



CONCEPT MAPS

DESCRIPTION

Concept maps are a visual representation of interrelated ideas. Creating concept maps helps students to recognize and remember the hierarchical and horizontal relationships among words and ideas, and to represent these relationships both visually and cognitively. Concepts or ideas are written in bubbles and connected by lines as appropriate. Hierarchical relationships are represented vertically, and other interrelationships are represented horizontally. This activity helps students to consolidate and integrate areas of knowledge.

LEARNING STRATEGIES Visualizing, Connecting

LESSON PLAN STAGE Investigation

SKILLS Classifying Information, Comparing and Contrasting, Main Ideas vs Details

PREPARATION

- Create or find several models of concept maps to share with students.
- Identify the topic about which you would like students to create concept maps.

ACTIVITY STEPS

TEACHER NOTES

1	Teacher displays and reviews models of concept maps with the students.	When this strategy is first introduced, students will need to see and hear a lot of modeling and thinking aloud. After completing this activity several times it should be sufficient for students to have a brief review.
2	Teacher introduces the topic or text to the students. In groups or individually, students generate a list of no more than 20 terms or concepts related to the topic or text.	If you want to scaffold this activity for students, you can provide all or some of these terms for them.
3	Students rank the terms according to how important or general they are.	If may be easier for students to think flexibly about the concepts or terms if they write each on a separate index card or Post-it.
4	Students physically arrange the concepts in hierarchical order.	Students can do this on their desks with cards or Post-its, on paper with a pencil or pen, or through many possible apps on a computer or tablet.



CONCEPT MAPS

ACTIVITY STEPS

TEACHER NOTES

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| 5 | <p>Students arrange the concepts horizontally to represent relationships. Students copy their maps onto paper, drawing a circle or square around each term, and representing their hierarchical relationships vertically, and other relationships horizontally. Students connect terms with lines and arrows to indicate relationships.</p> | <p>You can also encourage students to find other ways to represent meaning, such as making important terms bigger, or color-coding related terms. They can be creative to make these maps as meaningful as possible.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Students edit their maps to ensure that the hierarchies and relationships are accurately represented. Students share their maps with a larger group, each taking turns to present their work.</p> | <p>You may want to scaffold the editing process by providing students with a checklist of what they should be looking for.</p> |
| 7 | <p>Alone or in groups, in writing or in conversation, students reflect on their learning process.</p> | <p>Students respond to questions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does making a visual map help you to think about and understand this topic or text?• How does representing relationships hierarchically help you to understand this text or topic?• How does representing horizontal relationships help you to understand this text or topic?• When else might it be useful to you to make a concept map? |