

SOCIAL STUDIES READING STRATEGIES



Practical Strategies for Developing Historical Thinkers

BEFORE READING

Activate curiosity
and build
background
knowledge.

DURING READING

Engage with text
and analyze
information.

ACTIVE NOTE MAKING

Organize, analyze,
and synthesize
learning.

AFTER READING

Process,
communicate,
and apply
understanding.



SOCIAL STUDIES SUCCESS

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES. PURPOSEFUL INSTRUCTION. DEEPER THINKING.

The Social Studies Success Framework

Teaching Social Studies is about more than covering content—it is about helping students think like historians, geographers, economists, political scientists, and informed citizens. Developing those disciplinary habits of mind begins with purposeful reading. Reading in Social Studies is unique because students analyze documents, interpret maps, evaluate evidence, and compare multiple perspectives rather than simply recall facts.

Successful Social Studies readers do more than decode words. They question, analyze evidence, make connections, evaluate perspectives, and construct meaning from historical texts and sources.

Rather than presenting a collection of unrelated strategies, this manual organizes every strategy around how students learn Social Studies—preparing for learning, engaging with content, and processing understanding.



Before Reading (Pre-Reading)

Students activate prior knowledge, preview key concepts and vocabulary, and build the background knowledge needed to understand new learning. These strategies spark curiosity, encourage questioning, and prepare students to engage thoughtfully with content before they begin reading.



During Reading

Students actively engage with historical content by analyzing evidence, making inferences, asking questions, and organizing information.

The During Reading section is organized into two parts:

Active Reading Strategies help students engage directly with text through discussion, annotation, questioning, visual analysis, and comprehension.

Active Note Making helps students organize, compare, analyze, and synthesize new learning through purposeful note making and graphic organizers.

Together, these strategies help students construct meaning, organize their thinking, and develop the disciplinary skills needed to think like historians.



After Reading (Processing)

Students communicate their understanding, evaluate ideas, explain relationships, and apply their learning through discussion, writing, and creative processing. These strategies extend thinking beyond the reading and help students make meaningful connections to the content.



Using This Manual

For the best results:

- ✓ Start with the **Teacher Planning Guide** to identify your instructional goal.
- ✓ Use the **Quick Start Guide** to choose strategies that match your available preparation time.
- ✓ Select the strategy that best supports your content and your students' learning needs.

Teacher Planning Guide



BEFORE READING

I need students to...



Activate prior knowledge

- Analogies
- Four Corner Debate
- Carousel Brainstorming



Preview vocabulary

- Predict This
- Card Sort
- Fast Facts



Build background knowledge

- Image Analysis
- Character Quotes
- Artifact Examination



Analyze images

- Crop-It
- Image Analysis
- Picture Prediction



Generate curiosity

- Book Bits
- Character Quotes
- Artifact Examination



Explore multiple perspectives

- Four Corner Debate
- Character Quotes
- Primary Source Snapshot



DURING READING

I need students to...



Read collaboratively

- WRAP
- C-R-R



Monitor comprehension

- Think Aloud
- Three-Minute Pauses
- Text Coding



Annotate the text

- Annotating
- Text Coding
- SNOTS Notes



Ask meaningful questions

- Question Dice
- Beat the Teacher
- RAP-Q



Find the main idea

- Just One
- Hashtag Notes
- GIST



Summarize information

- GIST
- C-R-R
- Hashtag Notes



ACTIVE NOTE MAKING

I need students to...



Compare and contrast ideas

- Double Bubble
- Triple Venn Diagram
- Janus Figure



Analyze cause and effect

- Cause & Effect
- Fishbone Organizer
- Problem-Solution



Sequence events

- Connections Across Time
- Cartoon Capers
- Problem-Solution



Organize information visually

- Mind Map
- Doodle Notes
- Sketch Notes



Summarize key ideas

- GIST
- Somebody-Wanted-But-So-Then
- Summarization Star



Analyze evidence

- Opinion Proof
- Image Analysis
- Sketch to Stretch



Evaluate decisions

- Decision Tree
- Changing History



AFTER READING

I need students to...



Review learning

- Alpha Blocks
- GIST
- Pick a Card
- Any Card



Reflect on learning

- Mosaic
- Character Maps
- Annotated Image



Discuss ideas

- Dialogue Detectives
- Pick a Card
- Any Card
- Beyond the Frame



Apply learning creatively

- Pipe Cleaner Processing
- Mosaic
- I Am Poem



Communicate understanding

- Elevator Speech
- I Am Poem
- Dialogue Detectives



Extend thinking

- Changing History
- Beyond the Frame
- Annotated Image

Quick Start Guide



Grab & Go

Little or No Prep



PERFECT FOR:

- ✓ Busy weeks
- ✓ Bell ringers
- ✓ Last-minute lessons



STRATEGIES



Think Aloud



WRAP



C-R-R



Three-Minute Pauses



Just One



GIST



Alpha Blocks



Pick a Card,
Any Card



Elevator Speech



Ready Tomorrow

10–20 Minutes



PERFECT FOR:

- ✓ Regular daily lessons
- ✓ Station activities
- ✓ Small-group instruction



STRATEGIES



Text Coding



Annotlighting



SNOTS Notes



Character Quotes



Fast Facts



Image Analysis



Fishbone Organizer



Mind Map



Character Maps



Worth the Prep

1–2 Days Before Class



PERFECT FOR:

- ✓ Unit launches
- ✓ Collaborative learning
- ✓ High-engagement days



STRATEGIES



Four Corner Debate



Carousel



Brainstorming



Predict This



Card Sort



Crop-It



Artifact Examination



Picture Prediction



Question Dice



Beat the Teacher



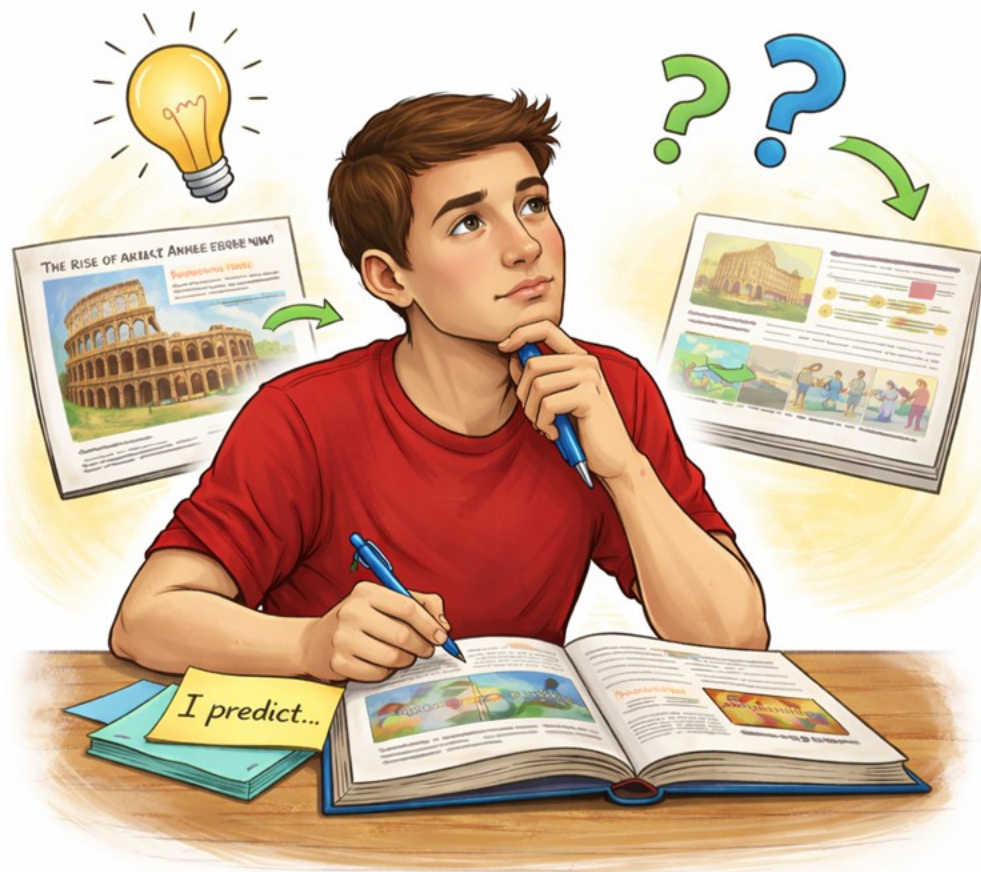
Pattern Puzzles



Mosaic

Pipe Cleaner Processing

Stage One: Before Reading Strategies



Connect real-life situations to new learning.

Purpose
✓ Activate and assess prior knowledge ✓ Connect new concepts to students' existing understanding ✓ Build readiness for new learning
Steps
Prepare a prompt Create a relatable scenario that mirrors the concept students will learn. Choose situations connected to students' lives (school, friendships, rules, fairness, choices). Middle School: fairness, rules, friendships, school situations High School: rights vs. safety, justice, government decisions, real-world trade-offs Ask an open-ended question Frame a question that encourages students to think about the situation and how they would respond. Students think and respond Students write or discuss their ideas, focusing on how they would feel, react, or make decisions. Share and discuss Students share with a partner, then discuss responses as a class. Make the connection Explicitly connect student responses to the new content, showing how the analogy relates to the concept being studied.

In Action
Making the connection  The diagram illustrates the process of making a connection. At the top, a thought bubble shows a family (mother, father, and child) in a modern setting. Below this, a student is shown in a thinking pose. A blue arrow points down to another thought bubble, which depicts a historical scene with three men in 19th-century attire. One man holds a Union Jack flag, another holds a pitchfork, and the third holds an American flag, representing the historical context of the Texas Annexation.
Examples
Topic: Annexation of Texas Analogy: Your small school is thinking about merging with a larger school. Some students think it will bring more opportunities; Others worry about losing identity. What would you think? Connection: Debate over Texas joining the United States.
Benefits
✓ Makes new concepts easier to understand ✓ Encourages deeper thinking ✓ Improves long-term retention

Anticipation Guide

Before
Reading

Agree or disagree—then read to find out.

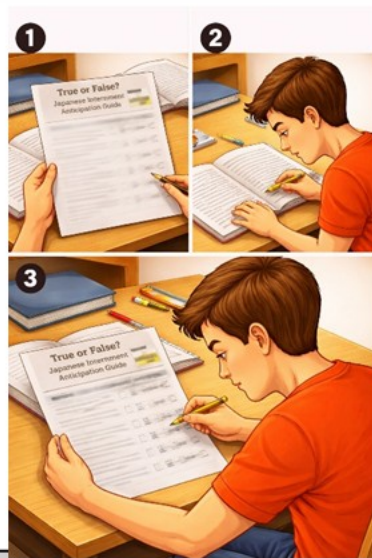
Purpose

- ✓ Activate prior knowledge
- ✓ Make informed predictions
- ✓ Uncover student thinking

Steps

1. **Identify key concepts**
Determine the most important ideas students should learn from the text.
2. **Anticipate student thinking**
Consider what students may already believe—or misunderstand—about the topic.
3. **Create statements**
Write 4–6 statements tied to those key ideas. Use **Agree/Disagree** or **True/False** format.
Include statements that may challenge or confirm student thinking.
4. **Students respond (Before Reading)**
Students mark their initial responses
Encourage discussion—but do not reveal answers.
5. **Read with purpose**
Students read to confirm, revise, or challenge their thinking.
6. **Revisit responses (After Reading)**
Students update their answers.
Compare before/after thinking.
7. **Discuss and reflect**
Guide a discussion about how thinking changed and what new understanding was gained.

In Action



Examples

Agree or Disagree?
American Revolution
Anticipation Guide

Statement	Before	After
1. Colonists were treated fairly by Britain.	☒ Agree ☐ Disagree	☐ Agree ☐ Disagree
2. Taxes were the main cause of the Revolution.	☒ Agree ☐ Disagree	☐ Agree ☐ Disagree
3. All colonists wanted independence.	☒ Agree ☐ Disagree	☐ Agree ☐ Disagree
4. Protest is an effective way to create change.	☒ Agree ☐ Disagree	☐ Agree ☐ Disagree

True or False?
Civil Rights Movement
Anticipation Guide

Statement	Before	After
1. Laws alone can create equality.	☐ True ☐ False	☐ True ☐ False
2. Nonviolent protest is the best way to create change.	☐ True ☐ False	☐ True ☐ False
3. One person can make a difference.	☐ True ☐ False	☐ True ☐ False
4. Segregation is no longer a problem in the U.S.	☐ True ☐ False	☐ True ☐ False

Where do you stand?
Cold War
Anticipation Guide

Before reading, mark an X to show your opinion about each statement. After reading, re-mark, then write: What did you read that made you change your mind?

Statement	Before	After
1. Nuclear weapons make the world safer.	☐ T ☐ F	☐ T ☐ F
2. The U.S. should try to stop the spread of communism.	☒ T ☐ F	☐ T ☐ F
3. Fear is an effective way for governments to gain support.	☐ T ☐ F	☐ T ☐ F

Anticipation Guide:
Japanese Internment

Before reading, mark an X to show your opinion about each statement. After reading, re-mark, then write: What did you read that made you change your mind?

Statement	Before	After	Evidence
Internment was necessary for security.	☒ Agree ☐ Disagree	☐ Agree ☐ Disagree	
All detainees were threats.	☒ Agree ☐ Disagree	☐ Agree ☐ Disagree	
Fear influenced internment decisions.	☒ Agree ☐ Disagree	☐ Agree ☐ Disagree	

Benefits

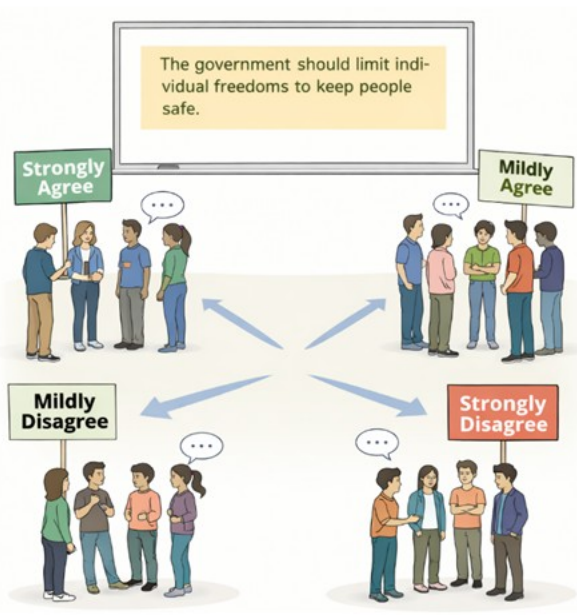
- ✓ Reveals misconceptions before reading
- ✓ Gives students a purpose for reading
- ✓ Encourages deeper thinking

Four Corner Debate

Before
Reading

Take a position before you read.

Purpose
✓ Analyze multiple perspectives ✓ Support claims with evidence and reasoning ✓ Engage in structured academic discussion
Steps
Post signs in four corners of the room <i>Strongly Agree Mildly Agree Mildly Disagree Strongly Disagree</i> Present a statement connected to your content The statement should be broad and debatable. <i>Examples:</i> Affirmative action is no longer necessary. The Civil Rights Movement is over. The government should take any action to ensure public safety. Students think and commit Write their position and reasoning on a card or paper. Move to the corner that matches their opinion. Corner discussion (5–10 minutes) Students discuss their reasoning with others in their corner. One student records key ideas. Share out One student from each corner shares the group's thinking. Written reflection Students write a short paragraph stating their position and supporting it with their strongest reasons. <i>Example stem: I strongly agree with the statement _____ because...</i>

In Action

Examples
• The government should limit individual freedoms to keep people safe. • The United States should be the “police” of the world. • The Constitution should change with the times.
Benefits
✓ Increases student participation ✓ Encourages respectful discussion ✓ Develops evidence-based reasoning

Fast Facts

Before
Reading

Organize and connect ideas before reading.

Purpose
✓ Categorize information ✓ Analyze relationships among concepts ✓ Make evidence-based generalizations
Steps
Set up the chart Create a 2–3 column chart using categories from the upcoming reading (ex: Union / Confederacy, Causes / Effects, Regions). Brainstorm prior knowledge Students list words, phrases, or facts they already know in each column. Look for connections Students choose one item from each column that go together (same idea or relationship). They circle the items and draw lines to connect them. Explain the connection Students write a sentence explaining how the connected ideas are related. <i>Example: The Union had more factories, while the Confederacy relied on farming.</i> Repeat Students create additional sets of connections using different colors. Read with a purpose As students read, they look for information that confirms, changes, or adds to their connections.

In Action
Examples
• American Colonies: New England Middle Southern • American Revolution: Causes Key Events Outcomes • Great Depression: Causes Effects Government Response • Industrialization: Innovations Changes to Work Effects on Society • Cold War: U.S. Actions Soviet Actions Global Impact • Civil Rights Movement: Leaders Actions/Events Results • Republic of Texas: Leaders Challenges Solutions • Cattle Drives: Resources Challenges Outcomes • India: Geography Religion Culture
Benefits
✓ Helps students organize ideas ✓ Strengthens conceptual understanding ✓ Builds connections between concepts

Image Analysis

Before
Reading

Use images to build understanding before reading.

Purpose
✓ Analyze visual evidence ✓ Develop observation skills ✓ Make evidence-based inferences
Steps
Select images Choose a few strong images that clearly represent key concepts from the upcoming lesson (events, scenes, or actions—not just portraits). Observe closely Ask students: <i>What do you see?</i> Focus on details without interpretation. Infer meaning Ask: <i>What is happening?</i> Students use evidence from the image to make inferences. Connect to content Ask: <i>Why does this matter?</i> Guide students to connect the image to the topic or “big idea.” Build on learning Students read, take notes, or discuss to confirm, revise, or extend their thinking.

In Action
 Observe • What details stand out to you? • What people, objects, or actions do you see? • What is the setting (time/place clues)? Infer • What do you think is happening in this image? • What clues from the image support your thinking? • Why do you think this is happening? • What might have happened just before this moment? • What might happen next? Connect • Why is this important? • How is this related to what we are learning? • How does this connect to something today?
Examples
U.S. History • Dust Bowl migrants traveling west • Little Rock Nine entering Central High School Texas History • The Alamo (battle or aftermath) • Cattle drive on the Chisholm Trail World History • Industrial Revolution factory (child labor) • Trench warfare in WWI World Geography • Ganges River (religious activity) • Amazon rainforest (deforestation scene)
Benefits
✓ Makes historical content more engaging ✓ Promotes evidence-based thinking ✓ Improves comprehension

Build curiosity and preview key ideas before reading.

Purpose
✓ Preview important concepts ✓ Generate predictions ✓ Prepare students to read with purpose
Steps
Select key excerpts Choose important phrases or sentences from the text. Reveal ideas, but don't give everything away Create "book bits" Write each excerpt on a strip of paper (one per student) Individual thinking Students read their book bit and consider: <i>What might this text be about?</i> Share aloud (no discussion) Students move around the room and read their book bit to others (<i>Listen only—no explaining or discussing</i>) Optional structure: • Two lines facing each other • Read → rotate → repeat Quick write Students return to their seat and write: • what they think the text is about • what they predict or notice. Discussion Students share ideas and refine their thinking.

In Action
  
Examples
Topic: The Great Depression "Banks began to close across the country." "People stood in long lines for food." "Many families lost their homes." "The stock market crashed suddenly." "President Roosevelt promised a 'New Deal.'"
Benefits
✓ Sparks curiosity before reading ✓ Builds anticipation for new learning ✓ Increases reading engagement

Character Quotes

Before
Reading

Start with their words—then read to learn more.

Purpose

- ✓ Analyze historical perspectives
- ✓ Infer character traits and beliefs
- ✓ Prepare students for historical inquiry

Steps

1. Select quotes

Choose quotes that reveal different aspects of a historical figure's personality, beliefs, or leadership.

2. Distribute quotes

Give each group a different quote.

3. Group analysis

Students read the quote and generate words or phrases that describe the person's traits or perspective.

4. Share & justify thinking

Groups share their quote and explain how it supports their ideas.
Teacher records traits and reveals all quotes are from the same figure.

5. Develop a profile

Students write a short personality profile using the class-generated traits (4–5 sentences).

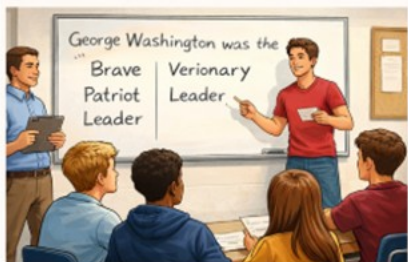
Optional sentence stem:

_____ was the type of person who _____. He/She also seemed to be _____. Other traits included _____. His/Her words suggest that he/she believed _____.

6. Read & refine understanding

Students read the text, then revise and add to their profile using evidence.

In Action



Examples

Topic: Abraham Lincoln

- "A house divided against itself cannot stand."
- "Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves."
- "Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."
- "I am a slow walker, but I never walk back."

Benefits

- ✓ Humanizes historical figures
- ✓ Builds historical empathy
- ✓ Strengthens historical thinking

Card Sort

Before
Reading

Build curiosity and preview key ideas before reading.

Purpose

- ✓ Categorize information
- ✓ Compare and classify concepts
- ✓ Identify relationships among ideas

Steps

- 1. Prepare the cards:**
Create a set of cards with quotes, images, or short statements related to the upcoming topic.
- 2. Set the purpose:**
Tell students they will sort the cards to make predictions about what they will be learning.
- 3. Sort the cards:**
In pairs or small groups, students group the cards into categories based on patterns or similarities they notice.
- 4. Name the categories:**
Students create labels for each group and explain their reasoning.
- 5. Discuss & revise:**
Groups share their categories and adjust their thinking as they hear other ideas.
- 6. Predict learning:**
Students use their categories to predict key ideas, themes, or topics in the upcoming reading.
- 7. Connect to reading:**
Transition to the text, asking students to confirm or revise their predictions as they read.

In Action



Examples

Branches of Government

Cards: veto laws, declare war, interpret laws, make laws, appoint judges
→ Legislative / Executive / Judicial

Belief Systems

Cards: karma, Five Pillars, monotheism, enlightenment, nirvana
→ Hinduism / Islam / Christianity / Buddhism

Benefits

- ✓ Helps students recognize patterns
- ✓ Builds connections between concepts
- ✓ Makes abstract concepts more concrete

Predict This

Before
Reading

Use images to unlock vocabulary.

Purpose

- ✓ Preview academic vocabulary
- ✓ Analyze visual clues
- ✓ Make evidence-based predictions

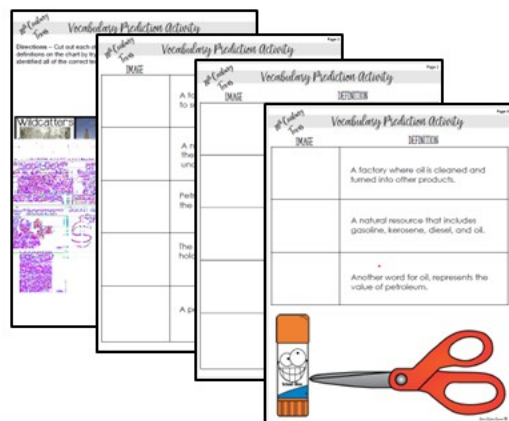
Steps

- 1. Prepare materials**
Create a template that includes the definitions of key vocabulary terms from the lesson, with a space next to each definition.
Provide a separate sheet with the vocabulary terms paired with images for students to cut out.
- 2. Distribute materials**
Give each student (or pair) the template and the cut-out vocabulary/image sheet.
- 3. Predict & match**
Students cut out the vocabulary terms/images and use the visuals to infer meaning.
They match each term/image to the definition they believe fits best and glue it in place.
- 4. Justify thinking**
Students discuss their matches with a partner, explaining how the image helped them determine the meaning.
- 5. Debrief & confirm**
Review answers as a class, clarify definitions, and address misconceptions.

In Action



Examples



Benefits

- ✓ Builds confidence before reading
- ✓ Reduces vocabulary anxiety
- ✓ Improves reading comprehension

Primary Source Snapshot

Before
Reading

Think like a historian.

Purpose

- ✓ Analyze primary sources
- ✓ Develop historical questions
- ✓ Investigate historical evidence

Steps

1. Choose Historical Quotes

Select 2–5 short primary source quotes connected to your lesson.
Example: *"The ballot is stronger than the bullet."* — Abraham Lincoln

2. Think Like a Historian

Without using the textbook or notes, students examine each quote and record: One inference (*What can you conclude?*)

Example: Lincoln believed disagreements should be resolved through voting rather than violence. One historical question (*What do you need to learn to better understand this quote?*) Example: How did Lincoln's actions reflect this belief?

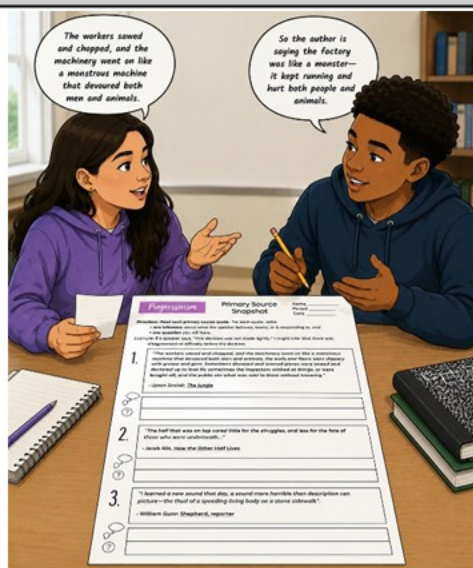
3. Read for Evidence

Students read the lesson looking for evidence that answers their questions and either supports or challenges their original inference.

4. Confirm or Revise

After reading, students return to each quote. Using evidence from the text, they confirm, revise, or expand their original thinking.

In Action



Examples

Progression		Primary Source Snapshot	Name: <u>Key</u>
			Date: _____
Directions: Read each primary source quote. For each quote, write: • one inference about what the speaker believes, wants, or is responding to, and • one question you still have. Example: It's a speaker says, "This decision was not made lightly." (Infer that there was disagreement or difficulty before the decision.)			
1.	"The workers saved and chopped, and the machinery went on like a monstrous machine that devoured both men and animals; the walls and floors were slippery with grease and gore. Sometimes diseased and scoured pieces were saved and doctored up to look fit; sometimes the inspectors winked at things, or were bought off, and the public ate what was sold to them without knowing." —Upton Sinclair, <i>The Jungle</i>	Factory conditions were dangerous and unsanitary, and some companies cared more about profits than workers' safety or consumer health. Why did inspectors allow these unsafe conditions to continue?	
2.	"The half that was on top cared little for the struggles, and less for the fate of those who were underneath." —Jacob Riis, <i>How the Other Half Lives</i>	Wealthier people often ignored the struggles and poor living conditions of lower-income families. What hardships were the people "underneath" facing?	
3.	"I learned a new sound that day, a sound more horrible than description can picture—the thud of a speeding living body on a stone sidewalk." —William Gunn Shepherd, reporter	The event was tragic and deadly, and people were falling from a building because they could not afford. What caused people to fall from the building?	

Benefits

- ✓ Promotes historical inquiry
- ✓ Strengthens sourcing skills
- ✓ Encourages evidence-based thinking

Carousel Brainstorming

Before
Reading

Start with your ideas—then build on others..

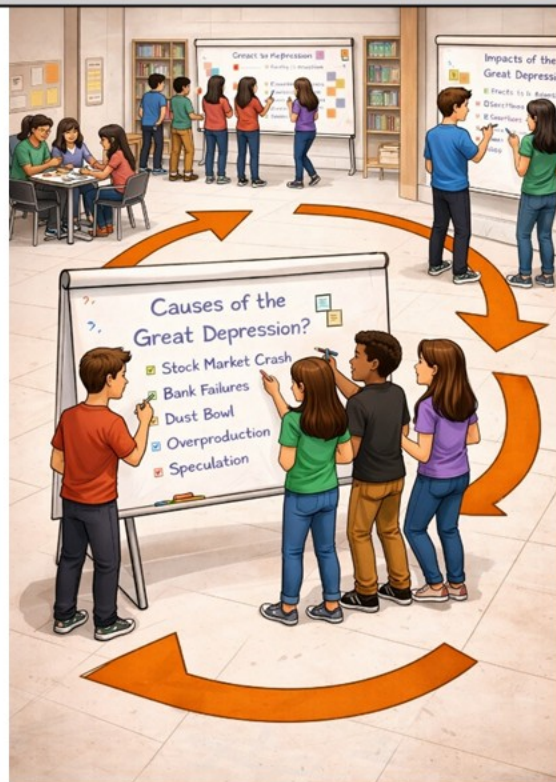
Purpose

- ✓ Activate prior knowledge
- ✓ Build on shared ideas
- ✓ Connect prior knowledge to new concepts

Steps

- 1. Create text-based questions**
Write questions connected to key ideas, themes, or problems students will encounter in the text.
- 2. Form groups**
Divide students into small groups (5 or fewer) and assign each group a starting station.
- 3. Set expectations**
Give each group a marker (different colors if possible) and a time limit (2–3 minutes per station).
- 4. Rotate & respond**
Groups brainstorm and record ideas using what they already know or predict about the topic.
When time is called, rotate clockwise to the next question.
- 5. Continue rotations**
Repeat until groups have visited each station and built on others' ideas.
- 6. Share & connect to reading**
Groups select their top ideas to share.
Use responses to preview key concepts students will encounter in the text.

In Action



Examples

Topic: Civil Rights Movement (Before Reading)

- What does equality mean in a society?
- Why do people protest unfair laws?
- What are effective ways to create change?
- How might laws and beliefs conflict?
- What challenges might leaders face when pushing for change?

Benefits

- ✓ Involves every student
- ✓ Builds on classmates' ideas
- ✓ Creates momentum for learning

Crop-It

Before
Reading

Analyze images to build background knowledge.

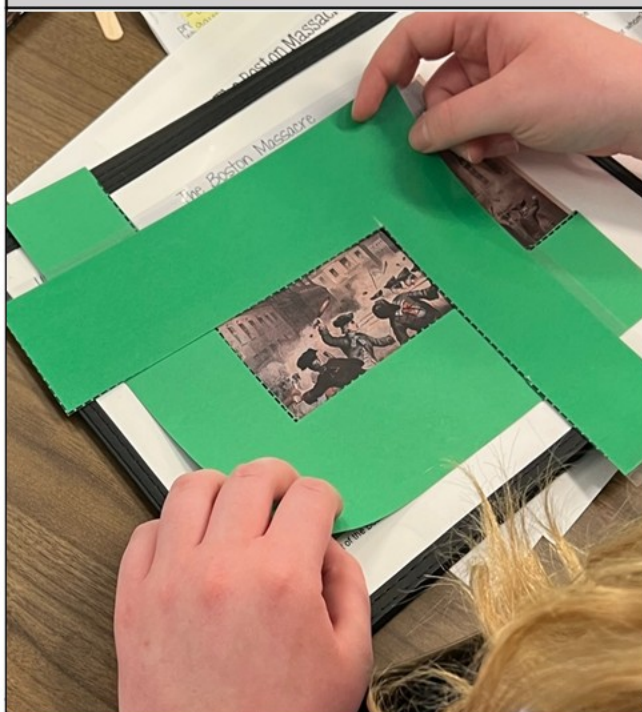
Purpose

- ✓ Analyze visual evidence
- ✓ Identify significant details
- ✓ Draw evidence-based conclusions

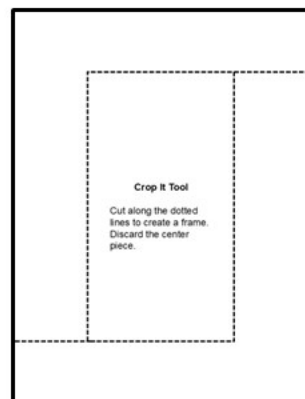
Steps

- 1. Prepare materials**
Create a class set by duplicating the crop-it tool onto cardstock. Laminate for durability.
Cut out the L-shapes and discard the center.
Choose one image that best represents the topic. Print a class set.
Choose questions from the handout that suits the topic the best.
- 2. Distribute materials**
Give each student the crop-it tool and an image.
- 3. Place students with a partner**
- 4. Ask questions**
Ask your preselected questions.
Have your students answer by using their crop-it tool to show their response to their partner..
- 5. Debrief**
Review answers as a class. Have one person from each pair come up to the large image to show a detail with their crop it tools.

In Action



Examples



Benefits

- ✓ Sharpens observation skills
- ✓ Improves attention to detail
- ✓ Strengthens evidence-based thinking

Image Investigation

Before
Reading

See It Before You Read It.

Purpose

- ✓ Interpret visual evidence
- ✓ Corroborate images with text
- ✓ Infer historical context

Steps

1. Create Partner Groups

Place students in pairs. Give each pair a bag containing historical images and short primary source quotes connected to the lesson.

2. Investigate the Images

Students spread out the images and quotes on their desks. For each one, they place a sticky note and record:
Images: descriptive words or phrases about what they observe.

Quotes: a one-sentence summary of the main idea.

3. Read for Evidence

As students read the lesson, they identify the paragraph that best matches each image or quote. Students should use evidence from the text to confirm or revise their original observations.

4. Extend the Learning (Optional)

Leave the images and sticky notes on students' desks throughout the lesson. This activity transitions naturally into the Visual Summaries strategy found in the During Reading section of this manual.

In Action



Examples



- soldiers
- landing
- beach
- invasion
- smoke

"The United Nations will not stand idly by while aggression takes place anywhere in the world."

- promises to stop aggression
- will take action
- supports peace and security

Benefits

- ✓ Strengthens visual literacy
- ✓ Develops historical reasoning
- ✓ Encourages evidence-based thinking

Picture Prediction

Before
Reading

Predict. Read. Confirm.

Purpose
✓ Interpret visual clues ✓ Make evidence-based predictions ✓ Justify predictions with evidence
Steps
Select images and text Choose 6–10 images that represent important people, events, places, objects, or ideas from the reading. Pull one matching sentence or short excerpt for each image. Choose text that clearly describes what students will see in the picture. Prepare materials Print one set of image cards and matching sentence cards for each pair. Cut apart the cards and place each set in a baggie or envelope. Predict Students match each image to the sentence they think best fits. Read and revise Students read the text, then confirm or revise their matches using evidence from the reading.

In Action	
	
Examples	
History •Historical people •Battles & events •Historical photographs •Political cartoons •Artifacts	Government •Political cartoons •Government buildings •Voting •Courtrooms •Campaigns
Geography •Maps •Landforms •Satellite images •Climate graphs •Population maps	Economics •Factories •Businesses •Products •Graphs & charts •Supply & demand
Benefits	
✓ Creates purpose for reading ✓ Strengthens inferencing skills ✓ Increases reading engagement	

Artifact Examination

Before
Reading

Use objects to unlock vocabulary.

Purpose

- ✓ Analyze historical artifacts
- ✓ Draw conclusions from artifacts
- ✓ Connect artifacts to historical context

Steps

1. Prepare Artifact Sets

Place **3–6 artifacts** (real or images) in a bag or box related to the lesson. Choose items that spark curiosity and support key concepts.

Teacher Tip: Avoid artifacts related to traumatic events or topics that require significant historical context (e.g., the Holocaust or slavery).

2. Introduce the Challenge

Tell students they will examine the artifacts to predict what they will be learning.

3. Observe & Discuss

In pairs or small groups, students examine each artifact and discuss: What do you see? What do you think? What do you wonder?

4. Make Connections

Guide students with questions such as: What might this have been used for? What does it reveal about the past? Students group related artifacts and explain the connections they notice.

5. Predict the Learning

Students create a title for their artifact collection and write a brief prediction describing what they think the upcoming lesson will be about.

6. Share & Transition

Groups share their predictions before beginning the lesson or reading.

In Action



Examples



Benefits

- ✓ Makes history tangible and memorable
- ✓ Develops historical inquiry skills
- ✓ Builds historical reasoning

Stage Two: During Reading Strategies



Think Aloud

During
Reading

Show them how to think, not just what to read.

Purpose

- ✓ Analyze historical information while reading
- ✓ Make evidence-based inferences
- ✓ Explain historical reasoning

Steps

- 1. Display the text**
Project or show a short passage you want to model.
- 2. Model your thinking**
Read the passage out loud and pause to share your thinking.
(Example: "This reminds me of...", "I'm picturing...", "This is important because...")
- 3. Show your thinking**
Highlight the text and jot quick notes or sketches in the margin to capture your thoughts.
- 4. Students practice**
Give students a new section of text. Have them record their own Think Alouds on paper or directly on the text.
- 5. Share out**
Invite students to share their thinking with a partner or the class.

In Action



Examples

More Formal

- "This reminds me of..."
- "I wonder why..."
- "This part is important because..."
- "I'm confused about..."

More Casual

- "Whoa... that is..."
- "Wait... why did that happen?"
- "Ohhh, this is important because..."
- "I don't get this part..."

Benefits

- ✓ Makes expert thinking visible
- ✓ Strengthens historical understanding
- ✓ Builds confidence with complex texts

Whisper Read Alternating Paragraphs.

Purpose
✓ Monitor comprehension collaboratively ✓ Interpret historical information ✓ Summarize key ideas
Steps
1. Partner students: Pair students and assign each partner a number (1 and 2). 2. Start the reading: Student 1 whisper-reads the first paragraph to their partner. 3. Alternate reading: Student 2 whisper-reads the next paragraph. Partners continue alternating paragraphs until the text is finished. 4. Monitor & support: Circulate as students read to support pacing and engagement. 5. Debrief: Bring the class back together to discuss key ideas from the reading.

In Action
 
Examples
When to Use It • When introducing a new or challenging text • When you want all students actively engaged in reading • When working with longer passages that need structure Best Texts • Textbook passages • Primary or secondary sources • Articles or informational texts
Benefits
✓ Increases student engagement ✓ Strengthens oral communication ✓ Reinforces historical understanding

Cover-Read-Retell

Purpose
✓ Summarize historical information ✓ Explain ideas using evidence ✓ Monitor comprehension
Steps
Partner up Assign students to pairs and label them Partner 1 and Partner 2 Read aloud Partner 1 reads a paragraph aloud while Partner 2 covers the text. Summarize Partner 2 shares a verbal summary of what they heard. (Uncover the text if needed for support.) Switch roles Partners switch and repeat the process with the next section. Debrief Discuss key ideas as a class after reading.

In Action

Examples
Teacher Launch (During Reading) “Partner 1, you will read the first paragraph aloud while Partner 2 covers the text.” “Partner 2, when your partner finishes, summarize what you heard—do not look at the text unless you need help.” “Then switch roles and repeat with the next paragraph.” “Your goal is to listen carefully and give a clear, accurate summary.”
Benefits
✓ Reinforces key historical concepts ✓ Improves recall of important ideas ✓ Strengthens academic communication

Three-Minute Pauses

During
Reading

Pause, process, and make meaning.

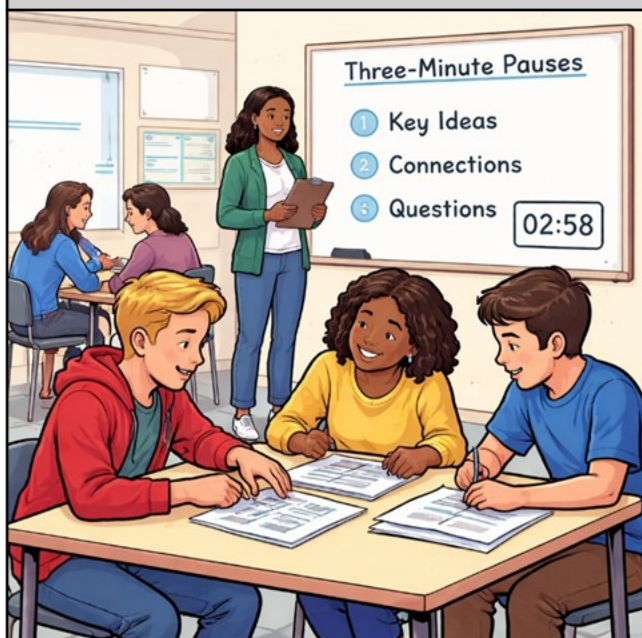
Purpose

- ✓ Summarize historical information
- ✓ Connect historical ideas
- ✓ Generate historical questions

Steps

- 1. Read in chunks**
Have students read a section of text for a set amount of time (about 3–5 minutes). Stop them, even if they are not finished.
- 2. Pause & process (3 rounds)**
Students work in groups of 3–5 and move through three quick rounds. (Each round is about 3 minutes, but adjust timing as needed.)
 - Round 1 - Key ideas**
Students summarize the most important ideas from the text.
 - Round 2 - Connections**
Students connect the text to prior knowledge or experiences. (Example: “This reminds me of...”, “This connects to...”)
 - Round 3 - Questions**
Students generate clarifying questions. (Example: “I’m confused about...”, “Why did this happen?”)
- 3. Debrief**
Bring the class back together and have groups share key ideas and questions.

In Action



Examples

Key Ideas

- “This section is mostly about...”
- “The main idea is...”
- “One important detail is...”

Connections

- “This reminds me of...”
- “This connects to...”
- “This is similar to...”

Questions

- “I’m confused about...”
- “Why did this happen?”
- “I wonder what would happen if...”

Benefits

- ✓ Encourages reflective thinking
- ✓ Deepens historical understanding
- ✓ Strengthens classroom discussion

Text Coding

During
Reading

Track Thinking with Symbols

Purpose

- ✓ Identify significant historical details
- ✓ Monitor comprehension
- ✓ Analyze textual evidence

Steps

1. **Provide materials**
Give students a passage and a Text Coding card.
2. **Set the focus**
Choose 1–2 codes so students aren't overwhelmed.
(Example: ? = question, ★ = important)
1. **Model the process**
Read the first paragraph and demonstrate how to mark the text.
2. **Read & code**
Students read in pairs or groups and pause to mark the text.
3. **Discuss & compare**
Students share and explain their codes with a partner or group.
4. **Reflect (optional)**
Students revisit codes to clarify confusion or identify key ideas.

In Action



Examples



Benefits

- ✓ Makes thinking visible
- ✓ Encourages purposeful reading
- ✓ Strengthens close reading skills

Annolighting

During
Reading

Highlight and explain what matters.

Purpose

- ✓ Analyze textual evidence
- ✓ Identify significant historical details
- ✓ Support claims with evidence

Steps

- Set a focus**
Use a prompt that targets a key idea.
(Example: "Annolight parts of the text that show how conflict developed between Britain and the Colonies.")
- Highlight key information**
Highlight only the most important words or phrases that connect to the prompt.
- Annotate thinking**
Add short notes in the margins explaining why the text was highlighted.
- Check & share**
Review annotations with a partner or class to clarify thinking.

Teacher Tip: Glue the reading onto larger paper (11x17 or chart paper) to give students space for annotations and a short summary.

In Action

This doesn't make sense to me. How can those sweet little animals cause so much damage?

People Write

Australia Today

Rabbits are generally considered cute furry little animals, except in Australia. Here they were introduced from Europe and quickly became a destructive pest that has ruined the land and caused millions of dollars in damage every year.

Rabbits are not indigenous to Australia but were brought over in the late 18th century with English colonists and farmed for food. It is believed the current introduction is a result of one release of 24 rabbits into the wild in 1859 to encourage rabbit hunting. Thomas Austin, an Englishman who enjoyed rabbit hunting, believed "the introduction of a few rabbits could do little harm and might provide a source of income, in addition to a sport or hunting." As it turned out, Mr. Austin was completely wrong, and the unintended consequences of his actions have plagued Australia to this day. Within ten years of the release, over two million rabbits were killed and there was not even a noticeable drop in the rabbit population in Australia. It is thought the different breeds brought by the English bred and became very adapted to the environment of Australia. With few winners and many farms in Australia, the rabbit population increased greatly with all the needed food available. In Australia, rabbits are considered pests that create issues for farming and have changed the ecosystem of Australia.

The feral (wild) rabbits have not only destroyed crops and farmland, but through overgrazing they have also created soil erosion. The loss to the decline of native plants and animals has led to the drop in the number of native animals in Australia. There are no native predators in Australia and only need soil to burrow in and short grass to feed on. Feral rabbits have easily adapted to the deserts and plains of Australia while producing two to seven kits per year. These feral rabbits compete with native species for food and are responsible for the decline in many native species such as the greater blue, the yellow-footed cockatoo, and the southern and northern wombats. The soil erosion has not only impacted farming, but many historic and cultural sites are compromised as a result.

Many attempts have been made by Australia to control and manage the feral rabbit population over the years. In the early 1900s, the Australian government constructed 31 fences in Western Australia running from north to south trying to prevent rabbits from entering farmland and farms. The original fences were made of wire and were not designed to produce young that were immune to the virus. Another virus was introduced in the 1960s and had mixed results. Poison has been used to fumigate the burrows and warrens as well. Even with all these measures, the rabbit species (an animal not indigenous that causes harm to the environment) continues to disrupt the ecosystem of Australia. In January of 2020, it was estimated there were about 260 million feral rabbits in Australia.

Changed the ecosystem?
How does a rabbit do that?

Wow! I never thought that a furry little rabbit could cause the destruction of so many other animals.

Examples

They shared a history and a goal.

They are used to independence.

The Proclamation of 1763

During the French and Indian War, Britain and the colonies fought side by side. However, when the war ended, problems arose. Britain wanted to govern its 13 colonies and the territories gained in the war in a uniform way. So, the British Parliament in London imposed new laws and restrictions. Previously, the colonies had been allowed to develop largely on their own. The British government simply let the colonists govern themselves with little to no interference. The new laws that were being passed made the colonists feel that their natural rights and freedoms were being taken away.

Ideals of a free government.

Benefits

- ✓ Encourages evidence-based thinking
- ✓ Strengthens historical reasoning
- ✓ Improves source analysis

Purpose	
✓ Encourages active reading ✓ Organizes thinking while reading ✓ Reinforces historical understanding	
Steps	
1.	Set the focus Choose what students will track (main idea, vocabulary, reactions, new information, etc.). <i>(Example: "As you read, track causes of the Texas Revolution.")</i>
2.	Provide materials Give students sticky notes for note-taking.
3.	Read & pause Students read in short sections and pause to jot quick notes. <i>(Example note: "Mexico ended immigration → upset settlers")</i>
4.	Stick & organize Place notes next to the part of the text they connect to. <i>(Example notes on one page: "taxes increased," "Santa Anna gains power," "tension growing")</i>
5.	Summarize Use the notes to write a final summary of the reading. <i>(Example: "Several political and economic tensions between Texas settlers and Mexico led to the Texas Revolution.")</i>

In Action

Examples
Ideas for Sticky Notes • Main idea of a paragraph • New information they learned • Key vocabulary (with a quick definition) • Cause and effect relationships • Important people, events, or dates • Questions they have while reading • Reactions or opinions about the content • Connections to previous learning • Predictions about what will happen next • Confusing parts of the text
Benefits
✓ Encourages active reading ✓ Improves organization of ideas ✓ Reinforces historical understanding

Hashtag Notes

During Reading

Summarize in just a few words.

Purpose

- ✓ Determine the central idea
- ✓ Summarize historical information
- ✓ Distinguish significant details

Steps

1. Select the Reading

Choose a passage that can be divided into short sections. Model one example hashtag before students begin.

2. Read a Section

Students read one paragraph or short section at a time.

3. Identify the Big Idea

Students decide what the section is mostly about.

4. Create a Hashtag

Write a short hashtag (1–4 words) that captures the main idea.

5. Share & Discuss

Partners compare hashtags and explain their thinking using evidence from the text.

6. Summarize

After reading, students use their hashtags to orally or briefly summarize the text.

In Action

Mohandas Gandhi believed that people should speak up for what is right, even when it is unpopular. He led India's fight for independence from British rule through nonviolent protest. Gandhi encouraged people to be the change they wanted to see by living with honesty, simplicity, and respect for all people.

I'd say
#LeadByExample

I was thinking
#BeTheChange



Examples

U.S. History

Transcendentalism

The Reform Movement did not just stop at religion and reform. It impacted the art, music, and literature of the time. Inspired by nature and the idea that you could change your own life, Transcendentalism was born. This was an idea where people believed that they should transcend, or go beyond, logical thinking to reach true understanding of the world.

Transcendentalists added to the reform movement by urging people to question society's rules and institutions. Authors like Henry David Thoreau changed their lives to reflect this belief system. Thoreau even moved away from society to live in the woods for over two years. As he meditated on the meaning of life, he wrote a book "Walden; or Life in the Woods", that inspired many others. His belief in questioning society and government even led him to be jailed when he refused to pay taxes to protest the Mexican-American War. His act of civil disobedience inspired many others.

Transcendentalism focused on individualism, nature, self-reliance, and the transcendence of the material world. Key characteristics of transcendentalism included:

- Individualism:** Transcendentalists believed in the goodness of individuals and the importance of self-expression. They encouraged people to trust their own intuition and inner moral compass. #THINKFORYOURSELF #BEYOUROWNPERSON #FOLLOWYOURHEART #MINDCHANCE
- Nature:** Nature held a central place in transcendentalist philosophy. They saw nature as a source of inspiration and believed that by connecting with the natural world, individuals could connect with religion. #NATURELOVE #WALDENWISDOM #LIVESIMPLY #BACKTONATURE
- Self-Reliance:** Transcendentalists emphasized self-reliance and self-discovery. They encouraged individuals to seek their own truths, make independent decisions, and not rely on established institutions or traditions. #WALKYOURSELF #OWNYOUR #WAKEUPANDWALK #IVEGOTTHIS
- Social Reform:** While transcendentalism was primarily an individual movement, many transcendentalists were also active in various social reform causes, such as abolitionism and women's rights, as they believed that individuals should push for justice and equality. #HEADUPINPROTEST #FIXWHAT'SBROKEN #DOTHERIGHTTHING

CHOOSE TWO INDIVIDUALS AND CREATE A BURNING TEMPLE FOR EACH ONE. 12. #INDIVIDUALISM

Benefits

- ✓ Encourages concise thinking
- ✓ Improves summarizing skills
- ✓ Reinforces key historical concepts

One sentence that matters most

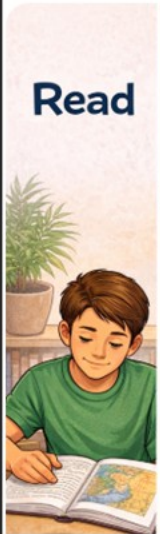
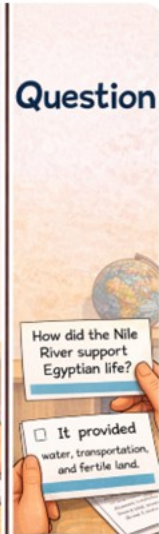
Purpose
✓ Identify the central idea ✓ Evaluate the importance of evidence ✓ Justify conclusions with evidence
Steps
1. Select the Reading Choose a short passage (about one page) that has a clear central idea and several important supporting details. 2. Read with Purpose Students read, looking for the one sentence they believe best captures the main idea. 3. Select & Highlight Students highlight their chosen sentence. 4. Defend Their Choice Students explain why their sentence is the most important, using evidence from the text. 5. Share & Discuss Students compare their choices with a partner or the class and discuss similarities and differences.

In Action

Examples
Teacher Launch “As you read, your goal is to find just one sentence that best represents the main idea.” “You may reread the text, but you can only choose one.” “Be ready to explain why your sentence is the most important.”
Benefits
✓ Focuses attention on essential ideas ✓ Develops historical reasoning ✓ Encourages thoughtful discussion

Read, Ask, Paraphrase, Question

Purpose	
✓ Generate historical questions ✓ Paraphrase historical information ✓ Connect ideas across the text	
Steps	
1.	Read Read a short section of text (one paragraph at a time).
2.	Ask Identify the main idea by asking, "What is this mostly about?" (Example: <i>This paragraph explains how geography influenced life in ancient Egypt.</i>)
3.	Put in your own words Paraphrase the main idea using your own words. (Example: <i>The Nile River helped Egyptians farm, travel, and survive in the desert.</i>)
4.	Question Write a question and answer based on your paraphrase. (Example: <i>How did the Nile River support Egyptian life? → It provided water, transportation, and fertile land.</i>)
5.	Connect (as you continue) Compare your questions and answers across sections to see how ideas build. (Example: <i>One section explains geography, and the next shows how it shaped culture and religion.</i>)

In Action			
Read 	Ask 	Put in your own words 	Question 
Examples			
Paraphrase: The Nile River was essential to Egyptian life. Question: Why was the Nile River important? Answer: It supported farming, travel, and survival. Connection: Geography → Daily Life → Culture			
Benefits			
✓ Strengthens comprehension ✓ Encourages historical inquiry ✓ Improves academic discussion			

Question Dice

During
Reading

Read, Roll, Question

Purpose

- ✓ Generate historical questions
- ✓ Analyze historical information
- ✓ Support discussion with evidence

Steps

1. Read Together

Students read a short passage with a partner or small group.

2. Roll the Dice

After reading a section, one student rolls two dice.

3. Create the Question

Using the Question Dice Guide, the student matches each die to a question stem and combines the two prompts to create a question about the reading.

Example: Roll a 2 and a 6 → What + was/were → What was the main cause of the conflict?

4. Discuss the Answer

Group members answer the question using evidence from the text.

5. Switch & Repeat

Students read the next section. A different student rolls the dice, creates a new question, and leads the discussion.

In Action



Examples

Question Dice

Directions: Roll the dice and create questions by combining each die.

Who	had
What	did
Where	could
When	would
Why	should
How / Which	was / were

Who + could → Who could have influenced this event the most?
What + did → What did the colonists do to protest the taxes?
Where + would → Where would this conflict have the greatest impact?

Benefits

- ✓ Encourages inquiry
- ✓ Develops higher-order thinking
- ✓ Promotes evidence-based discussion

Beat the Teacher

During
Reading

Stump the teacher with your questions.

Purpose

- ✓ Generate rigorous historical questions
- ✓ Evaluate historical evidence
- ✓ Justify answers with evidence

Steps

- 1. Read & create questions**
Students read the text and work in pairs/groups to write questions they think will challenge the teacher.
- 2. Teacher prepares**
Read the same text and create your own questions for students.
- 3. Get ready to play**
Choose a recorder to track questions and answers.
- 4. Take turns asking**
Groups take turns asking the teacher questions.
If students stump the teacher → students earn a point
If the teacher answers correctly → teacher earns a point
- 5. Teacher asks back**
After answering correctly, the teacher asks a group a question.
If students miss it → teacher earns a point
- 6. Keep the game going**
Teams must answer correctly before asking another question.

In Action



Examples

Teacher Launch (During Reading)

"Today, your goal is to **beat me**. As you read, create questions you think I won't be able to answer. The better your questions, the better your chances of winning."

"Your questions should make me think—avoid simple recall. Focus on **why, how, and connections** in the text."

"When we're done reading, we'll play. If you stump me, your team earns a point. If I answer correctly, I earn a point—and then I get to ask you a question."

"Be ready—you can't ask a question unless you can also answer one."

Benefits

- ✓ Motivates close reading
- ✓ Encourages historical curiosity
- ✓ Builds academic confidence

Pattern Puzzles

During
Reading

Organize ideas to understand the text.

Purpose

- ✓ Sequence historical events
- ✓ Analyze relationships among events
- ✓ Organize historical information

Steps

- 1. Select a text**
Choose a passage for students to read.
- 2. Create cards**
Write 8–10 key ideas (or quotes) from the text on separate cards.
- 3. Shuffle & distribute**
Place cards in envelopes and give them to students.
- 4. Read & organize**
Students read and arrange the cards in the correct order.
(They may revise their order as they reread.)
- 5. Extend thinking (optional)**
Students can create a timeline, sequence chart, or Venn diagram.

In Action



Examples

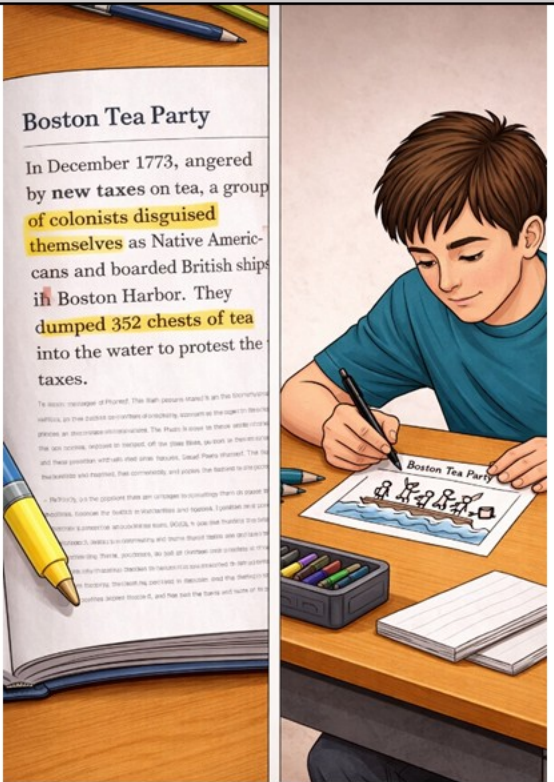
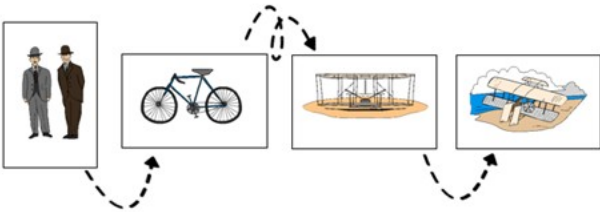


Benefits

- ✓ Strengthens chronological thinking
- ✓ Reinforces cause-and-effect relationships
- ✓ Improves historical understanding

Turn reading into cartoons

Purpose
✓ Sequence historical events ✓ Summarize historical information ✓ Represent historical understanding visually
Steps
1. Choose a topic Select a text for students to read in short sections. 2. Prep materials Give each student at least six index cards. 3. Read & draw After each short reading, students draw a quick cartoon that summarizes the main idea. 4. Repeat the process Continue for multiple sections until students have several cartoons. 5. Sequence the story Shuffle the cards and have students put them back in the correct order of events.

In Action
 The image shows a young boy with brown hair, wearing a blue t-shirt, sitting at a wooden desk. He is focused on drawing a cartoon on a piece of paper. The cartoon depicts a ship on the water with several figures on board. To his left, an open book is visible, showing a page titled 'Boston Tea Party'. The text on the page reads: 'In December 1773, angered by new taxes on tea, a group of colonists disguised themselves as Native Americans and boarded British ships in Boston Harbor. They dumped 352 chests of tea into the water to protest the taxes.' The boy is using a black pen to draw. On the desk, there are also several colored pencils in a small box and a stack of white paper.
Examples
 The image shows a sequence of four cartoon cards arranged horizontally. Each card is enclosed in a rectangular frame. The first card shows two men in 18th-century attire standing and talking. The second card shows a bicycle. The third card shows a large, multi-story building with a flag on top. The fourth card shows a steam locomotive. Dashed arrows connect the cards in a sequence: from the first to the second, from the second to the third, and from the third to the fourth. There is also a dashed arrow pointing from the fourth card back to the first, indicating a cycle or a return to the beginning.
Benefits
✓ Makes learning memorable ✓ Supports visual learners ✓ Reinforces historical understanding

Color Coded Reading

During
Reading

Color Your Thinking. Find the Evidence.

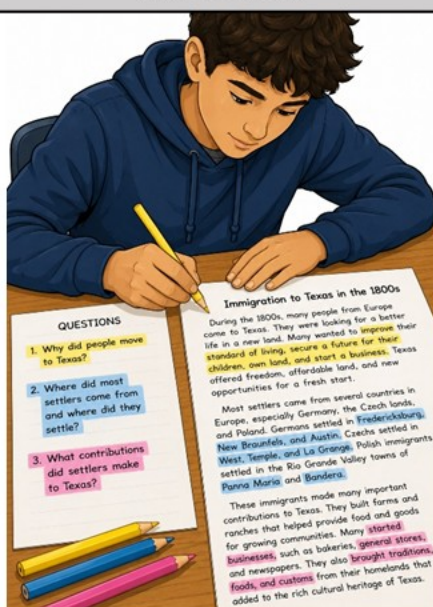
Purpose

- ✓ Analyze textual evidence
- ✓ Categorize historical information
- ✓ Support claims with evidence

Steps

- 1. Create guiding questions**
Prepare 3 questions or create 3 categories (i.e. economic, political, social) for each section of the reading.
- 2. Choose colors**
Students select three different colored pencils or highlighters. Each question is assigned one of their colors.
- 3. Read the section**
Students read one section of the text at a time.
- 4. Match the evidence**
When students find the answer to a question, they highlight, underline, or color the evidence using the same color as the question.
- 5. Discuss with partner**
Partners compare the evidence they selected and explain their thinking.

In Action



Examples

Texas Republic Guided Reading Questions

Directions: Choose 3 different colored pencils or highlighters. Color each of the questions a different color. When you find the answer to that question in the reading, color it the same color.

IMMIGRATION TO TEXAS

1. What were some of the reasons to emigrate to Texas?
2. Where did most Europeans settle?
3. What are the settlements created by European immigrants?

Stop and complete your Doodle Notes on Immigration.

THE GERMANS

1. Where did a majority of Germans move to in the mid-1800's?
2. What words describe a German immigrant?
3. What contributions did Germans give to Texas?

Stop and complete your Doodle Notes on the Germans.

THE CZECH

1. When did the Czech move to Texas? Where did they settle?
2. What elements of Czech culture still exist today?
3. How did the Czech contribute to the growth of Texas?

Stop and complete your Doodle Notes on the Czech.

THE POLISH

1. Why did the Polish settle in Texas? Who helped inspire them to move to Texas?
2. Where did the Polish settle in Texas?
3. How did the Polish contribute to the growth of Texas?

Stop and complete your Doodle Notes on the Poles.

Compare and Contrast: Choose two different immigrant groups in Texas. How are they similar? How do they differ?

Benefits

- ✓ Organizes evidence visually
- ✓ Strengthens analytical thinking
- ✓ Encourages purposeful reading

Visual Summary

During
Reading

Pictures Tell the Story.

Purpose

- ✓ Analyze visual and textual evidence
- ✓ Connect historical evidence
- ✓ Summarize historical information

Steps

1. Prepare the visuals

The teacher selects 9–12 images, maps, political cartoons, photographs, quotes, or primary source documents that represent important ideas from the reading.

Create one set for each pair of students.

2. Analyze the visuals

Working with a partner, students spread out the images and place a sticky note on each one.

They write a brief summary describing what they see or what they think the image or document represents.

3. Read the text

Students receive the reading and number each paragraph.

4. Match the evidence

As students read, they place each annotated image or document beside the paragraph they believe it best represents.

Some paragraphs may have multiple visuals, while others may have none.

5. Discuss and justify

Partners explain why they matched each visual to a specific paragraph using evidence from the reading.

In Action



Examples

U.S. History: Photographs, maps, political cartoons, primary sources

World History: Artwork, maps, artifacts, primary sources

Texas History: Maps, photographs, artifacts, primary sources

Government: Diagrams, political cartoons, constitutional documents

Economics: Graphs, charts, infographics, political cartoons

Benefits

- ✓ Strengthens visual literacy
- ✓ Reinforces historical understanding
- ✓ Encourages evidence-based reasoning

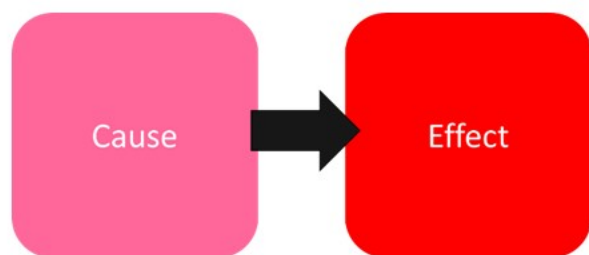
Stage Two:

Active Note Making



Social Studies Skills

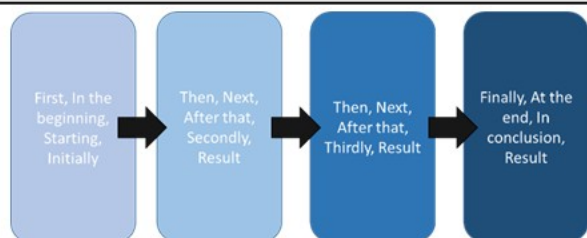
Sequencing



Cause / Effect

- Why something happened
- What happened because of it
- How one event caused another

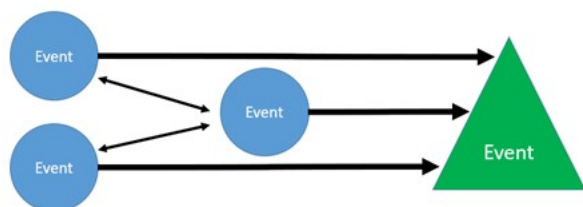
Clue Words: **cause, effect, led to, resulted in, because, why did/was, how did, impact, turning point, which factor, significant, purpose, contributed to**



Sequencing

- Puts events in the correct order
- Tells what happened first, next, or last

Clue Words: **first, next, then, after, before, during, order, sequence, timeline**

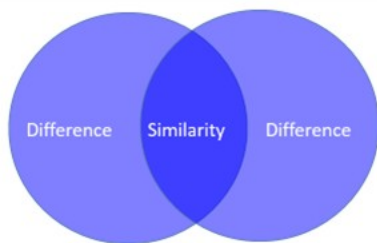


Connections Across Time

- How ideas or events changed over time
- How something from the past affects the future

Clue Words: **influenced, over time, long-term, later, impact on, continued, changed, shows how**

Categorization



Compare/Contrast

- How things are similar or different
- Looks at two or more ideas or events

Clue Words: **compare, contrast, similar, different, both, whereas, however**



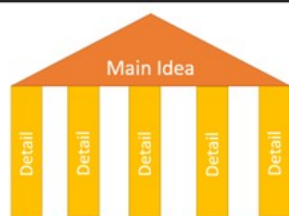
Categorization

- Groups, people, or ideas into right group or time period
- Where something belongs

Clue Words: **which era, which group, best fits, correctly replaces, title of the list, classified as, completes**

Social Studies Skills

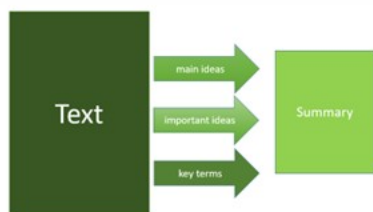
Text Dependent



Main Idea

- What is this mostly about?

Clue Words: **main idea, best describes, overall**

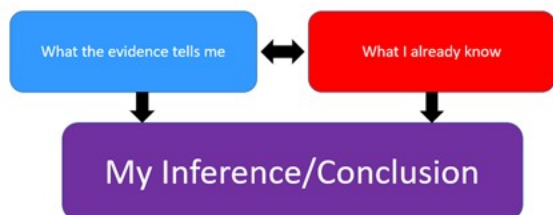


Summarization

- Which choice best sums it up?

Clue Words: **best summarizes, summary**

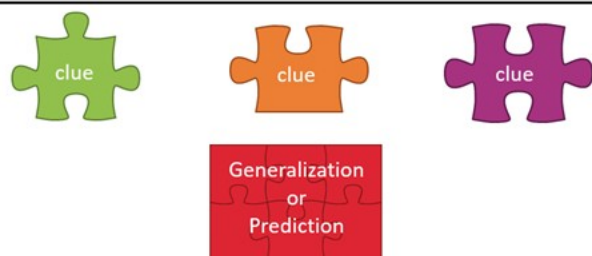
Evidence Based



Drawing Conclusions

- Use clues & facts to figure it out
- Answer not directly stated

Clue Words: **based on this, what can be concluded, supports, best supported**



Making Predictions

- Use information to decide what most likely happens next

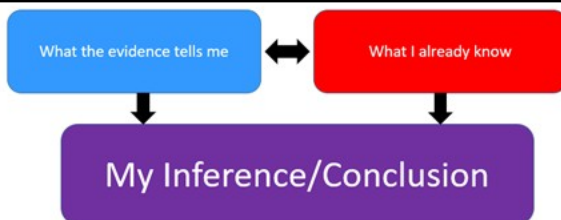
Clue Words: **most likely, would probably, what will happen next**



Point of View/Perspective

- What do they believe? Their opinion?

Clue Words **point of view, perspective, would most likely say, believed, supported, opposed**

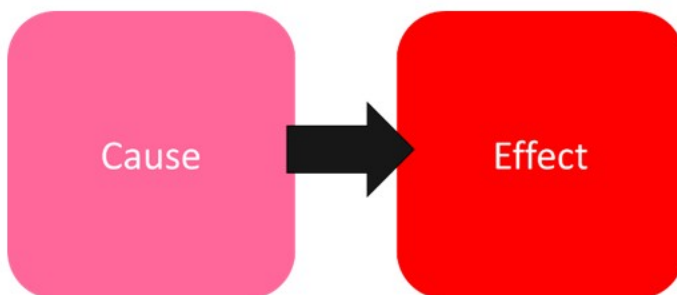
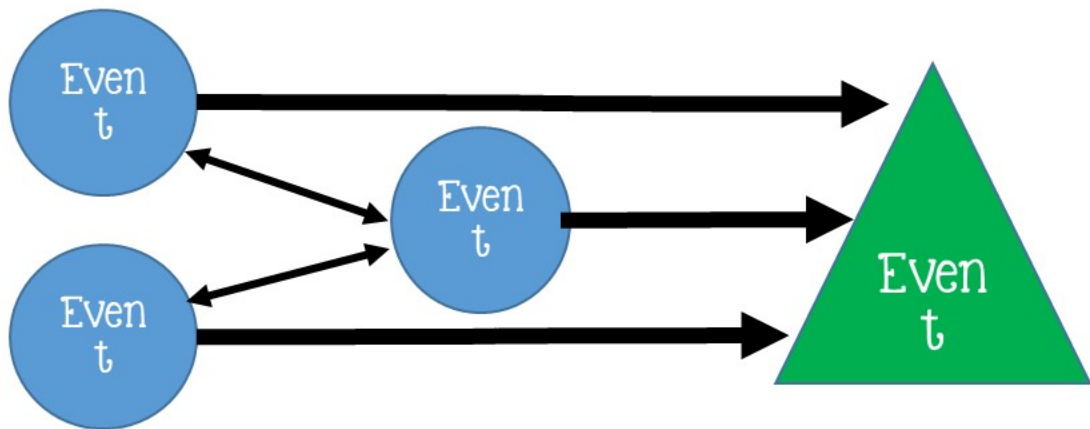
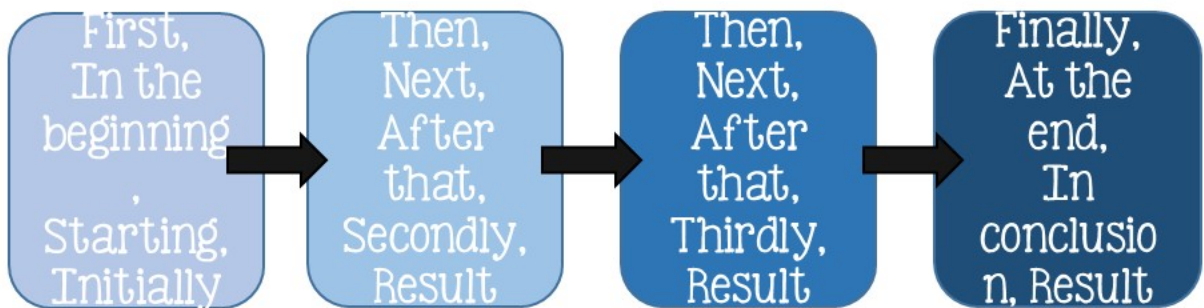


Inferencing

- Text suggests but doesn't say
- Read between the lines

Clue Words **implies, suggests, indicates, inferred**

Sequencing Skills



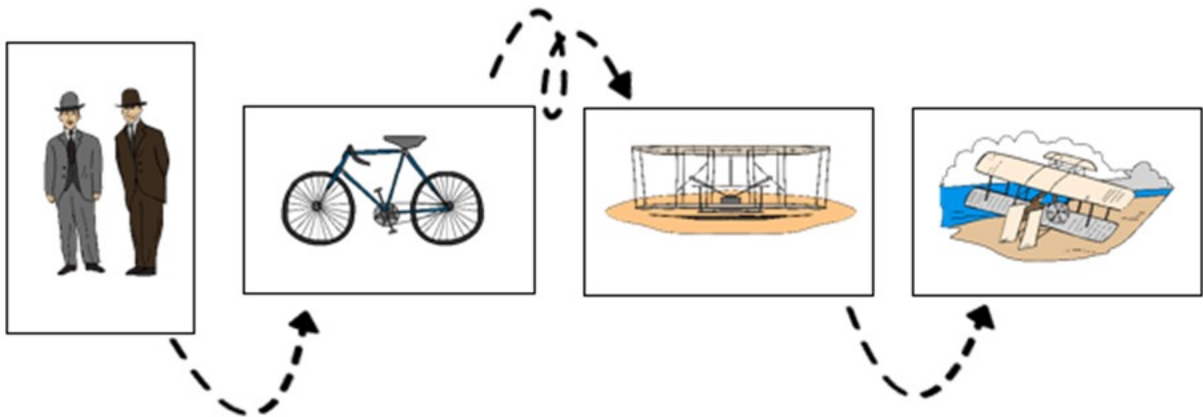
Purpose

- ✓ Sequence historical events
- ✓ Summarize historical information

Steps

1. Read a short section of text.
2. After each section, draw a simple cartoon to show the main idea.
3. Repeat for several sections.
4. Sequence the cartoons in order and add brief captions to summarize the learning.

Example



Connections Across Time

Active
Note
Making

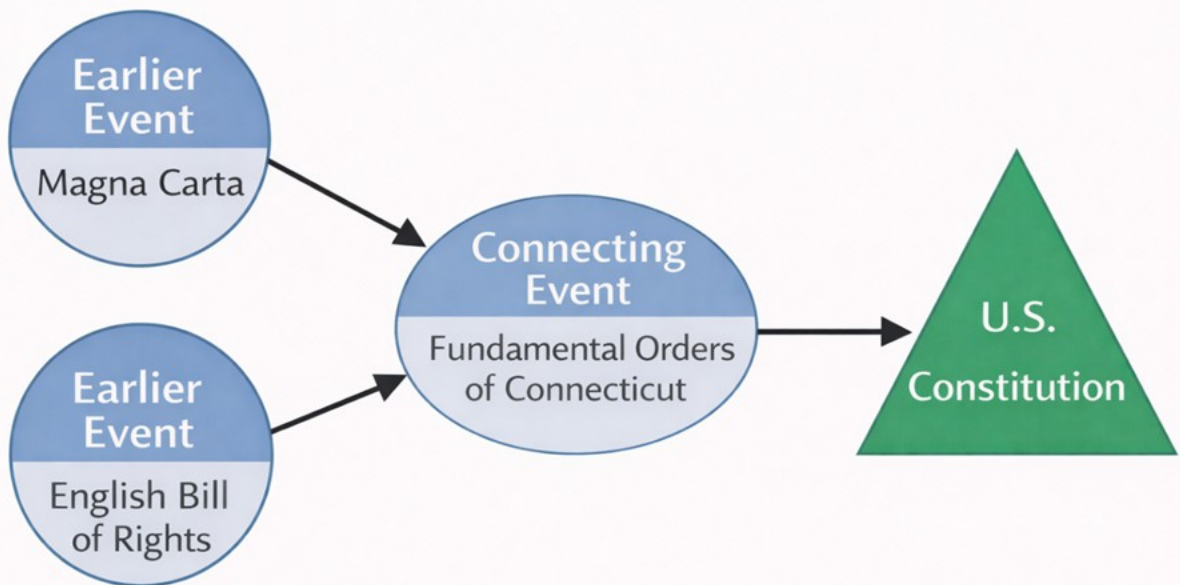
Purpose

- ✓ Analyze continuity and change over time
- ✓ Explain historical relationships

Steps

1. Identify a central event or idea.
2. Have students read to identify earlier events that connect to it.
3. Record each event and describe how it contributes to the central event.
4. Discuss how multiple events across time influence the outcome.

Example



Purpose

- ✓ Analyze cause-and-effect relationships
- ✓ Support conclusions with evidence

Examples

1. Single Chain



Best used when:

Teaching a direct relationship between one cause and one outcome.

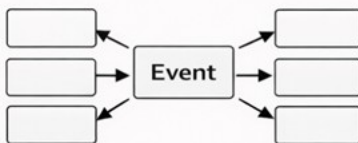
2. Multi-Cause → One Effect



Best used when:

An event has multiple contributing factors.

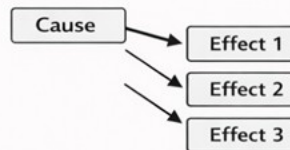
3. Central Event Web



Best used when:

An event has multiple cause/effect pairs.

4. Cause & Effect T-Chart



Best used when:

A single event leads to several outcomes.

4. Cause & Effect T-Chart

Causes	Effect

Best used when:

Students are pulling multiple cause/effect pairs.

6. Chain Reaction



Best used when:

Events build in a chain, where each effect becomes a new cause.

Problem - Solution

Active
Note
Making

Purpose

- ✓ Evaluate historical problems and solutions
- ✓ Explain historical outcomes

Steps

1. Identify a central problem.
2. Have students read to find or generate solutions.
3. Pause to add ideas.
4. Identify results and connect outcomes back to the problem.

Example

Problem

American Settlers in Texas were unhappy with the Mexican government.

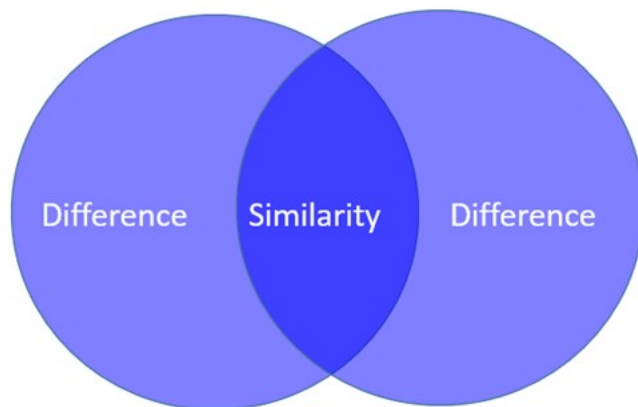
Steps to Solution

- Meet with other settlers
- Write letters of protest
- Avoid following the new laws

When these steps have been taken, what happens next?

War

Categorization Skills



Double Bubble

Active
Note
Making

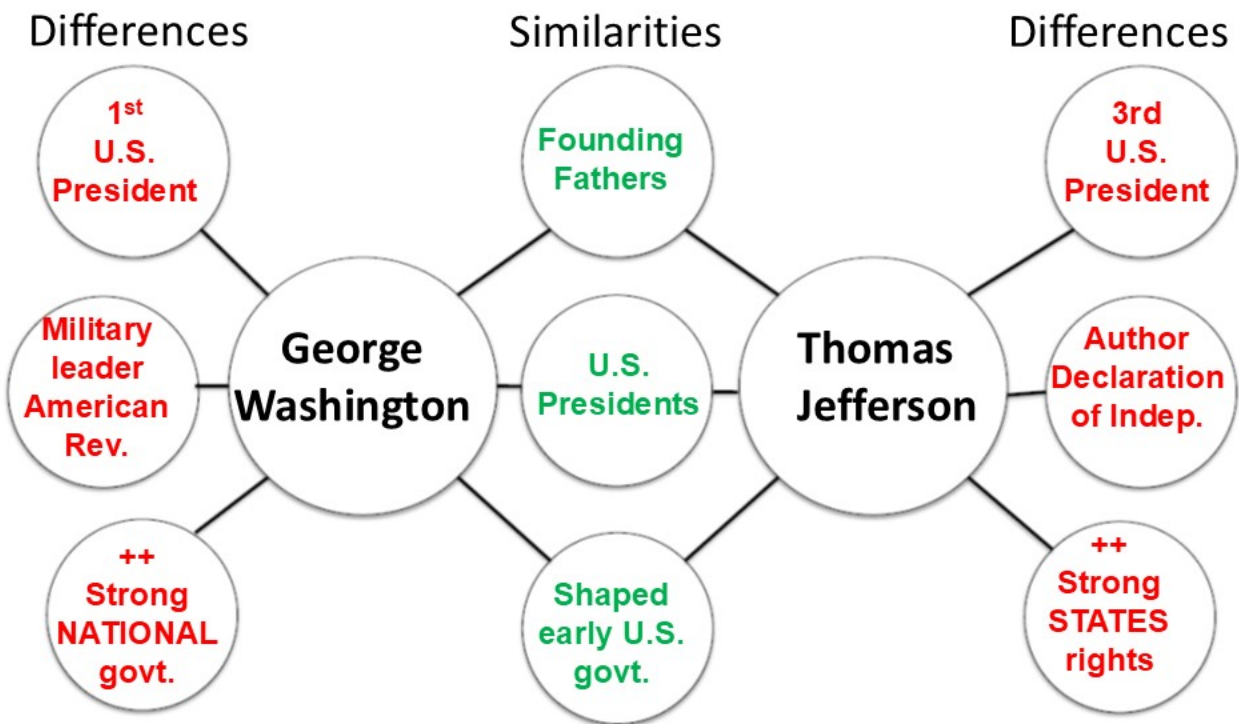
Purpose

- ✓ Compare historical people, events, and ideas
- ✓ Analyze similarities and differences

Steps

1. Identify two topics to compare.
2. Have students read to find similarities and differences.
3. Record similarities in the center bubbles.
4. Record differences on the outer sides for each topic.

Example



Triple Venn Diagram

Active
Note
Making

Purpose

- ✓ Compare multiple historical concepts
- ✓ Analyze relationships among ideas

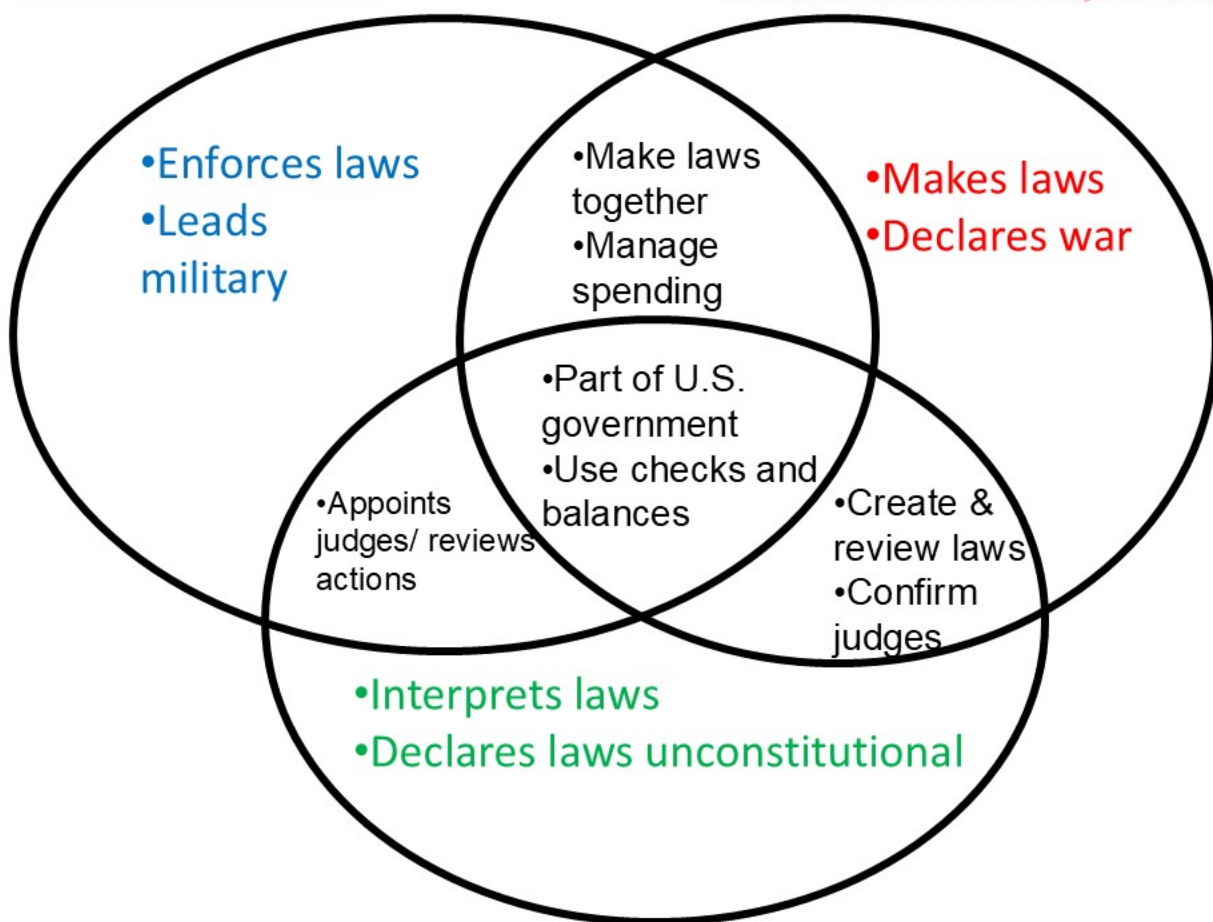
Steps

1. Identify three related topics to compare.
2. Have students read to find similarities and differences.
3. Record similarities shared by all three in the center.
4. Record similarities shared by two in the overlapping sections.
5. Record unique characteristics on the outer sections.

Example

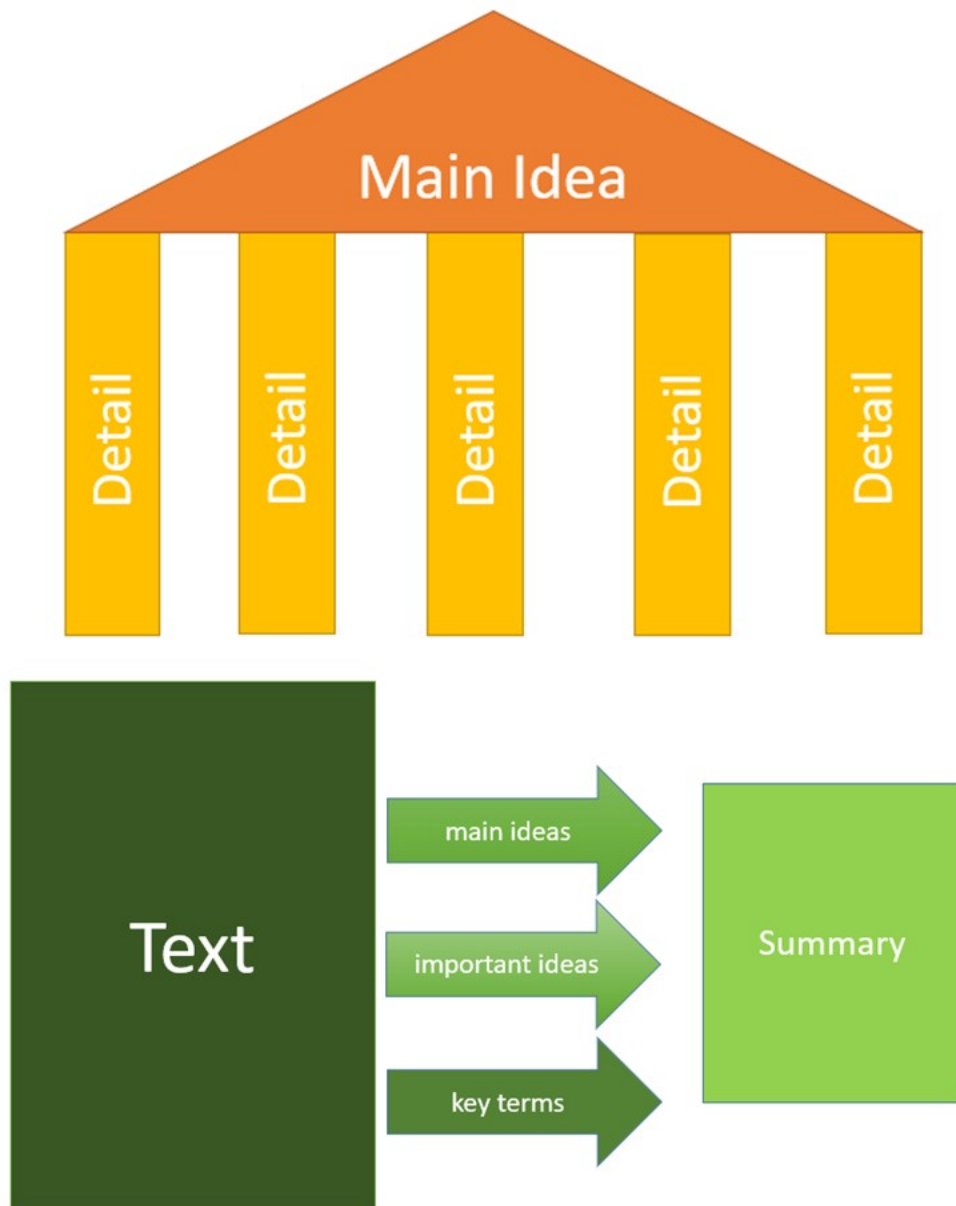
Executive Branch

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH



Judicial Branch

Text Dependent Skills



Purpose

- ✓ Determine the central idea
- ✓ Summarize historical information

Steps

1. Students read the text and jot down key words or ideas as they go.
2. Students work with a partner to determine the main idea of the text.
3. Students use their notes or memory to write a summary in 20 words.

Example



Somebody Wanted...

Active
Note
Making

Purpose

- ✓ Explain historical conflict and resolution
- ✓ Sequence historical events

Steps

1. As students read, identify the "Somebody" (main person or group).
2. Determine what they "Wanted."
3. Note the problem or conflict ("But").
4. Explain how it was resolved ("So") and what happened next ("Then").
5. Use the organizer to write brief sentences that summarize the text.

Example

Somebody Wanted...	
Somebody...	Texans (settlers in Texas)
somewhere...	Texas (part of Mexico)
wanted...	More rights & self-government
but...	The Mexican government limited rights and increased control
so they...	Rebelled and fought battles against Mexico
then...	Texas won independence after the Battle of San Jacinto
and so...	Texas became its own country (the Republic of Texas)
SUMMARY: Texans wanted more freedom from Mexico, but strict rules led them to fight for independence, and they created the Republic of Texas.	

Summarization Star

Active
Note
Making

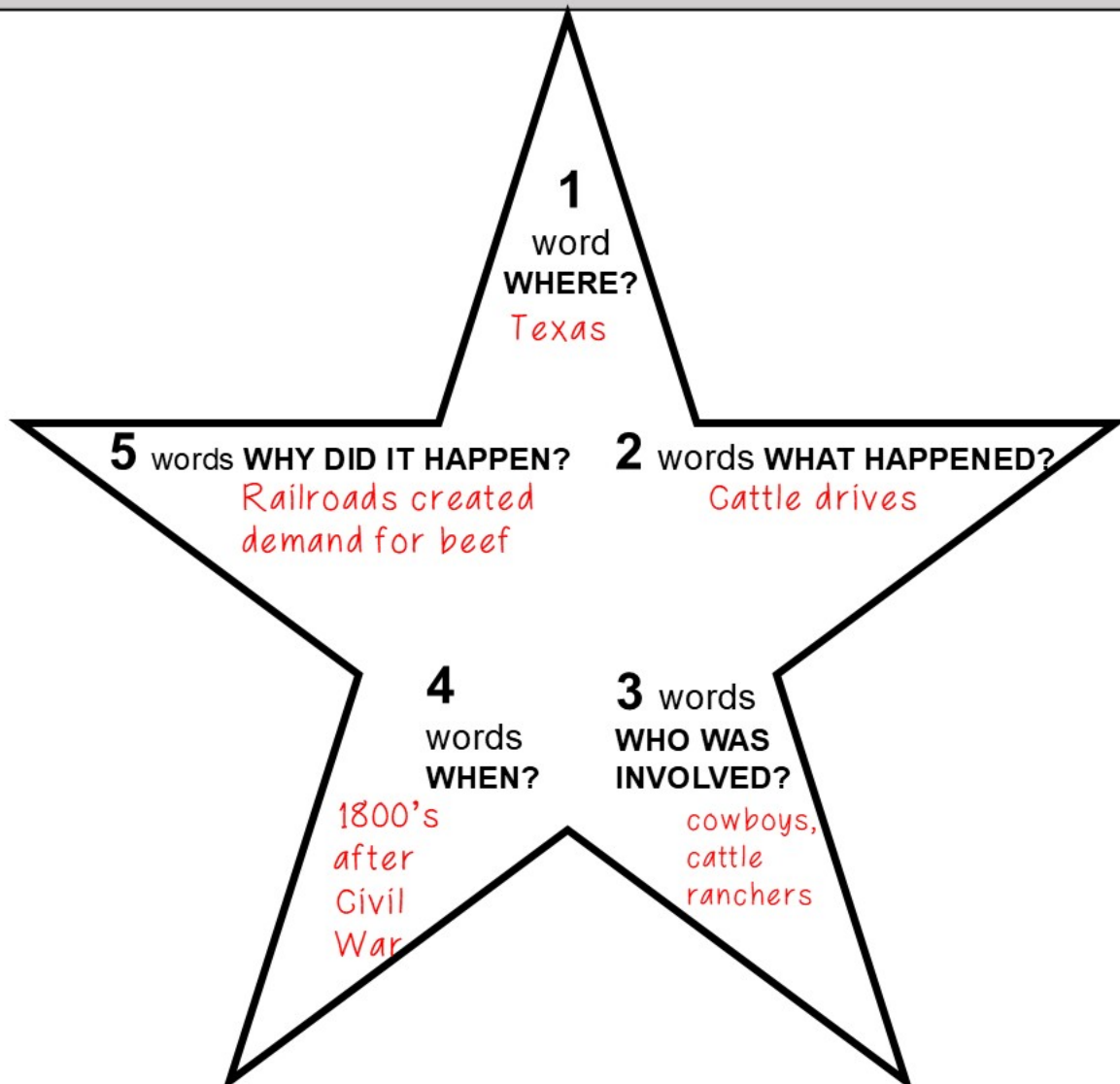
Purpose

- ✓ Identify significant historical details
- ✓ Identify key historical details

Steps

1. Create a star with prompts for who, what, when, where, and why.
2. As students read, record answers for each point of the star.
3. Keep responses brief (1–3 words or short phrases).
4. Use the completed star to build a summary of the topic.

Example



Fishbone Organizer

Active
Note
Making

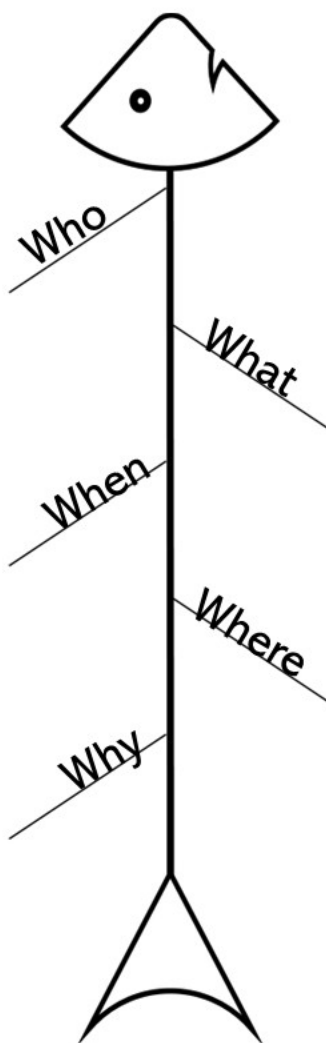
Purpose

- ✓ Analyze supporting evidence
- ✓ Explain historical relationships

Steps

1. Write the topic or event at the fish head.
2. As you read, record details on each "bone" (Who, What, When, Where, Why).
3. Use your notes to explain the full story of the event.

Example



Mind Mapping

Active
Note
Making

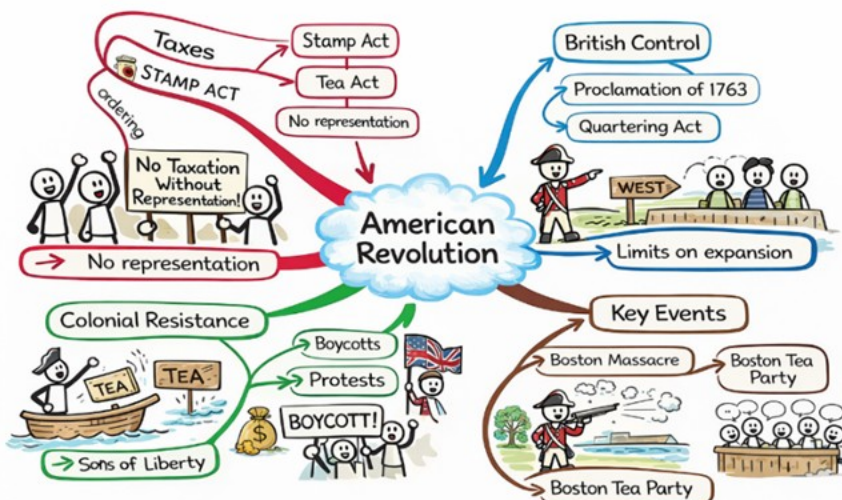
Purpose

- ✓ Organize historical concepts
- ✓ Connect historical ideas

Steps

1. Place the main idea in the center of the page (landscape works best).
2. As students read, add key ideas as branches and details off each branch.
3. Use lines, arrows, colors, or symbols to show relationships.
4. Write short phrases—capital letters can help highlight key ideas.
5. Work quickly and add ideas as they come—don't overthink.
6. Leave space to continue adding and revising the map over time.

Example



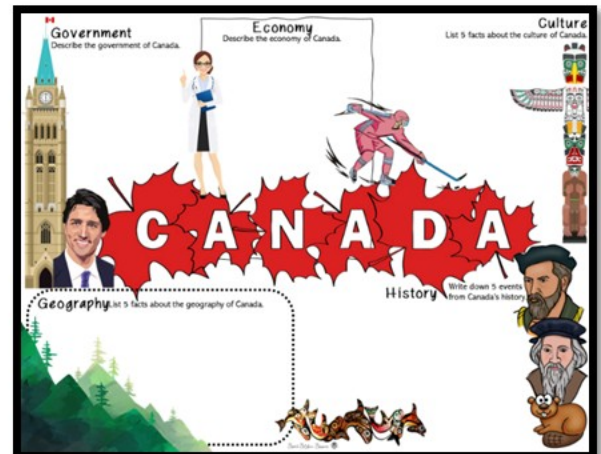
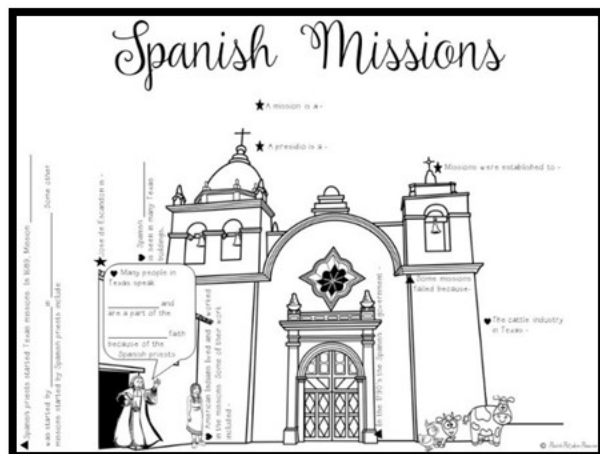
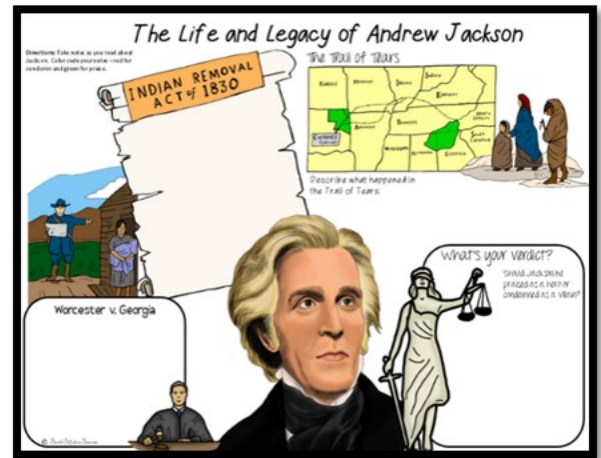
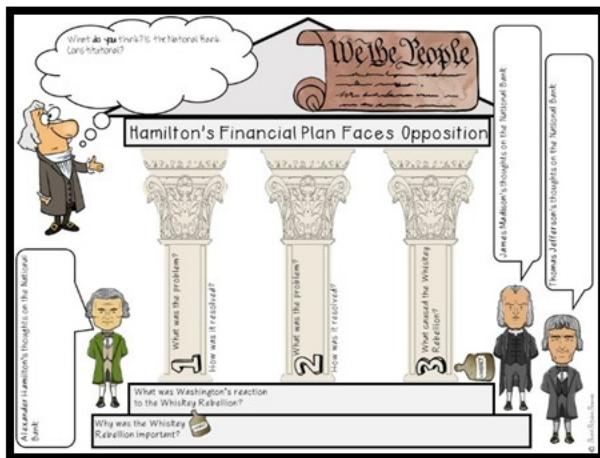
Purpose

- ✓ Identify significant historical concepts
- ✓ Represent historical understanding visually

Steps

1. Prepare Doodle Notes™ with visuals and note spaces.
2. Include graphics, symbols, or shapes to represent key ideas.
3. Have students write, label, and sketch as they learn.
4. Wrap up with a task (highlight, color-code, identify key ideas).

Example



Sketch Notes

Active
Note
Making

Purpose

- ✓ Organize historical evidence visually
- ✓ Communicate historical understanding

Steps

1. As students read or listen, record key ideas using a mix of words and simple sketches.
2. Use symbols, arrows, boxes, and color to organize information.
3. Focus on key ideas—not full sentences.
4. Practice on smaller topics, then build toward independent use.

Example

Sharecropping

- A form of legal slavery
- Kept workers IN POVERTY
- How does it work...
- As students read or listen record key ideas using POVERTY

Sharecropper farmed land → Profits → NOT land owner → sharecropper

1. What are sketch notes?

notes that are **VISUAL**

notes that are **MEANING**

Where can I learn more?

SKETCH NOTES

2. Why do they work?

- ♥ sketch notes make **connections**
- ♥ sketch notes tell a **STORY**
- ♥ sketch notes are **SHORT** and to the point

3. How do I teach sketch notes?

MODEL

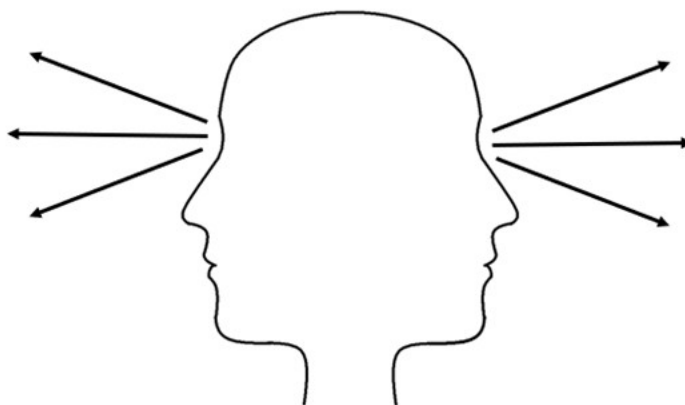
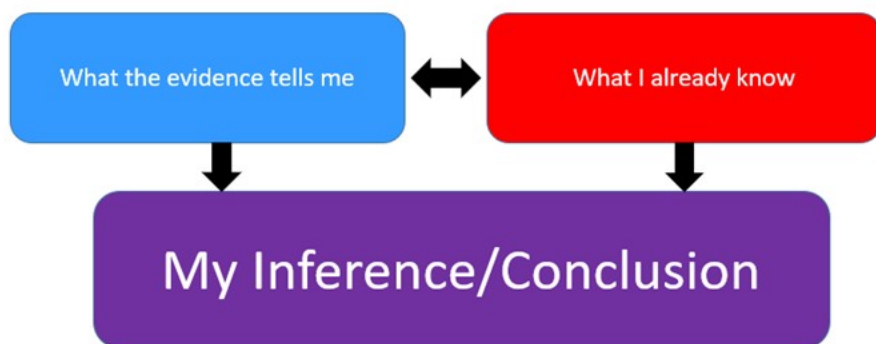
Read → Think → **DRAW** → **COLOR!!**

PRACTICE PRACTICE PRACTICE...

mistake are ok mistakes

CB

Evidence-Based Skills



Purpose	
✓ Support claims with evidence ✓ Justify historical conclusions	
Steps	
1. Set up two columns: Opinion and Proof. 2. As students read, record an opinion in the left column. 3. Add evidence from the text in the right column to support the opinion. 4. Use the chart notes to explain thinking, write, or prepare for discussion.	
Example	
Opinion Abraham Lincoln was the greatest president of the United States.	Proof • Lincoln led the country through the Civil War. • Lincoln made great speeches.
Opinion The U.S. should have dropped the atomic bomb.	Proof • It helped end WWII quickly. • Japan surrendered soon after the bombs were dropped. • It avoided a long and deadly invasion of Japan.

Purpose

- ✓ Analyze multiple perspectives
- ✓ Compare historical viewpoints

Steps

1. Introduce the idea of two perspectives (Janus figure).
2. As students read, identify and record different points of view.
3. Add words, phrases, or symbols to represent each perspective.
4. Use the completed figure to compare ideas and understand multiple viewpoints.

Example



Cultural Diffusion

Benefits

- New ideas spread
- New foods and traditions
- Cultures connect and learn

Challenges

- Loss of traditions
- Cultural conflicts
- Unequal power between groups



Image Analysis

Active
Note
Making

Purpose

- ✓ Interpret visual evidence
- ✓ Draw evidence-based conclusions

Steps

1. Select images that clearly represent key content.
2. As students observe, record what they see (details).
3. Infer what is happening using evidence from the image.
4. Record how the image connects to the lesson or text.
5. Add new details and revise notes as students continue reading.

Example



Image Analysis

Directions: Examine the picture to answer the following questions.

Step One

Observation
Study the photograph for 2-3 minutes. Look at the picture as a whole and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photograph into quadrants (4 parts) and study each section to see what new details become visible.
Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

People	Objects	Activities
soldiers	helmets	hiding in trench
2 men in uniform	grenade	throwing grenade
1 soldier throwing	dirt trench	preparing for attack
	weapons	staying low

Step Two

Inference
Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.
1. The soldiers are in active combat.
2. They are under attack or preparing to attack.
3. The trench is being used for protection.

Step Three

Questions
What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?
• What battle is this from?
• How dangerous was trench warfare?
• What weapons were commonly used?
Where would you find answers to them?
• Textbook reading
• Primary sources
• Class discussion

Image Analysis

Directions: After completing the photo analysis, read about the picture. Find at least 6 details in the text that are also in the pictures. Put a * by any new details you discovered after reading. When you are finished, answer the questions.

1. Soldiers used trenches for protection	2. Grenades were common weapons
3. Fighting was close and dangerous	4. Soldiers stayed low to avoid being seen
5. Mud and rough terrain made movement hard	6. Many soldiers were young and in danger

1. What can you learn just by looking at the pictures?
Soldiers were fighting in close combat and using trenches for protection.
2. How do the pictures help you with the reading?
They show what trench warfare looked like and help me understand the danger.
3. Imagine that you could be in this scene. What would you hear? What would you smell? What else might you see?
I would hear explosions and shouting. I might smell smoke and dirt. I would see chaos and soldiers moving quickly.

Sketch to Stretch

Active
Note
Making

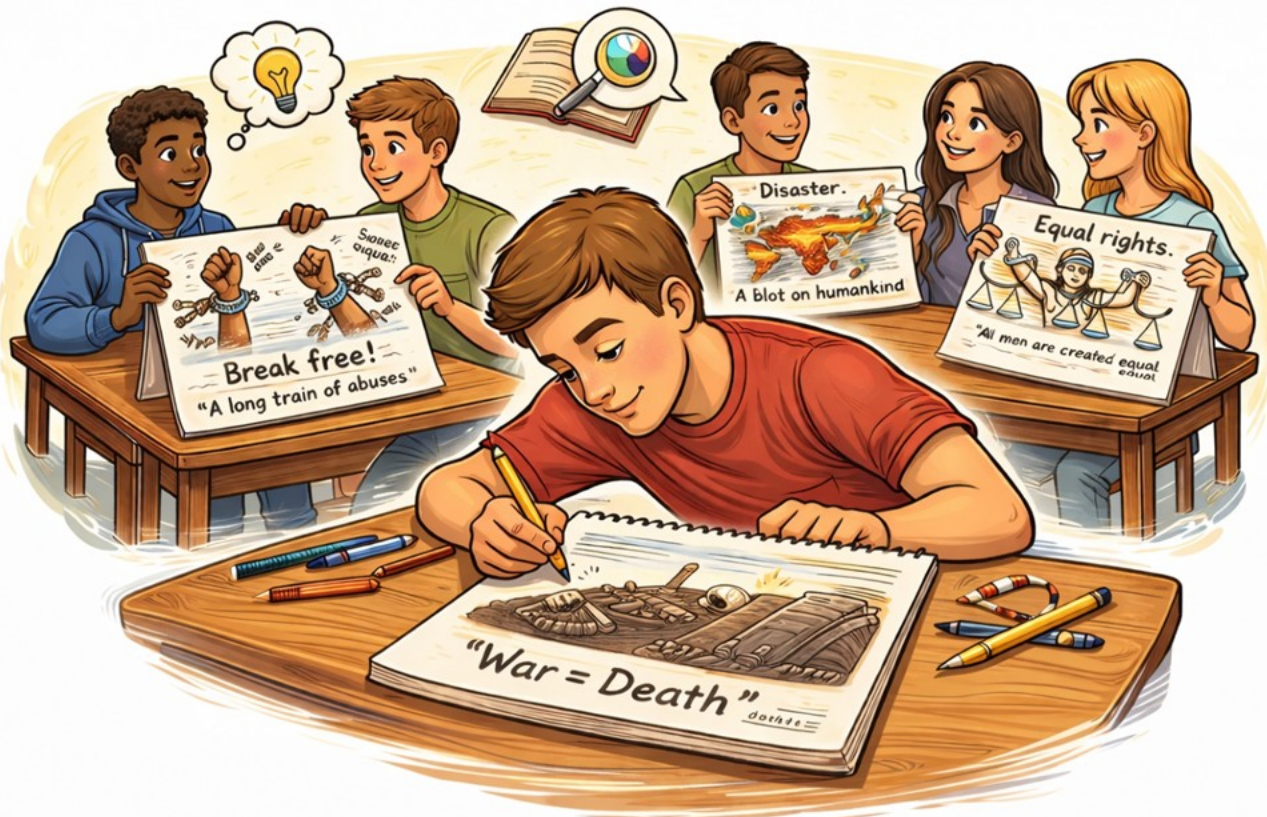
Purpose

- ✓ Interpret historical ideas
- ✓ Draw conclusions from evidence

Steps

1. Model how to sketch meaning from a text.
2. As students read, create a sketch that represents the meaning (not just the events).
3. Add a brief written explanation of the sketch.
4. Share and discuss interpretations with a small group.

Example



Decision Tree

Active
Note
Making

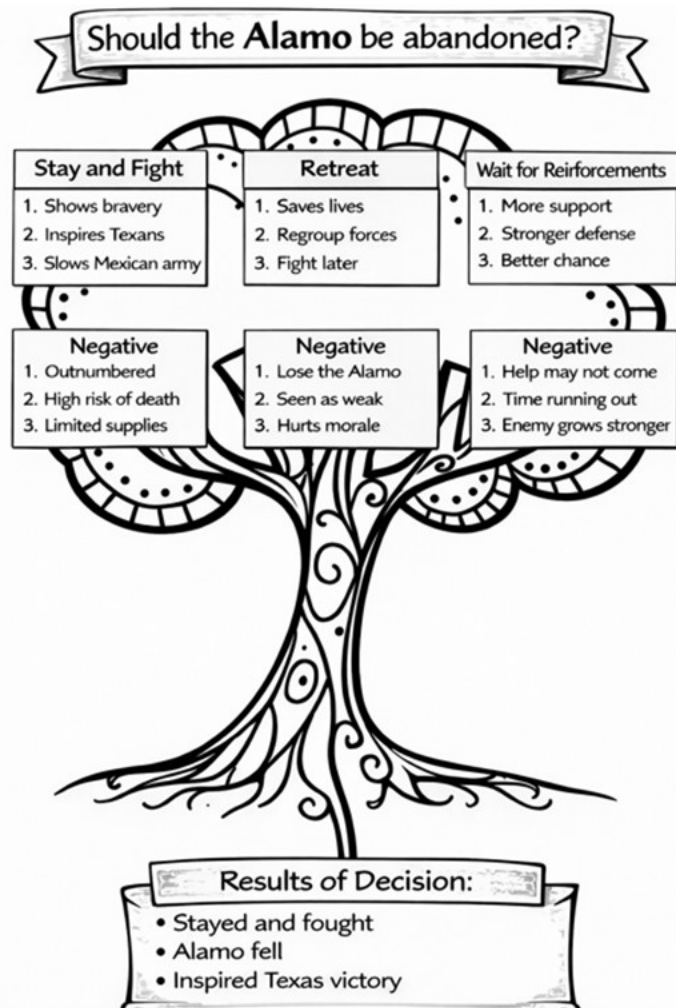
Purpose

- ✓ Evaluate historical decisions
- ✓ Justify decisions with evidence

Steps

1. Identify a decision or problem from the text.
2. Record possible options in the trunk of the tree.
3. List pros and cons for each option on the branches.
4. Use the information to make and justify a decision.

Example



Purpose

- ✓ Evaluate historical significance
- ✓ Predict historical outcomes

Steps

1. As students read, identify key events.
2. Select one event to change.
3. Predict how the outcome would be different.
4. Explain how this change would impact future events.

Example



Changing History




What if...? _____

ORIGINAL EVENT
(What actually happened?)

CHANGE
(What is different?)

CAUSE
(Why would this change happen?)

HISTORICAL EFFECTS
(What would happen next?)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Example (modeled for students):

What if slavery had never been allowed in the United States?

ORIGINAL EVENT: Slavery existed in the early United States.

CHANGE: Slavery is outlawed in the Declaration of Independence.

CAUSE: Leaders decide slavery goes against freedom.

HISTORICAL EFFECTS:

1. Southern economy develops differently
2. Civil War may not happen
3. African American rights come earlier

Stage Three:

After Reading

Strategies



Alpha Blocks

After
Reading

Summarize learning from A to Z.

Purpose

- ✓ Synthesize historical understanding
- ✓ Communicate historical conclusions
- ✓ Use academic vocabulary accurately

Steps

- Set up the organizer**
Provide students with an Alpha Blocks template or have them create one. Choose a topic, big idea, or theme connected to the reading.
- Individual or pairs – complete A-Z paper**
Students complete as many letters as they can by recording words, phrases, and/or simple illustrations connected to the reading.
Share & build:
Students join with others to compare answers and fill in any missing letters, adding new ideas to their organizer.
- Whole class – complete A-Z chart**
Post a large Alpha Blocks organizer on chart paper or a bulletin board.
Add ideas
Students add words, phrases, or illustrations using sticky notes.
- Build over time**
Continue adding to the chart before, during, and after reading to deepen understanding.

In Action



Examples



Benefits

- ✓ Strengthens long-term retention
- ✓ Reinforces academic vocabulary
- ✓ Encourages collaborative review

Say it in 20 words

Purpose

- ✓ Determine the central idea
- ✓ Summarize historical information
- ✓ Distinguish significant details

Steps**1. Read First**

Have students read a selection of text.

2. Collect Key Ideas

Students identify the most important words or phrases from the reading.

Rules:

- ✓ Record **one word or one short phrase** in each box.
- ✓ Choose **important people, places, events, vocabulary, or concepts**.
- ✓ Use **your own words** whenever possible.
- ✗ Do **not** copy entire sentences.
- ✗ Do **not** fill every box if the information isn't important.

3. Use the Organizer

Students record their key words and phrases in the graphic organizer as they read.

4. Write the Summary

Using only the words and phrases from the organizer, students write a summary of the reading in 20 words.

5. Share & Refine

Students compare summaries with a partner and revise for clarity, accuracy, and conciseness.

In Action**Examples****Guided Gist**

Topic: Constitution

Key Words:

government • branches • power • limit • rights • protect

The Constitution set up three branches of government to limit power and protect people's rights and freedoms in the U.S.

Benefits

- ✓ Strengthens concise communication
- ✓ Reinforces essential concepts
- ✓ Improves content retention

Pick A Card, Any Card

After
Reading

Break it down. Piece it together.

Purpose

- ✓ Support claims with evidence
- ✓ Explain historical reasoning
- ✓ Communicate historical understanding

Steps

1. Prepare the Cards

Create a set of response cards using discussion prompts such as:

I wonder...

I learned...

I was surprised by...

This reminds me of...

2. Form Groups

Place students in small groups. Each student draws two response cards.

3. Read & Respond

After reading, students write a response to each prompt on a sticky note or index card, using evidence from the text when appropriate.

4. Share & Discuss

Students take turns reading one prompt and sharing their response. Group members ask questions, add ideas, or make connections.

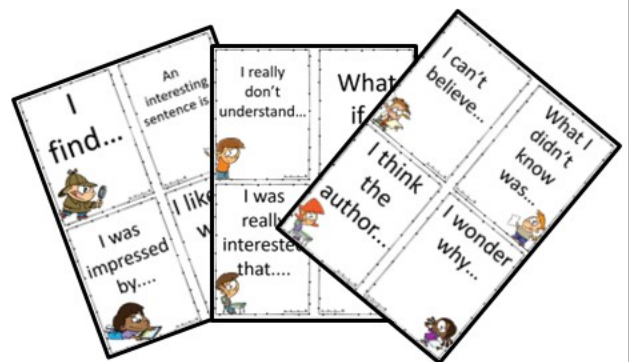
5. Reflect

Students discuss how the different responses helped deepen their understanding of the reading.

In Action



Examples



Benefits

- ✓ Encourages academic discussion
- ✓ Promotes collaborative thinking
- ✓ Builds confidence in sharing ideas

Annotated Image

After
Reading

Bring perspectives to life through quote bubbles.

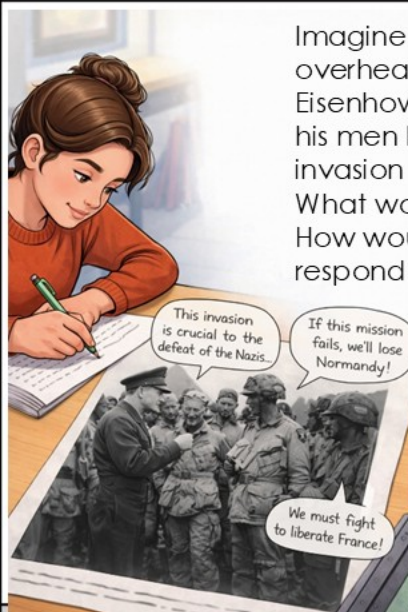
Purpose

- ✓ Interpret visual evidence
- ✓ Explain historical perspectives
- ✓ Support observations with evidence

Steps

- 1. Read first**
Have students read a short text about a historical event.
- 2. Introduce the image**
Show an image connected to the event they just read about.
- 3. Model thinking (optional)**
Model how to add an annotation that reflects a person's thoughts or feelings.
(Example: "I can't believe this is happening...")
- 4. Annotate the image**
Students add text boxes or notes around the image to represent different perspectives.
- 5. Use key terms (optional)**
Have students incorporate important vocabulary from the reading into their annotations.
- 6. Share & discuss**
Students share their annotations and explain their thinking.

In Action



Imagine you could overhear General Eisenhower speaking to his men before the invasion of Normandy. What would he say? How would his soldiers respond?

Examples

Quote Bubble Sentence Stems

_____ = vocabulary term

- "This _____ is affecting us because..."
- "I can't believe the _____ is happening..."
- "If this _____ continues, then..."
- "We need to respond to the _____ by..."
- "This _____ is not fair because..."
- "Because of the _____ I feel..."
- "The _____ is causing..."
- "I think the _____ will lead to..."

Benefits

- ✓ Strengthens historical empathy
- ✓ Reinforces evidence-based thinking
- ✓ Deepens historical understanding

Character Maps

After
Reading

Bring historical figures to life.

Purpose

- ✓ Analyze historical significance
- ✓ Evaluate historical impact
- ✓ Support conclusions with evidence

Steps

- 1. Read first**
Have students learn about a historical figure through text.
- 2. Provide the organizer**
Give students a Character Map template.
- 3. Add key facts**
Students list 4–5 factual statements about important events or accomplishments.
- 4. Interpret the figure**
Students write 4–5 descriptive or interpretive statements about the person.
- 5. Show the role**
Students design a symbol or “hat” that represents the person’s role in history.
- 6. Evaluate significance**
Students write a final statement that explains the person’s importance.

Variation: Sensory Figure

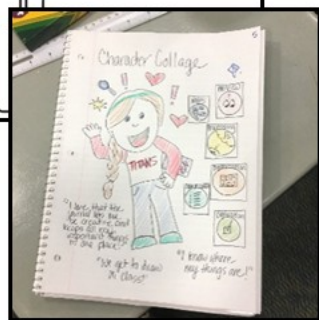
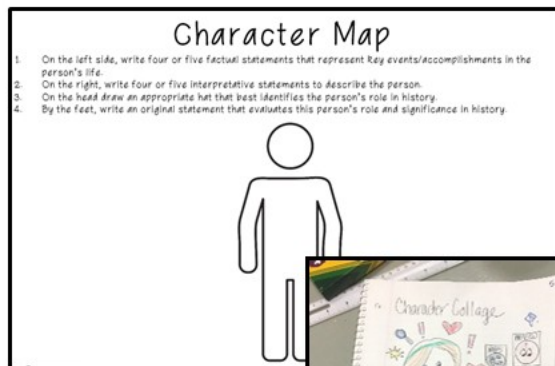
Students draw a simple figure and label it with what the person might be:

- seeing
- hearing
- saying
- feeling
- doing

In Action



Examples



Benefits

- ✓ Humanizes historical figures
- ✓ Encourages historical reasoning
- ✓ Reinforces key concepts

Break it down. Piece it together.

Purpose

- ✓ Synthesize historical understanding
- ✓ Explain historical relationships
- ✓ Organize historical evidence

Steps

1. Read & Gather Information

Students read the text and identify the most important people, events, ideas, and supporting details.

2. Identify Key Pieces

Students determine the essential information to include (who, what, when, where, why, and historical significance or impact).

3. Design the Mosaic

Students divide their paper into sections. In each section, they represent one key idea using drawings, symbols, color, and brief notes.

4. Connect the Pieces

Students create a title and write a summary sentence explaining how the individual pieces work together to tell the larger story or concept.

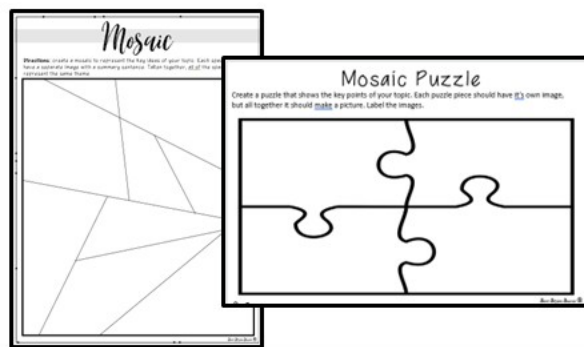
5. Share & Explain

Students present their mosaics and explain how each section contributes to the overall understanding of the topic.

In Action



Examples



Benefits

- ✓ Makes learning more meaningful
- ✓ Strengthens conceptual understanding
- ✓ Encourages creative thinking

Beyond the Frame

After
Reading

Extend the story beyond the picture.

Purpose

- ✓ Draw conclusions from evidence
- ✓ Infer historical context
- ✓ Interpret historical perspectives

Steps

1. Read the Text

Have students read a short text connected to a historical event or image.

2. Place the Image

Place a photograph or illustration in the center of a large sheet of paper.

3. Observe & Discuss

Students closely examine the image and discuss what they see, what might exist beyond the frame, and what evidence from the reading supports their ideas.

4. Extend the Story

Students draw and/or write around the image to show what they believe exists outside the visible scene. They may add: people or objects, dialogue or thought bubbles, labels or captions events that happened before or after the scene

Encourage students to support their additions with evidence from the reading.

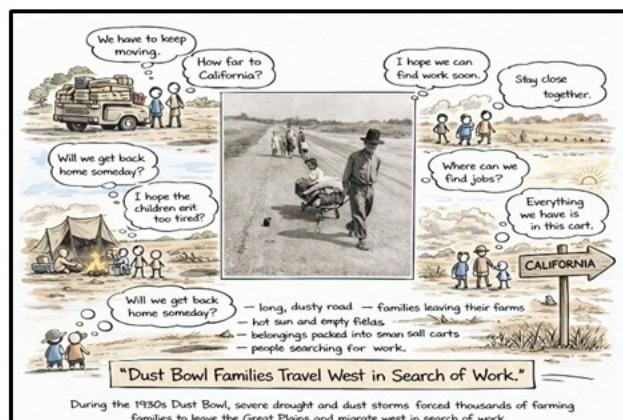
5. Share & Explain

Groups present their completed scenes and explain how the reading and image helped them infer what was happening beyond the frame.

In Action



Examples



Benefits

- ✓ Encourages historical inquiry
- ✓ Develops analytical thinking
- ✓ Promotes thoughtful discussion

Pipe Cleaner Processing

After
Reading

Twist learning into something meaningful.

Purpose

- ✓ Represent historical concepts visually
- ✓ Explain historical significance
- ✓ Communicate historical understanding

Steps

1. Prepare Materials

Provide a variety of pipe cleaners (and optional craft materials, if desired). Choose a reading with a clear person, event, object, or concept for students to represent.

2. Identify the Big Idea

Students choose an important person, event, object, or concept from the reading.

3. Create the Model

Students use pipe cleaners to build a simple model that symbolically represents their chosen topic.

4. Explain the Thinking

Students write a brief explanation describing:
what the model represents,
why they designed it that way, and
why it is historically significant.

5. Share & Discuss

Students present their models to a partner or small group, explaining how their model represents the key ideas from the reading.

In Action



Examples

- Civil Rights Movement → 🗑️ Broken Chain
Industrial Revolution → 🏭 Factory
Cold War → 🧱 Berlin Wall
Manifest Destiny → ➡️ Covered Wagon
Checks and Balances → ⚙️ Three connected gears
Supply and Demand → ⬆️ Two arrows
Space Race → 🚀 Rocket
Constitution → 📜 Scroll
Underground Railroad → ⭐ North Star
Great Depression → 🍞 Bread Line

Benefits

- ✓ Makes learning memorable
- ✓ Encourages creative thinking
- ✓ Reinforces historical understanding

Dialogue Detectives

After
Reading

Read. Discuss. Debate.

Purpose
✓ Analyze multiple perspectives ✓ Support claims with evidence ✓ Communicate historical reasoning
Steps
1. Choose a text This strategy works best with text that presents multiple perspectives or opposing viewpoints. Good choices include: Debates Conflicts Court cases Historical decisions Political disagreements Cause-and-effect events involving different groups 2. Choose the speakers Select two historical figures, groups, or opposing viewpoints from the reading. 3. Read for evidence Students identify what each side believed, wanted, or argued. 4. Write the dialogue. Students create a conversation using evidence from the text—not their imagination. 5. Perform and discuss. Partners read the dialogue aloud and discuss each perspective.

In Action	
	
Examples	
History	Federalists vs. Anti-Federalists • Patriots vs. Loyalists • North vs. South
Geography	Farmer vs. Conservationist • City Planner vs. Resident
Government	Plaintiff vs. Defendant • Majority vs. Minority Opinion
Economics	Consumer vs. Producer • Employer vs. Worker
Benefits	
✓ Strengthens historical reasoning ✓ Encourages respectful discussion ✓ Develops evidence-based arguments	

Changing History

After
Reading

Rethink the past. Reimagine the outcome.

Purpose

- ✓ Evaluate historical significance
- ✓ Analyze cause-and-effect relationships
- ✓ Justify historical conclusions

Steps

1. Read First

Have students study a historical event, person, or unit.

2. Identify a Turning Point

Students identify an important event or decision that significantly influenced what happened next.

3. Change History

Students change one event and predict how history might have unfolded differently.

4. Analyze the Impact

Students explain how their change would affect later people, events, decisions, or outcomes, using evidence from the reading to support their reasoning.

5. Share & Defend

Students share their alternate history and explain why their prediction is reasonable based on historical evidence.

In Action



What if slavery had never been allowed in the United States?

CAUSE

The Continental Congress outlawed slavery in the Declaration of Independence.

HISTORICAL EFFECT

1. The Southern economy never flourished.
2. The Civil War never happened.
3. African-American men would have gotten to vote decades earlier.

Examples

U.S. History

- What if the American colonies had lost the Revolutionary War?
- What if the Civil War had ended differently?

World Geography / World History

- What if the Roman Empire had never fallen?
- What if World War I had been avoided?

Texas History

- What if Texas had remained part of Mexico?
- What if oil had never been discovered at Spindletop?

Government / Civics

- What if the Constitution had never been ratified?
- What if there were no checks and balances?

Benefits

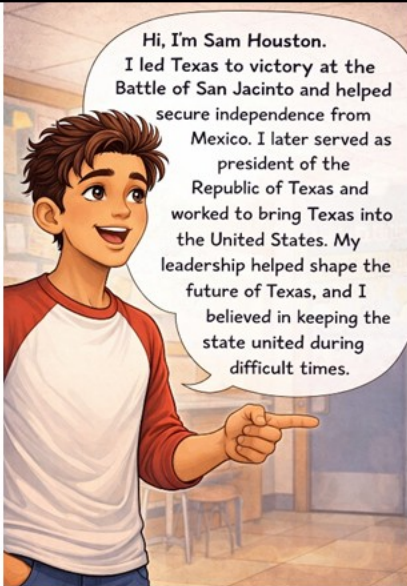
- ✓ Encourages higher-order thinking
- ✓ Deepens understanding of historical events
- ✓ Reinforces historical reasoning

Elevator Speech

After
Reading

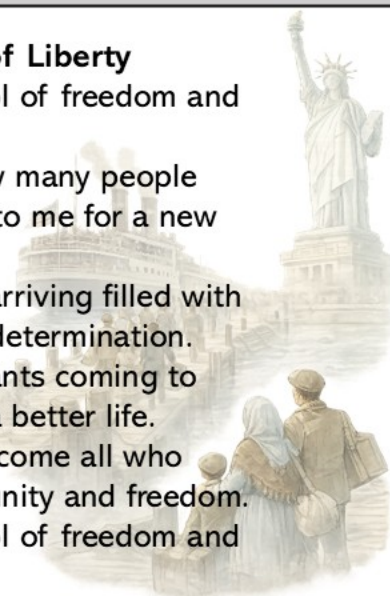
Summarize the story in seconds.

Purpose
✓ Communicate historical understanding ✓ Explain historical significance ✓ Support ideas with evidence
Steps
1. Read first Have students read about a historical figure. 2. Identify key ideas Students list 3–4 important accomplishments, actions, or contributions. 3. Plan the speech Students organize their ideas: • Who am I? • What did I do? • Why does it matter? 4. Write the speech Students write a short “elevator speech” in first person as the historical figure (3–5 sentences). 5. Keep it concise Remind students the speech should be about 30–60 seconds—only the most important information. 6. Share Students share their speeches with a partner or the class.

In Action
 Hi, I'm Sam Houston. I led Texas to victory at the Battle of San Jacinto and helped secure independence from Mexico. I later served as president of the Republic of Texas and worked to bring Texas into the United States. My leadership helped shape the future of Texas, and I believed in keeping the state united during difficult times.
Examples
U.S. History Frederick Douglass Eleanor Roosevelt World History Mansa Musa Atatürk Texas History Lorenzo de Zavala Juan Seguín Government / Civics Thurgood Marshall Sandra Day O'Connor
Benefits
✓ Builds speaking confidence ✓ Reinforces essential learning ✓ Improves academic communication

Summarize history through voice and perspective.

Purpose
✓ Interpret historical perspectives ✓ Communicate historical understanding ✓ Explain historical experiences
Steps
1. Read First Have students read a selection of text or complete research on a topic, event, or historical figure. 2. Take on a Perspective Students choose to write from the perspective of the person, event, object, or concept. 3. Complete the Poem Using the template, students complete each line with details and evidence from the reading. 4. Bring It to Life Students include thoughts, feelings, sensory details, and historical facts that accurately reflect their chosen perspective. 5. Share & Reflect Students share their poems and explain how the reading influenced their writing.

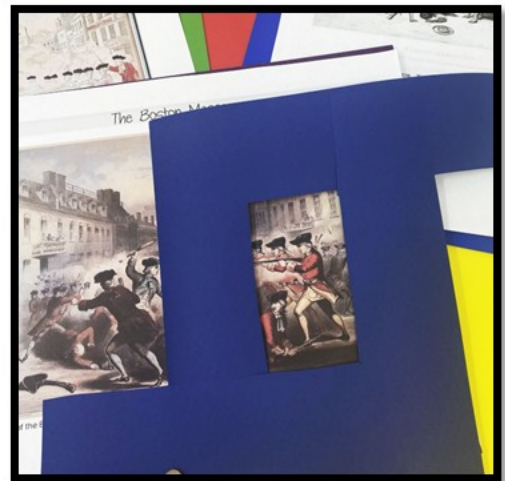
In Action
The Statue of Liberty I am a symbol of freedom and hope. I wonder how many people have looked to me for a new beginning. I hear ships arriving filled with dreams and determination. I see immigrants coming to America for a better life. I want to welcome all who seek opportunity and freedom. I am a symbol of freedom and hope. 
Examples
Events (empathy + cause/effect) The Dust Bowl, The Great Depression, The Civil Rights Movement, 9/11 Objects/Symbols (creativity + meaning) The Constitution, The Liberty Bell, A protest sign Concepts / Ideas (higher-level thinking) Freedom, Democracy, Slavery, Industrialization, Civil rights
Benefits
✓ Develops historical empathy ✓ Encourages perspective-taking ✓ Makes learning personally meaningful

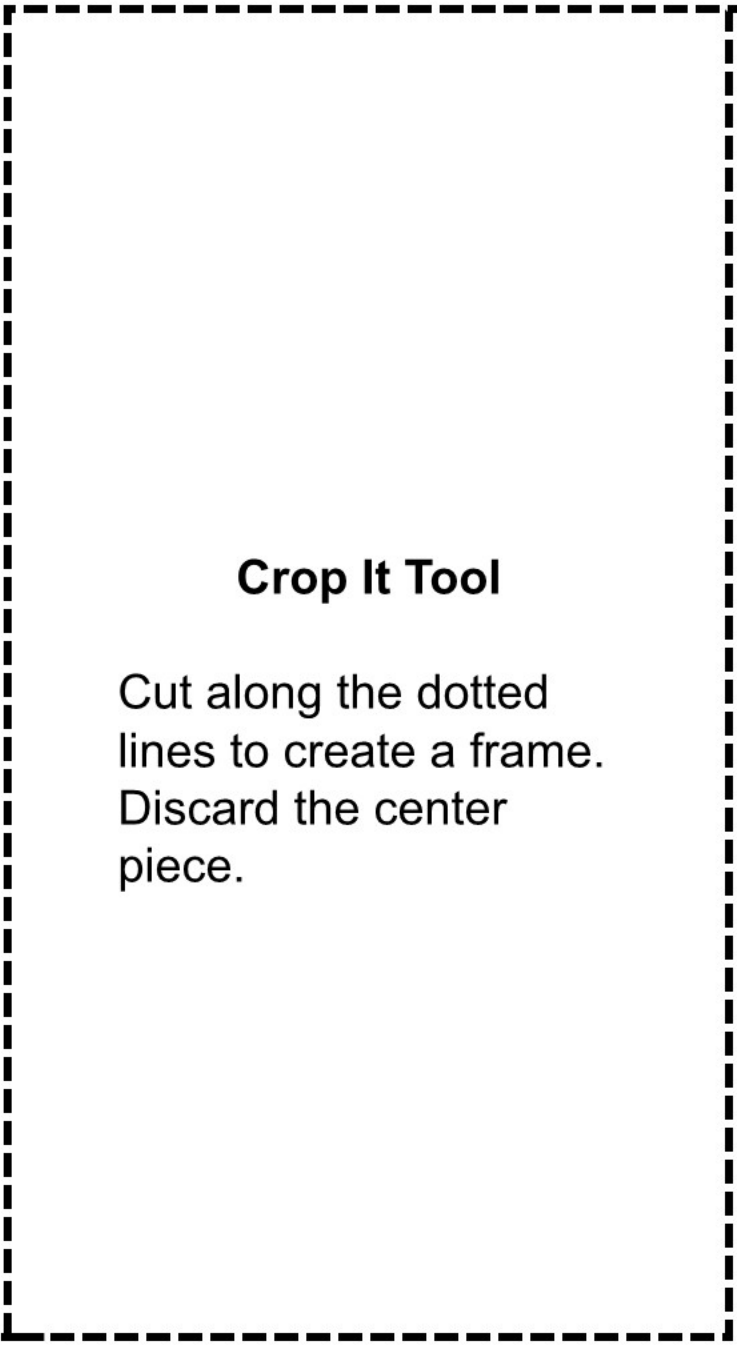
Strategy Templates & Tools

Crop-It Questions

Choose from the following questions for your students to use the Crop-It Tool.

- Crop to show what first caught your eye – Why did you first notice this part?
- Crop to show who or what this image is about. Why is this person or thing important?
- Crop to a clue that shows where this takes place. What do you think is happening?
- Crop to a clue that tells when this is happening. What helps us recognize specific times or eras?
- Crop to show the most important part of the image. Why is this part important?
- Crop to show tension or a problem in the image. Why is this important to the image or era?
- If you were to create a title for the image, what part of the image would you crop to highlight the title? What is the title you would create?
- Crop to a spot that you have a question about. What is your question?
- Crop to a spot that this image tells us about the past. How does it show the past?
- Crop to a place where you would add something to this image. What would you add and why?
- Crop to a spot that shows the emotion expressed in the image. What emotions are you seeing? Why are they important to the image?
- Crop to a spot that shows action. What action is occurring and why is it important to the image?





Crop It Tool

Cut along the dotted
lines to create a frame.
Discard the center
piece.

Image Analysis

Directions: Examine the picture to answer the following questions.

Step One

Observation

Study the photograph for 2-3 minutes. Look at the picture as a whole and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photograph into quadrants (4 parts) and study each section to see what new details become visible.

Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

People

Objects

Activities

Step Two

Inference

Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Step Three

Questions

What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

Where would you find answers to them?

Image Analysis

Directions: After completing the photo analysis, read about the picture. Find at least 6 details in the text that are also in the pictures. Put a * by any new details you discovered after reading. When you are finished, answer the questions.

1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.

1. What can you learn just by looking at the pictures?
2. How do the pictures help you with the reading?
3. Imagine that you could this scene. What would you hear? What would you smell? What else might you see?

Question Dice

Directions: Roll the dice and create questions by combining each die.

Who	had
What	did
Where	could
When	would
Why	should
How / Which	was / were

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Question Dice

Directions: Roll the dice and create questions by combining each die.

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What	did
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Question Dice

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Who	had
What	did
Where	could
When	would
Why	should
How / Which	was / were

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Text Coding

✓ I know this

X This is not what I expected

★ This is important

? I have a question about this

?? I am really confused

!!! This surprises me

○ This is new information

RR I have to reread this section

Social Styles Success®

Text Coding

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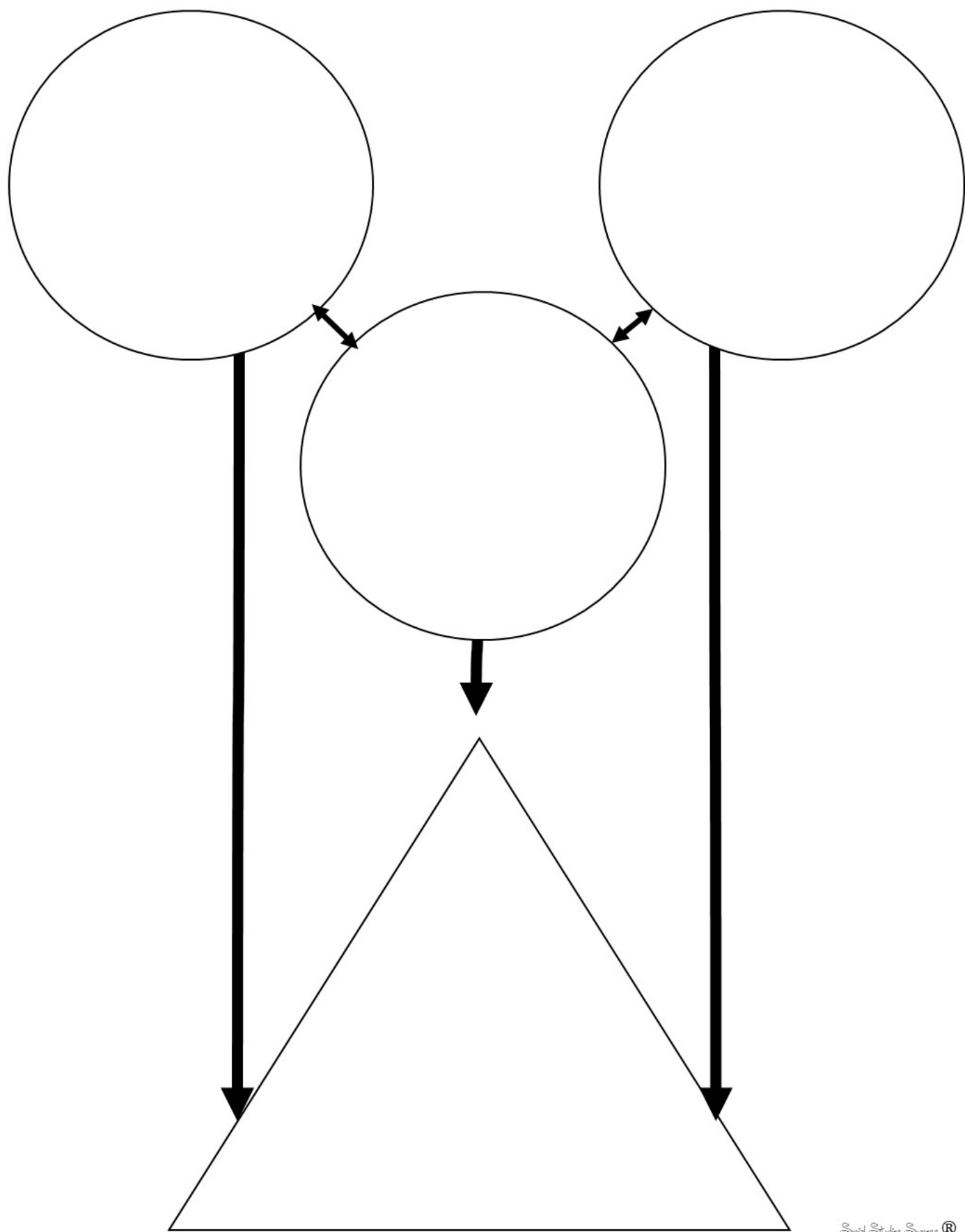
!!! This surprises me

○ This is new information

RR I have to reread this section

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Connections Across Time



Problem - Solution

Problem

A large empty rectangular box with a black border and a blue glow, intended for writing the problem.

Steps to
Solution

A large empty rectangular box with a black border and a blue glow, intended for writing the steps to the solution.

When these
steps have
been taken,
what
happens
next?

A large empty rectangular box with a black border and a blue glow, intended for writing what happens next.

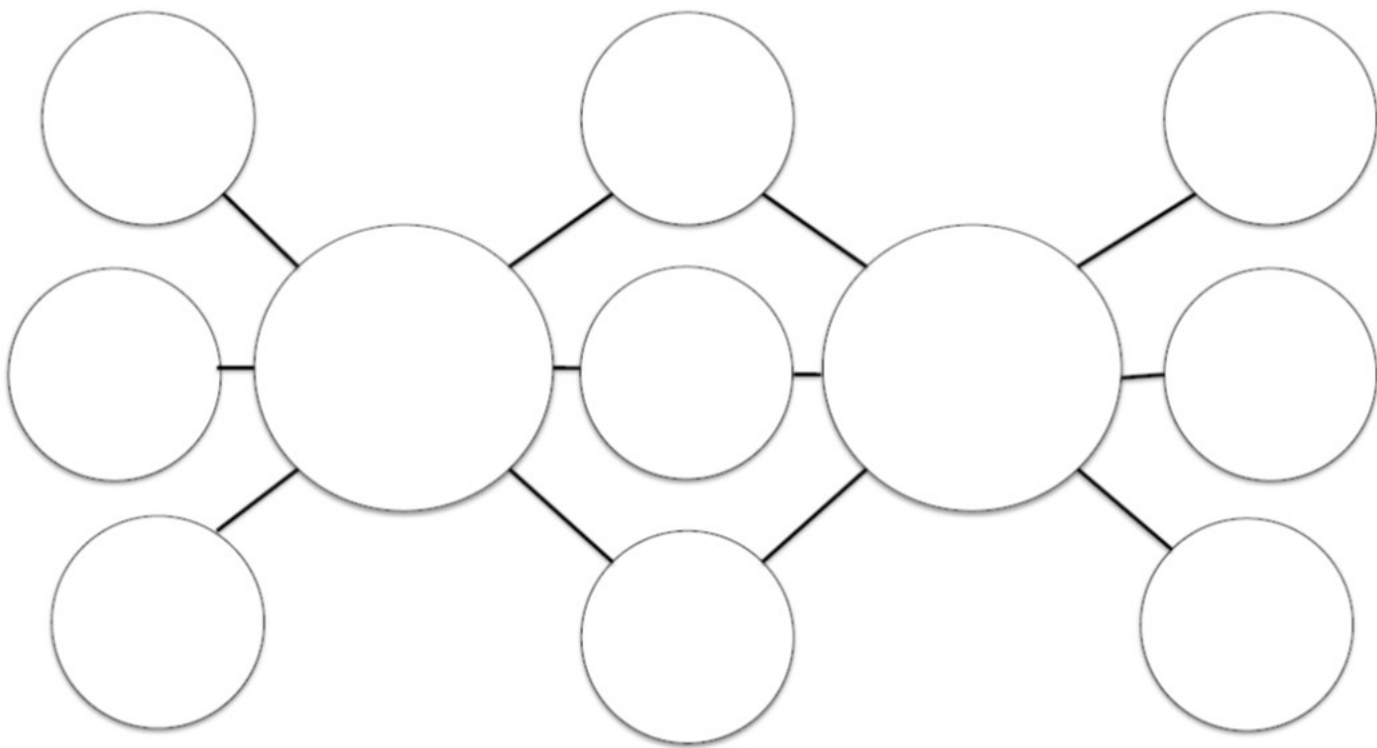
Double Bubble

Directions: Compare two ideas with this double bubble graphic organizer.

Differences

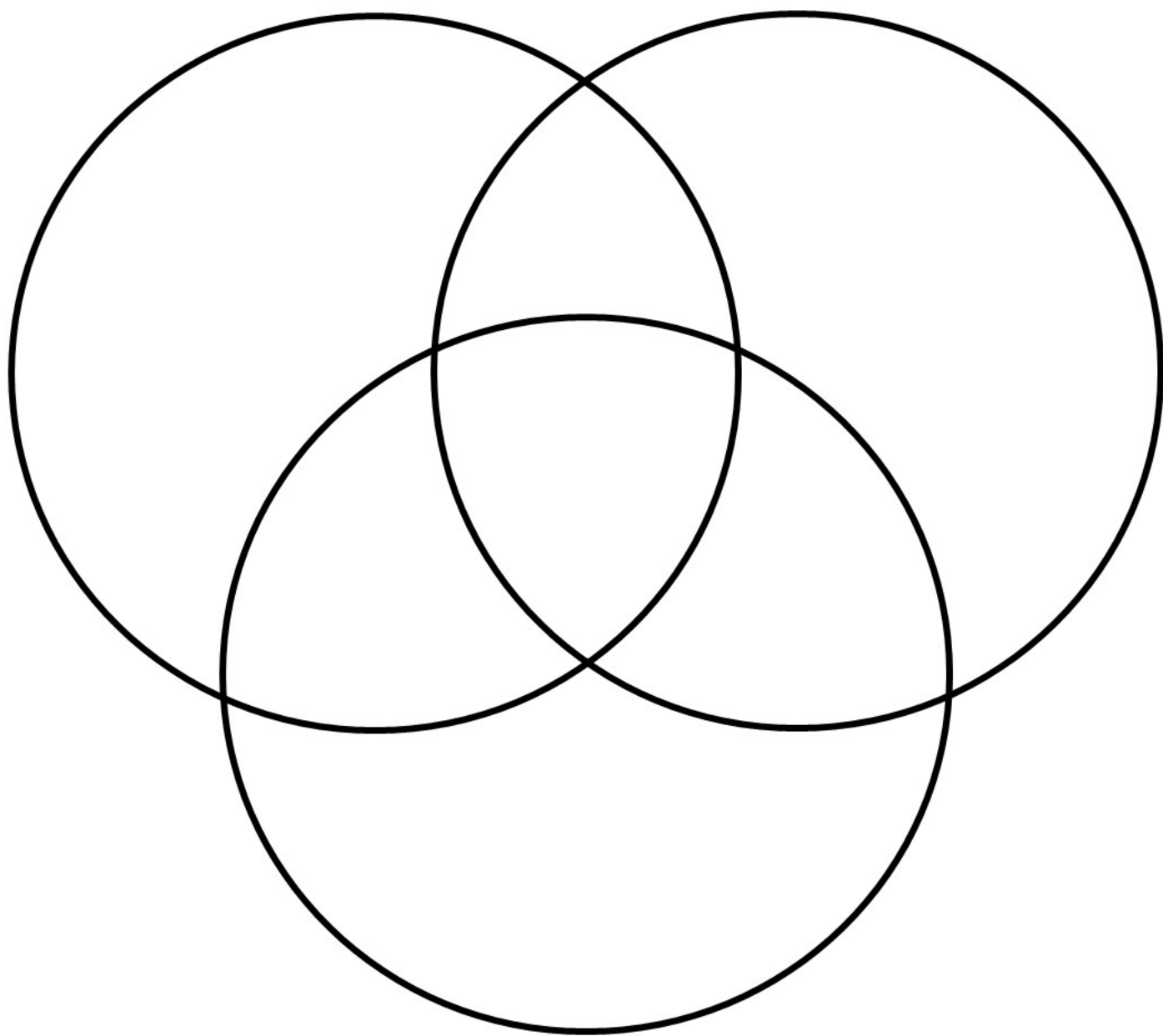
Similarities

Differences

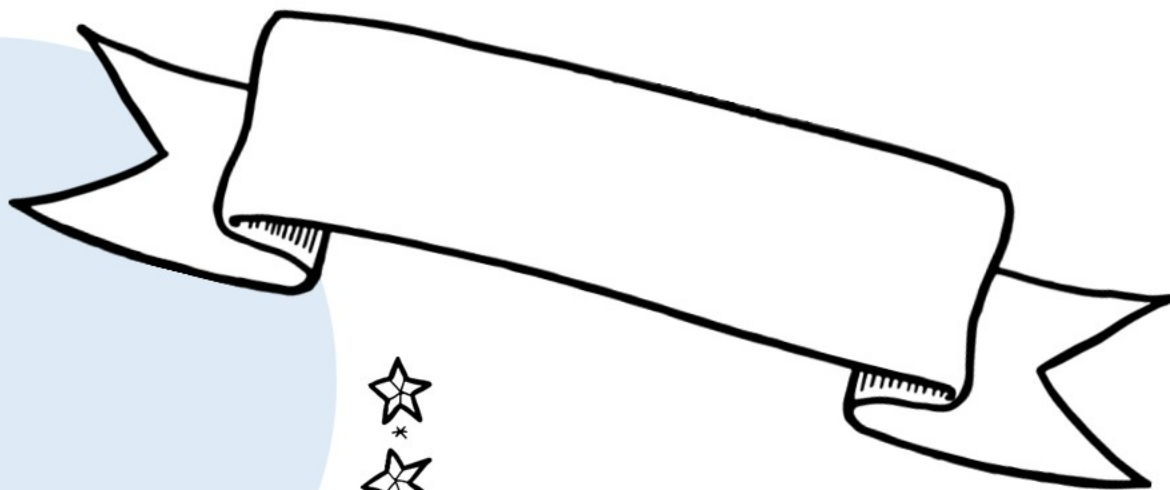


Summary: Write a paragraph comparing the two different topics. Include key ideas from your Double Bubble.

Triple Venn Diagram



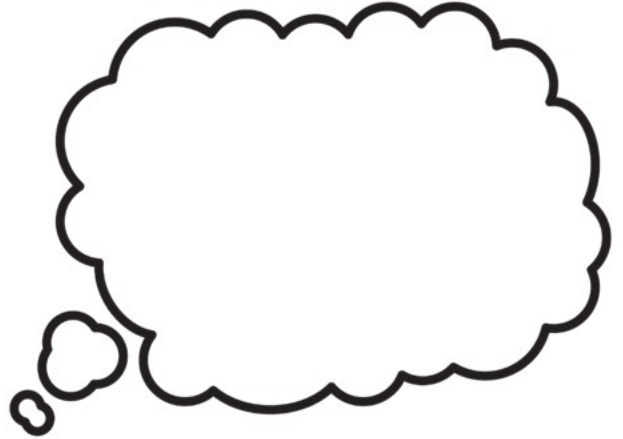
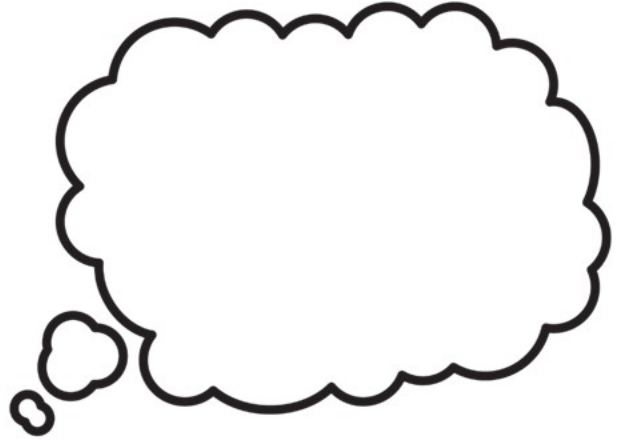
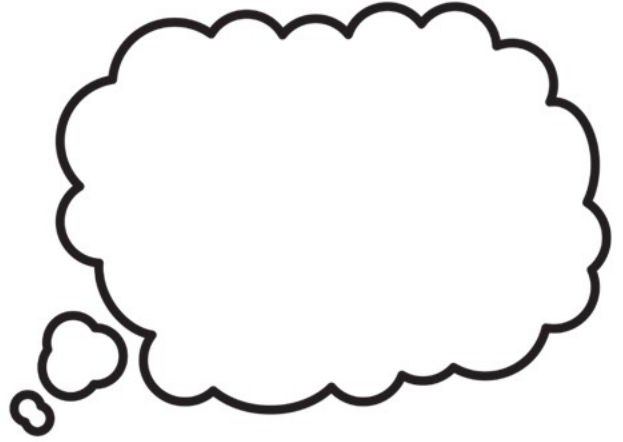
Doodle Notes



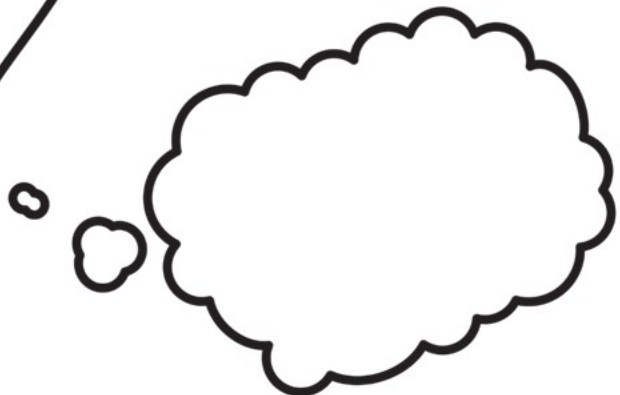
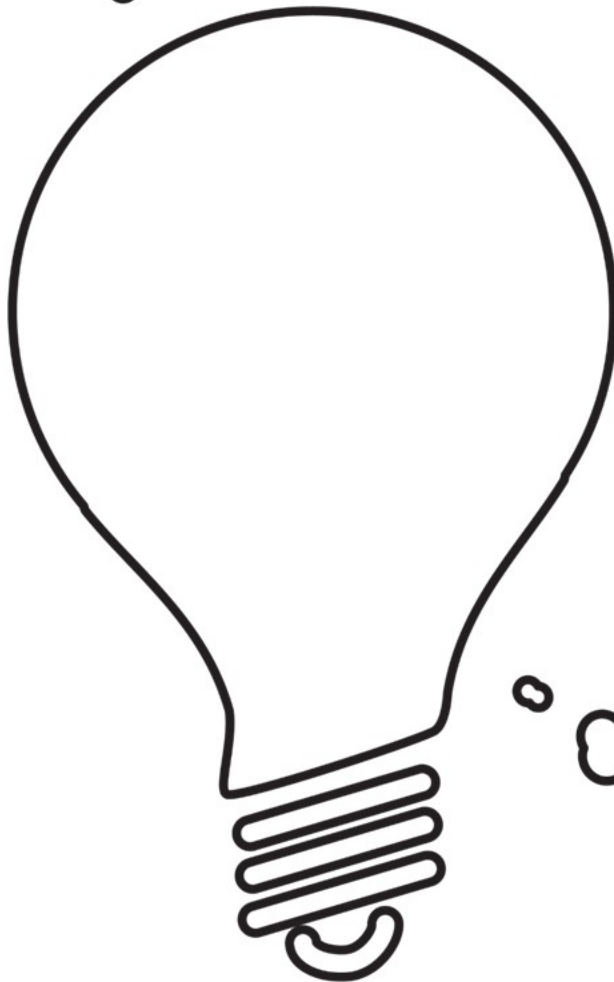
Four sets of horizontal lines for writing, each preceded by a small stick figure icon. The first and third figures have a question mark above their heads, while the second and fourth have their arms raised.



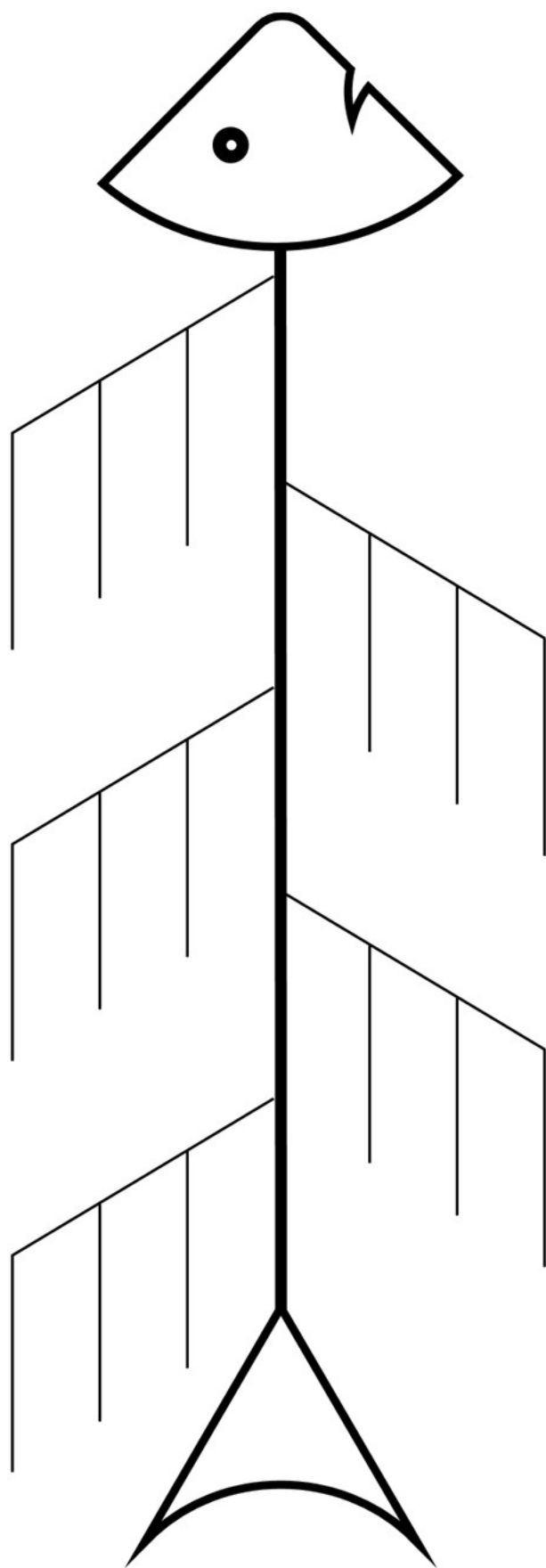
Doodle Notes



Doodle Notes



Fishbone Organizer



Gist

Directions: use the graphic organizer to create a paragraph with exactly 20 words to summarize the main ideas of the topic.

Somebody Wanted...

Somebody...	
somewhere...	
wanted...	
but...	
so they...	
then...	
and so...	
SUMMARY:	

Summarization Star

1
word
WHERE?

5 words **WHY DID IT HAPPEN?**

2 words **WHAT HAPPENED?**

4 words
WHEN?

3 words
WHO WAS INVOLVED?

Changing History

 **What if...** _____



ORIGINAL EVENT

(What actually happened?)

CHANGE

(What is different?)



CAUSE

(Why would this change happen?)



HISTORICAL EFFECTS

(What would happen next?)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Decision Tree

Question

Alternative #1

Alternative #2

Alternative #3

Positive

1.

2.

3.

Positive

1.

2.

3.

Positive

1.

2.

3.

Negative

1.

2.

3.

Negative

1.

2.

3.

Negative

1.

2.

3.

Results of Decision:

Image Analysis

Directions: Examine the picture to answer the following questions.

Step One		
Observation	Study the photograph for 2-3 minutes. Look at the picture as a whole and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photograph into quadrants (4 parts) and study each section to see what new details become visible. Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.	
People	Objects	Activities
Step Two		
Inference	Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph. 1. 2. 3.	
Step Three		
Questions	What questions does this photograph raise in your mind? Where would you find answers to them?	

Image Analysis

Directions: After completing the photo analysis, read about the picture. Find at least 6 details in the text that are also in the pictures. Put a * by any new details you discovered after reading. When you are finished, answer the questions.

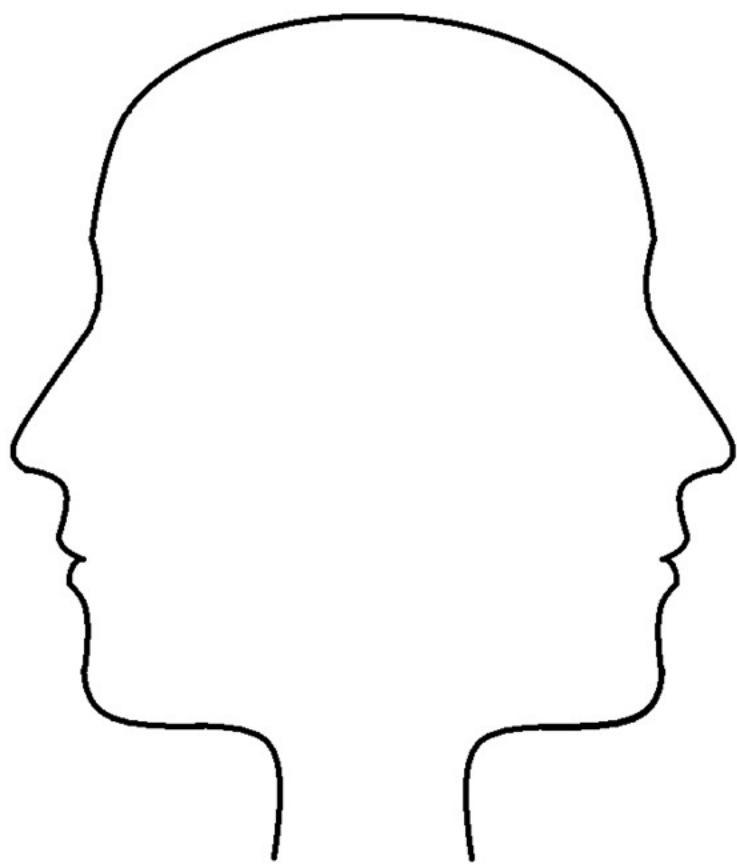
1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.

1. What can you learn just by looking at the pictures?

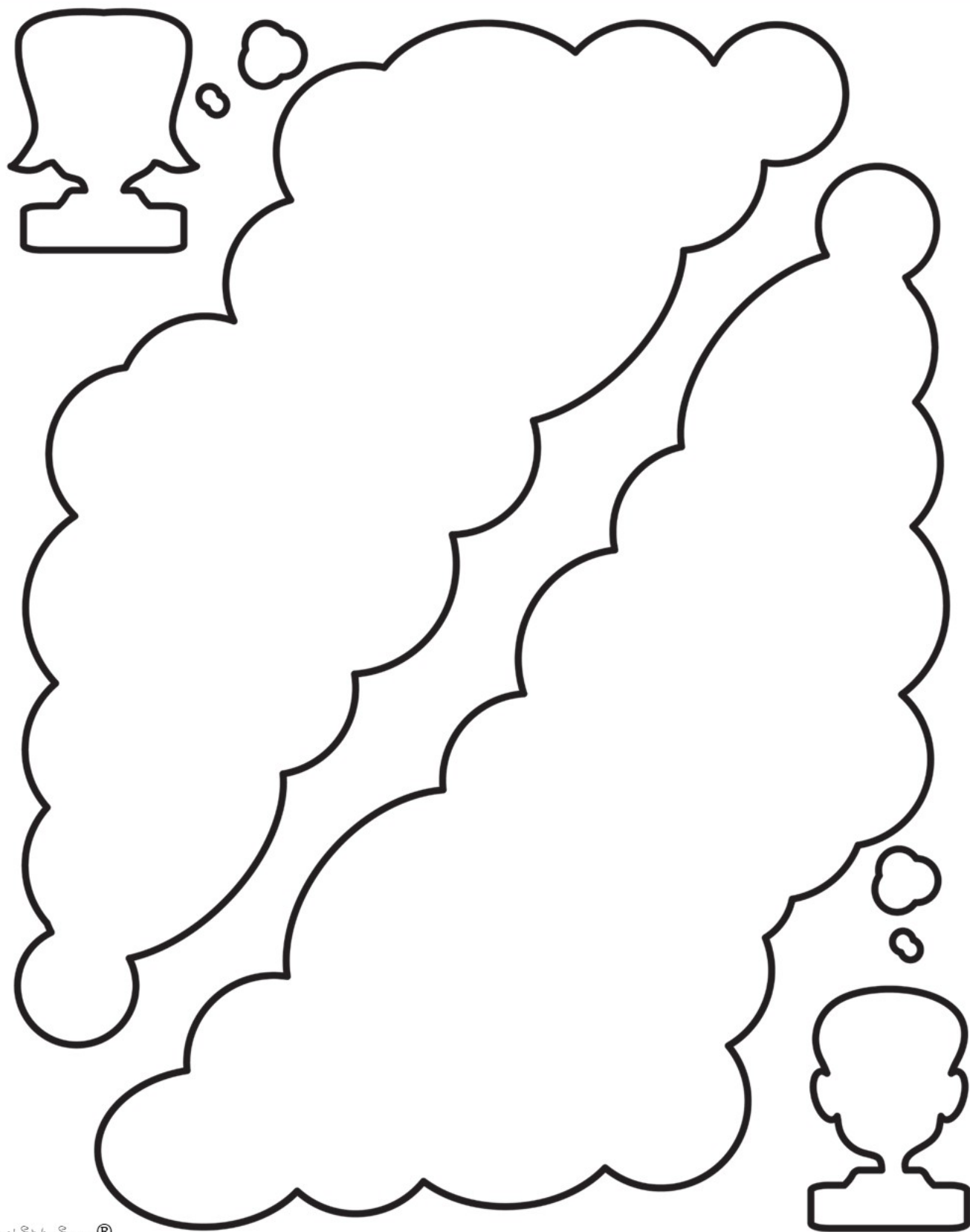
2. How do the pictures help you with the reading?

3. Imagine that you could this scene. What would you hear? What would you smell? What else might you see?

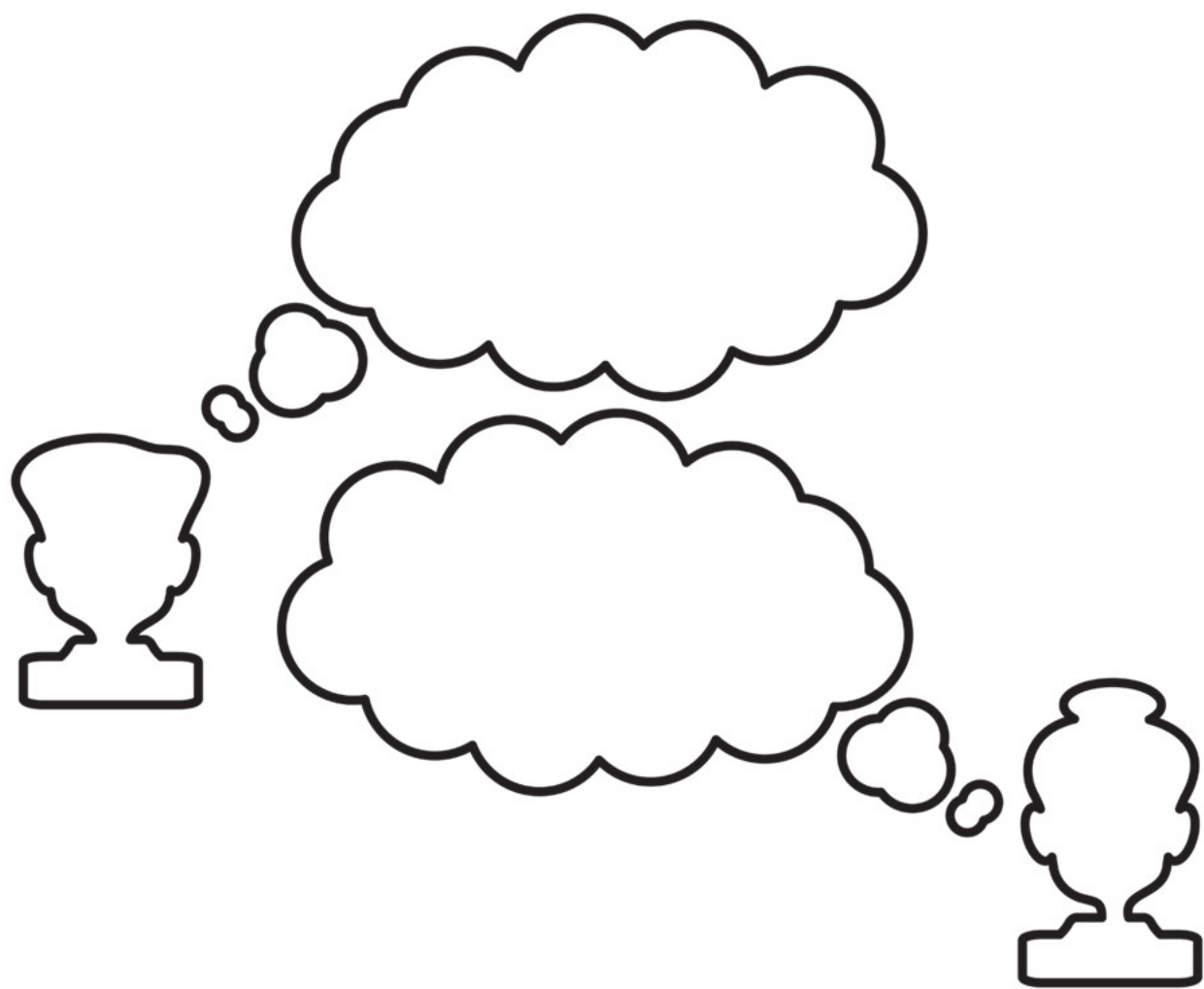
Janus Figure



Point of View

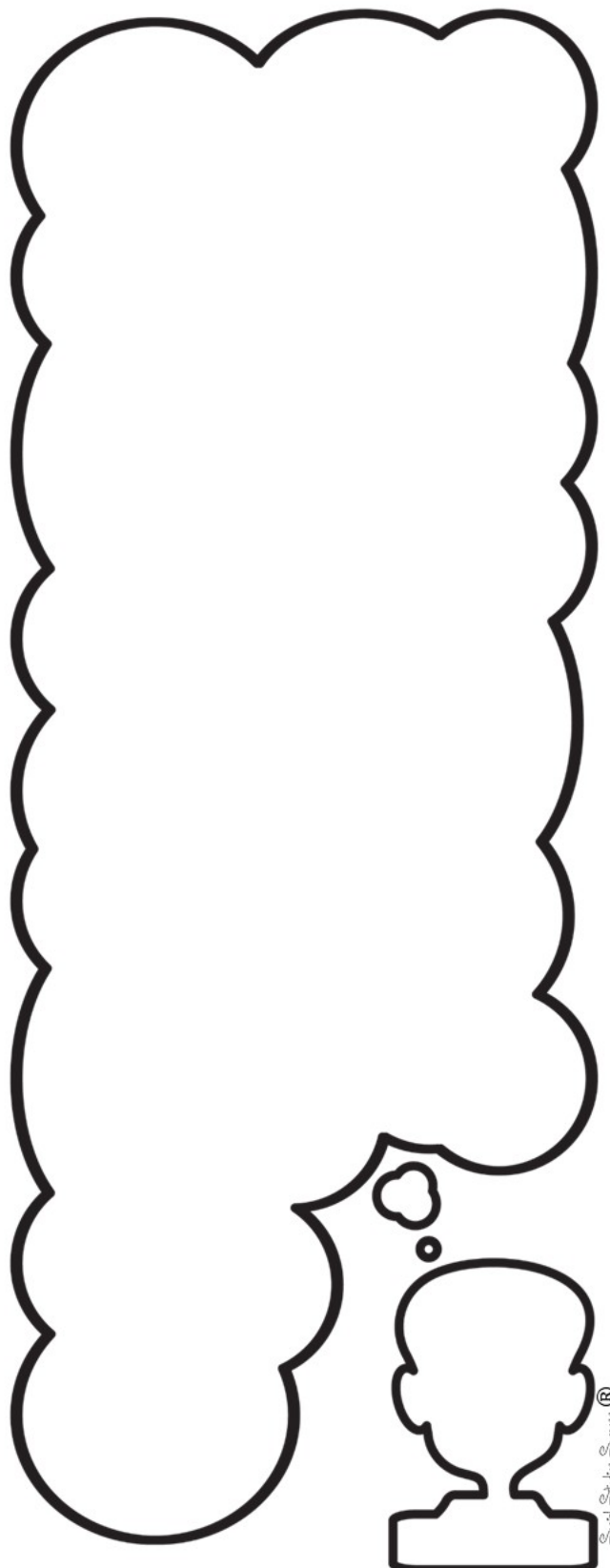
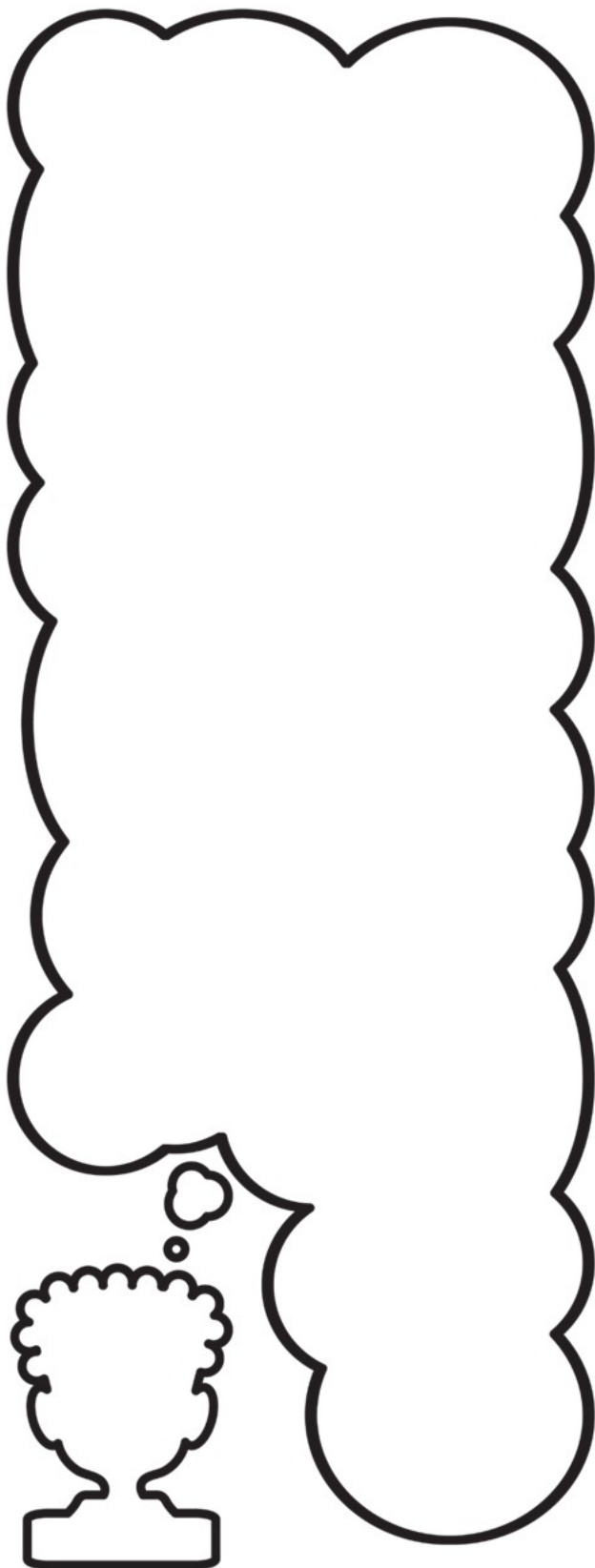


Point of View

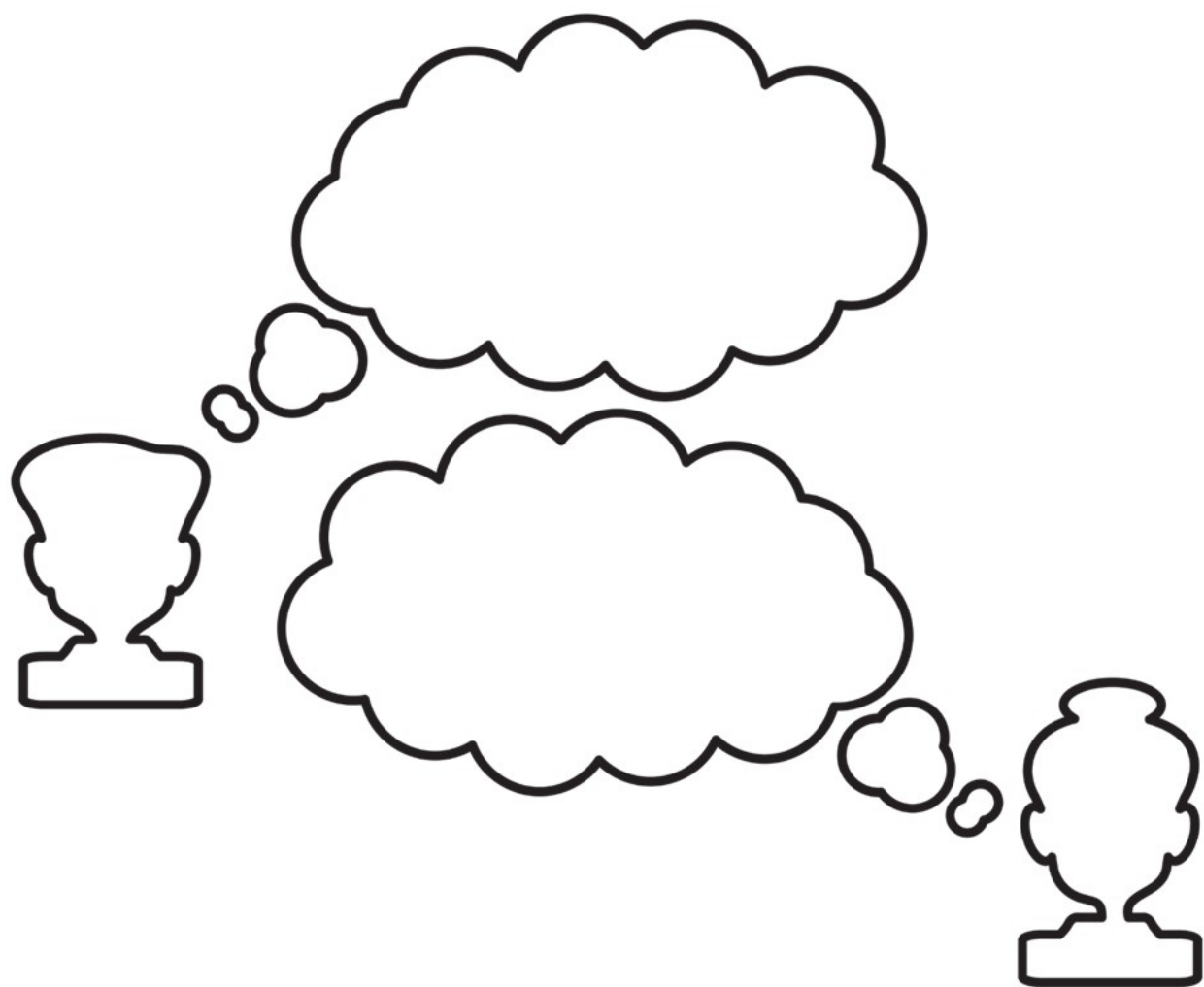


A large empty rectangular box for writing.

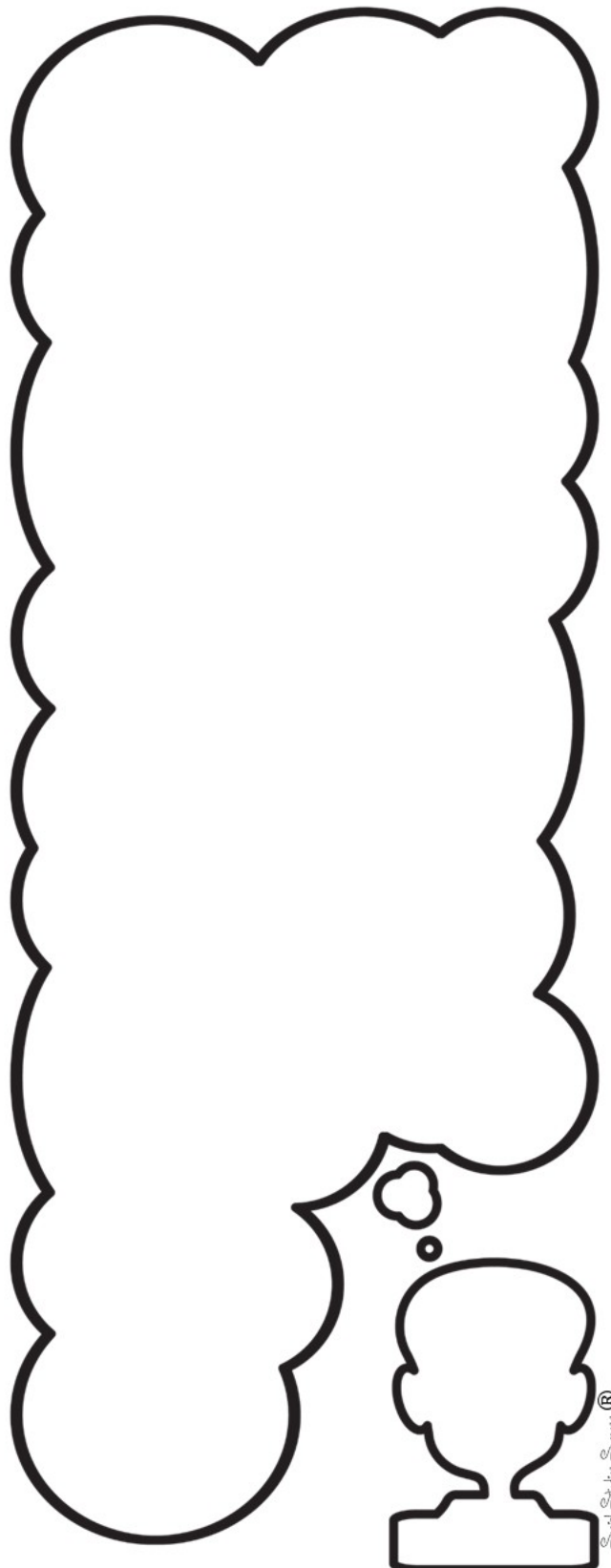
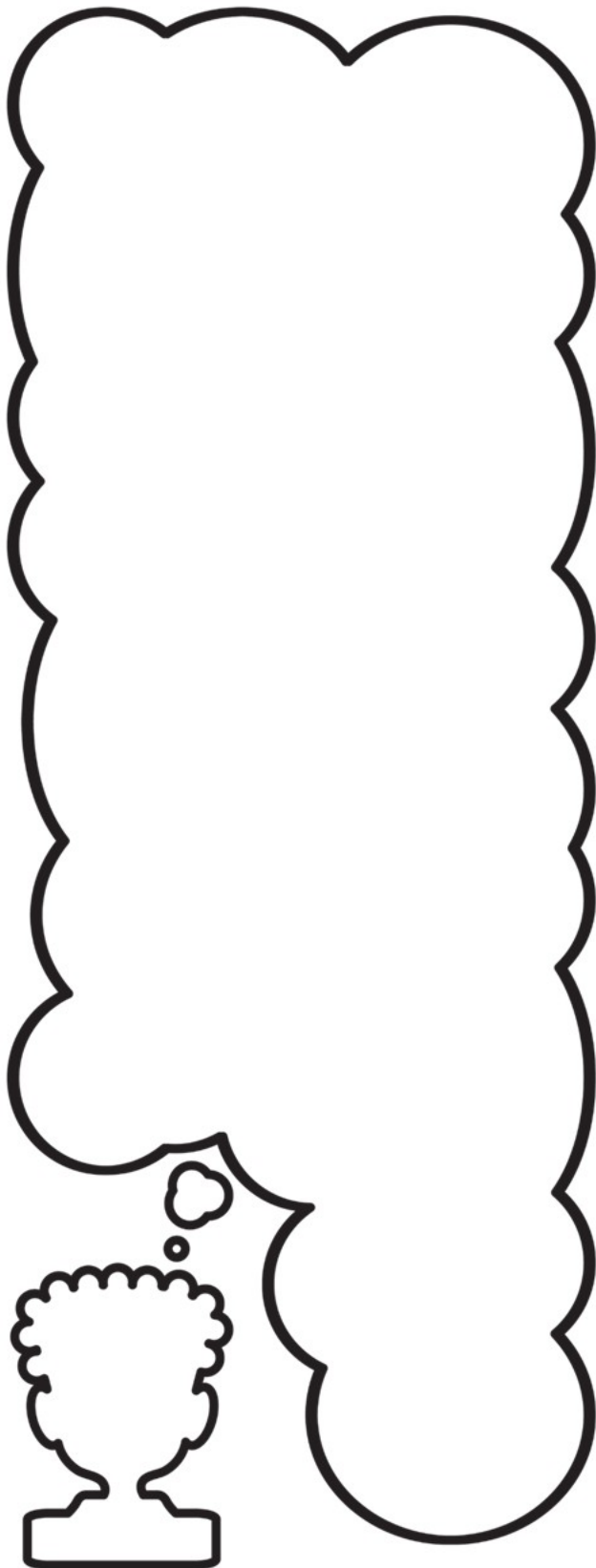
Point of View



Point of View



Point of View



Opinion/Proof

Prove this statement true with 3 facts from the reading.

Opinion

Proof



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Opinion/Proof

Prove this statement false with 3 facts from the reading.

Opinion

Proof

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Alpha Blocks

Topic:

ABCD

EFGH

IJKL

MNOP

QRST

UVWXYZ

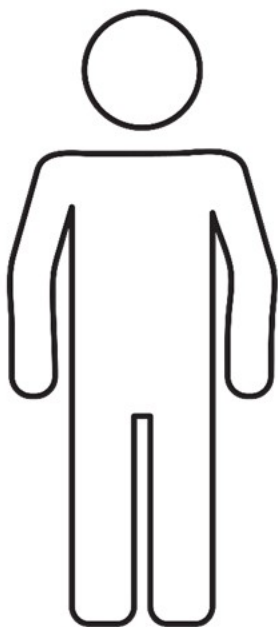
Alpha Boxes

Topic:

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P
Q	R	S	T
U	V	W	XYZ

Character Map

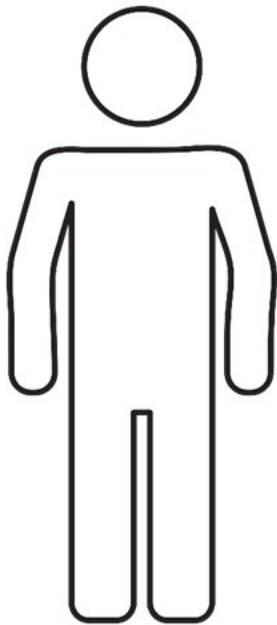
1. On the left side, write four or five factual statements that represent key events/accomplishments in the person's life.
2. On the right, write four or five interpretative statements to describe the person.
3. On the head draw an appropriate hat that best identifies the person's role in history.
4. By the feet, write an original statement that evaluates this person's role and significance in history.



Scissors icon

Character Map

1. On the left side, write four or five factual statements that represent key events/accomplishments in the person's life.
2. On the right, write four or five interpretative statements to describe the person.
3. On the head draw an appropriate hat that best identifies the person's role in history.
4. By the feet, write an original statement that evaluates this person's role and significance in history.



Scissors icon

Gist

Directions: use the graphic organizer to create a paragraph with exactly 20 words to summarize the main ideas of the topic.



I Am Poem

I am _____
I wonder _____
I hear _____
I see _____
I want _____
I am _____

Small Steps Success®



I Am Poem

I pretend _____
I feel _____
I touch _____
I worry _____
I cry _____
I am _____

Small Steps Success®



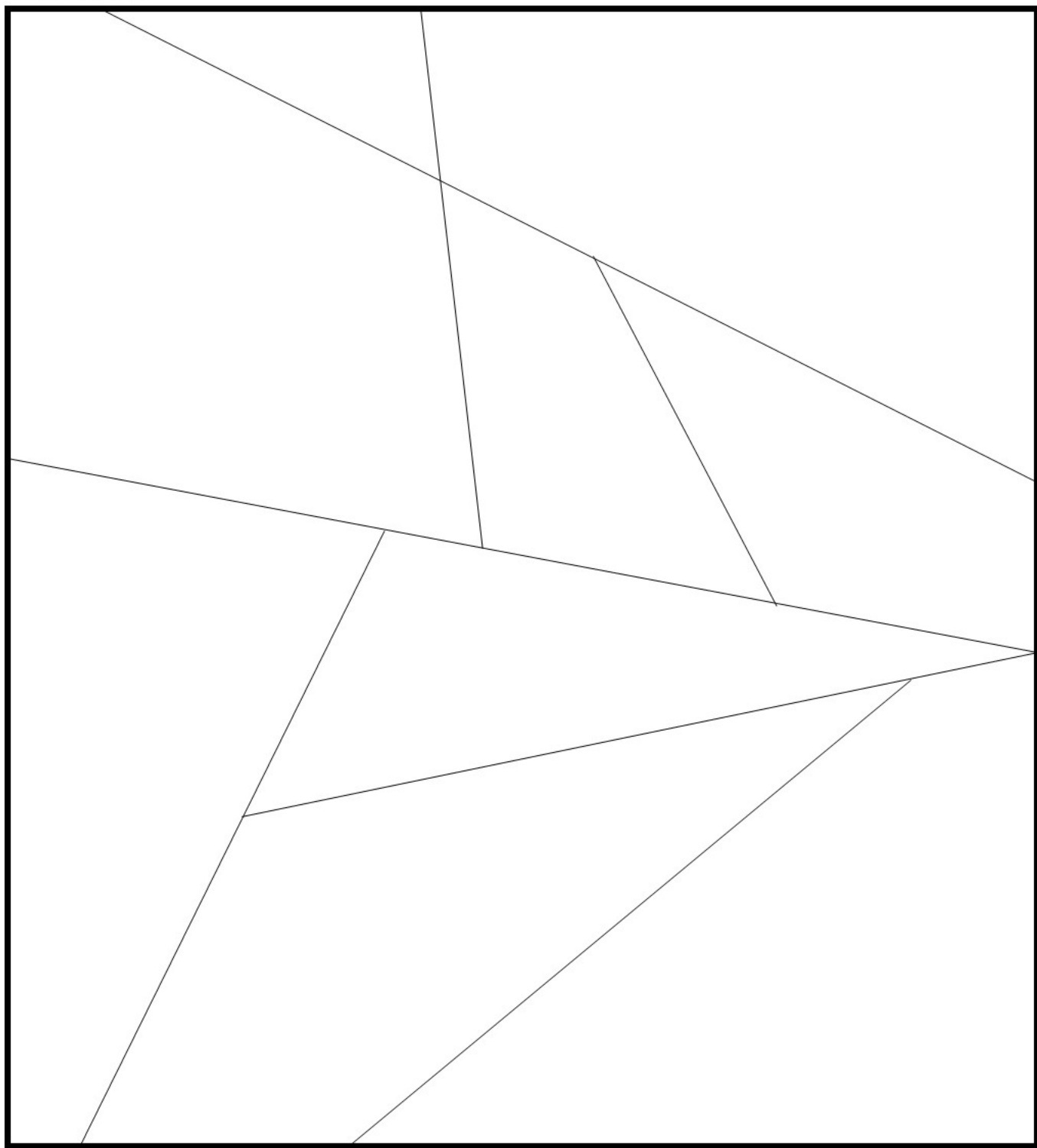
I Am Poem

I understand _____
I say _____
I dream _____
I try _____
I hope _____
I am _____

Small Steps Success®

Mosaic

Directions: create a mosaic to represent the key ideas of your topic. Each space should have a separate image with a summary sentence. Taken together, all of the spaces should represent the same theme.



I never
thought
that...



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I can relate
to this
because...



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I thought....



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I was
imagining
that...



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I can't
believe...



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What I
didn't
know
was...



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I think
the
author...



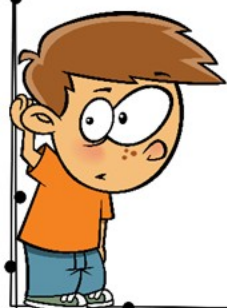
Social Studies Success®

I wonder
why...



Social Studies Success®

I really
don't
understand...



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What
if...



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I was really
interested
that....



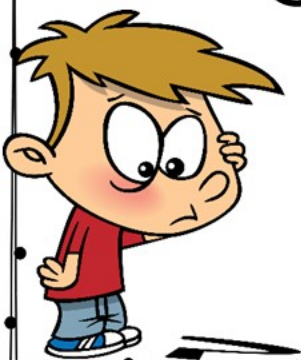
Social Styles Success®

When I
read this I
felt...



Social Styles Success®

I was
surprised
by...



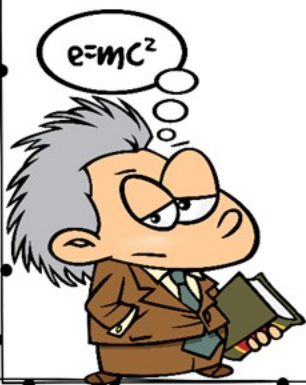
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I noticed
that...



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I learned...



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The part that
makes a real
picture in my
mind is...



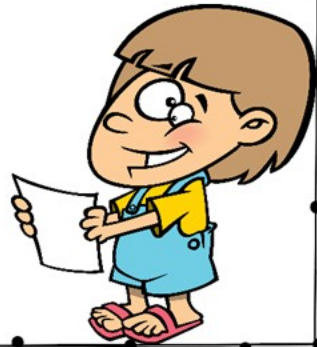
Social Styling Success®

I find...



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An interesting
sentence is ...



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I was
impressed
by....



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I like the
way...



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The most
important
part is...



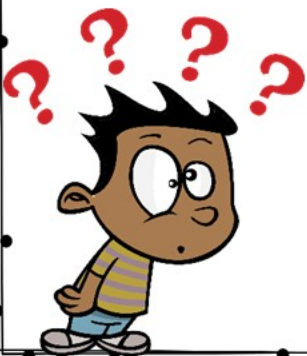
Social Studies Success ®

Some new
ideas
include...



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I am
confused
by....



Social Studies Success ®

This
information is
important
because...



Social Studies Success ®

Professional Resources

The instructional strategies in this book are informed by professional literature on social studies instruction, content-area literacy, comprehension, discussion, differentiation, and student engagement.

Agarwal, P. K., & Bain, P. M. (2019). *Powerful teaching: Unleash the science of learning*. Jossey-Bass.

Hill, J. D., & Flynn, K. M. (2006). *Classroom instruction that works with English language learners*. ASCD.

Hoyt, L. (1999). *Revisit, reflect, retell: Strategies for improving reading comprehension*. Heinemann.

Marzano, R. J. (2004). *Building background knowledge for academic achievement: Research on what works in schools*. ASCD.

McLaughlin, M., & Allen, M. B. (2002). *Guided comprehension: A teaching model for grades 3–8*. International Reading Association.

Ogle, D., Klemp, R. M., & McBride, B. (2007). *Building literacy in social studies: Strategies for improving comprehension and critical thinking*. ASCD.

Richard-Amato, P. A. (1988). *Making it happen: Interaction in the second language classroom*. Longman.

Seidlitz, J., & Perryman, B. (2011). *Seven steps to a language-rich, interactive classroom*. Canter Press.

Tomlinson, C. A. (1999). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. ASCD.

Tovani, C. (2004). *Do I really have to teach reading? Content comprehension, grades 6–12*. Stenhouse Publishers.

Walsh, J. A., & Sattes, B. D. (2005). *Quality questioning: Research-based practice to engage every learner*. Corwin Press.

Wexler, N. (2019). *The knowledge gap: The hidden cause of America's broken education system—and how to fix it*. Avery.

Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design* (Expanded 2nd ed.). ASCD.

The Social Studies Success Philosophy

At Social Studies Success®, I believe effective Social Studies instruction is built on a few simple, but powerful principles.

- ✓ Students need to be engaged to learn.
—Schlechty's *Design Qualities of engagement*
- ✓ All students can learn – we just need to support them in different ways. —Seidlitz's *Seven Steps*
- ✓ Students need continuous opportunities to review content through games and engaging activities.
—Himmele's *Total Participation Techniques*
- ✓ Writing is essential for learning, not just assessment.
—Daniels' *Content Area Writing*
- ✓ Vocabulary instruction must be intentional and engaging.
—Marzano *Academic Vocabulary*
- ✓ History should not be trivial pursuit – dig deeper and teach with essential questions and enduring understandings.
—Wiggins & McTighe *Essential Questions*
- ✓ Students are social – purposeful talk is crucial to learning.
—Walsh *Quality Questioning*
- ✓ Students need to read in Social Studies – reading informational text cannot be mastered without constant practice.
—Kinsella's *Considerate Text*
- ✓ “Soft skills” of collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity are essential to future success in the job market.
—Muir *Reasons Millennials Get Fired*
- ✓ The best way to improve reading comprehension and scores, is to focus on building knowledge through Social Studies instruction.
—Wexler *The Knowledge Gap*
- ✓ Heavy reliance on digital technology can weaken critical thinking, focus, and literacy – students learn best with pen and paper.
—Horvath *The Digital Delusion*



Dawn Viñas is an educator, author, and national presenter with more than 20 years of experience helping teachers create engaging, meaningful Social Studies classrooms. She has served as a classroom teacher, instructional coach, curriculum coordinator, university instructor, and professional development consultant. She founded **Social Studies Success®** with one mission: **Helping teachers develop historical thinkers through practical, engaging instruction.** Today, Dawn supports educators across the United States through classroom resources, curriculum support, and professional learning.