



# ATTRIBUTE SORTS

## DESCRIPTION

This activity helps students to organize and remember important and distinguishing information about key people, places, or other ideas from their reading. Students sort a set of prepared attributes under the label of the person, place, or idea to which each attribute corresponds. This activity works well as an initial learning activity during and immediately after reading, and can also serve as a review activity later on.

**LEARNING STRATEGIES** Connecting, Determining Importance, Inferring, Synthesis

**LESSON PLAN STAGE** Investigation, Synthesis

**SKILLS** Classifying Information, Character Analysis, Considering Big Ideas, Making Meaning

## PREPARATION

- Identify the text that students will read or listen to.
- Identify the most important people, places, or concepts from the text, and create a graphic organizer with each of these important ideas in a different section.
- Identify a set of important attributes of each of the main ideas, and create a card for each attribute. Create enough copies of each for all the students.

## ACTIVITY STEPS

## TEACHING TIPS

- | ACTIVITY STEPS  | TEACHING TIPS  |
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| <b>1</b> Teacher introduces general topic of presentation or reading, and distributes graphic organizers and attribute cards. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Graphic organizers should include the labels for the primary entities about which students will be learning. For example, if they are reading about habitats, you would include each habitat type. If they are reading a novel, you could include the main characters.</li><li>• This activity tends to be fairly self-evident, but you may want to model sorting attribute cards and thinking aloud about an easier text.</li></ul> |
| <b>2</b> Students begin reading.  | Students can read alone, in groups, or in pairs. This activity can also work for presentations, films, or read-alouds.   |



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| 3 | Students stop periodically as they work, and sort any attributes they recognize by placing the cards in the appropriate boxes of their graphic organizers.  | You can circulate as students are working, and ask them about their sorting decisions, and about their emerging understanding of the different main ideas.  |
| 4 | When students are done reading, they look back over all the attributes, and make sure that everything is sorted. They can refer to the text as needed to complete sorting.  | Circulate as students are working, gauging their comprehension and recall, and asking them about their understanding of the ideas. Ask them questions that prompt them to think about what distinguishes each idea.   |
| 5 | When they are done, students get into pairs, and compare their attribute sorts. They note commonalities and discuss any potential differences. They discuss the primary similarities and differences among the ideas. | As students are talking, you can sit with each group for several minutes and listen to their conversation. Ask them about their process and what they are noticing, and help guide them towards better understanding of the ideas and their interrelationships.<br><br>If students disagree about how to sort attributes, encourage them to look back at the text to resolve disagreements. Also encourage them to be open about different ways to think about the attributes, and the possibility that there might be more than one reasonable response. |
| 6 | Alone or in groups, in conversation or in writing, students reflect on their learning process.  | Students respond to questions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How did this activity affect your understanding of the text?</li><li>• How will this activity affect your ability to remember these main ideas?</li><li>• How does sorting affect your understanding of these ideas?</li><li>• In what other context might you use this strategy?</li></ul>  |