

# ABC Brainstorm

## Purpose:

The purpose of ABC Brainstorm is to activate students' prior knowledge about a certain topic that will be discussed. It is to be used before studying a new concept or major topic.

## Materials Needed:

Paper, Pencil

## Procedures:

- Students will first write each letter of the alphabet going down a sheet of paper, leaving room to write a word or phrase beside each letter.
- They will then be given a topic. With this topic, the students brainstorm words or phrases for each letter of the alphabet that correlate with that topic.
- Students will first work individually. Then, they can work with a partner or a group to compare words/phrases and to brainstorm letters they have not filled in yet.
- Finally, the class can have a group discussion about what they wrote for each letter.
- It is suggested that broad topics should be used in order for students to be able to think of words/phrases for each or most of the letters of the alphabet.
- Variations include having students brainstorm words/phrases for blocks of letters instead of each letter. (For example, ABC; DEF; GHI; etc.)

## Reference:

- <http://www.readingquest.org/strat/abc.html>

# Bio Poems

## Purpose:

Bio poems are an effective strategy because they allow students to express themselves or reflect on a character in a poetic way. They are a creative way to show what the students have learned about a character from a story.

## Procedures:

- Students will have already read a story and will be told to write a bio poem about a certain character. A variation of this would be to have the students write the bio poem about themselves.
- Students will follow the following template to write their bio poems:

*Line One*            First Name  
*Line Two*            Four traits that describe character  
*Line Three*            Relative (brother, sister, daughter, etc.)  
of \_\_\_\_\_  
*Line Four*            Lover of \_\_\_\_\_ (list three  
things or people)  
*Line Five*            Who feels \_\_\_\_\_ (three items)  
*Line Six*            Who needs \_\_\_\_\_ (three items)  
*Line Seven*            Who fears \_\_\_\_\_ (three items)  
*Line Eight*            Who gives \_\_\_\_\_ (three items)  
*Line Nine*            Who would like to see \_\_\_\_\_ (three items)  
*Line Ten*            Resident of \_\_\_\_\_  
*Line Eleven*        Last Name

## Materials Needed:

Paper, Pencil, Bio Poem Template

## Reference:

- <http://literacy.kent.edu/eureka/strategies/biopoems.pdf>

# Concept Cards

## Purpose:

Concept cards are not flash cards. Concept cards contain much more than definitional knowledge. The cards contain a multitude of characteristics, and most importantly contextual knowledge. Contextual knowledge is meaning gained from the context, whether it be from a picture or graph, an example, an explanatory paragraph, or students' prior knowledge about the word. Furthermore, concept cards require the students to apply, construct, and draw their own opinion about vocabulary terms and concepts.

## Procedure:

1. Students are administered a select list of the key concepts of the unit and/or chapter.
2. Students write the target word / concept on the front of the card.
3. On the back of the concept card, students write the correct professional definition of the targeted vocabulary word or concept, its characteristics and/or features, key words within the word or concept's definition, the student's own sentence using the word or concept, as well as a visual, descriptive image of it.

## Materials:

1. Writing utensil
2. Index cards
3. Textbook
4. Key concepts and vocabulary

## Resources:

Nist, S. L., & Simpson, M. L. (2001). *Developing vocabulary concepts for college thinking*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Stahl, S. A. (1999). *Vocabulary development*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books.

## **Concept Card Layout Model**

**TARGET WORD**

**[FRONT OF THE CARD]**

**1. Professional Definition**

**2. Word's Characteristics and/or Features**

**3. Key Words Within the Definition**

**4. Student's Own Sentence Using The Word**

**5. Visual Descriptive Picture**

## **Directed Reading-Thinking Activity**

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this strategy is to get students making predictions about a selected section of a text, discussing these predictions, and reevaluating the predictions as they continue reading through the text.

### **Procedures:**

First, write the title of the story, or the subheadings within a story on the board. Next, have students make predictions about the story based on this title, subheading, or sentence. Then have all of the students come together and discuss what predictions that they have made, and the teacher isn't allowed to make predictions at this time. Read a little of the story, stopping at a predetermined stopping point, and allow the students to reassess their predictions. Continue this throughout the story.

### **Materials Needed:**

Paper, Writing utensil, Classroom copy of the same story.

### **Reference:**

[http://nms.pulaski.net/teacher\\_pages/a\\_to\\_z\\_literacy\\_strategies.htm](http://nms.pulaski.net/teacher_pages/a_to_z_literacy_strategies.htm)

# Fruyer Model

Purpose: Helps students further organize meanings and concepts.

Strategy Procedures: Divide a blank sheet of paper into four quadrants.

First quadrant: place the definition of the concept

Second quadrant: list facts about the concept

Third quadrant: examples

Fourth quadrant: non examples

Materials: Blank paper

Reference: Kenney, Joan M. Literacy Strategies for Improving Mathematics. ASCD Publications. Virginia, 2005.

## **K.I.M. Strategy for Vocabulary and New Ideas**

Purpose: Reinforce vocabulary words and new ideas by organizing them into chart form.

Strategy Procedure: Each student should have a chart with three columns. The first column will be labeled K for Key Idea, the second column I for Information, and the third column M for Memory Clue. As new information is learned, have the students fill out the chart. Under K, they should write the vocabulary word or the key idea. Under I, they will write information about the key idea in the form of a brief description. In the Last column, under M, the students can draw a sketch that explains the key idea. Completing this chart will help the students make the information learned about the key idea their own.

Materials: Chart for each student

Reference: A to Z Literacy Strategies: 70 Best Practice Strategies for  
Teaching Reading and Writing Across Middle Grades  
Content Areas

[http://nms.pulaski.net/teacher\\_pages/a\\_to\\_z\\_literacy\\_strategies.htm](http://nms.pulaski.net/teacher_pages/a_to_z_literacy_strategies.htm)

# Knowledge Rating Scale

## Purpose:

A knowledge rating is a self-assessment that a student completes before reading a chapter or engaging in a unit of study. This strategy allows the teacher to see how familiar the students already are with terms and concepts from the upcoming chapter. Additionally, the students activate prior knowledge and make predictions about the reading material.

## Material:

Copies of knowledge rating scale graphic organizers  
Textbook

## Procedure:

1. The teacher develops the Knowledge Rating Scale by selecting keywords from the text to survey the students' prior knowledge of the vocabulary they will be encountering.
2. The students complete the Knowledge Rating Scale by evaluating their level of understanding of the keywords. (The students check whether they know a lot, some, or not much about the selected words).
3. The teacher initiates a discussion about the Knowledge Rating Scale. Encourage the students to share predictions about the meanings of the keywords.
4. Use the Knowledge Rating Scale to establish a purpose for reading the text. Ask the students what they think the text may be about.
5. Have the students compare their initial words meaning predictions with what they are learning as they read.

## Resources:

Campbell, N.A., Reece, J.B., & Mitchell, L.G. (1999). *Biology*. Menlo Park, CA: Benjamin/Cummings.

Example:

Key Term	Know It	Unsure	Don't Know
Antibodies			
Antigen			
Phagocytosis			
Neutrophils			
Monocytes			
Eosinophils			
Histamine			
Mast Cells			
B Lymphocytes			
T Lymphocytes			
Memory Cells			
Cytotoxic T Cells			
Helper T Cells			



## Vocabulary Concept Cards

**Purpose:** Help students learn content specific terminology while increasing their depth of word knowledge which will lead to greater comprehension.

**Strategy Procedures:** Demonstrate how to create a card by drawing a large rectangle on the board or overhead. Write a new term in the middle of the card and leave the corners open for things like definition, characteristics, examples, and an illustration. Create one card together as a class. Discuss with students how everything they need to know about the vocabulary word is right there on the card for easy learning and recall. Outline a list of vocabulary words and have the students write them in the middle of index cards. As the material is learned, allow the students to stop and fill out the corners of their cards. Allow the students time to review their cards both individually and with a partner.

**Materials:** Several index cards for each student

Reference: Brozo, Dr. William. (2008) Content Literacy Strategy  
Descriptions for Louisiana Comprehensive  
Curriculum.

# Vocabulary Prediction Chart

## Purpose:

The purpose of the Prediction Chart is to allow students to think about vocabulary words, familiar words, and unfamiliar words. This allows them to activate prior knowledge and use context clues to try to discover the meaning of the words presented in the text.

## Procedures:

1. Make a table with the following titles: vocabulary word, predicted meaning, after reading, and clue words.
2. Have students guess at the meaning of the word prior to reading.  
Read the selection containing the vocabulary words, and then have them try to define them again.
3. After you finish reading, go back and write what you think the word means.
4. If your first prediction was correct, place a check in the box labeled after reading.
5. If you changed your prediction after you read, write your new definition.
6. Have them identify key words that helped them with their definition.

## Materials:

- ✓ Text (book, article, newspaper, etc.)
- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Chart
- ✓ Pencils

## Example:

Vocabulary Word	Predicted Meaning	After Reading	Clue Words

## Resource:

[http://people.uncw.edu/sherrilld/edn356/notes/vocabulary\\_prediction\\_chart.htm](http://people.uncw.edu/sherrilld/edn356/notes/vocabulary_prediction_chart.htm)

# Word Sorts

## Purpose:

Word sorts require the students to classify words into categories based on their prior knowledge.

## Material:

Copies of blank word sort graphic organizers

Internet access/computer or

Printed websites for the students to read

## Procedure:

1. The teacher identifies the keywords from the unit of study and creates word cards.
2. The teacher explains that the students are to sort the words into logical, categorical arrangements.
3. The students either sort the words individually or in small groups.
4. The students group the words into different categories by looking for shared features among the meanings.

(In a closed sort, the students know the categories. In an open sort, the categories are given to the students.)

## Resources:

<http://hyperphysics.phy-astr.gsu.edu/Hbase/pertab/metal.html>

**Example:**

<b>Vocabulary</b>	<b>Metals</b>	<b>Non-Metals</b>
Hydrogen Helium Lithium Beryllium Boron Carbon Nitrogen Oxygen Fluorine Neon Sodium Magnesium Aluminum Selenium Phosphorus Sulfur Chlorine Argon Potassium	Hydrogen Lithium Beryllium Boron Sodium Magnesium Aluminum Selenium Potassium	Helium Carbon Nitrogen Oxygen Fluorine Neon Phosphorus Sulfur Chlorine Argon



# Word Map

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

4

(synonym)

5

(antonym or "nonexample")

3

(the matching dictionary definition)

1

(Vocabulary Word)

**Page Number**

\_\_\_\_\_

6

(other forms of the word)

2

(sentence or phrase from the text)

8

(my very own sentence)

7

(my association, example, or sketch)

V O C A B U L A R Y   W O R D   M A P

**Definition in Your Own Words**

**Synonyms**

VOCABULARY WORD

**Use It Meaningfully in a Sentence**

**Draw a Picture of It**

Thanks to Debbie Petrick for design idea.