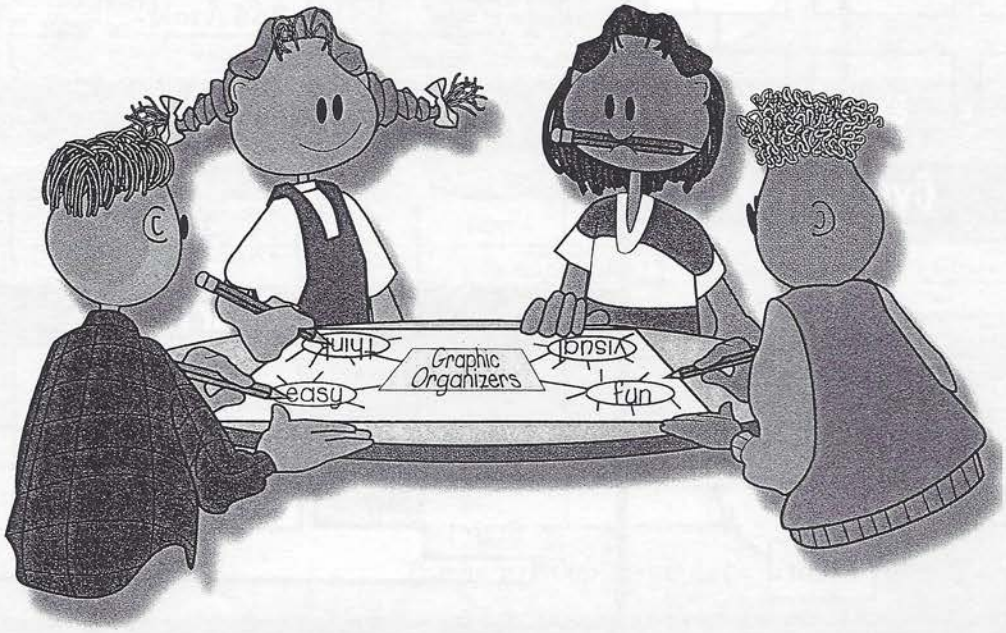
Graphic Organizers

Graphic Organizers *are visual frames used to represent and organize learning information. Graphic organizers engage students' visual intelligence, stretch students' thinking skills, and promote active learning. We may use graphic organizers to plan lessons, units, and present information to our students. This* ***SmartCard*** *explores the rationale for using graphic organizers, provides ideas for use in your classroom, and illustrates over 30 graphic organizers to transform your class into a visual think tank!*



Ideas and Activities for My Class

• **Presentations** - On the board or overhead, display a filled-in graphic organizer relating to the topic as you teach. Alternatively, fill in a graphic organizer as you teach. Encourage students to use Mind Maps and other organizers for visual note-taking and as visual aids in their own presentations.

• **Cooperative Learning** - Graphic organizers are excellent for cooperative learning. Have students work in pairs or in teams to fill in or create their organizers. Have students take turns so no single student does all the work and/or have each student use a different colored marker to tell at a glance that everyone is contributing. One favorite method is to have teams brainstorm ideas, organize them in their own frame, then share and compare their organizers with other teams.

• **Reflection and Assessment** - After an activity, lesson or unit, have students create graphic organizers to summarize and reflect on what they learned. Mind Maps work especially well for big concepts. Collect students' organizers to authentically assess their learning.

• **Find My Rule** - This is a fun, cooperative logic activity that works with numerous organizers across the curriculum. Draw an organizer on the board. A math example: Draw two category boxes. Add a symmetrical shape to one Box 1 and an asymmetrical shape to Box 2. Have students discuss why the shapes belong in different categories. Continue to add items, until a team thinks they know the rule. Teams show they know the rule by correctly adding the next items to the organizers. Continue adding items until all teams have "found your rule."

• **Prewriting** - Have students fill in a graphic organizer before they write an essay, story, or steps, or as they prepare a presentation. The graphic organizer depends on the content. For example, for a compare & contrast essay, use a Venn Diagram; for writing instructions, use a Step Chart.

• **Bulletin Boards & Displays** - On the bulletin board, post the many types of organizers; highlight a specific organizer; or display students' completed organizers on any topic.

Why Use Them?

Higher-Level Thinking

Graphic organizers expand many facets of students' higher-level thinking skills including: analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, relating and developing concepts, categorizing, sequencing, and comparing & contrasting.

Comprehension

Using graphic organizers helps students better understand the learning material. Students make content connections, and can see how the information is related.

Memory

Graphic organizers facilitate long-term retention of information. Information in organizers is presented in short, easy-to-remember visual cues rather than long cumbersome text. Students remember more of what they see and draw than what they hear and write.

Brain-Based Learning

Our brains process and store information in a uniform fashion. We strive to make sense out of information, and search for patterns and organization. Graphic organizers promote brain-compatible learning.

Multiple Intelligences

Graphic organizers strongly engage four intelligences simultaneously:

- **Verbal Linguistic** - Students select key words and phrases for their organizers.
- **Logical/Mathematical** - Organizers often deal with hierarchy, sequence, part/whole relationships, concept development, and cycles — all logical processes.
- **Visual/Spatial** -The learning material is organized in a visual format.
- **Naturalist** - Different graphic organizers engage different facets of the naturalist intelligence, such as: categorizing, classifying, sequencing, attention to attributes, comparing & contrasting.

Language Learning & ESL

Information is presented visually rather than verbally which helps limited English proficient students grasp basic concepts.

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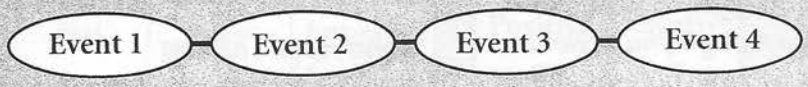
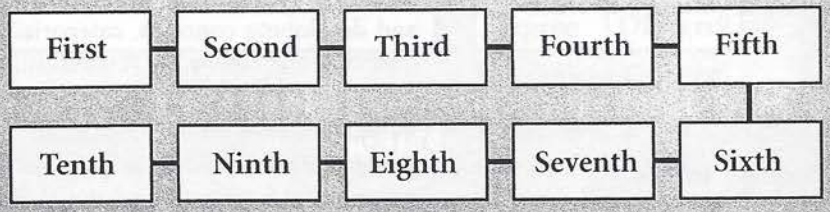
Graphic Organizers! Transform

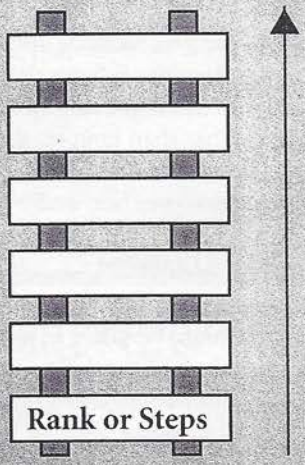
Sequence Organizers

Chains

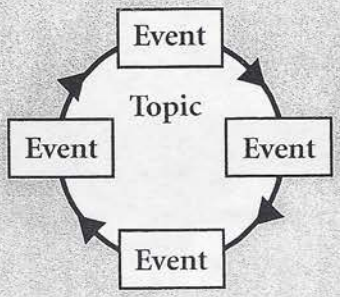




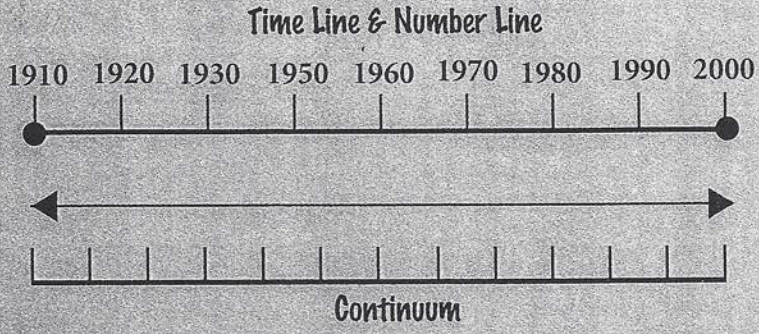
Ladder



Cycle Graph



Line Graphs

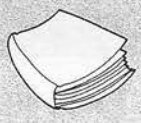


Cartoon & Picture Strip

Picture 1	Picture 2	Picture 3	Picture 4	Picture 5

Ideas for Sequence Organizers

Language Arts



- Alphabetical Order
- Parts of a Book
- Parts of a Letter
- Parts of an Essay
- Parts of a Paragraph
- Story Plot, Sequence of Events
- Writing Directions
- Writing Instructions
- Writing Process

Mathematics

- Area, Volume
- Decimals
- Degree of Angle
- Fractions
- Length
- Money
- Number Lines
- Number of Sides
- Numerical Order
- Order of Operation
- Ordinal Sequence
- Percents
- Roman Numerals
- Steps of Problem Solving
- Time
- Weight

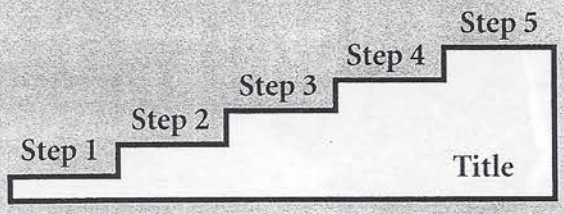
Social Studies

- Historical Events
- Inventions
- Presidents
- Sequence of Events
- Time Lines
- Time Periods

Science

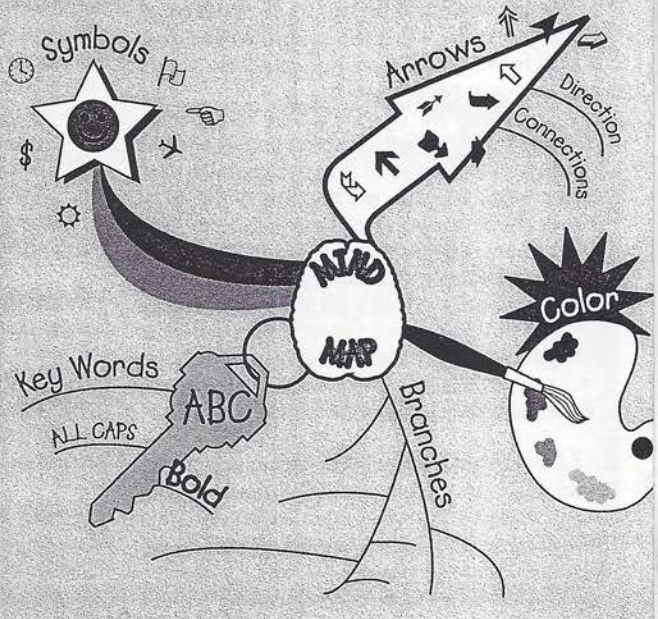
- Chain of Events
- Consequences of Action
- Food Chain
- Planets from Sun
- Procedures for Experiment
- Scientific Method
- Seasonal Cycle
- Water Cycle

Step Chart



Concept Developmen

Mind Map



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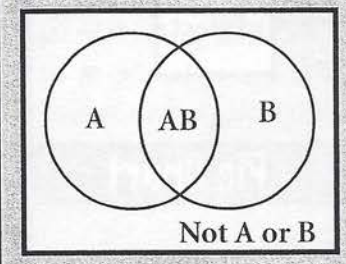
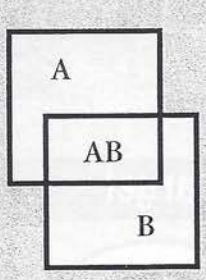
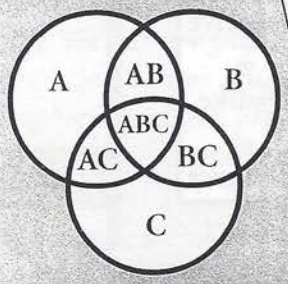
your class into a visual think tank!

Compare/Contrast Organizers

Venn Diagrams



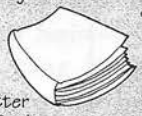




Ideas for Compare/Contrast Organizers

Math
- Addition/Subtraction
- Acute/Obtuse
- Concave/Convex
- Fractions/Decimals
- Metric/ Inch-Pound
- Multiplication/Division
- Symmetrical/Asymmetrical

Language Arts
- Authors
- Book/Movie
- Business/Friendly Letter
- Characters in Same Book
- Characters in Different Books
- Fairy Tales
- Stories



Social Studies
- Articles of Confederation/ Constitution
- Careers
- Cultures
- Historical Events
- Judicial/Executive/Legislative Branches
- Presidents
- State/Federal
- Wars

Science
- Animals
- Fruits/Vegetables
- Solids/Liquid/Gas
- Vitamins

Comparison Charts

Same	Different

T-Chart

Item 1	Item 2
with regard to Characteristic 1	
with regard to Characteristic 2	
with regard to Characteristic 3	

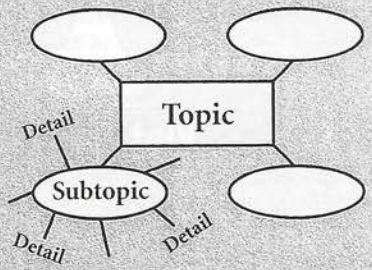
Compare or Contrast Chart

Item 1	Item 2	Item 1	Item 2
Compare		Contrast	
with regard to Characteristic 1		with regard to Characteristic 1	
with regard to Characteristic 2		with regard to Characteristic 2	
with regard to Characteristic 3		with regard to Characteristic 3	

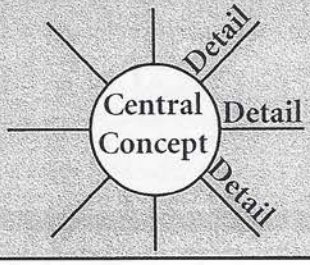
Compare & Contrast Chart

Organizers

Word Web



Concept Map



Concept Charts

Who
What
Where
When
Why

5W Chart

Looks
Tastes
Feels
Smells
Sounds

Senses Chart

Know	Wonder	Learned

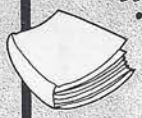
Know-Wonder-Learned Chart

Ideas for Concept Development Organizers

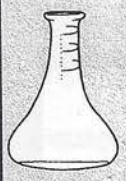
Math
- Fractions, Decimals, Percents
- Numbers
- Operations (+, -, x, ÷)
- Patterns
- Place Value
- Probability
- Time, Money

Social Studies
- Career
- Culture
- Current Event
- Explorer
- Historical Event
- Mission
- Native Americans
- Neighborhood
- President
- State
- War

Language Arts
- Book, Poem, Story
- Fairy Tale
- Grammar
- The Library



Science
- Animal
- Acid Rain
- Adaptation
- Dinosaurs
- Electricity
- Health
- Human Body
- Magnets
- Rainforest
- Seas
- Solar System
- Weather



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More Great Graphic Organizers!

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Evaluation Organizers

Evaluation Charts

P	M	I
Plus	Minus	Interesting

PMI Chart

+	-
Positive or Like or Agree	Negative or Dislike or Disagree

Plus/Minus T-Chart

Scales

Agreement Scales

Disagree — Agree

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 (4) 5 Strongly Agree

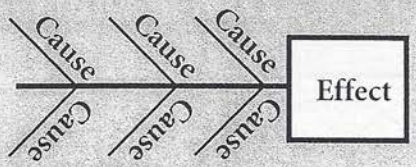
Evaluation Scale

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 (10)

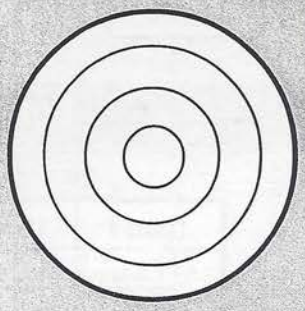
Needs Work — Satisfactory — Excellent

Relational Organizers

Fish Bone

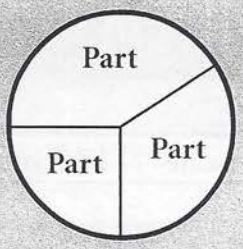


Target



Embedded Concepts or Objects

Pie Chart



Ideas for Categorize/Classify Organizers

Language Arts
- Common Nouns, Proper Nouns
- End Marks
- Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives, Adverbs
- Phonetic Sounds

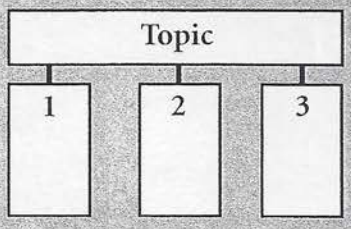
Math
- Acute/Obtuse
- Coins
- Factor Tree
- Odd/Even Numbers
- Round Up/Round Down
- Shapes

Science
- Birds, Mammals, Reptiles, Amphibians, Fish
- Carnivores, Herbivores, Omnivores
- Food Pyramid
- Pasta, Beans, Buttons, Nuts, Bolts, Screws
- Plants, Trees, Flowers
- Taxonomy
- Things That Walk, Fly, Swim
- Travel by Air, Land, Sea

Social Studies
- Caste System
- Family Tree
- Military Rank
- North of, South of, East of, West of
- Social Stratification
- WWI/ WWII, Vietnam War/Korean War

Categorize/Classify Organizers

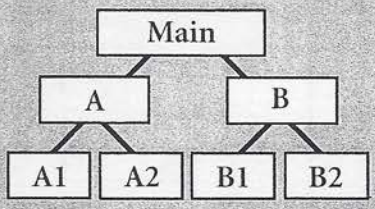
Categories



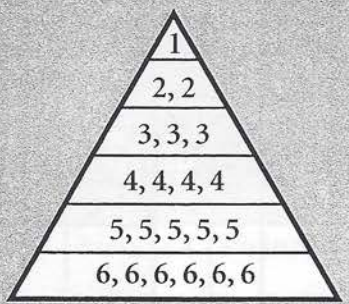
Topic

1	
2	
3	

Tree



Pyramid



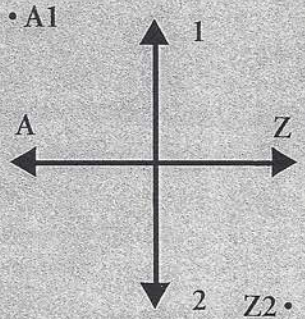
Hierarchical

Matrix

	A	B
1	1A	1B
2	2A	2B

2 x 2 Matrix

Plot



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