

# Literacy Strategies for *Social Studies*



# Three Stages of Reading

This manual provides engaging, purposeful reading strategies that create a rich learning experience in Social Studies. It follows the Content Literacy model of:



## Before Reading (Pre-Reading)

A short, engaging activity at the start of a lesson helps students preview key concepts and activate prior knowledge. This step builds background and prepares students for the content.



## During Reading

Students use active reading strategies and graphic organizers to take notes and record key ideas. These strategies help students make meaning from what they read. This portion of the manual is divided between active reading strategies and graphic organizers based on Social Studies skills.



## After Reading (Processing)

Students complete a processing task that promotes higher-order thinking and creativity. These activities help students apply, synthesize, and extend their learning.



## Using This Manual

This manual is organized around these three stages and includes multiple strategies for each step to support students in reading informational text. The most effective use of these strategies comes from **purposeful selection**. Choose strategies that best match your learners and closely align with the concept being taught.

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Before  
Reading

## Before Reading Strategies

### Minimal Prep

| Page | Strategy           | Helps Students...                         |
|------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 2    | Analogies          | Connect new learning to prior knowledge.  |
| 3    | Anticipation Guide | Challenge misconceptions before reading.  |
| 4    | Four Corner Debate | Discuss multiple viewpoints.              |
| 5    | Fast Facts         | Organize background knowledge.            |
| 6    | Image Analysis     | Observe and infer from historical images. |

### Moderate Prep

| Page | Strategy                | Helps Students...               |
|------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 7    | Book Bits               | Build curiosity before reading. |
| 8    | Character Quotes        | Infer historical perspectives.  |
| 9    | Card Sort               | Categorize key concepts.        |
| 10   | Predict This            | Preview vocabulary visually.    |
| 11   | Primary Source Snapshot | Analyze historical evidence.    |

### Higher Prep

| Page | Strategy               | Helps Students...                  |
|------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
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| 13   | Crop-It                | Focus on important visual details. |
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| 16   | Artifact Examination   | Explore history through artifacts. |



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**During  
Reading**

## During Reading Strategies

### Minimal Prep

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|------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 17   | Think Aloud         | Monitor thinking while reading.      |
| 18   | WRAP                | Read collaboratively with a partner. |
| 19   | C-R-R               | Retell key ideas while reading.      |
| 20   | Three-Minute Pauses | Pause and process learning.          |

### Moderate Prep

| Page | Strategy      | Helps Students...                 |
|------|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| 21   | Text Coding   | Monitor comprehension.            |
| 22   | Annolighting  | Highlight with purpose.           |
| 23   | SNOTS Notes   | Record thinking while reading.    |
| 24   | Hashtag Notes | Summarize the main idea.          |
| 25   | Just One      | Identify the most important idea. |

### Higher Prep

| Page | Strategy         | Helps Students...                 |
|------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 26   | RAP-Q            | Paraphrase and question the text. |
| 27   | Question Dice    | Generate meaningful questions.    |
| 28   | Beat the Teacher | Develop higher-level questions.   |
| 29   | Pattern Puzzles  | Organize information logically.   |
| 30   | Cartoon Capers   | Visualize the reading.            |



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Active  
Note Making

## Active Note Making Strategies

### Sequencing Skills

| Page | Strategy                | Helps Students...                          |
|------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 31   | Cartoon Capers          | Sequence historical events.                |
| 32   | Connections Across Time | Connect events across time.                |
| 33   | Cause & Effect          | Explain cause-and-effect relationships.    |
| 34   | Problem–Solution        | Analyze problems and historical solutions. |

### Categorization Skills

| Page | Strategy            | Helps Students...              |
|------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| 35   | Double Bubble       | Compare two concepts visually. |
| 36   | Triple Venn Diagram | Compare multiple concepts.     |

### Text-Dependent Skills

| Page  | Strategy                    | Helps Students...                      |
|-------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 37    | GIST                        | Summarize key ideas.                   |
| 38    | Somebody–Wanted–But–So–Then | Summarize historical events.           |
| 39    | Summarization Star          | Organize important details.            |
| 40    | Fishbone Organizer          | Identify supporting details.           |
| 41    | Mind Map                    | Connect related ideas.                 |
| 42–43 | Doodle Notes                | Organize learning visually.            |
| 44    | Sketch Notes                | Capture understanding through visuals. |

### Evidence-Based Skills

| Page | Strategy          | Helps Students...                          |
|------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 45   | Opinion Proof     | Support claims with evidence.              |
| 46   | Janus Figure      | Examine multiple perspectives.             |
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| 49   | Decision Tree     | Evaluate options and consequences.         |
| 50   | Changing History  | Analyze historical decisions and outcomes. |

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After  
Reading

## After Reading Strategies

### Minimal Prep

| Page | Strategy              | Helps Students...           |
|------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 51   | Alpha Blocks          | Review key concepts.        |
| 52   | GIST                  | Summarize essential ideas.  |
| 53   | Pick a Card, Any Card | Reflect through discussion. |

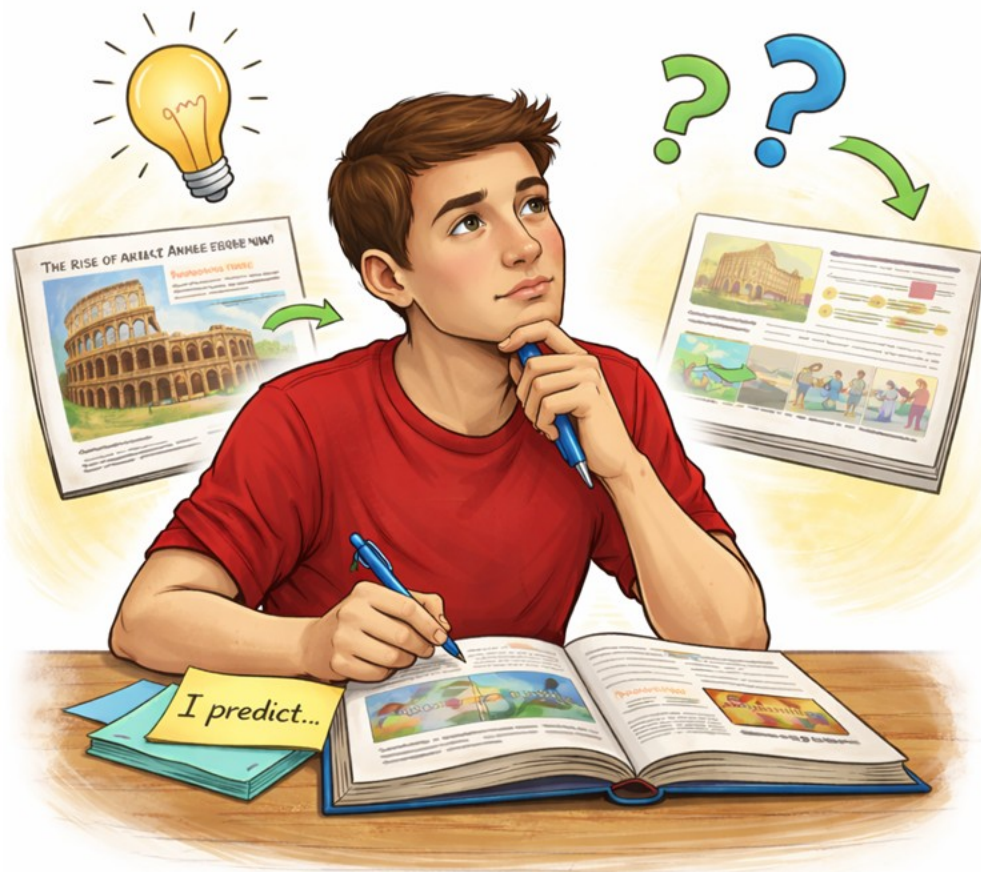
### Moderate Prep

| Page | Strategy         | Helps Students...                              |
|------|------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 54   | Annotated Image  | Connect visuals to learning.                   |
| 55   | Character Maps   | Organize information about historical figures. |
| 56   | Mosaic           | Synthesize learning visually.                  |
| 57   | Beyond the Frame | Extend thinking beyond the image.              |

### Higher Prep

| Page | Strategy                | Helps Students...                      |
|------|-------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 58   | Pipe Cleaner Processing | Model historical understanding.        |
| 59   | Dialogue Detectives     | Compare historical perspectives.       |
| 60   | Changing History        | Analyze alternate historical outcomes. |
| 61   | Elevator Speech         | Communicate learning concisely.        |
| 62   | I Am Poem               | Write from a historical perspective.   |

# Stage One: Before Reading Strategies





# Analogy

Before  
Reading

Connect real-life situations to new learning.

## What is it?

A BEFORE reading strategy that activates prior knowledge by connecting students' experiences to new content.

## How does it work?

- 1. 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
- 2. Ask an open-ended question:**

Frame a question that encourages students to think about the situation and how they would respond.
- 3. Students think and respond:**

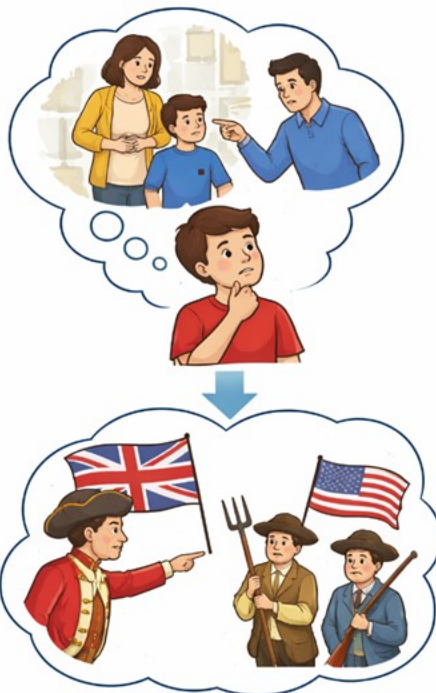
Students write or discuss their ideas, focusing on how they would feel, react, or make decisions.
- 4. Share and discuss:**

Students share with a partner, then discuss responses as a class.
- 5. 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



## 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.

## Why use it?

- Activates prior knowledge
- Makes abstract content relatable
- Builds deeper understanding
- Helps students transfer learning to new contexts

# Anticipation Guide

Before  
Reading

Agree or disagree—then read to find out.

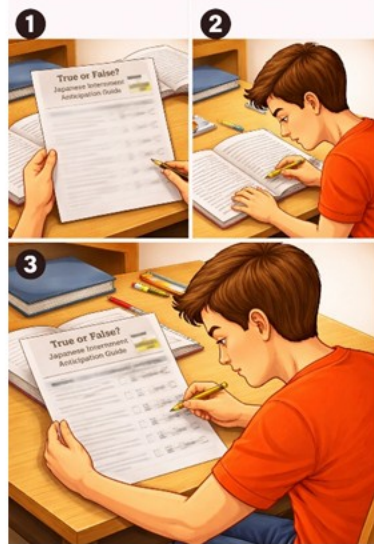
## What is it?

A BEFORE reading strategy in which students respond to statements that reveal their beliefs and ideas about key concepts before reading.

## How does it work?

- Identify key concepts:**  
Determine the most important ideas students should learn from the text.
- Anticipate student thinking:**  
Consider what students may already believe—or misunderstand—about the topic.
- 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
- Students respond (Before Reading):**
  - Students mark their initial responses
  - Encourage discussion—but do **not** reveal answers
- Read with purpose:**  
Students read to confirm, revise, or challenge their thinking.
- Revisit responses (After Reading):**
  - Students update their answers
  - Compare before/after thinking
- Discuss and reflect:**  
Guide a discussion about how thinking changed and what new understanding was gained.

## In Action



## Examples

| Agree or Disagree?<br>American Revolution<br>Anticipation Guide |                                           |                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Statement                                                       | Before                                    | After                          |
| 1. Colonists were treated fairly by Britain                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| 2. Taxes were the main cause of the Revolution                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| 3. All colonists wanted independence                            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| 4. Protest is an effective way to create change                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |

| True or False?<br>Civil Rights Movement<br>Anticipation Guide |                               |                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Statement                                                     | Before                        | After                          |
| 1. Laws alone can create equality                             | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| 2. Nonviolent protest is the best way to create change        | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| 3. One person can make a difference                           | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| 4. Segregation is no longer a problem in the U.S.             | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |

| Where do you stand?<br>Cold War<br>Anticipation Guide       |                                       |                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Statement                                                   | Before                                | After                                 |
| 1. Nuclear weapons make the world safer                     | <input type="checkbox"/> F            | <input type="checkbox"/> F            |
| 2. The U.S. should try to stop the spread of communism      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F |
| 3. Fear is an effective way for governments to gain support | <input type="checkbox"/> F            | <input type="checkbox"/> F            |

| Anticipation Guide:<br>Japanese Internment |                                           |                                           |          |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------|
| Statement                                  | Before                                    | After                                     | Evidence |
| Internment was necessary for security      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree |          |
| All decisions were threats                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree |          |
| Fear influenced internment decisions       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree |          |

## Why use it?

- Surfaces misconceptions
- Creates a purpose for reading
- Encourages deeper thinking and discussion
- Motivates students to read closely for evidence



# Four Corner Debate

Before  
Reading

Take a position before you read.

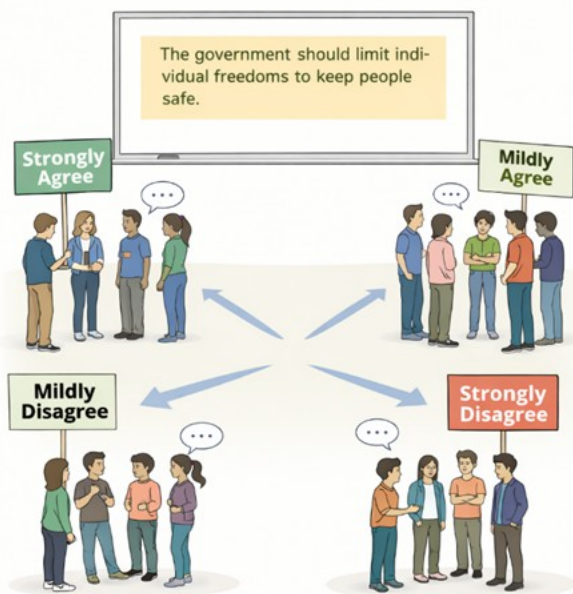
## What is it?

A BEFORE reading strategy that engages students in a topic by taking a position on a provocative statement and discussing multiple perspectives.

## How does it work?

1. **Post signs** in four corners of the room:  
*Strongly Agree* | *Mildly Agree* | *Mildly Disagree* | *Strongly Disagree*
2. **Present a statement** connected to your content.  
The statement should be broad and debatable.
3. **Examples:**
  - Affirmative action is no longer necessary.
  - The Civil Rights Movement is over.
  - The government should take any action to ensure public safety.
4. **Students think and commit:**
  - Write their position and reasoning on a card or paper
  - Move to the corner that matches their opinion
5. **Corner discussion (5–10 minutes):**
  - Students discuss their reasoning with others in their corner
  - One student records key ideas
6. **Share out:**
  - One student from each corner shares the group's thinking
7. **Written reflection:**  
Students write a short paragraph stating their position and supporting it with their strongest reasons.  
*Example stem:*  
*I strongly agree with the statement \_\_\_\_\_ because...*

## 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.

## Why use it?

- Activates prior knowledge
- Encourages discussion
- Builds reasoning skills
- Engages all students

# Fast Facts

Before  
Reading

Organize and connect ideas before reading.

## What is it?

A BEFORE reading strategy where students organize prior knowledge into categories and make connections to prepare for new learning.

## How does it work?

- 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.  
 *Example: The Union had more factories, while the Confederacy relied on farming.*
- 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

## Why use it?

- Helps students see relationships across ideas
- Builds prediction and reasoning skills



# Image Analysis

Before  
Reading

Use images to build understanding before reading.

## What is it?

A BEFORE reading strategy where students analyze powerful images to develop ideas, make inferences, and build understanding of new content.

## How does it work?

- 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: *What do you see?*
  - Focus on details without interpretation.
- Infer meaning:**
  - Ask: *What is happening?*
  - Students use evidence from the image to make inferences.
- Connect to content:**
  - Ask: *Why does this matter?*
  - 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 scene)
- Trench warfare in WWI

### World Geography / World Cultures

- Ganges River (religious activity)
- Amazon rainforest (deforestation scene)

## Why use it?

- Sharpens observation and evidence-based reasoning

# Book Bits

Before  
Reading

Build curiosity and preview key ideas before reading.

## What is it?

A BEFORE reading strategy where students receive short phrases or sentences from a text to spark thinking and build understanding before reading.

## How does it work?

- 1. Select key excerpts:**  
Choose important phrases or sentences from the text. Reveal ideas, but don't give everything away
- 2. Create "book bits":**  
Write each excerpt on a strip of paper (one per student)
- 3. Individual thinking:**  
Students read their book bit and consider:  
*What might this text be about?*
- 4. Share aloud (no discussion):**  
Students move around the room and read their book bit to others  
(Listen only—no explaining or discussing)
- Optional structure:**
  - Two lines facing each other
  - Read → rotate → repeat
- 5. Quick write:**  
Students return to their seat and write:
  - what they think the text is about
  - what they predict or notice.
- 6. 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.'"

## Why use it?

- Builds curiosity before reading
- Activates prior knowledge
- Encourages prediction and inference
- Helps students construct meaning



# Character Quotes

Before  
Reading

Start with their words—then read to learn more.

## What is it?

A BEFORE reading strategy where students analyze quotes from a historical figure to infer traits, beliefs, and perspective to better understand their role in history.

## How does it work?

### 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).

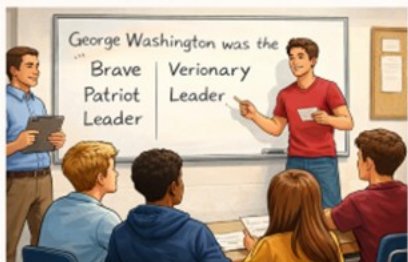
👉 *Optional sentence stem:*

\_\_\_\_\_ 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."

## Why use it?

- Builds historical thinking through sourcing and perspective
- Strengthens inference and evidence-based reasoning



# Card Sort

Before  
Reading

Build curiosity and preview key ideas before reading.

## What is it?

A BEFORE reading strategy where students sort primary source quotes, images, or statements into different categories.

## How does it work?

- 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

## Why use it?

- Builds curiosity before reading
- Activates prior knowledge
- Encourages prediction and inference
- Helps students construct meaning

# Predict This

Before  
Reading

Use images to unlock vocabulary.

## What is it?

A BEFORE reading strategy where students use images to infer and match the meanings of key vocabulary terms before encountering them in the text.

## How does it work?

- 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:**

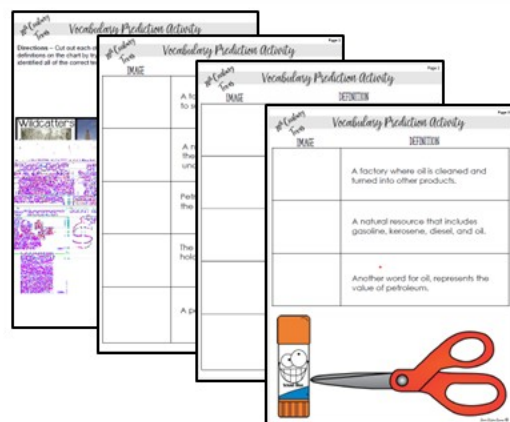
Students discuss their matches with a partner, explaining how the image helped them determine the meaning.
- 5. Debrief & confirm:**

Review answers as a class, clarify definitions, and address misconceptions.

## In Action



## Examples



## Why use it?

- Prepares students for key vocabulary before reading
- Builds inference and visual literacy skills
- Increases engagement and participation
- Supports comprehension of the text



# Primary Source Snapshot

Before  
Reading

Think like a historian.

## What is it?

A **BEFORE** reading strategy where students analyze a primary source by making an inference and asking a question before reading.

## How does it work?

- Choose primary sources.**
  - Select 2–5 short excerpts connected to your lesson.
- Analyze each source.**

For every source, students write:

  - one **inference**
  - one **question**
- Read for evidence.**
  - Students read the lesson looking for answers and supporting evidence.
- Reflect.**
  - Students confirm or revise their thinking using the reading.

## In Action



## Examples

| Progression                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Primary Source Snapshot                                                                                                                                                                               | Name: _____<br>Period: _____<br>Date: _____ |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <b>Directions:</b> Read each primary source quote. For each quote, write:<br>• one <b>inference</b> about what the speaker believes, wants, or is responding to, and<br>• one <b>question</b> you still have.<br>Example: If a speaker says, "This decision was not made lightly," I might infer that there was disagreement or difficulty before the decision. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                             |
| 1.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | "The workers sawed 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."<br>—Upton Sinclair, <i>The Jungle</i> | Factory conditions were dangerous and unsanitary, and some companies cared more about profits than worker safety or consumer health.<br>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."<br>—Jacob Riis, <i>How the Other Half Lives</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Whether people often ignored the struggles and poor living conditions of lower-income families.<br>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."<br>—William Gunn Shepherd, reporter                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | The event was tragic and deadly, and people were falling from a building because they could not escape.<br>What caused people to fall from the building?                                              |                                             |

## Why use it?

- Develops inference skills.
- Encourages historical inquiry.
- Gives students a purpose for reading.



# Carousel Brainstorming

Before  
Reading

Start with your ideas—then build on others..

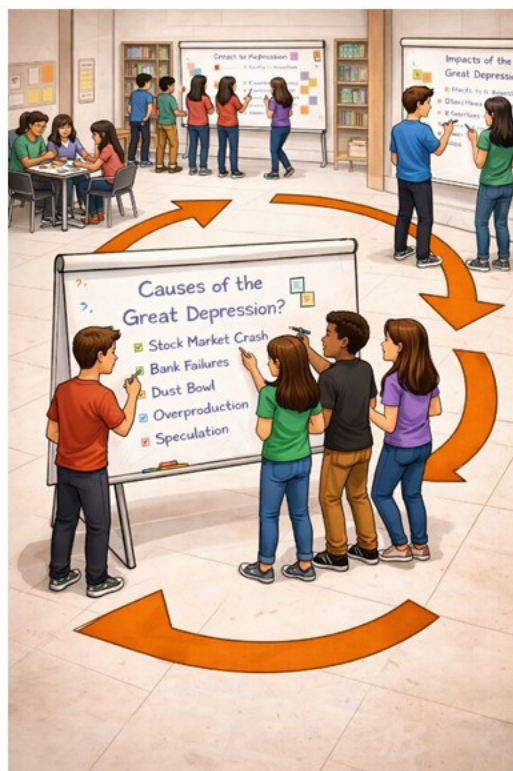
## What is it?

A BEFORE reading strategy where students rotate in groups to brainstorm ideas, activating prior knowledge and preparing for new learning.

## How does it work?

- 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?

## Why use it?

- Helps students make predictions and connections
- Encourages collaboration and discussion
- Builds a foundation for understanding new content

# Crop-It

Before  
Reading

Analyze images to build background knowledge.

## What is it?

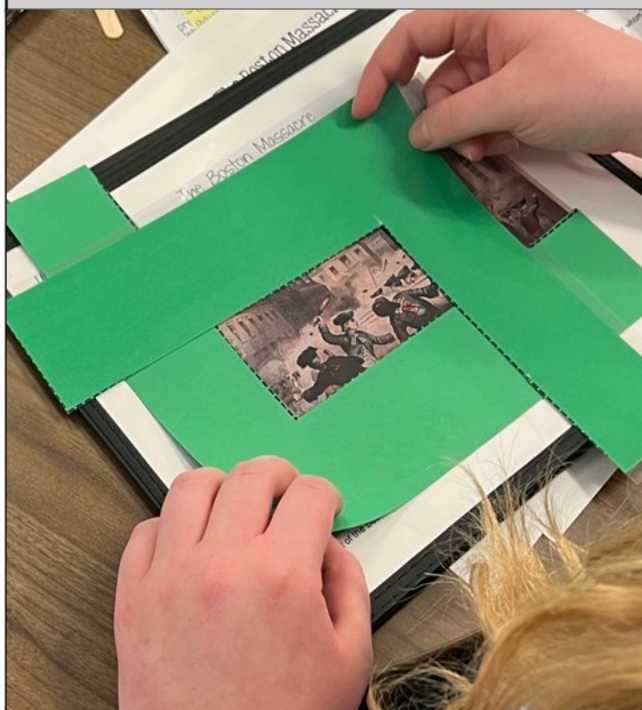
A BEFORE reading strategy where students use a paper tool to break an image down into smaller parts and answer questions.

## How does it work?

- 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.

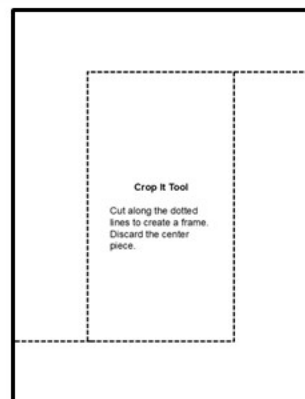
## In Action



## Examples

*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 story?
- 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?



## Why use it?

- Builds inference and visual literacy skills
- Manipulatives Increase engagement and participation
- Supports comprehension of the text



# Image Investigation

Before  
Reading

See It Before You Read It.

## What is it?

A BEFORE reading strategy where students examine visuals and quotes to build context before reading.

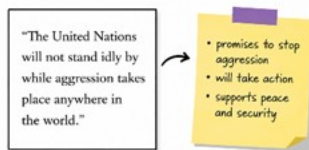
## How does it work?

1. **Create partner groups.**
2. **Distribute image sets.**  
Give each pair a bag containing historical images and short quotes.
3. **Spread out the visuals.**  
Lay every image and quote on the desk.
4. **Summarize each one.**  
Place a sticky note on every image.  
Write:  
**Images:** descriptive words or phrases about what you observe.  
**Quotes:** a one-sentence summary of the main idea.
5. **Read the text.**  
As students read, they identify the paragraph that matches each image or quote.

## In Action



## Examples



## Why use it?

- Activates prior knowledge.
- Develops observation and visual literacy skills.
- Makes complex texts more accessible.



# Picture Prediction

Before  
Reading

Predict. Read. Confirm.

## What is it?

A **BEFORE** reading strategy where students examine historical images and predict which sentences or ideas they represent in the reading.

## How does it work?

### 1. 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.

### 2. 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.

### 3. Predict.

- Students match each image to the sentence they think best fits.

### 4. 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

### Geography

- Maps
- Landforms
- Satellite images
- Climate graphs
- Population maps

### Government

- Political cartoons
- Government buildings
- Voting
- Courtrooms
- Campaigns

### Economics

- Factories
- Businesses
- Products
- Graphs & charts
- Supply & demand

## Why use it?

- Creates curiosity before reading.
- Gives students a reason to read closely.
- Turns reading into a problem-solving task.

# Artifact Examination

Before  
Reading

Use objects to unlock vocabulary.

## What is it?

A BEFORE reading strategy where students use tangible items to represent artifacts of a topic or era.

## How does it work?

### 1. Prepare artifact sets:

Place 3–6 artifacts (real or images) in a bag or box related to the topic or era. Choose items that spark curiosity and connect to key vocabulary.

*\*\*Avoid artifacts that cause trauma or represent a traumatic era: holocaust, slavery, reconstruction*

### 1. Introduce the task:

Tell students they will explore the artifacts to make predictions about what they will be learning.

### 2. Observe & discuss:

In pairs or small groups, students examine each artifact and discuss what they see, think, and wonder.

### 3. Guide thinking:

Use prompting questions (e.g., What does this represent? What might it be used for?) to help students infer meaning and make connections.

### 4. Categorize & connect:

Students group artifacts into categories and identify possible relationships (including cause and effect).

### 5. Synthesize learning:

Students create a title for their set and write a brief description explaining what they think the upcoming learning will be about.

### 6. Share & transition:

Groups share their ideas, then connect their predictions to the upcoming reading.

## In Action



## Examples



## Why use it?

- Prepares students for key vocabulary before reading
- Builds inference and visual literacy skills
- Increases engagement and participation
- Supports comprehension of the text



# Stage Two: During Reading Strategies





# Think Aloud

During  
Reading

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

## What is it?

A DURING reading strategy where the teacher models their thinking as they read, then has students practice doing the same.

## How does it work?

- 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..."

## Why use it?

- Shows students how to think while reading
- Improves comprehension
- Keeps students engaged with the text

# WRAP

During  
Reading

Whisper Read Alternating Paragraphs.

## What is it?

A DURING reading strategy where students take turns whisper-reading paragraphs to stay engaged and support comprehension.

## How does it work?

- 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

## Why use it?

- Keeps both partners actively engaged
- Supports fluency and comprehension
- Provides structure for partner reading

# C-R-R

## Cover-Read-Retell

During  
Reading

### What is it?

A DURING reading strategy where partners take turns reading aloud and summarizing to build comprehension.

### How does it work?

- 1. Partner up:**  
Assign students to pairs and label them Partner 1 and Partner 2
- 2. Read aloud:**  
Partner 1 reads a paragraph aloud while Partner 2 covers the text.
- 3. Summarize:**  
Partner 2 shares a verbal summary of what they heard. (Uncover the text if needed for support.)
- 4. Switch roles:**  
Partners switch and repeat the process with the next section.
- 5. 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.”

### Why use it?

- Builds listening & summarizing
- Supports learning with partners
- Reinforces understanding through repetition



# Three-Minute Pauses

During  
Reading

Pause, process, and make meaning.

## What is it?

A DURING reading strategy that gives students time to stop, reflect, make connections, and ask questions about what they are reading.

## How does it work?

- 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..."

## Why use it?

- Breaks reading into manageable chunks
- Builds comprehension through discussion
- Encourages students to think and question

# Text Coding

During  
Reading

Track Thinking with Symbols

## What is it?

A DURING reading strategy where students use symbols to track their thinking as they read.

## How does it work?

- 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



## Why use it?

- Makes thinking visible while reading
- Helps students monitor comprehension
- Promotes discussion and reflection



# Annolighting

During  
Reading

Highlight and explain what matters.

## What is it?

A DURING reading strategy that combines highlighting with brief margin notes to explain important words and ideas in a text.

## How does it work?

- 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**

**Australia Today**

Rabbits are generally considered cute furry little animals, except in Australia. Here they have become a pest and cause 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 sheep raising. Thomas Austin, an Englishman who engaged rabbit hunting believed "the introduction of a few rabbits could do little harm and might provide a source of food, in addition to a sport for 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 to the drop in the number of native animals in Australia. Rabbits have 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 desert and parts 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 3 fences in Western Australia running from north to south trying to prevent rabbits from entering farmland and crops. The original fences were 120 miles long making it the longest running fence in the world. Two more fences were added and the "rabbit proof" fences are still up today, but rabbits are still a problem. Farmers destroy rabbit warrens (underground tunnels where rabbits breed) and raise their young with a tractor which works only on land that is accessible. In the 1950s, the Australian government began to introduce rabbit specific viruses into the rabbit population. Initially the warrens, but the rabbits that survived began 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.

## Why use it?

- Encourages purposeful highlighting (not over-highlighting)
- Builds comprehension through quick written thinking
- Supports note-taking without overwhelm



# SNOTS Notes

During  
Reading

Small Notes On The Side

## What is it?

A DURING reading strategy where students use sticky notes to record their thinking while reading.

## How does it work?

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

## 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

## Why use it?

- Encourages active reading
- Helps students track thinking in real time
- Makes thinking visible

# Hashtag Notes

During  
Reading

Summarize in just a few words..

## What is it?

A **DURING** reading strategy where students summarize each paragraph or section by creating a short, meaningful hashtag.

## How does it work?

- 1. Read a section.**
  - Students read one paragraph or short section at a time.
- 2. Identify the big idea.**
  - Decide what the section is mostly about.
- 3. Create a hashtag.**
  - Write a short hashtag (1–4 words) that captures the main idea.
- 4. Share and discuss.**
  - Partners compare hashtags and explain their thinking using evidence from 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* PAGE 3

### 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:

- 1. 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 #MYCHOICE*
- 2. 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 #WALDENMIBES #LIVESIMPLY #BACKTONATURE*
- 3. 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. *#HANDLEYOURSELF #OWNYOUROWN #MAKEYOUROWNWAY #IVEGOTTTHIS*
- 4. 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. *#PEACEFULPROTEST #HUMANRIGHTS #CIVILDISOBEDIENCE #COTHRIGHTS*

CHOOSE TWO PARAGRAPHS AND CREATE A HASHTAG SUMMARY FOR EACH ONE.  
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## Why use it?

- Identifies the main idea.
- Encourages paraphrasing.
- Makes summarizing engaging.

# Just One

During  
Reading

One sentence that matters most

## What is it?

A DURING reading strategy where students identify the single most important sentence in a text.

## How does it work?

- 1. Assign a short reading:**  
Give students a brief text (no more than one page).
- 2. Read with purpose:**  
Students read and look for the one most important sentence.
- 3. Select & highlight:**  
Students highlight the sentence they believe captures the main idea.
- 4. Defend thinking:**  
Be ready to explain why that sentence is the most important.
- 5. Share out:**  
Students share their choices and reasoning with the class.

## 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.”

## Why use it?

- Strengthens main idea identification
- Promotes evidence-based thinking
- Builds discussion and justification skills



# RAP-Q

During  
Reading

Read, Ask, Paraphrase, Question

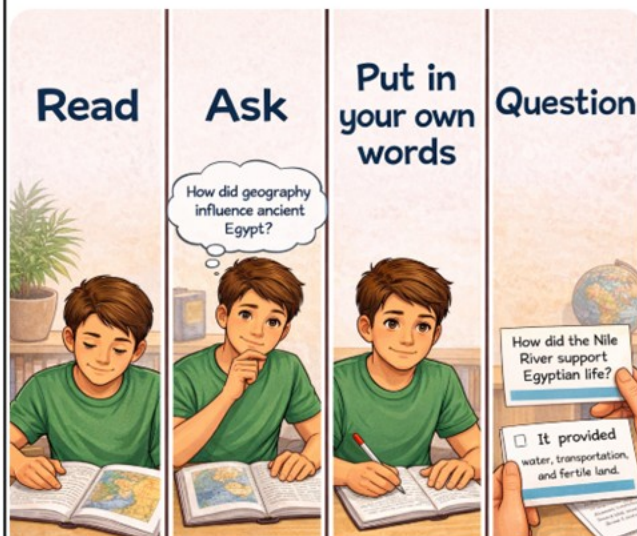
## What is it?

A DURING reading strategy that helps students read, paraphrase, and question to improve comprehension.

## How does it work?

- 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: *This paragraph explains how geography influenced life in ancient Egypt.*)
- 3. Put in your own words:**  
Paraphrase the main idea using your own words.  
(Example: *The Nile River helped Egyptians farm, travel, and survive in the desert.*)
- 4. Question:**  
Write a question and answer based on your paraphrase.  
(Example: *How did the Nile River support Egyptian life? → It provided water, transportation, and fertile land.*)
- 5. Connect (as you continue):**  
Compare your questions and answers across sections to see how ideas build.  
(Example: *One section explains geography, and the next shows how it shaped culture and religion.*)

## In Action



## 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

## Why use it?

- Encourages paraphrasing and summarizing
- Promotes active reading
- Helps students make connections across text

# Question Dice

During  
Reading

Read, Roll, Question

## What is it?

A DURING reading strategy where students generate questions using dice to guide their thinking.

## How does it work?

- 1. Read together:**  
Students read a passage with a partner or small group.
- 2. Roll the dice:**  
After a section of reading, one student rolls two dice.
- 3. Create a question:**
  - Use the numbers on the dice to find the matching words on the Question Dice guide.
  - Combine those words to create a question about the reading.  
(Example: If you roll a 2 and a 6 → "What" and "was/were" → "What was the main cause of the conflict?")
- 4. Discuss:**  
Group members answer or discuss the question.
- 5. Switch & repeat:**  
Continue reading, then switch roles and roll again.

## 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?

## Why use it?

- Builds strong questioning skills
- Encourages discussion and collaboration
- Supports deeper thinking about the text



# Beat the Teacher

During  
Reading

Stump the teacher with your questions.

## What is it?

A DURING reading strategy where students create challenging questions to test the teacher and deepen comprehension.

## How does it work?

- 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."

## Why use it?

- Builds strong questioning skills
- Increases engagement through friendly competition
- Encourages careful, purposeful reading



# Pattern Puzzles

During  
Reading

Organize ideas to understand the text.

## What is it?

A DURING reading strategy where students organize key ideas from a text into a logical sequence.

## How does it work?

- 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



## Why use it?

- Builds sequencing and organization skills
- Encourages close reading and rereading
- Supports collaboration and discussion

# Cartoon Capers

During  
Reading

Turn reading into cartoons

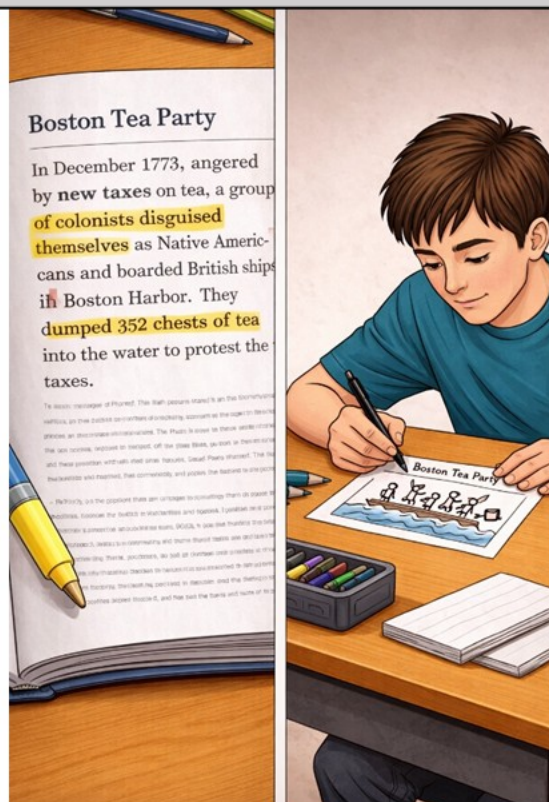
## What is it?

A DURING reading strategy where students create quick cartoons to represent key ideas and events in a text.

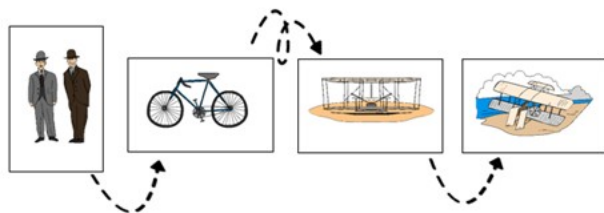
## How does it work?

- 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



## Examples



## Why use it?

- Engages visual-spatial learners
- Breaks reading into manageable chunks
- Provides a quick check for understanding



# Stage Two:

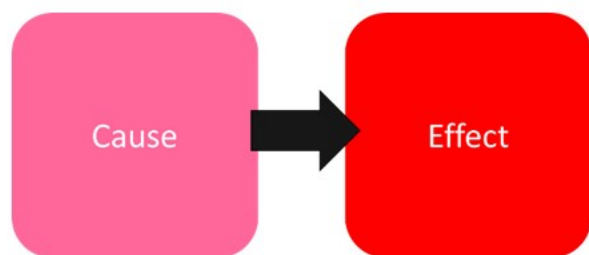
## Active Note Making





# Social Studies Skills

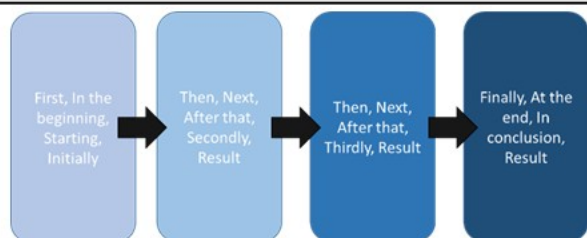
## Sequencing



### Cause / Effect

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

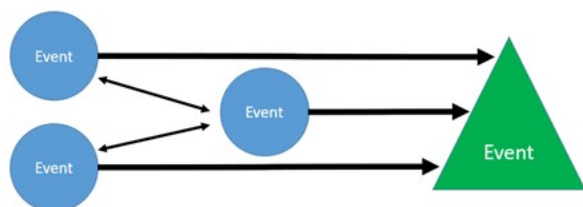
Clue Words: **cause, effect, led to, resulted in, because, why did/was, how did, impact, turning point, which factor, significant, purpose, contributed to**



### 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**

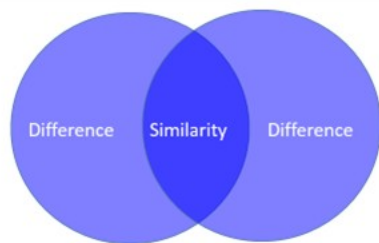


### Connections Across Time

- 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**



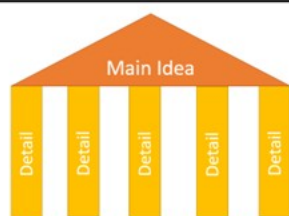
### Categorization

- 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

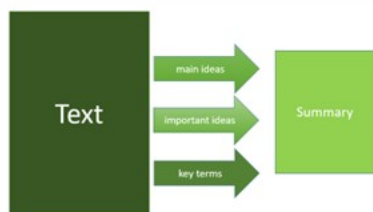
Text Dependent



## Main Idea

- What is this mostly about?

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

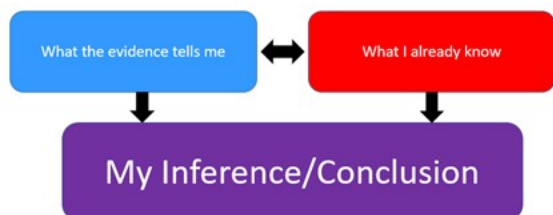


## Summarization

- Which choice best sums it up?

Clue Words: **best summarizes, summary**

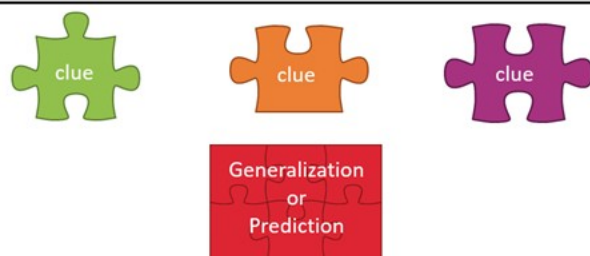
Evidence Based



## 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

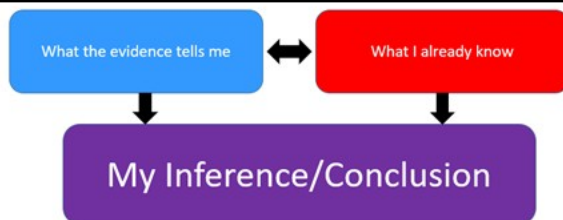
Clue Words: **most likely, would probably, what will happen next**



## Point of View/Perspective

- What do they believe? Their opinion?

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

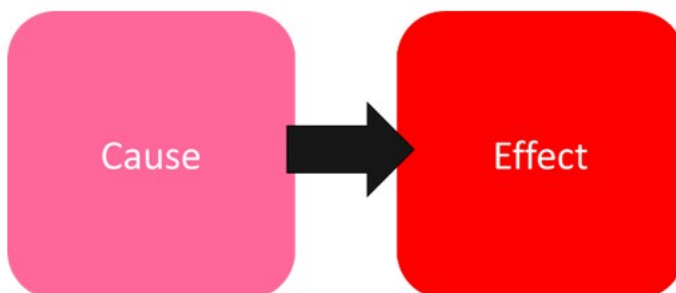
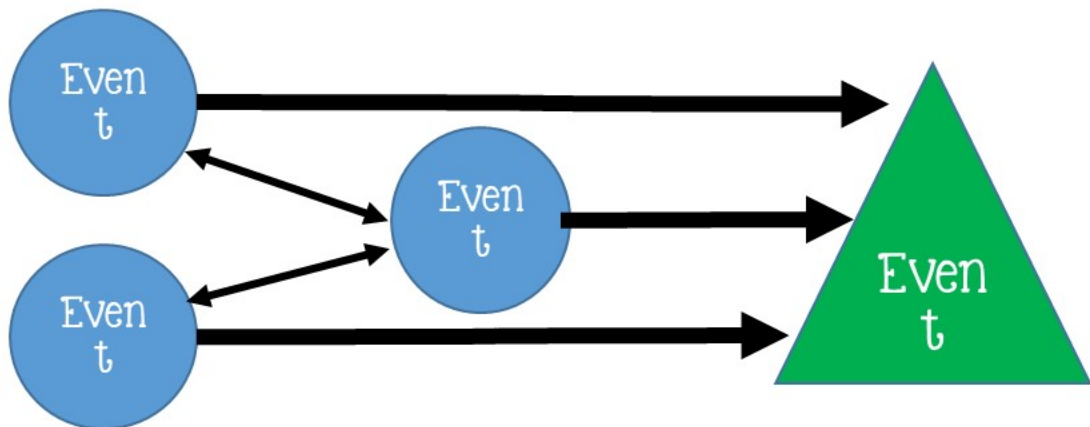
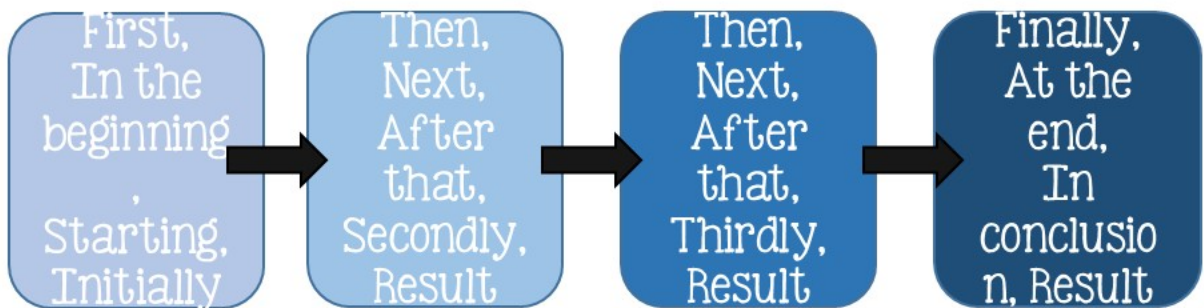


## Inferencing

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

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

# Sequencing Skills





# Cartoon Capers

Active  
Note Making

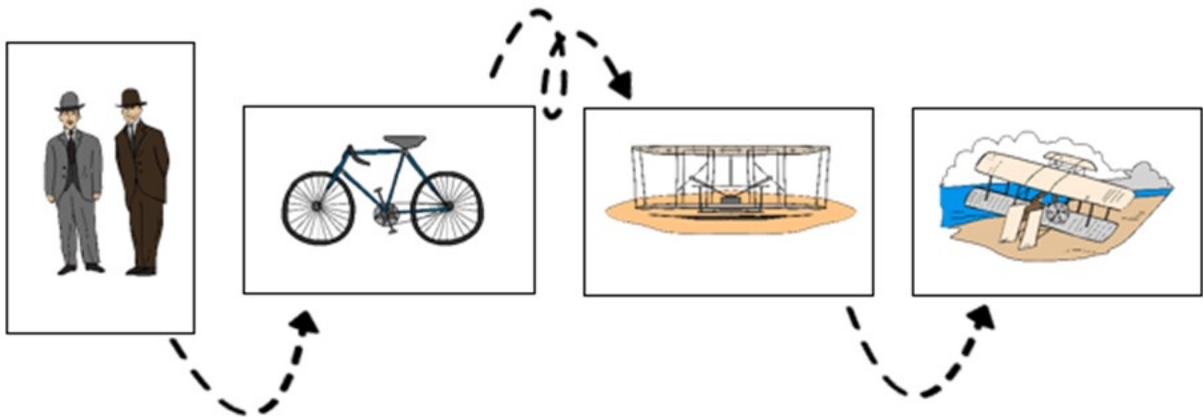
## What is it?

A during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy in which students draw quick cartoons to represent key events or ideas from a text.

## How does it work?

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

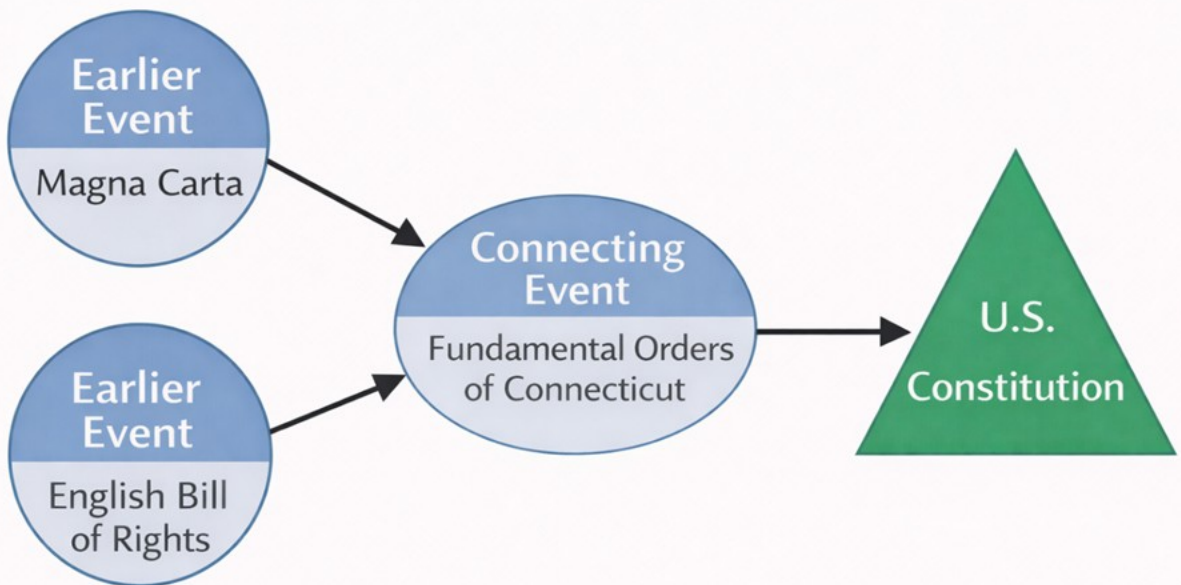
## What is it?

This is a during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students see how events across time are connected and influence a later event.

## How does it work?

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



# Cause & Effect

Active  
Note Making

## What is it?

A during-reading NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students identify how events are connected by causes and their effects

## Examples

### 1. Single Chain



Best used when:

Teaching a direct relationship between one cause and one outcome.

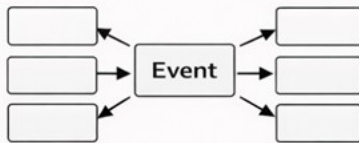
### 2. Multi-Cause → One Effect



Best used when:

An event has multiple contributing factors.

### 3. Central Event Web



Best used when:

An event has multiple cause/effect pairs.

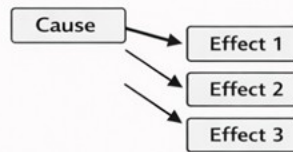
### 4. Cause & Effect T-Chart

| Causes | Effect |
|--------|--------|
|        |        |
|        |        |
|        |        |

Best used when:

Students are pulling multiple cause/effect pairs.

### 4. Cause & Effect T-Chart



Best used when:

A single event leads to several outcomes.

### 6. Chain Reaction



Best used when:

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



# Problem - Solution

Active  
Note Making

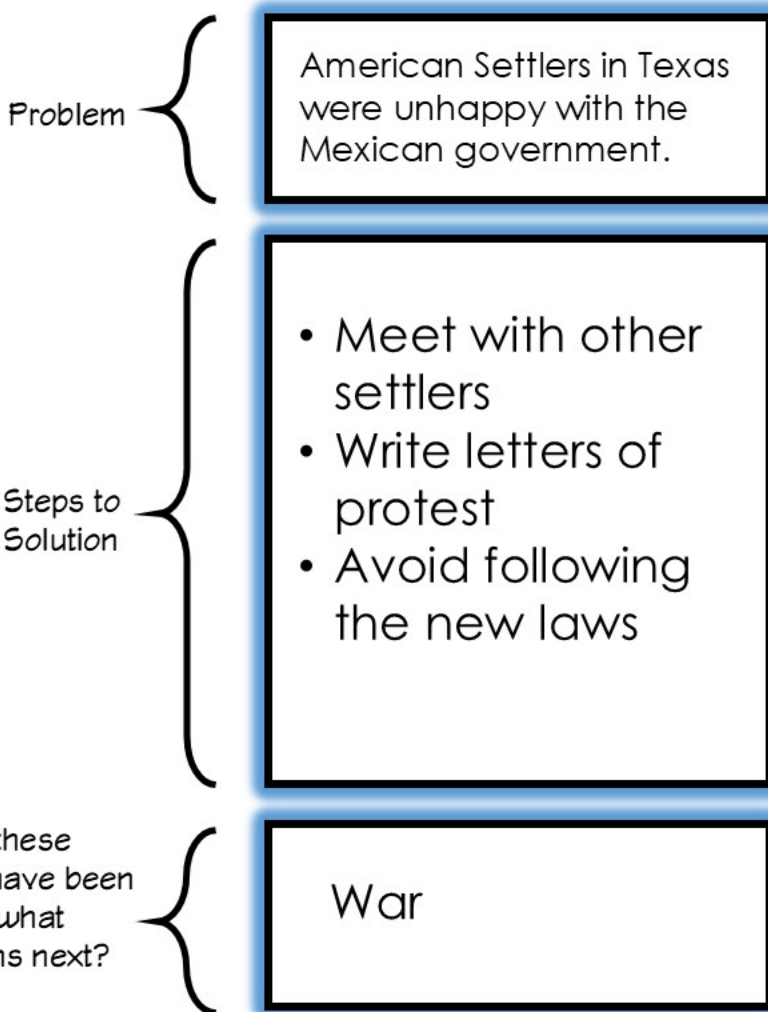
## What is it?

This is a during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students see cause-and-effect relationships by focusing on a central problem, possible solutions, and outcomes over time.

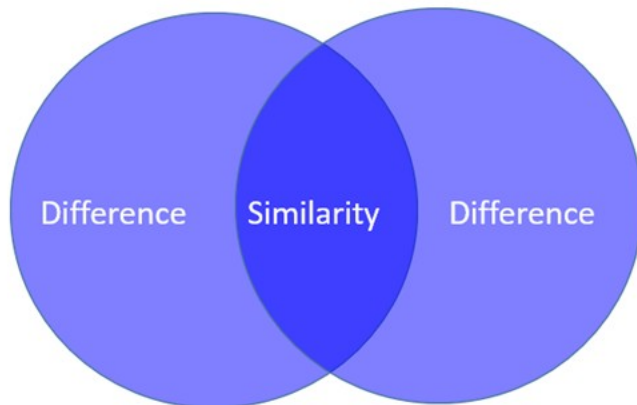
## How does it work?

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



# Categorization Skills



# Double Bubble

Active  
Note Making

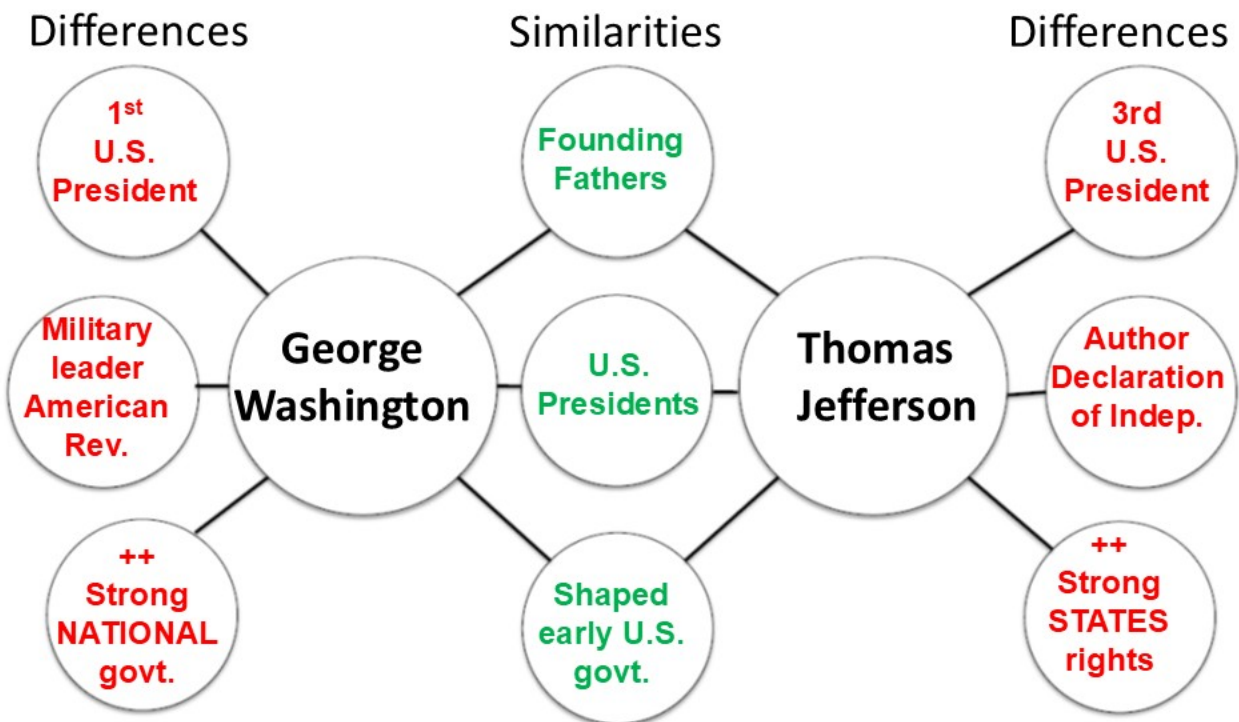
## What is it?

This is a during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students categorize similarities and differences when comparing two topics.

## How does it work?

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

## What is it?

This is a during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students compare and contrast three topics or concepts.

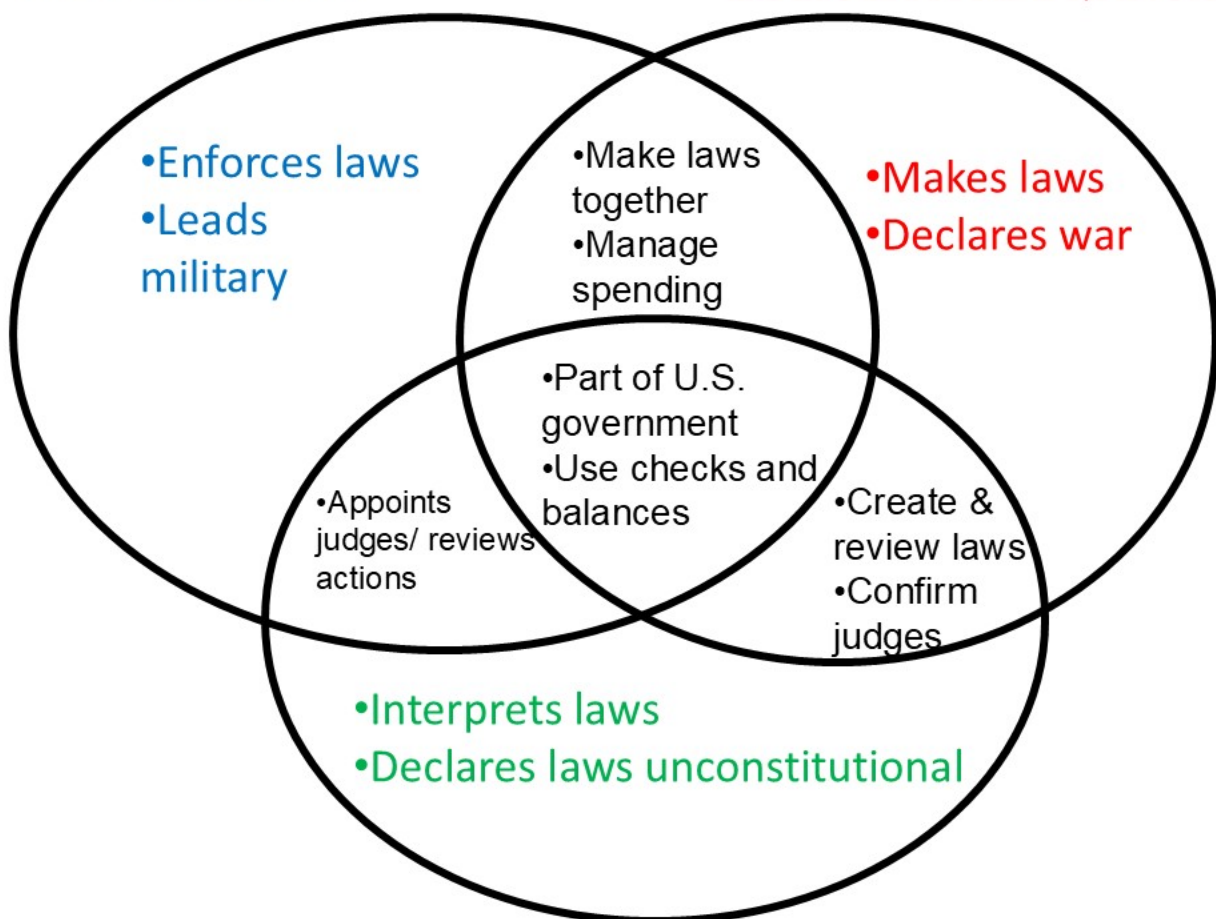
## How does it work?

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

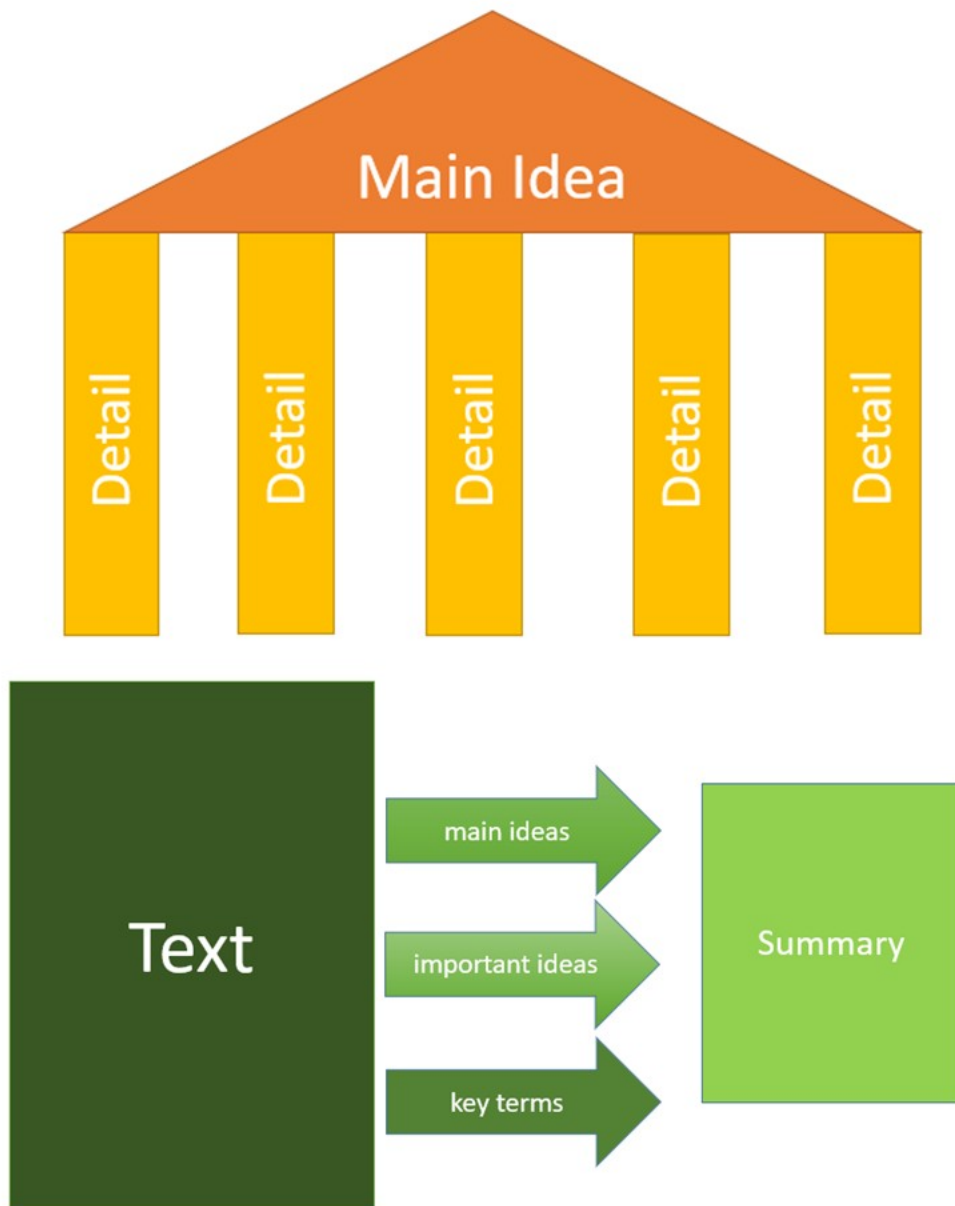
### Executive Branch

### LEGISLATIVE BRANCH



### Judicial Branch

# Text Dependent Skills



# Gist

## What is it?

A during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students capture the most important ideas from a text in a brief summary.

## How does it work?

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

## What is it?

A during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students summarize a text by identifying key elements of a narrative.

## How does it work?

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

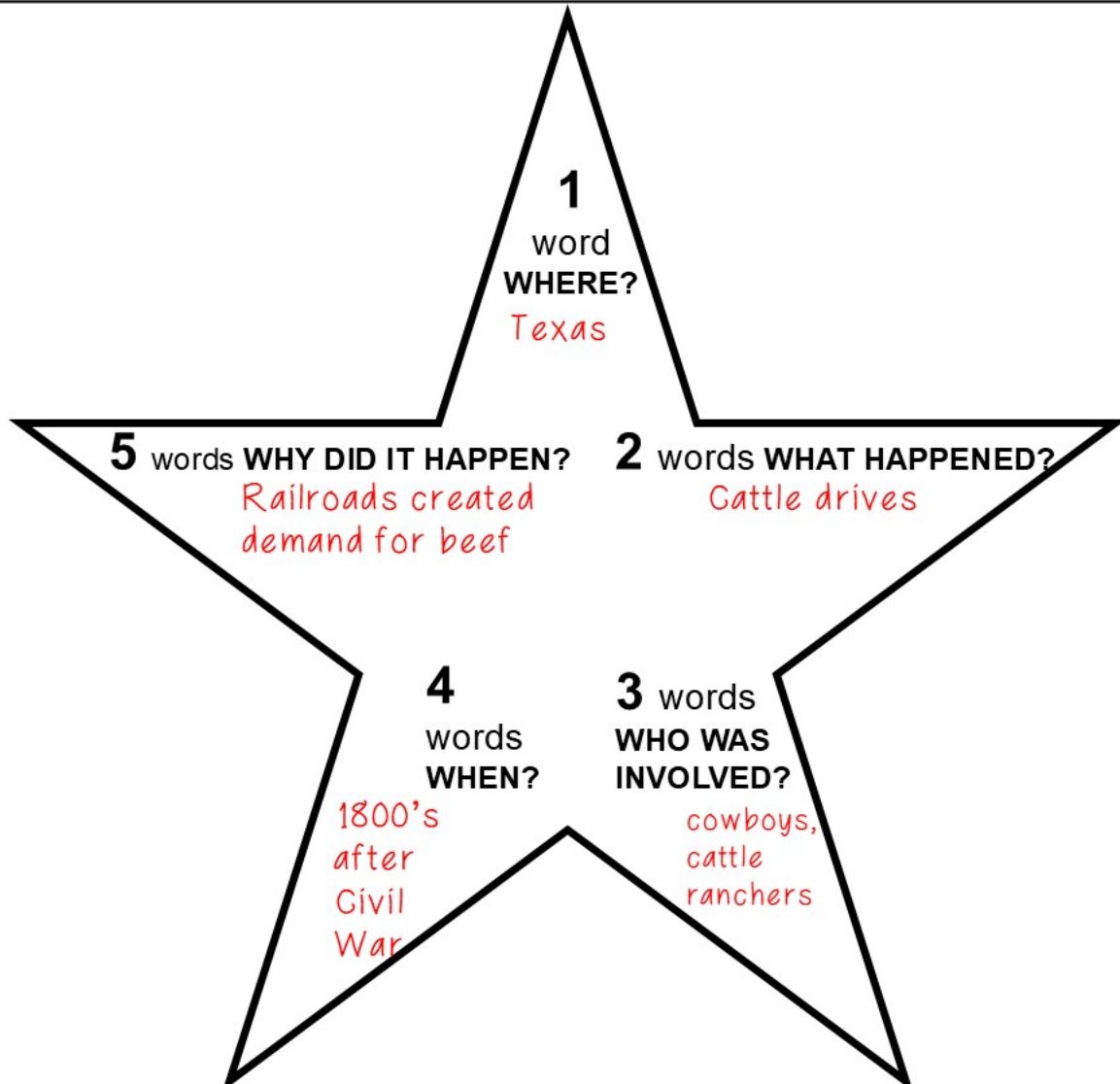
## What is it?

A during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students summarize information by answering key questions about a topic.

## How does it work?

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

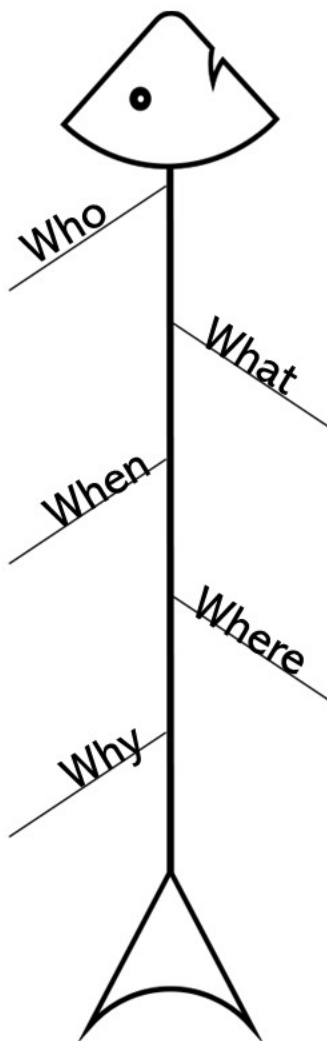
## What is it?

A during-reading NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students organize key details about an event (who, what, when, where, and why).

## How does it work?

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

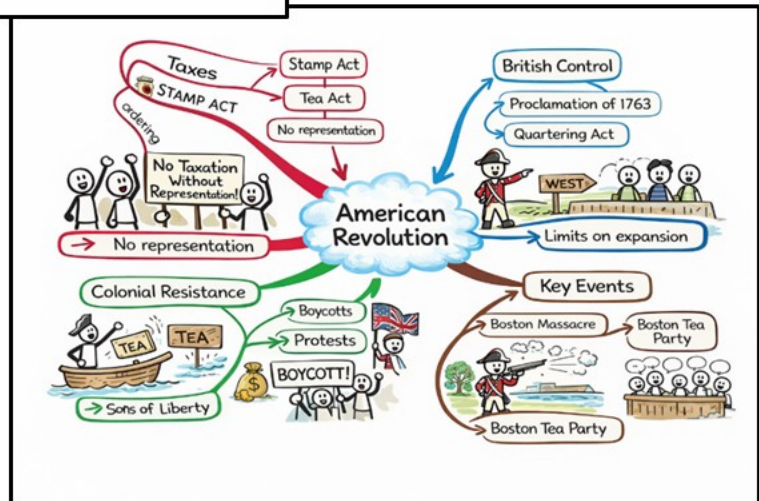
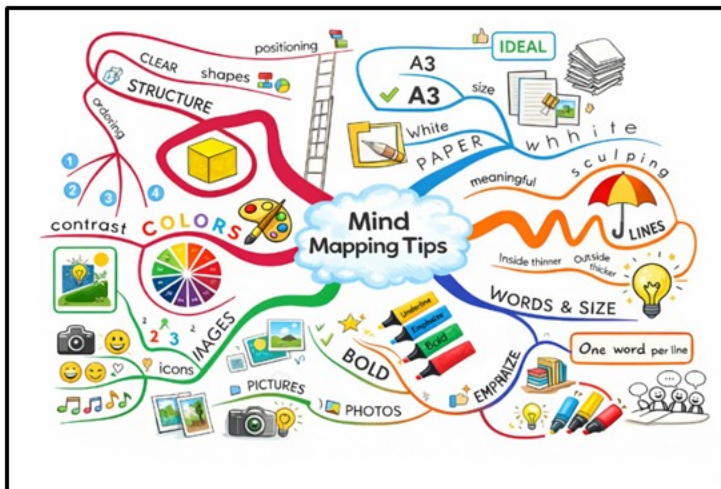
## What is it?

A during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students organize ideas by showing how concepts connect to a central topic.

## How does it work?

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



# Doodle Notes

Active  
Note Making

## What is it?

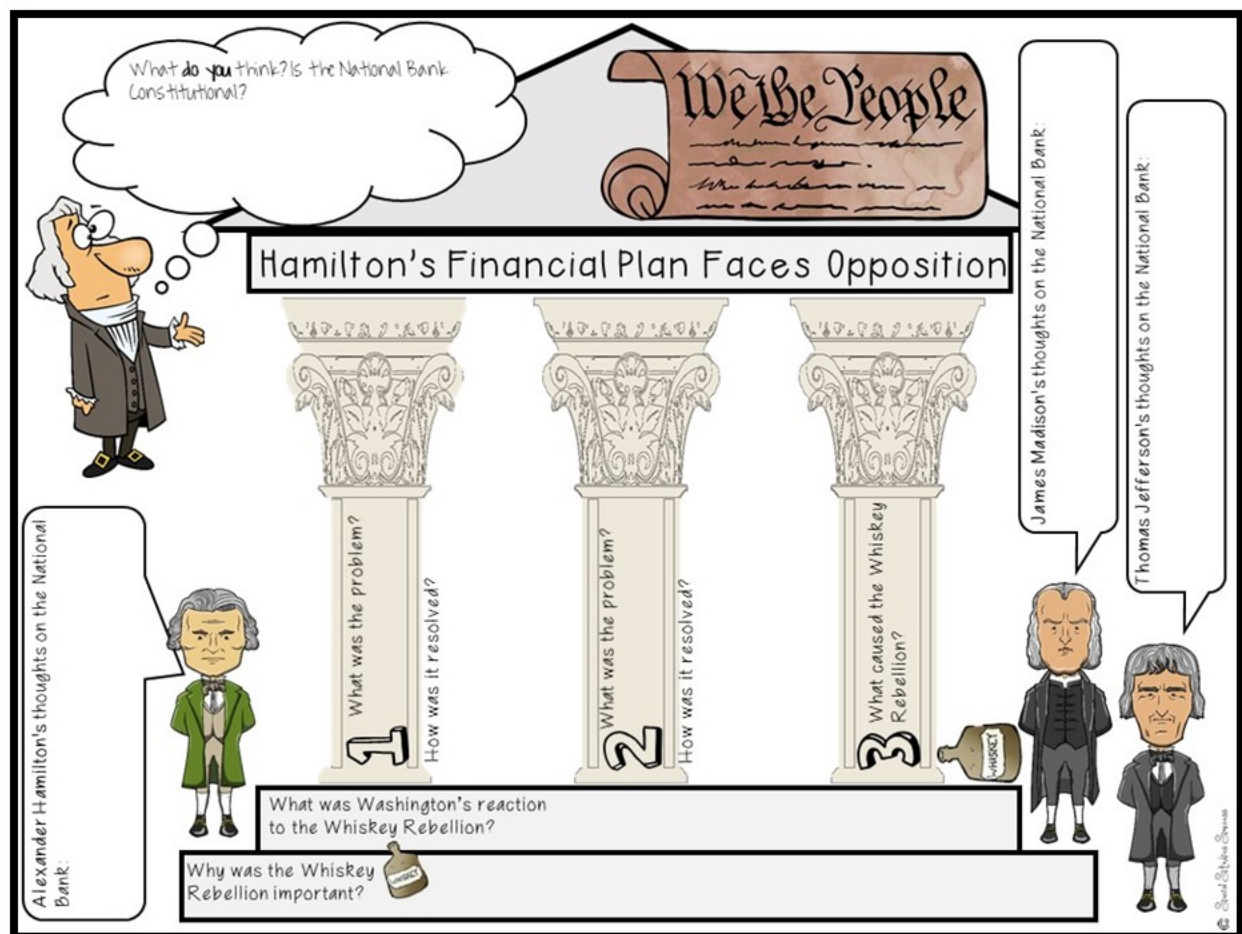
This is a during-reading, visual NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students use images and words to remember content.

Doodle Notes™ combine graphics and text to act as memory triggers and improve retention. Students interact with the content by labeling, color-coding, sketching, and summarizing.

## How does it work?

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).

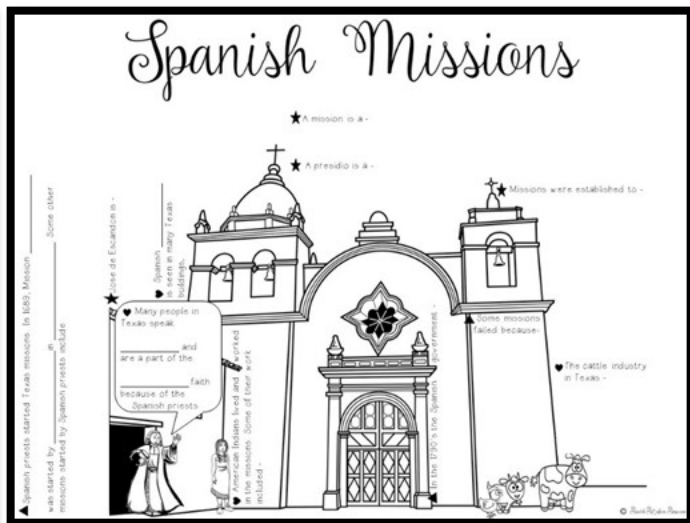
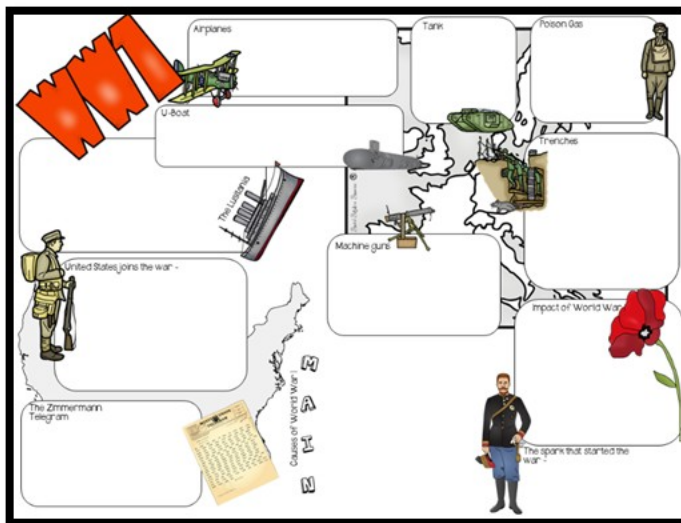
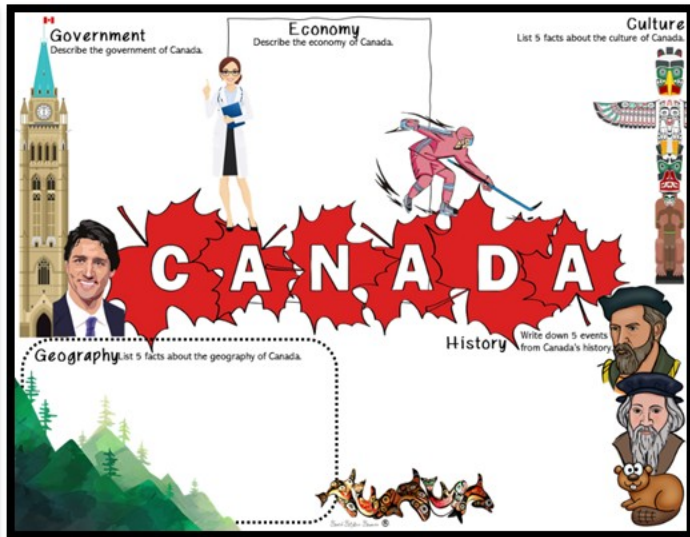
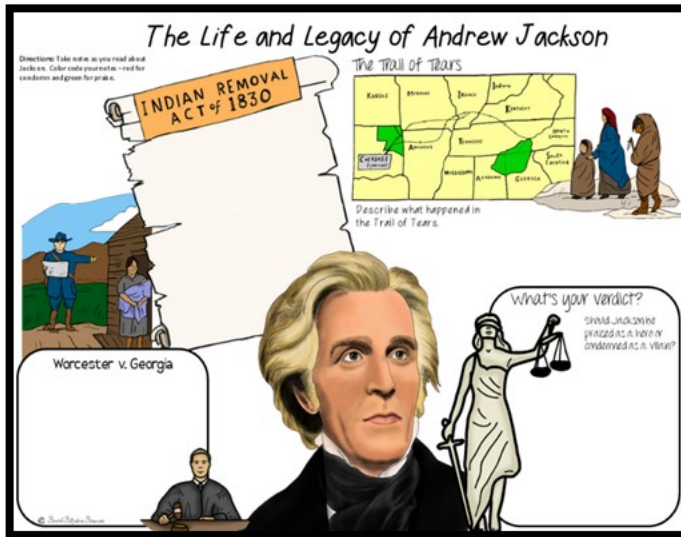
## Example



# Doodle Notes

Active  
Note Making

Examples:



Clip art can be purchased from  
1P1, Dreamstime, Shutterstock,  
and Adobe Images.





# Sketch Notes

Active  
Note Making

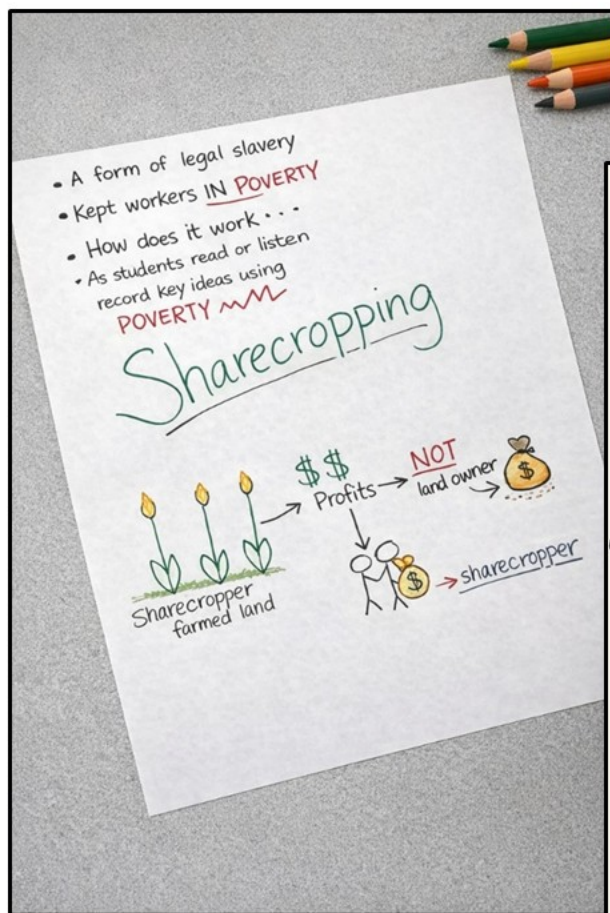
## What is it?

A during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students visually summarize key ideas using words, drawings, and symbols.

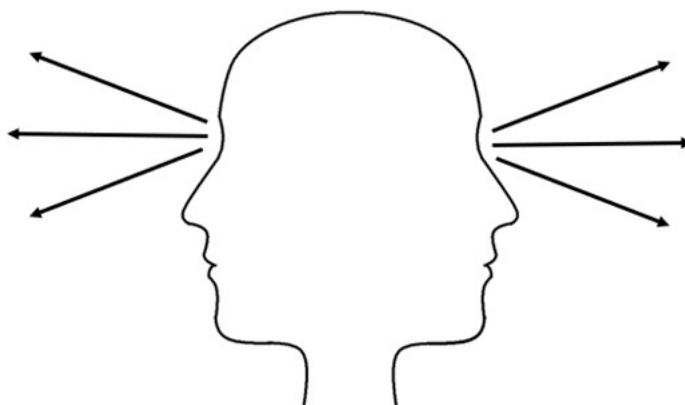
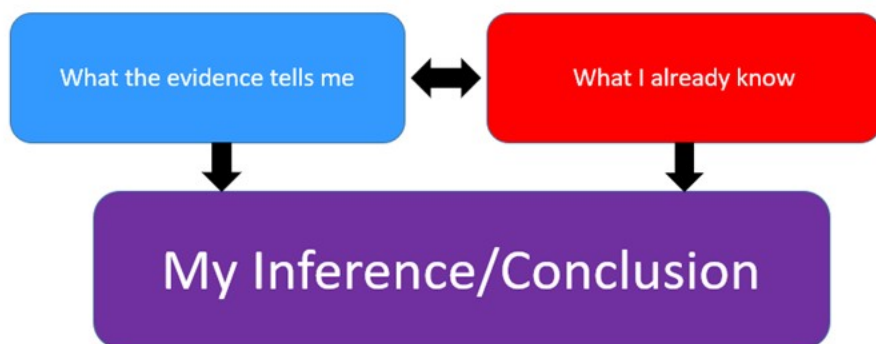
## How does it work?

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



# Evidence-Based Skills



# Opinion Proof

Active  
Note Making

## What is it?

A during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students form opinions and support them with evidence from the text.

## How does it work?

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.



# Janus Figure

Active  
Note Making

## What is it?

A during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students represent and compare different points of view.

## How does it work?

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

## What is it?

A during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students analyze images to gather information, make inferences, and develop key ideas.

## How does it work?

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

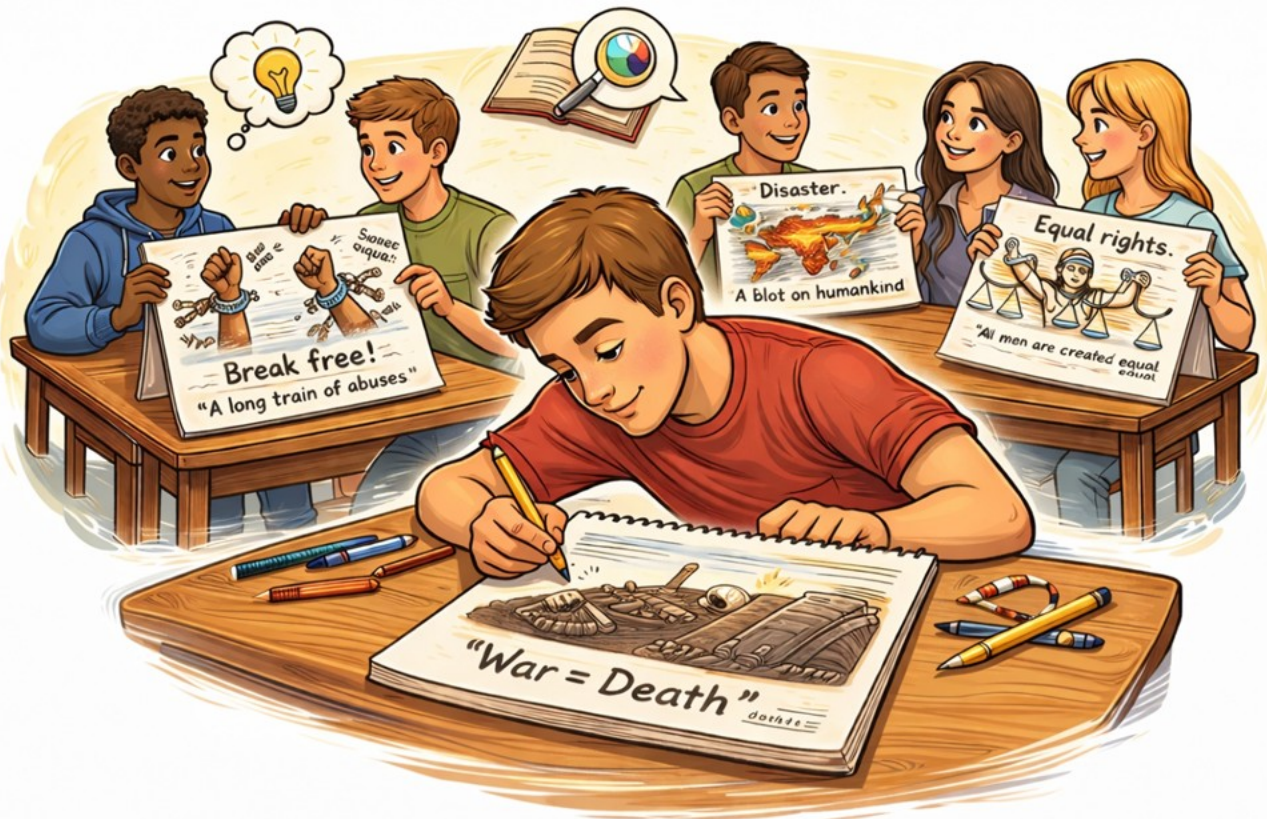
## What is it?

A during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy where students sketch and *stretch their thinking* by showing what a text means—not just what it says.

## How does it work?

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

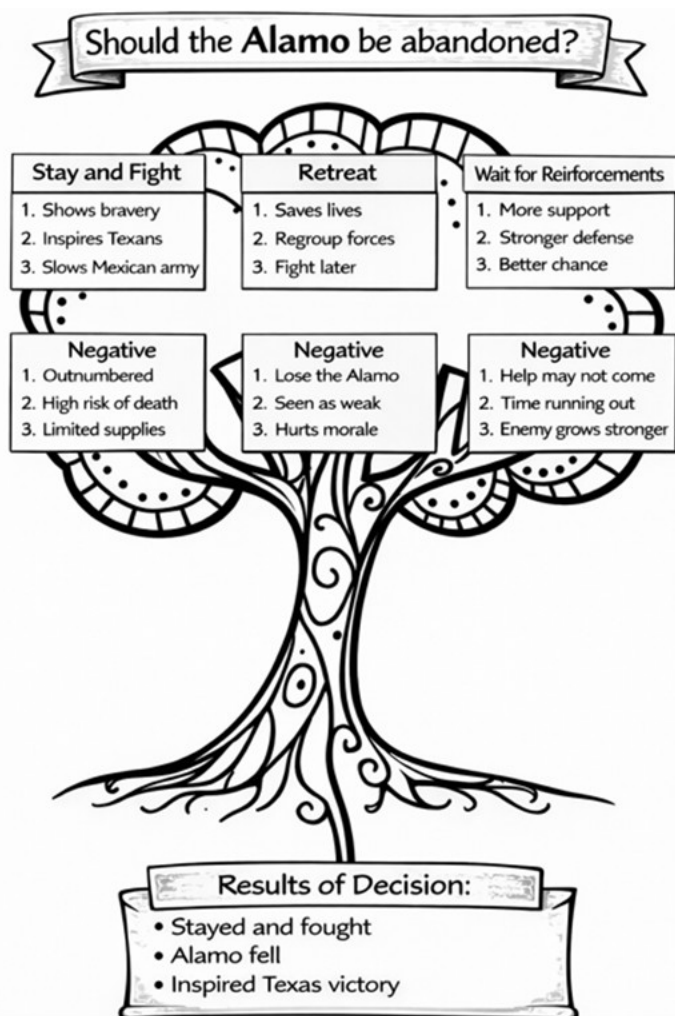
## What is it?

A during-reading, NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students organize choices, consider alternatives, and evaluate consequences.

## How does it work?

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



# Changing History

Active  
Note Making

## What is it?

A during- or after-reading NOTE-MAKING strategy that helps students make predictions by changing key events and considering how outcomes would be different.

## How does it work?

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.

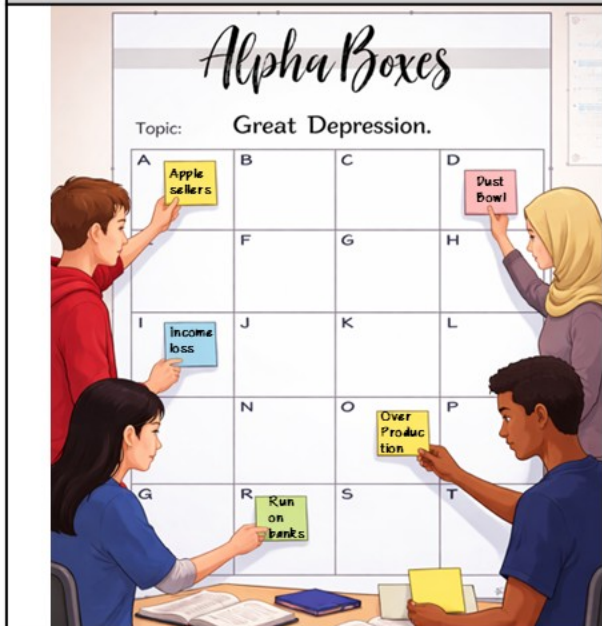
## What is it?

An AFTER reading strategy that helps students review, organize, and extend their understanding of key concepts by generating and refining ideas collaboratively.

## How does it work?

- 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



## Why use it?

- Reinforces key concepts
- Encourages collaboration and discussion
- Helps students organize and review ideas

# Gist

After  
Reading

Say it in 20 words

## What is it?

An AFTER reading strategy that helps students identify and summarize the most important ideas in a text.

## How does it work?

- 1. Read first:**  
Have students read a selection of text.
- 2. Collect key ideas:**  
Students identify important words or phrases from the reading (individually or with a partner).
- 3. Use the organizer:**  
Students record key ideas in the graphic organizer.
- 4. Write the summary:**  
Students use their notes to write a summary of the main ideas in **20 words**.
- 5. Share & refine:**  
Students compare summaries and revise for clarity and conciseness.

## In Action



## Examples

### Guided Gist

**Topic:** Constitution

### Key Words (in boxes):

government • branches • power • limit • rights • protect

### GIST (20 words):

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

## Why use it?

- Builds summarizing skills
- Helps students focus on big ideas
- Encourages active thinking

# Pick A Card, Any Card

After  
Reading

Break it down. Piece it together.

## What is it?

An AFTER reading strategy where students respond to prompts on cards to share their thoughts, reactions, and questions about a text.

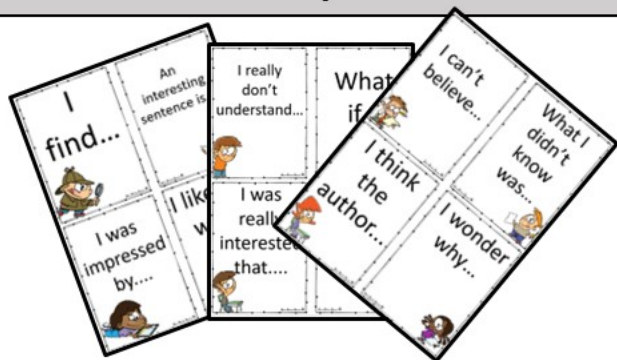
## How does it work?

- 1. Prepare the cards:**  
Create sets of response cards with prompts (ex: *I wonder...*, *I learned...*, *I was surprised by...*).
- 2. Form groups:**  
Place students in small groups and have each student draw two cards.
- 3. Read & respond:**  
After reading, students write responses to two prompts on sticky notes.
- 4. Share thinking:**  
Students share their responses with their group.
- 5. Discuss & reflect:**  
Groups discuss different perspectives and ideas from the text.

## In Action



## Examples



## Why use it?

- Encourages all students to participate
- Promotes reflection and personal connection.
- Builds discussion and deeper understanding.



# Annotated Image

After  
Reading

Bring perspectives to life through quote bubbles.

## What is it?

An AFTER reading strategy that helps students analyze an image by adding annotations to show thoughts, feelings, and perspectives.

## How does it work?

### 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.

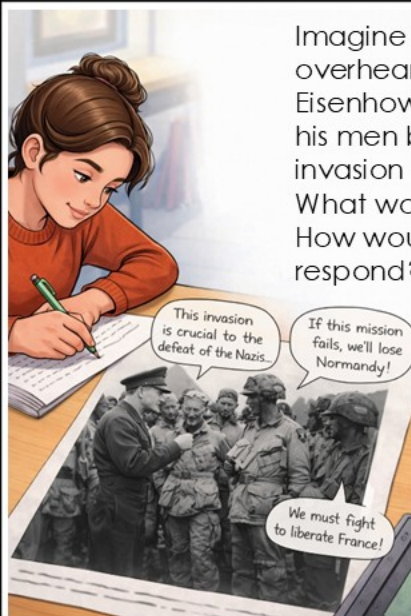
### 5. Use key terms (optional):

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..."

## Why use it?

- Builds empathy and perspective-taking
- Deepens understanding of historical events
- Connects reading to visual analysis

# Character Maps

After  
Reading

Bring historical figures to life.

## What is it?

An AFTER reading strategy that helps students organize and interpret information about a historical figure through visual representation.

## How does it work?

- 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

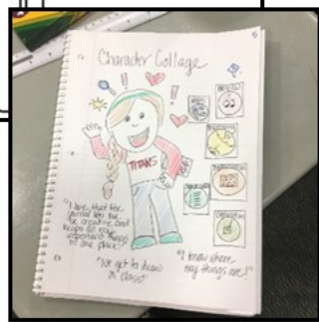
## In Action



## Examples

**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 interpretive 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.



## Why use it?

- Reinforces key information about historical figures
- Encourages interpretation and evaluation
- Supports visual and creative learning



# Mosaic

After  
Reading

Break it down. Piece it together.

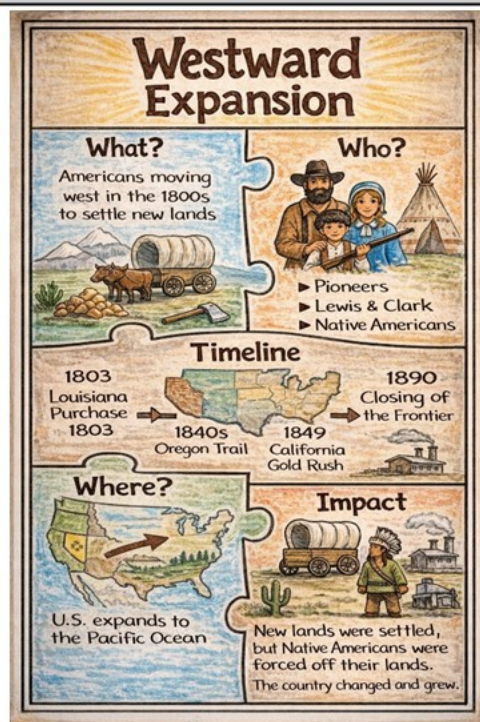
## What is it?

An AFTER reading strategy where students create a visual “mosaic” to show key ideas, events, and understanding of a topic using images, words, and short explanations.

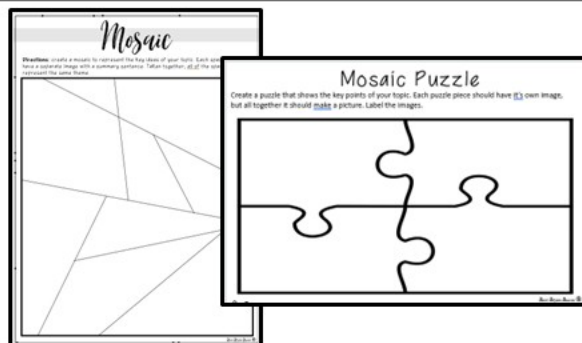
## How does it work?

- 1. Read & learn:**  
Students read and gather information about a topic or unit.
- 2. Identify key pieces:**  
Students determine the most important ideas (who, what, when, where, why, impact).
- 3. Create the mosaic:**  
Students organize information into sections using drawings, symbols, and brief notes.
- 4. Add meaning:**  
Students include a summary sentence and explain the impact of the topic.
- 5. Share & explain:**  
Students present their mosaic and explain their thinking.

## In Action



## Examples



## Why use it?

- Helps students organize and chunk information
- Combines visuals with content understanding
- Encourages synthesis, not just recall



# Beyond the Frame

After  
Reading

Extend the story beyond the picture.

## What is it?

An AFTER reading strategy that helps students analyze an image by adding annotations to show thoughts, feelings, and perspectives.

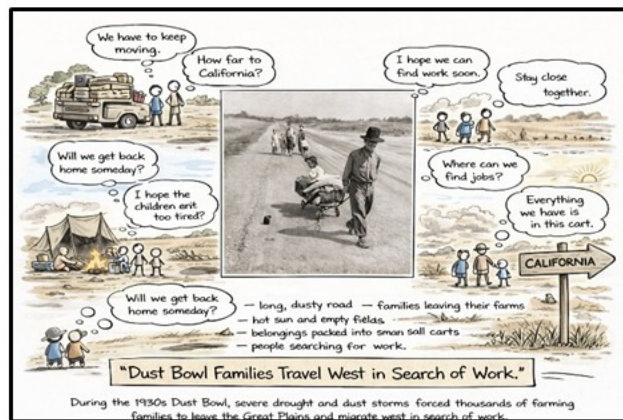
## How does it work?

- 1. Read first:**  
Have students read a short text connected to a historical event or image.
- 2. Place the image:**  
Place a photograph in the center of a large sheet of paper.
- 3. Observe & discuss:**  
Students closely examine the image and discuss what they see and what might exist just beyond the frame.
- 4. Extend the scene:**  
Students draw and/or write around the image to show what they think is happening outside the visible area.
- 5. Collaborate:**  
Students work together to build a shared understanding of the extended scene.
- 6. Share & explain:**  
Groups share their work and explain their thinking.

## In Action



## Examples



## Why use it?

- Encourages creative and critical thinking
- Deepens understanding of context
- Promotes discussion and collaboration

# Pipe Cleaner Processing

After  
Reading

Twist learning into something meaningful.

## What is it?

An **AFTER** reading strategy where students create a pipe cleaner model that represents an important person, event, object, or idea from the reading, then explain its historical significance in writing.

## How does it work?

### 1. Identify the big idea.

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

### 2. Create.

- Use pipe cleaners to build a simple model that represents the chosen topic.

### 3. Explain.

- Write a brief summary explaining what the model represents and why it is historically important.

### 4. Share.

- Students present their models and explain their thinking to a partner or small group.

## 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

## Why use it?

- Reinforces key concepts through creativity.
- Encourages summarizing and explanation.
- Makes learning memorable.



# Dialogue Detectives

After  
Reading

Read. Discuss. Debate.

## What is it?

An **AFTER** reading strategy where students use evidence from the text to create a dialogue between historical people or opposing viewpoints.

## How does it work?

### 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

## Why use it?

- Develops perspective-taking.
- Supports evidence-based discussion.
- Strengthens understanding of historical viewpoints.



# Changing History

After  
Reading

Rethink the past. Reimagine the outcome.

## What is it?

An AFTER reading strategy that helps students understand cause and effect by exploring how changing an event could alter historical outcomes.

## How does it work?

- 1. Read first:**  
Have students study a historical event or unit.
- 2. Identify key events:**  
Students brainstorm important events from the reading.
- 3. Change the event:**  
Students select one event and imagine how it could have happened differently.
- 4. Analyze the impact:**  
Students explain how this change would affect people, events, and outcomes.
- 5. Share thinking:**  
Students share their alternate history and explain their reasoning.

## 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 Cultures / 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?

## Why use it?

- Strengthens understanding of cause and effect
- Encourages critical and creative thinking
- Helps students see the impact of historical decisions

# Elevator Speech

After  
Reading

Summarize the story in seconds.

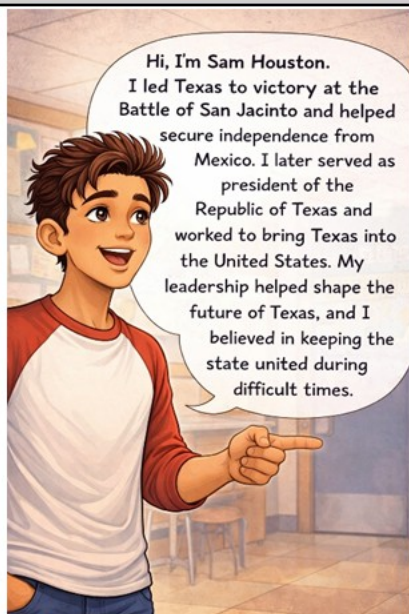
## What is it?

An AFTER reading strategy that helps students summarize the most important information about a historical figure in a short, focused response.

## How does it work?

- 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



## Examples

### U.S. History

- Frederick Douglass (*abolition of slavery*)
- Ida B. Wells (*anti-lynching activism*)
- Eleanor Roosevelt (*expanding human rights*)

### World History

- Mansa Musa (*wealth and spread of Islam in Mali*)
- Atatürk (Mustafa Kemal) (*modernizing Turkey*)
- Empress Wu Zetian (*first and only female emperor of China*)

### Texas History

- José Antonio Navarro (*support for Texas independence*)
- Lorenzo de Zavala (*role in Texas government and independence*)
- Juan Seguín (*Tejano leader in the Texas Revolution*)

### Government / Civics

- Thurgood Marshall (*Brown v. Board of Education*)
- Sandra Day O'Connor (*first female Supreme Court justice*)
- Shirley Chisholm (*first Black woman elected to Congress*)

## Why use it?

- Focuses on key information
- Builds summarizing skills
- Encourages concise communication

# I Am Poem

After  
Reading

Summarize history through voice and perspective.

## What is it?

An AFTER reading strategy that uses a structured poem format to help students show their understanding of a topic, event, or historical figure by writing in first person.

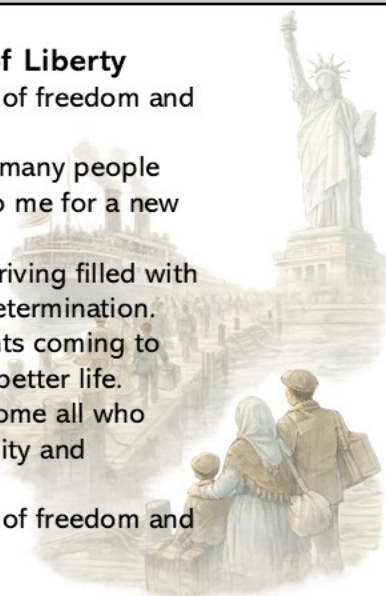
## How does it work?

- 1. Read first:**  
Have students read a selection of text or complete research on a topic, event, or person.
- 2. Take on a perspective:**  
Students choose to write as the person, event, or concept.
- 3. Use the template:**  
Students complete each line of the *I Am Poem* using details from the reading.
- 4. Add meaning:**  
Students include feelings, sensory details, and key ideas to show understanding.
- 5. Share & reflect:**  
Students share their poems and discuss how their writing connects to the content.

## 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 (great for empathy + cause/effect)

- The Dust Bowl
- The Great Depression
- The Civil Rights Movement
- 9/11

### Objects / Symbols (great for creativity + meaning)

- The Constitution
- The Liberty Bell
- A protest sign

### Concepts / Ideas (higher-level thinking)

- Freedom
- Democracy
- Slavery
- Industrialization
- Civil rights

## Why use it?

- Encourages deeper understanding beyond basic summary
- Builds perspective-taking and empathy
- Engages students through structured, creative writing



# Strategy Templates

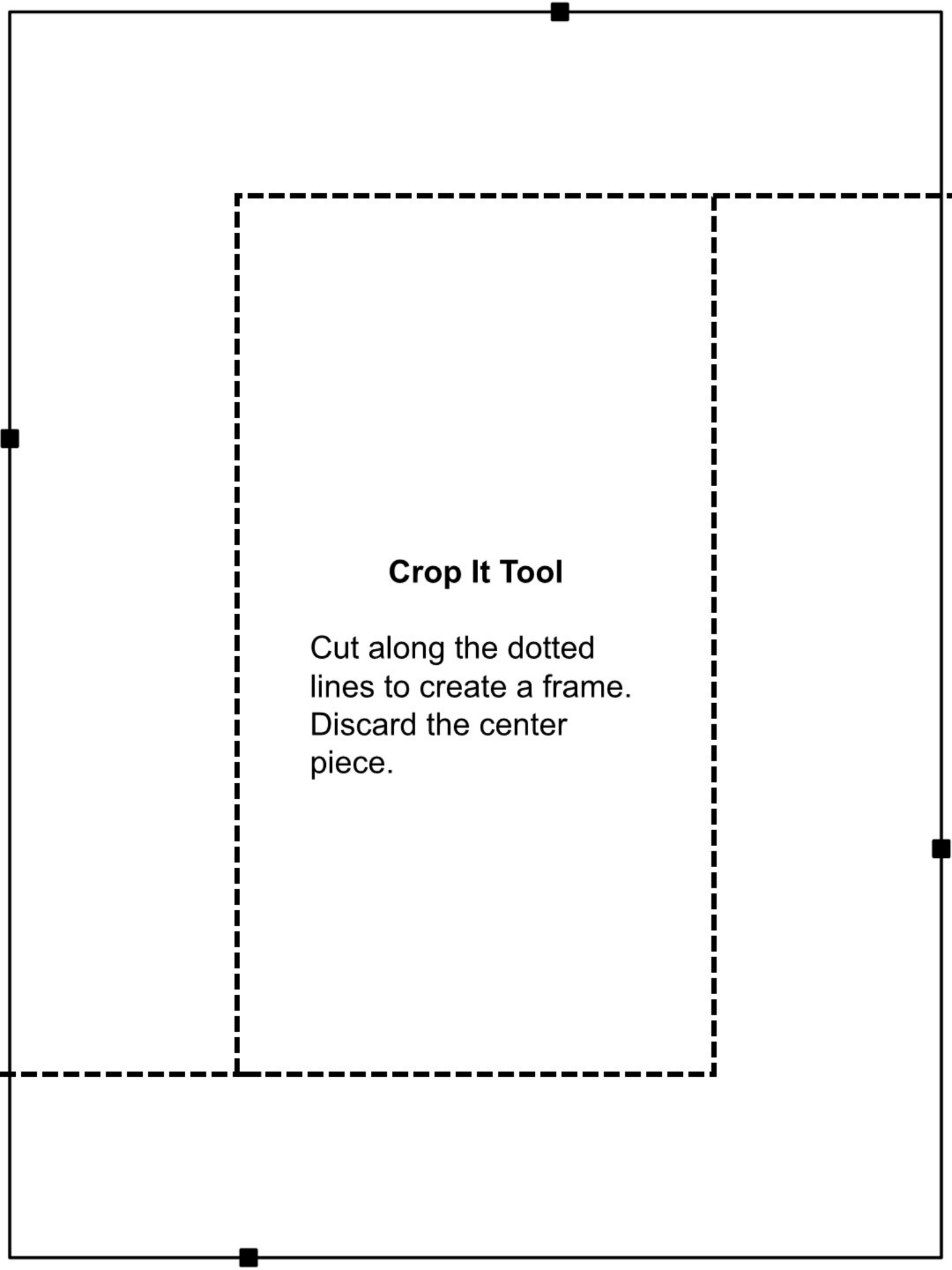
Ready-to-Use Graphic Organizers  
&  
Classroom Graphic Organizers

# 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?



A diagram showing a large rectangle with a solid border. Inside this rectangle is a smaller rectangle defined by a dotted border. The text 'Crop It Tool' is centered within the dotted rectangle. Below the title, there are two lines of text: 'Cut along the dotted lines to create a frame.' and 'Discard the center piece.' There are four small black squares at the corners of the outer solid rectangle: top-center, left-center, bottom-center, and right-center.

## 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 |

Social Studies Success®

## Question Dice

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

|             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| Who         | had        |
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Social Studies Success®

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Social Studies Success®

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| When        | would      |
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| How / Which | was / were |

Social Studies Success®



## 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 Skills Success*®

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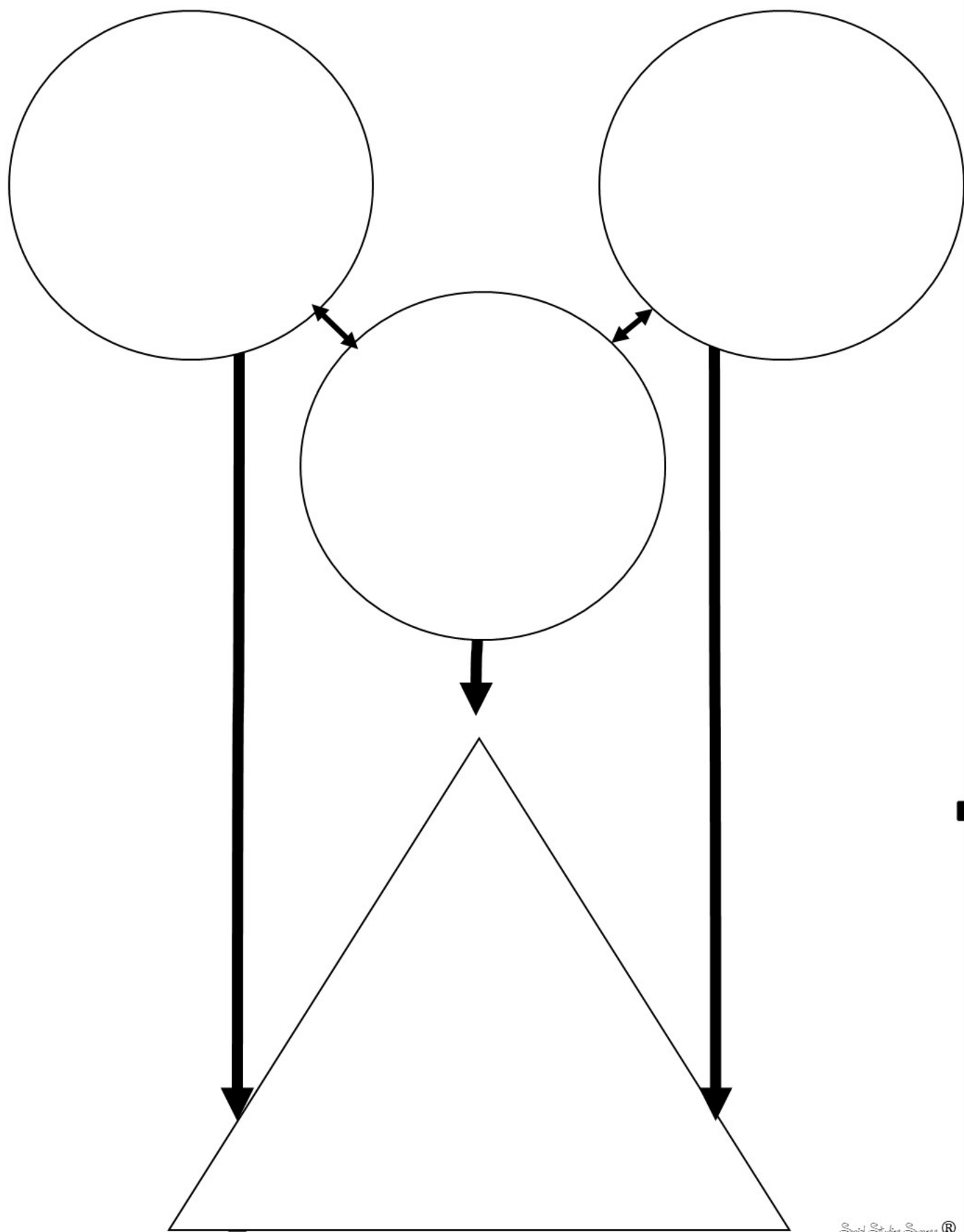
!!! This surprises me

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RR I have to reread this section

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# Connections Across Time



# Problem - Solution

Problem



Steps to  
Solution



When these  
steps have  
been taken,  
what  
happens  
next?





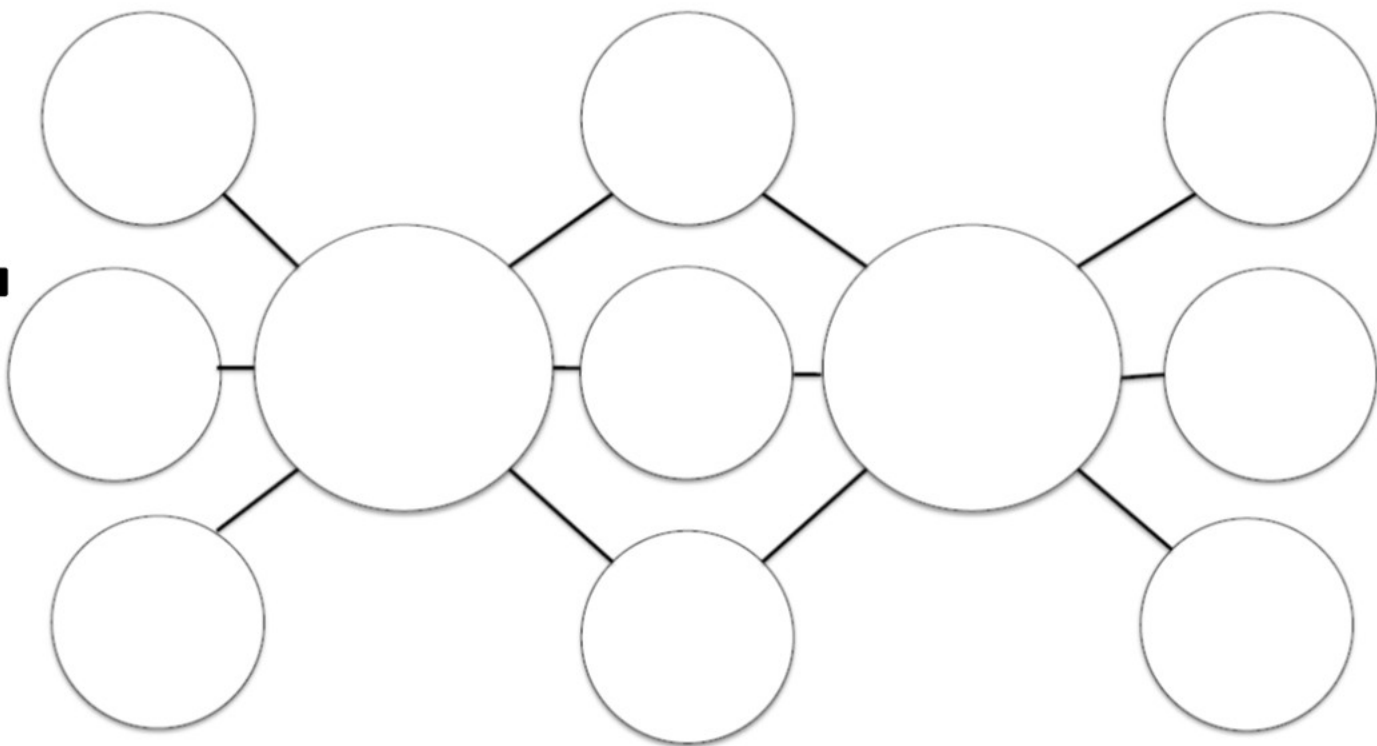
# Double Bubble

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

Differences

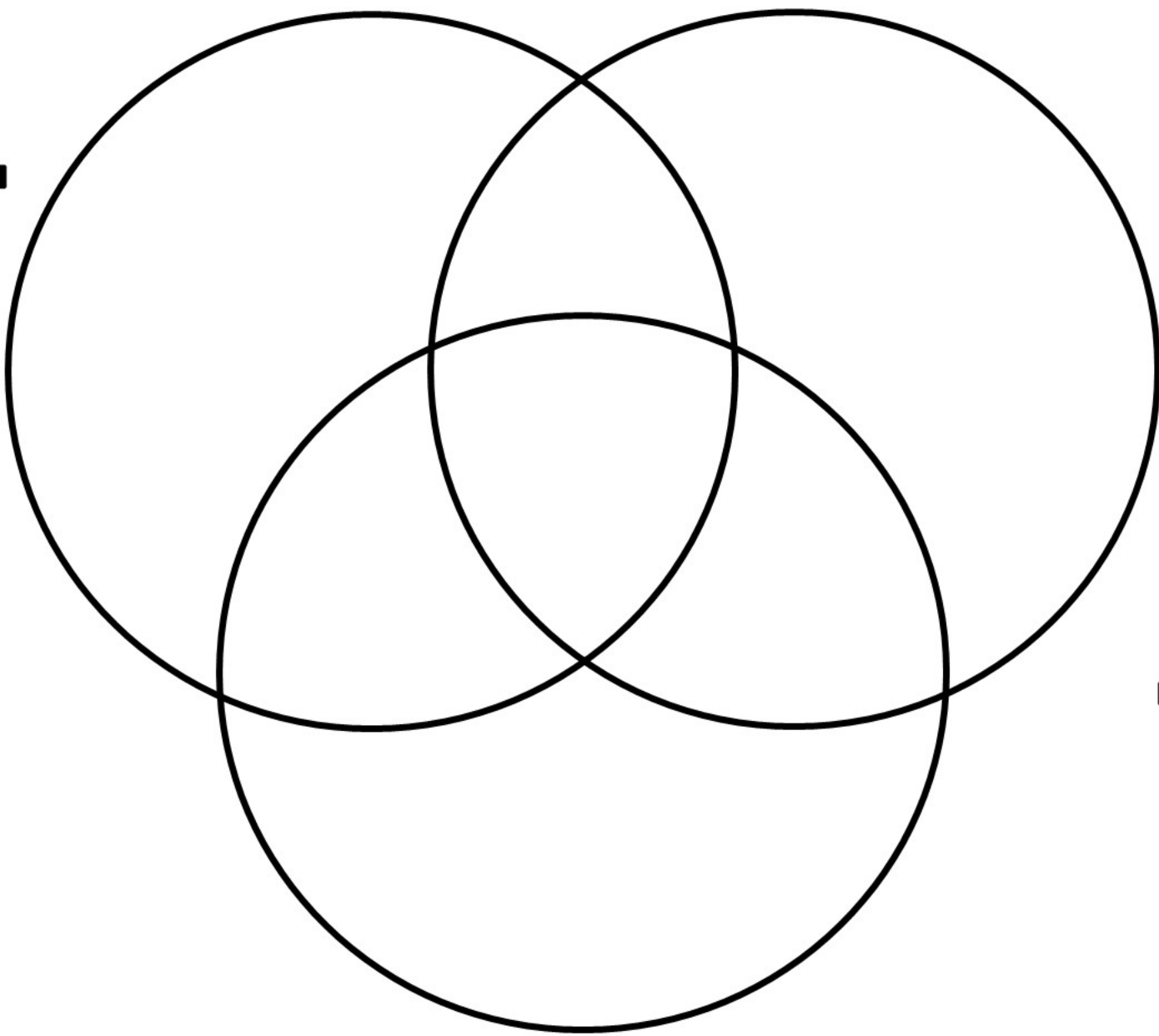
Similarities

Differences

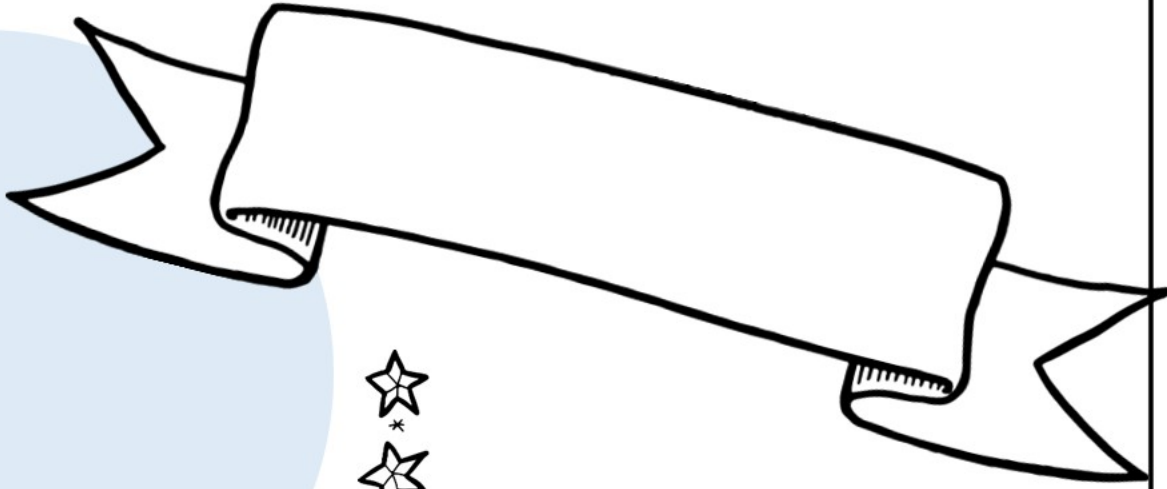


**Summary:** Write a paragraph comparing the two different topics. Include key ideas from your Double Bubble.

# Triple Venn Diagram



# Doodle Notes

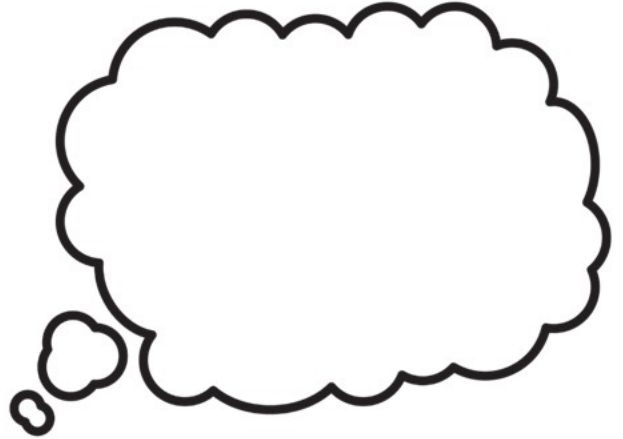
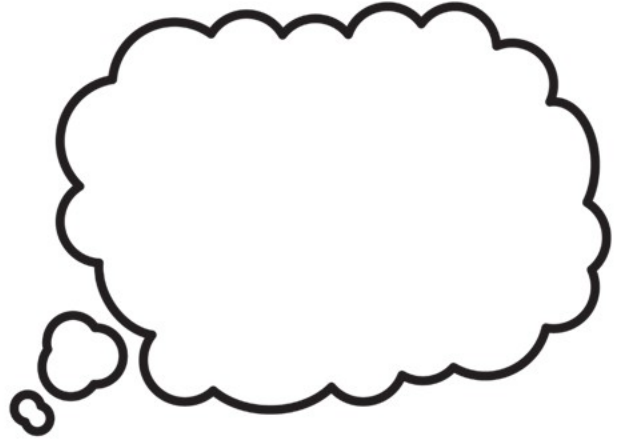
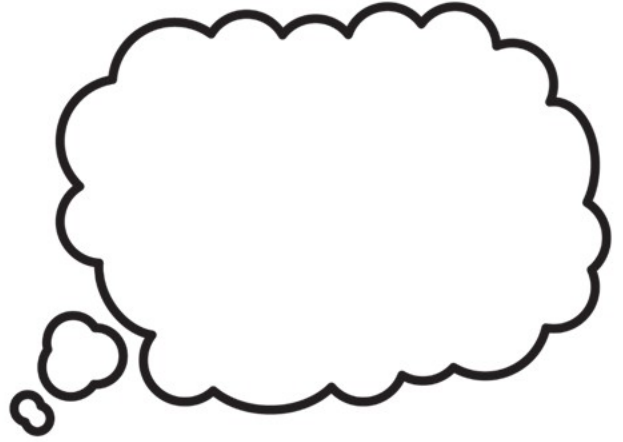


Four horizontal lines for writing, each preceded by a small stick figure icon. The first and third figures have a question mark above their heads, while the second and fourth have starburst symbols above their heads.

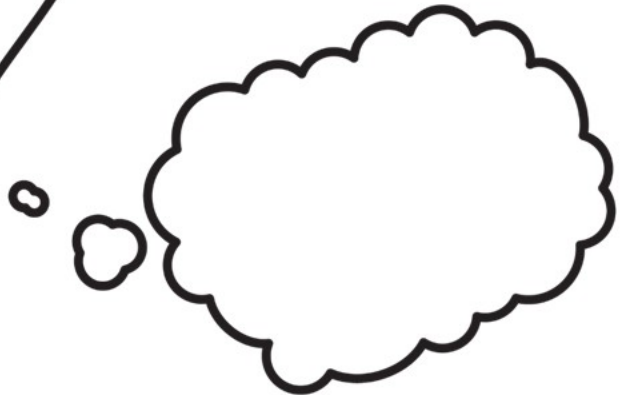
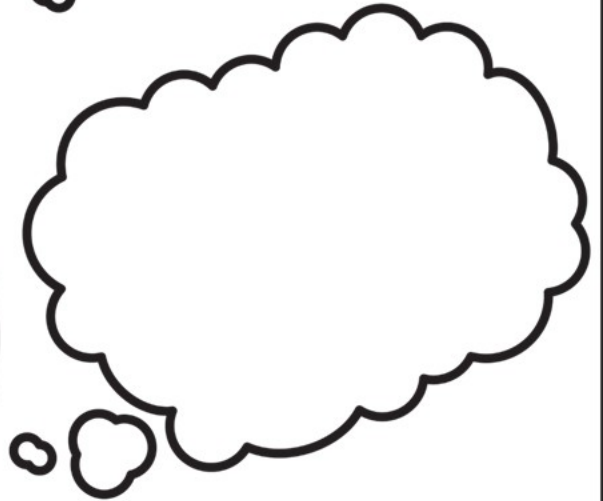
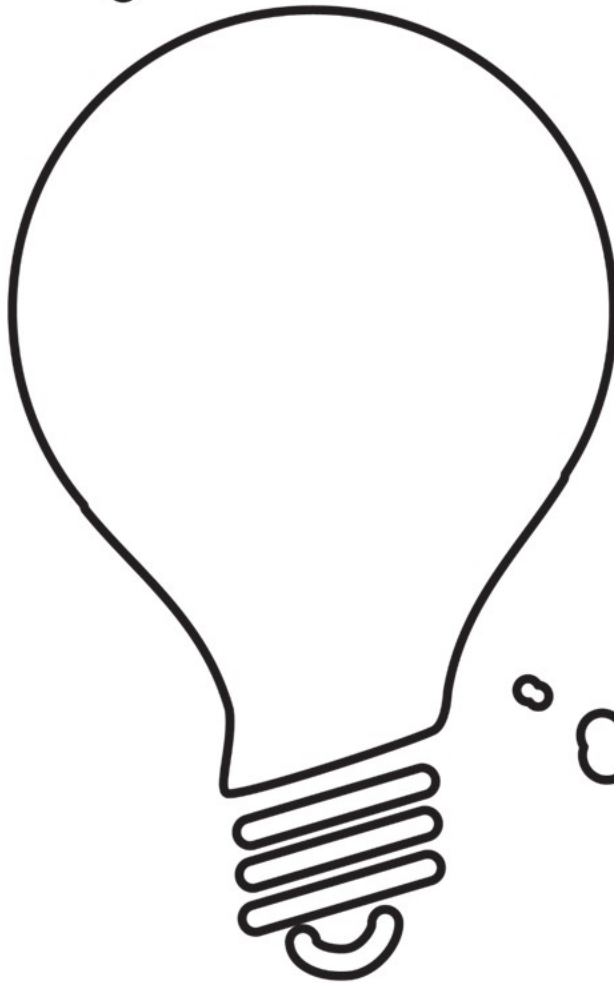




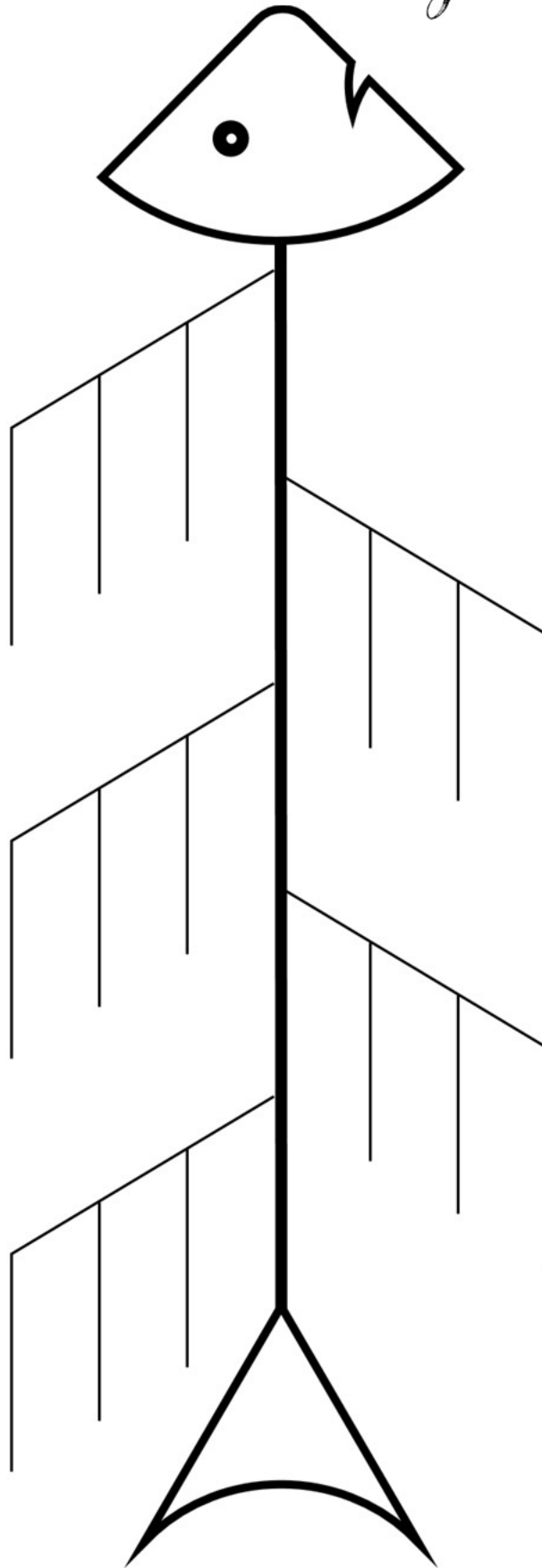
# Doodle Notes



# 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

Positive

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Alternative #2

Positive

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Alternative #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?



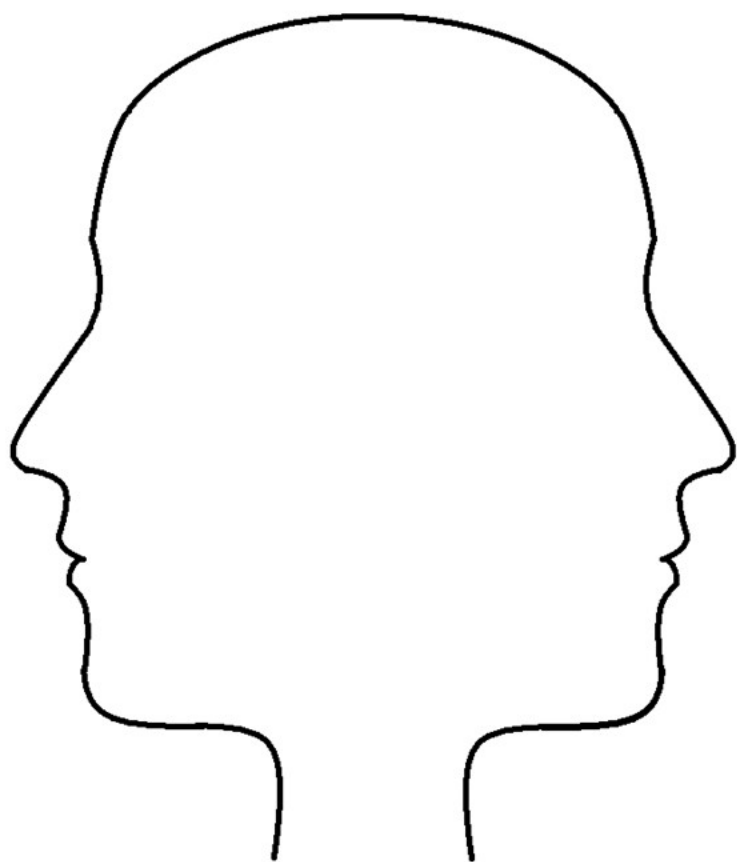
# Image Analysis

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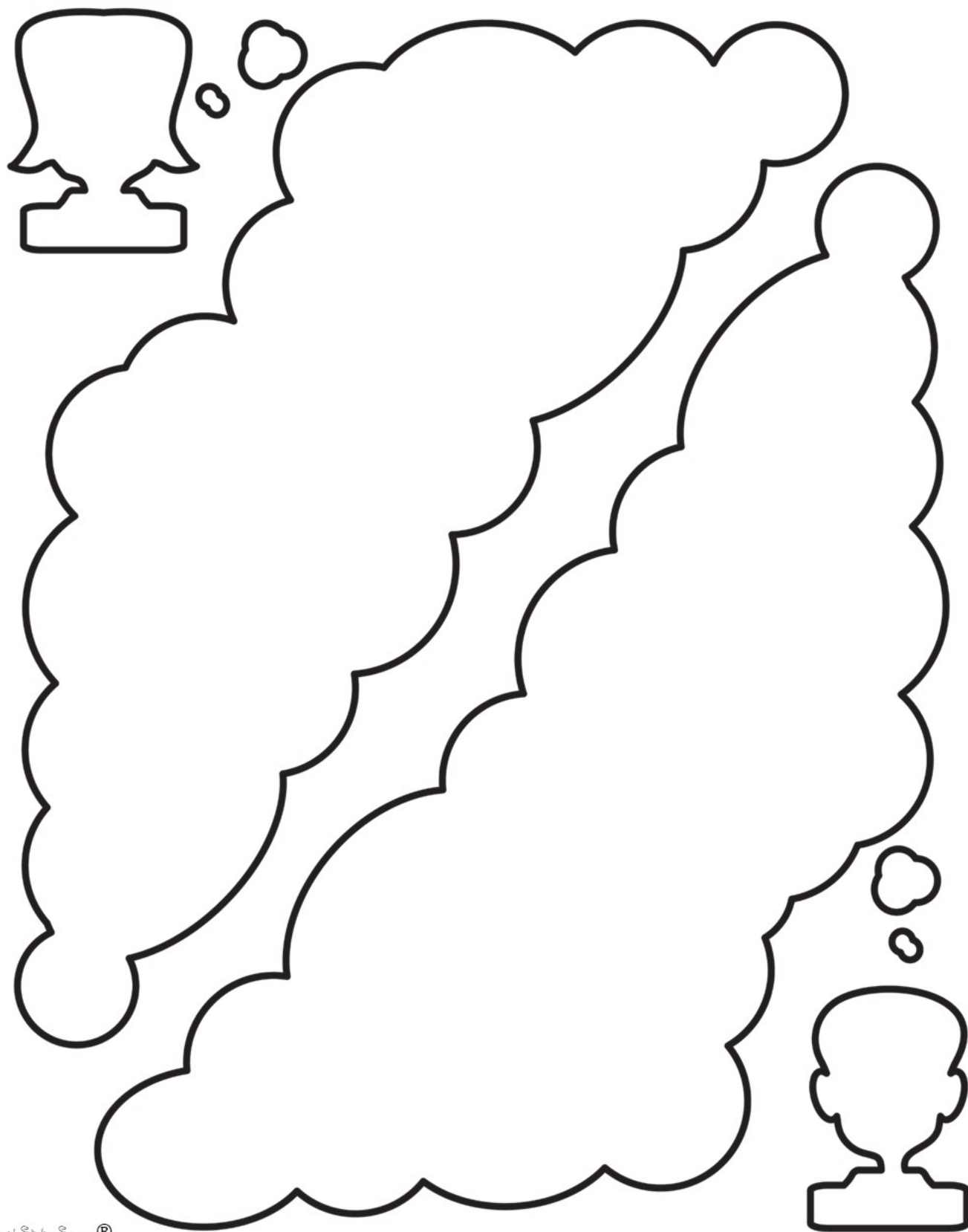
|    |    |
|----|----|
| 1. | 2. |
| 3. | 4. |
| 5. | 6. |

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 be in this scene. What would you hear? What would you smell? What else might you see?

# Janus Figure

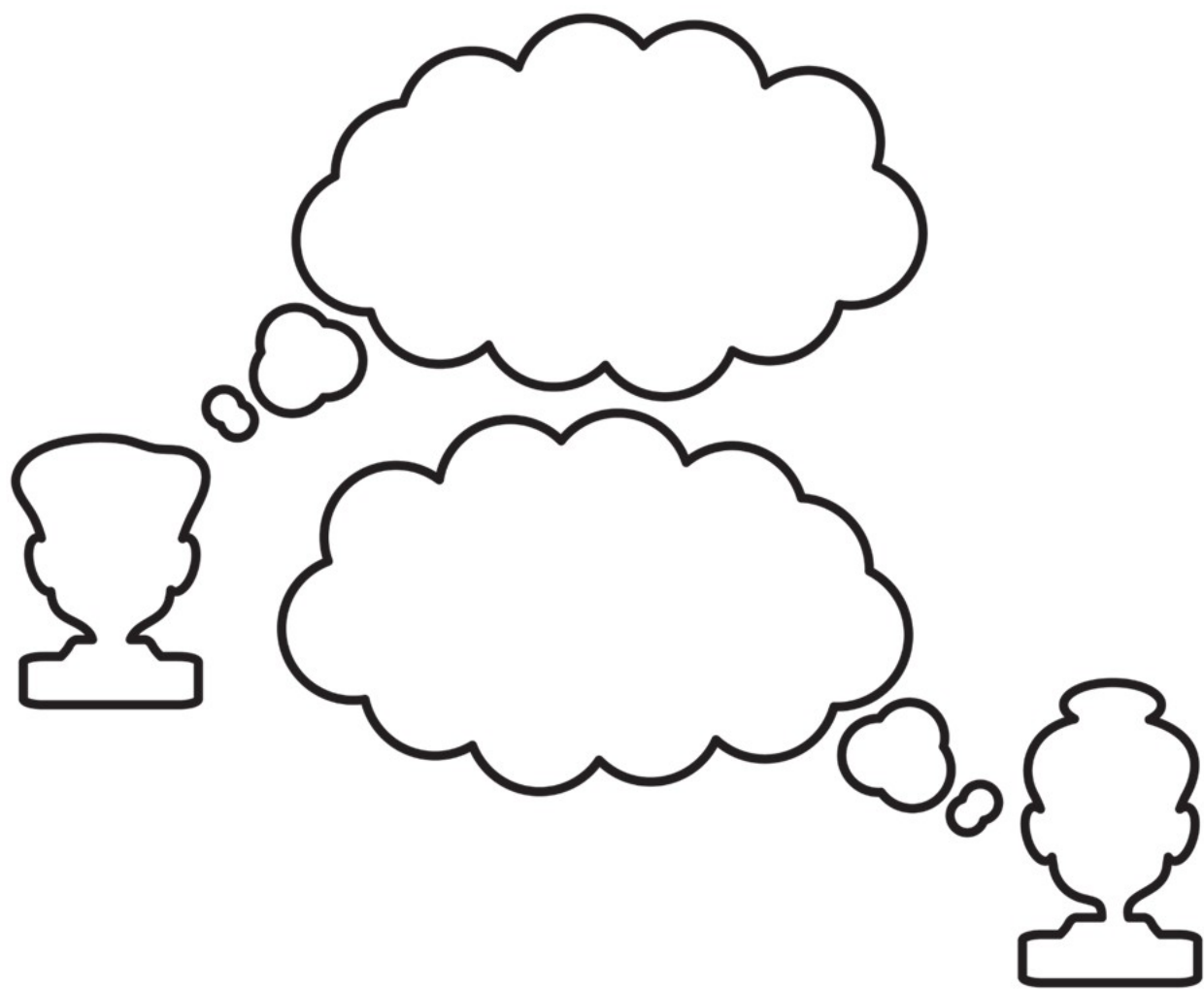


# Point of View



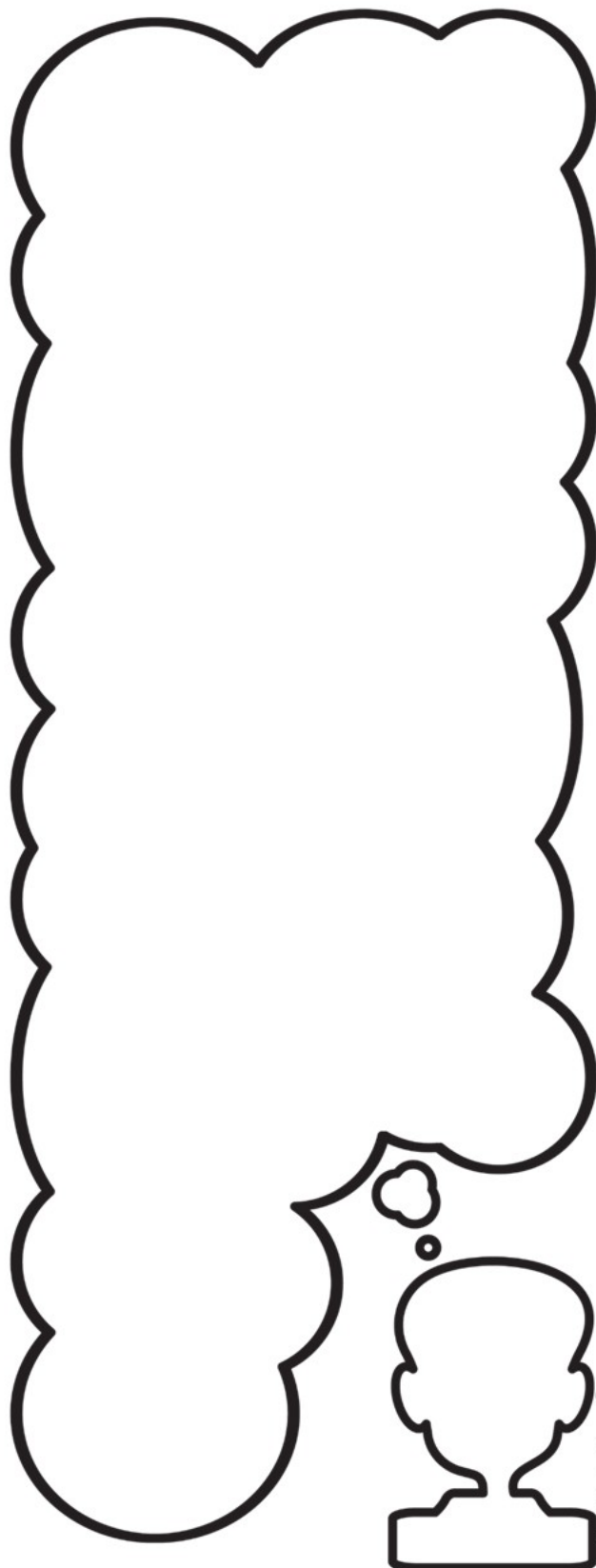
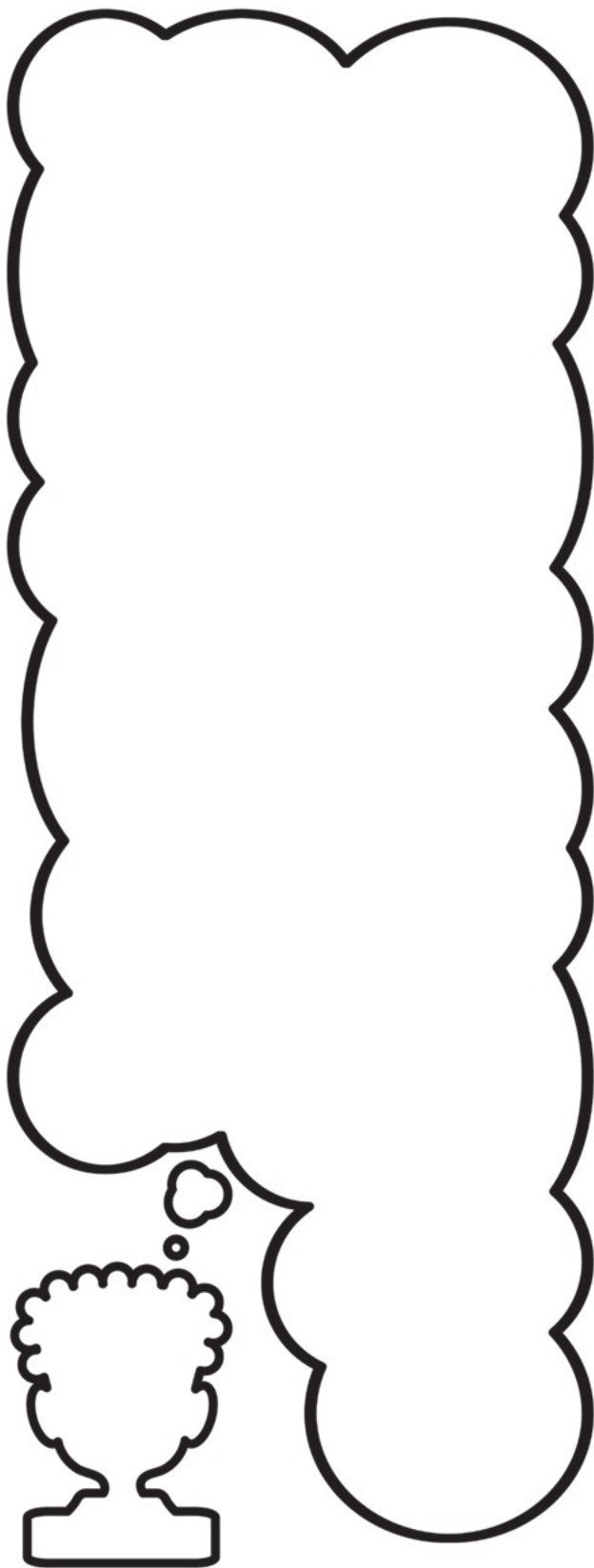


# Point of View

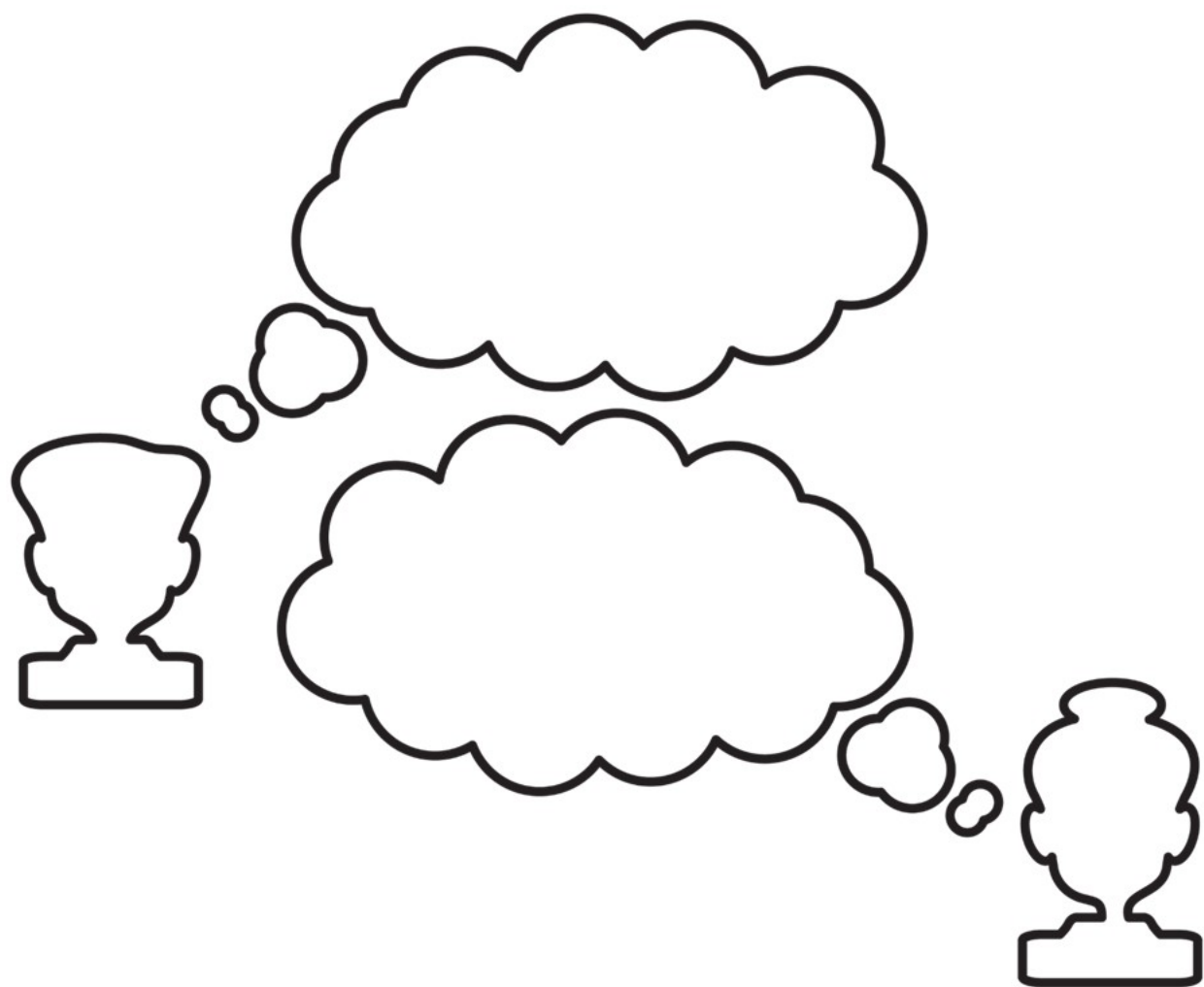


A large empty rectangular box for writing.

# Point of View

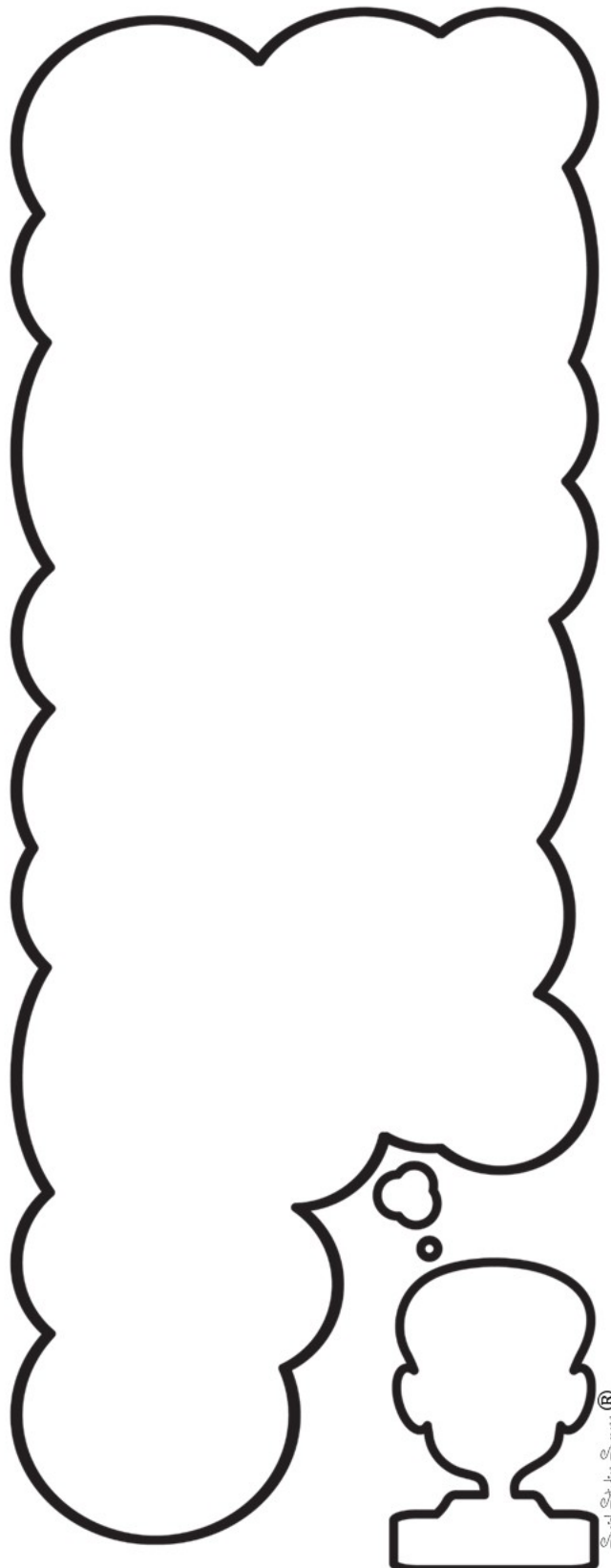
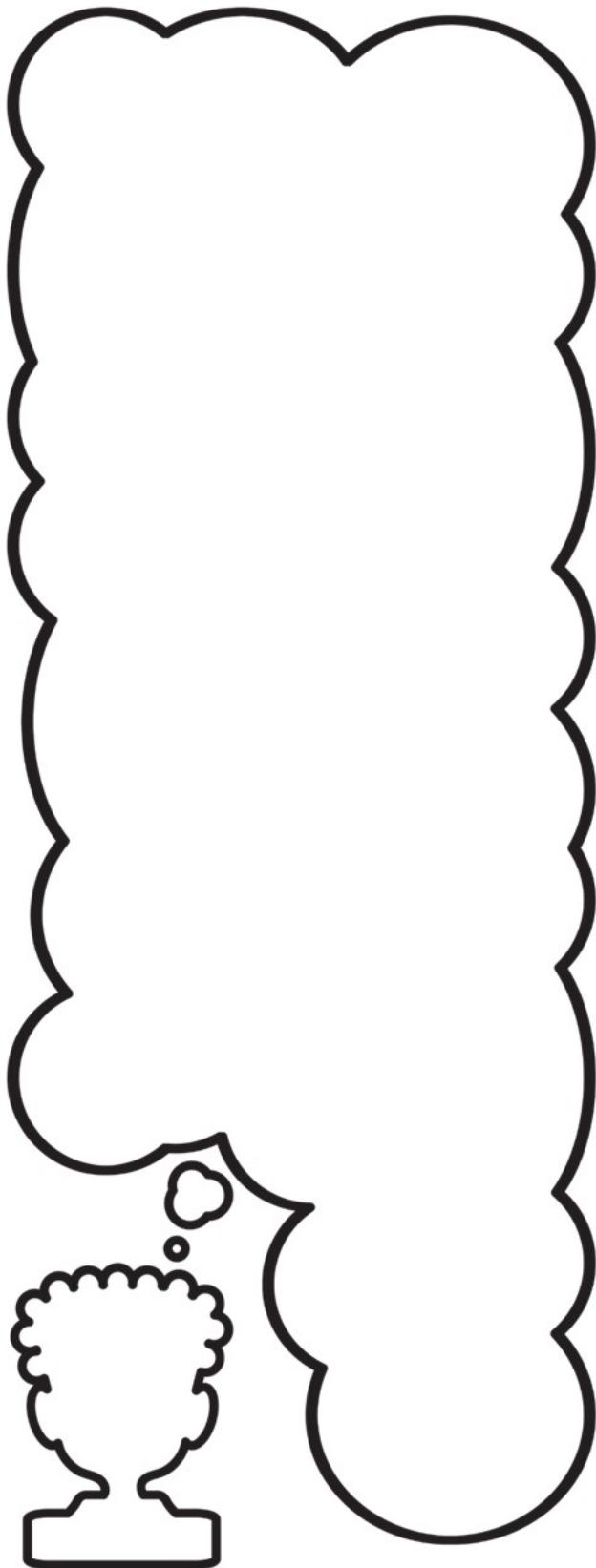


# Point of View



A large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for students to write their answers.

# 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

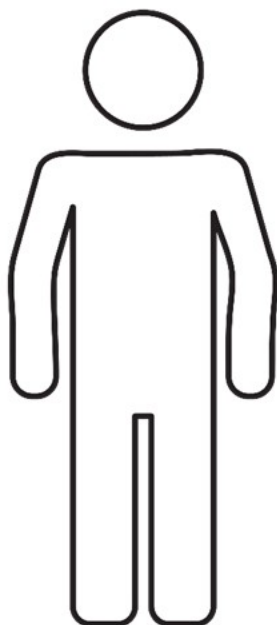
# Alpha Boxes

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

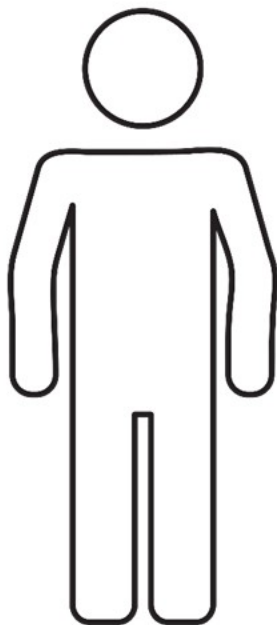
1. On the left side, write four or five factual statements that represent key events/accomplishments in the person's life.
2. On the right, write four or five interpretative statements to describe the person.
3. On the head draw an appropriate hat that best identifies the person's role in history.
4.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



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# 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.



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# 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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## *I Am Poem*

I pretend \_\_\_\_\_  
I feel \_\_\_\_\_  
I touch \_\_\_\_\_  
I worry \_\_\_\_\_  
I cry \_\_\_\_\_  
I am \_\_\_\_\_

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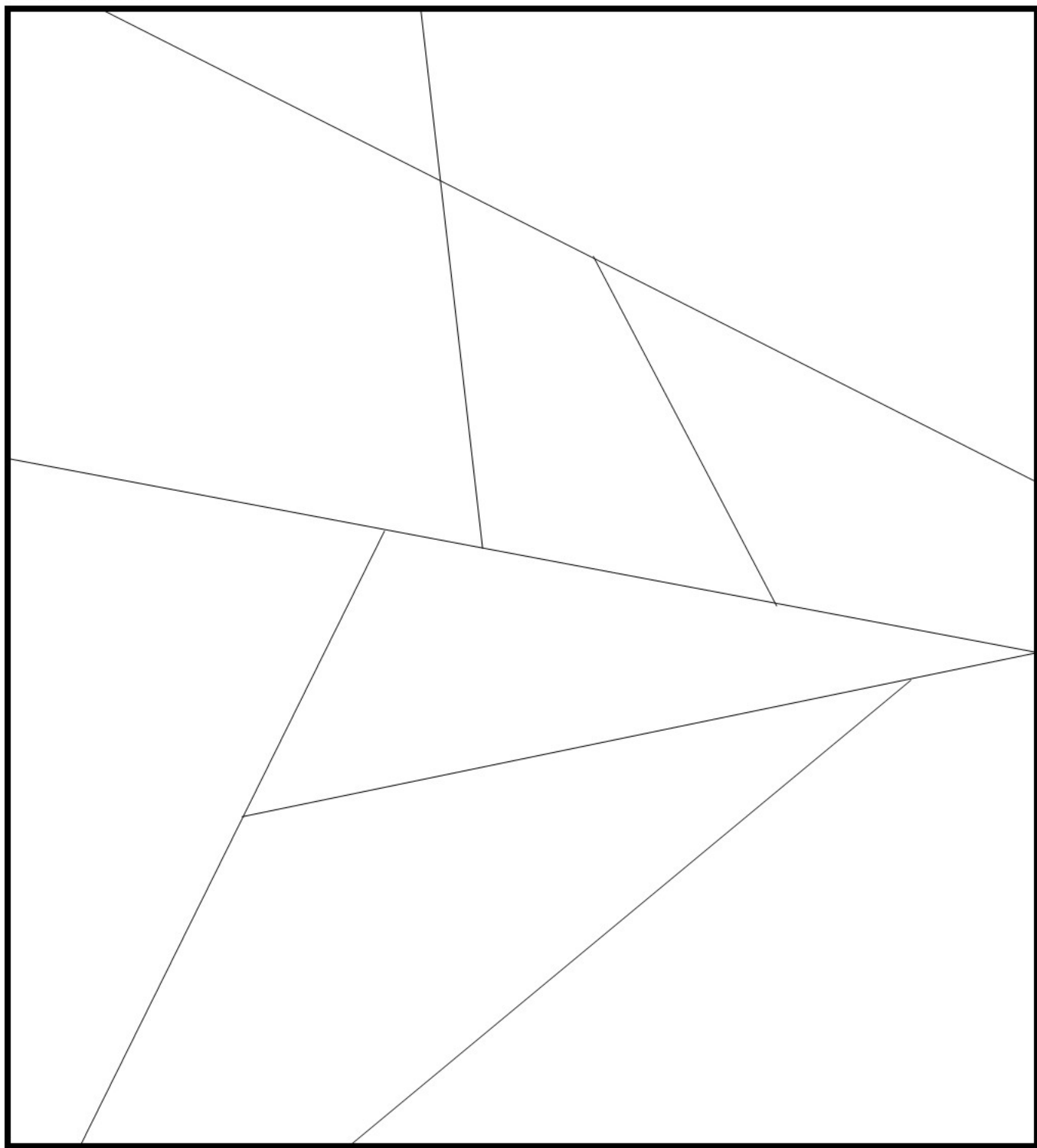
## *I Am Poem*

I understand \_\_\_\_\_  
I say \_\_\_\_\_  
I dream \_\_\_\_\_  
I try \_\_\_\_\_  
I hope \_\_\_\_\_  
I am \_\_\_\_\_

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# 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...



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I wonder  
why...



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I really  
don't  
understand...



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What  
if...



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I was really  
interested  
that....



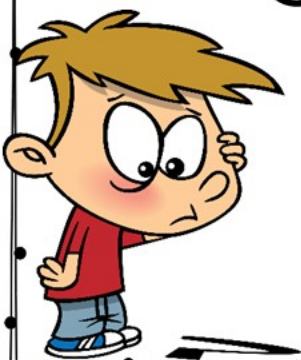
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When I  
read this I  
felt...



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I was  
surprised  
by...



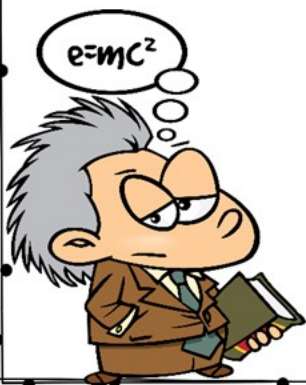
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I noticed  
that...



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I learned...



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



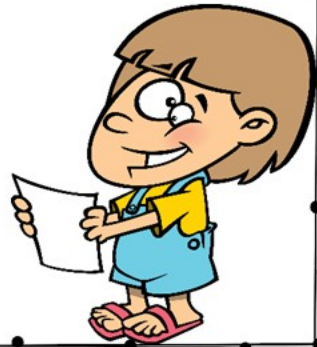
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I find...



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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...



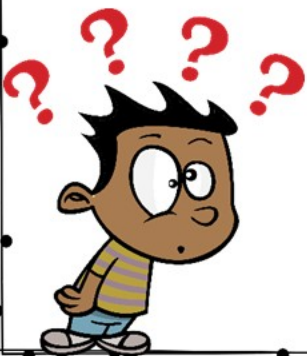
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Some new  
ideas  
include...



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I am  
confused  
by....



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This  
information is  
important  
because...



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# Bibliography

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US History



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# About the Author

## What do I believe about Social Studies instruction?

- ✓ 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*
- ✓ Kids need to continuously 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

Dawn earned her Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Texas A&M University. In her education journey, she was shaped by her various roles as a classroom teacher, instructional coach, curriculum coordinator, professional development trainer, university professor, and author. Dawn has provided Social Studies professional development for over 20 years to more than 10,000 teachers from Alaska to Florida. In 2015, Dawn started Social Studies Success<sup>®</sup> with the mission to revolutionize Social Studies instruction. With a goal of improving instruction, Dawn has provided consulting, classroom resources, and professional development services to several school districts across the state of Texas and the nation. You can reach Dawn [here](#).