

# Graphic Organizers and English Language Learners



*USING THE FINDINGS AND RESEARCH OF  
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# What are graphic organizers?



- Graphic organizers reveal the organization of concepts and/or relationships between those concepts.
- The learner does not have to process heavy amounts of language in order to understand the concept being taught. This aspect of graphic organizers is critical for ESL students to understand challenging ideas.
- Graphic organizers help to make information more precise and eliminates superfluous detail.

# Why use graphic organizers with ESL students?



- Graphic organizers are essential tools to help develop cognitive skills and strategic thinking across grade levels
- They help to promote analytical, critical, and creative thinking skills for all students regardless of language proficiency
- A substitute for rote memorization
- Helps to integrate content and language together
- Forces students to utilize the four domains of English: Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking
- Can promote classroom discussion
- Teachers can intentionally teach specific academic vocabulary and concepts
- You, as teacher, show and not tell students what is important in your lesson

# Examples of Graphic Organizers



- Brainstorming
- T-Charts
- Venn Diagrams
- Mind Maps
- Webs
- Flow Charts
- Time Lines
- Cause and Effect Maps

Pie Charts

Pro/Cons Chart

Pyramids

Compare/Compare Matrix

K-W-L Charts

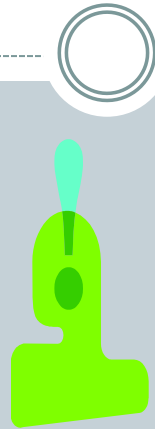
Stair Steps

# Aren't Students Just Copying From The Board With Graphic Organizers?



- Graphic organizers are like an iceberg. There's much more learning going on beneath the surface than appears.
- Before recording information, students perform higher order thinking skills such as:
  - Recognizing important information
  - Making decisions about this information
  - Consolidating details
  - Finding a clear and concise means to relay this information

# Of particular note with ESL students



- Remember that you can include all students in graphic organizer activities regardless of English proficiency.
- You can incorporate graphic organizers as the beginning of the writing process for beginning and intermediate ESL students.
- Will promote depth of essential learning.
- Graphic organizers will help to provide structure and organization to students with limited formal schooling.

# How to Enable Students to Construct Graphic Organizers



Teacher Does It: Modeling and Explanation

Class Does It: Co-construction and Continued Explanation

Groups Do It:  
Cooperative Learning  
and Teacher Guidance

Individual  
Students Do It

# In Conclusion....



*Less is more – depth is more,*



*Graphic organizers help all kids soar!*