribió esto el autor?	➡ ¿Qué piensas que sucedió antes de que esta historia iniciara?
➡ ¿Cómo pudo haber cambiado la historia si _____?	➡ ¿Qué piensas que sucederá después?


## Piénsalo Detenidamente

Las preguntas evaluativas te piden que lo **Pienses Detenidamente**-para aclarar tu posición y tomar una decisión acertada.

❑ ¿Cuál es el hecho mas importante?	❑ ¿Cuál es la mejor respuesta? Porqué?
❑ ¿Qué hace de este un buen libro?	❑ Expresa y justifica tu opinión acerca de _____.
❑ ¿Es un hecho o solo una opinión?	❑ ¿Qué parte es la más importante?
❑ ¿Cual es el evento más importante?	❑ ¿Cuál es la mejor razón para _____?
❑ ¿Qué personaje hace el mayor bien?	❑ ¿Cuál es el mejor final para la historia?
❑ ¿Cuál es la descripción más acertada del héroe?	❑ ¿Cuál es la mejor manera de escribir claramente?
❑ ¿Cuál es el mayor _____?	❑ ¿Cuál es el/la mejor _____?

## QUESTION MAKER

**Question Maker:** Write your question here.



You can make it multiple choice. To do that put the correct answer and three other possible answers here.

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## Question Taker:


What's your answer? \_\_\_\_\_

*Explain how you decided on that answer.*

## QUESTION MAKER/ANSWER RATER

## THINK IT THROUGH

**Question Maker:** Write your question here.



Write the correct answer and three other possible answers here:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

**Question Taker: Think It Through**

Rank the answers and explain why you ranked them in this order.

Best: \_\_\_\_\_ Why it's the best answer:

\_\_\_\_\_

Next: \_\_\_\_\_ Why it's not as good as the best:

\_\_\_\_\_

Next: \_\_\_\_\_ Why it's third best:

\_\_\_\_\_

Worst: \_\_\_\_\_ Why it's the worst possible answer:

\_\_\_\_\_

## Strategic Thinking: Analyzing Questions, Figuring Out Best Answers

Choose a challenging question.

✓ Write it here in your own words.

✓ What it's asking me to figure out:

✓ What information I need to answer it.

✓ What steps I need to take to answer it.

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**Answer:**

**Why it's a good answer.**

*(If it is multiple choice question then explain why it's the BEST answer.)*

**THINK IT THROUGH**



Write a digest of this week's learning.

## Get It



*At the end of your class, complete this activity.*

*What's important?*

List the five most important things you learned.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Which is most important?

Why?

## **Writing Increases Learning: The RESEARCH BASE**

As confirmed by Becoming a Nation of Readers (National Academy of Education, Commission on Reading, 1995), research has established a powerful relationship between the opportunity to write and the ability to read. Learning logs help students reflect what they have learned. The goal is not to repeat what the book or teacher said. Rather, the student is expected to connect new material with previously learned material.

Langer and Applebee further stated in How Writing Shapes Thinking: A Study of Teaching and Learning (1987) that there is clear evidence that activities involving writing (any of the many sorts of writing we studied) lead to better learning. Beyond that we learned that writing is not writing is not writing; different kinds of writing activities lead students to focus on different kinds of information, to think about that information in different ways, and in turn to take quantitatively and qualitatively different kinds of knowledge away from their writing experiences (p. 135).

In a later study, Langer (2000) examined related research that stated:

At the elementary level, a number of studies have examined curriculum and instruction in classrooms where students have made unusual progress in reading and writing achievement, in contrast with classrooms where achievement is more typical. Whatton-McDonald, Pressley, and Hampston (1988), for example, studied 9 first-grade teachers in New York State who differed in their effectiveness in promoting literacy. In the most effective classrooms, there was a high level of engagement in challenging literacy activities, a web of interconnections among tasks (so that writing, for example, was often related to what was being read), and skills were taught explicitly but in connection with real reading and writing activities (840).

J. A. Langer, "Beating the Odd: Teaching Middle and High School Students to Read and Write Well", American Educational Research Journal, Winter 2001, 38(4), p. 837-880.

## Write What's Important

Use this guide to organize writing or speaking about any topic.

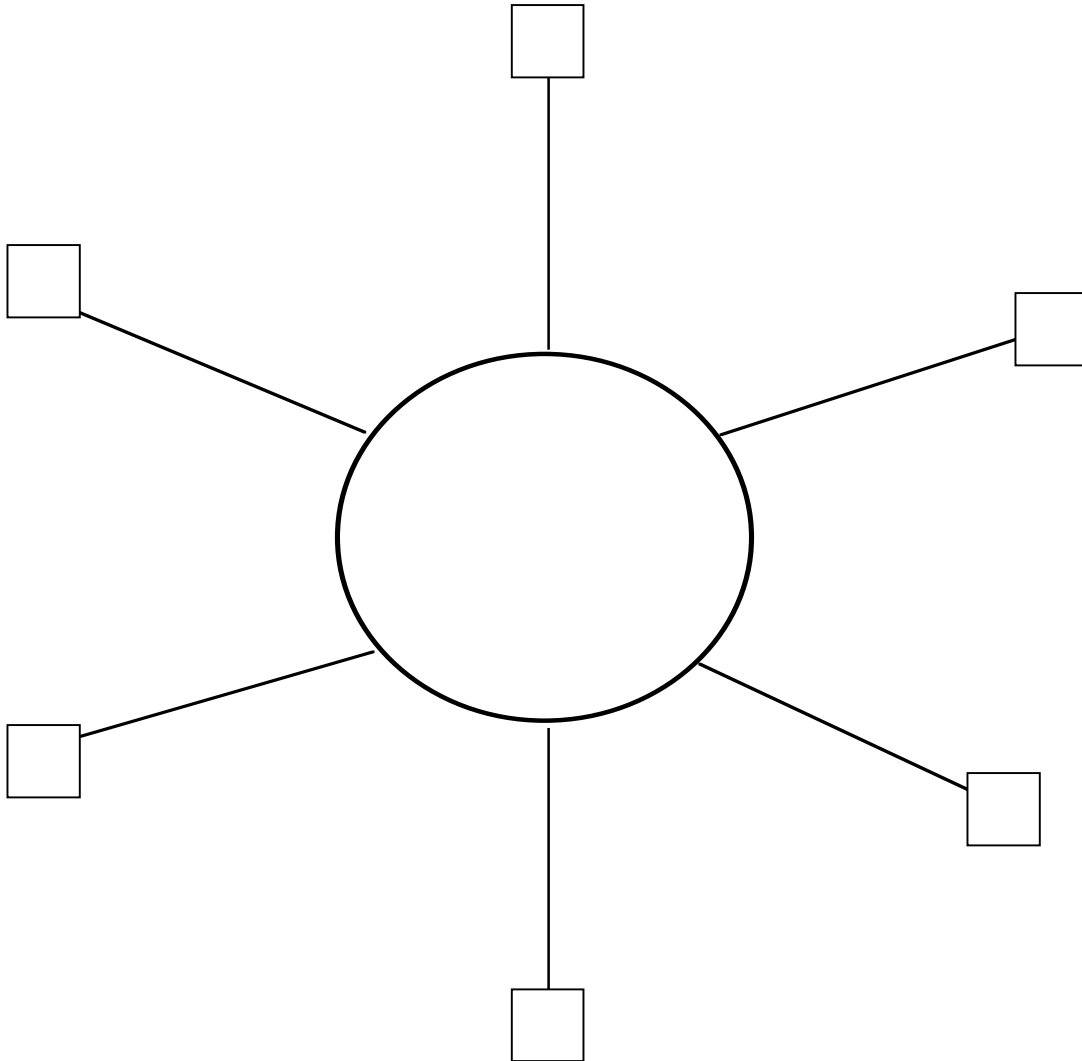
What's my topic? \_\_\_\_\_

*What's my focus—my idea? Write it in the circle.*

*What information is important to explain to make that idea clear?*

**Note it on the lines.**

*Number the lines—in the box at the end—in the order you will write this information.*



*How will I start?*

\_\_\_\_\_

*How will I conclude?*

\_\_\_\_\_

## Write What's Important

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

### What I Knew

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### What I Learned

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### What I Think

Take what you knew and what you learned and explain this topic in your own words.

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## Check Your Writing with Writing Standards

<b>Element of Clear Communication</b>	<i>What it Means to a Writer</i>	<i>My Writing Meets the Standards</i>
Focus	Your writing is all about one idea.	✓ Here's my idea—and how I kept it clear.
Support	You include information that helps your reader understand your idea.	✓ Here are some points I used to make my idea clear.
Organization	Make a plan before you write.	✓ This is how I organized my plan.
Integration	It all fits together to communicate your idea.	✓ Here's what I did to make sure it all made sense.
Conventions	Use correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling to make the meaning clear.	✓ I corrected these things.

# Poem Builder

Choose a topic. \_\_\_\_\_

- ✓ List words that are part of explaining the topic.
- ✓ Draw a picture or diagram of what you think about this topic.
- ✓ Write a poem about it. Use your words.

## Words


## Picture/Diagram/Idea—Make It Clear Here.



## POEM

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*Poets think more.*

## My Plan: