

DOINGWHATWORKS



Slideshow

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

A Sample of Graphic Organizers

Burlingame High School, California

KIPP San Francisco Bay Academy, California

Pocomoke Middle School, Maryland

Stoughton High School, Massachusetts

February 2009

Topic: Adolescent Literacy

Practice: Comprehension Strategies

Highlights

- Graphic organizers are an effective way to help students build text comprehension.
- Research evidence supports the use of graphic organizers for improving student learning of content and vocabulary across subject areas.
- Teachers in middle and high schools use these tools across grades and content areas to scaffold student understanding of text and encourage students to be actively engaged in their learning.
- Graphic organizers can be used to support comprehension skill development including generating and organizing ideas, recognizing elements of text structure, identifying important information, connecting ideas, illustrating concepts, inferring, and making comparisons between texts and concepts.

About the Sites

Burlingame High School

Burlingame, CA

Demographics

63% White

15% Hispanic

14% Asian

6% Other

1% Black

1% Native American

5% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

7% English Language Learners

Burlingame High School provides reading and academic intervention support to ninth graders through an academic literacy class called ACCESS. Teachers Jim Burke and Morgan Hallabrin have developed a comprehensive curriculum to help students develop reading, vocabulary, academic literacy, and comprehension skills. Features of the high school reading program include:

- Districtwide testing of all eighth graders to identify struggling readers,
- Academic literacy course for identified struggling readers in ninth grade, and
- Use of note-taking organizers and templates designed by Jim Burke to promote meaningful discussion about text

KIPP San Francisco Bay Academy

San Francisco, CA

Demographics

44% Hispanic

37% Black

11% Other

5% Asian

2% White

77% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

21% English Language Learners

KIPP San Francisco Bay Academy takes an explicit instruction approach to literacy development. Distinctive

features of the school include:

- A longer school day,
- Schoolwide use of a vocabulary journal in every class across all subject areas,
- Scaffolding reading comprehension using graphic organizers, and
- Maximal use of classroom time for learning using Do Now and Exit Ticket activities.

Pocomoke Middle School

Pocomoke City, MD

Demographics

49% White

47% Black

2% Hispanic

1% Asian

1% Native American

56% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

0% English Language Learners

12% Special Education

Pocomoke Middle School takes a schoolwide approach to meeting the needs of each of their students. Vocabulary instruction, comprehension strategies, and learning aids such as graphic organizers are a part of every content area classroom. Pocomoke staff work together to improve students' reading skills through:

- Adopting a schoolwide emphasis on vocabulary instruction;
- Training content teachers and implementing explicit literacy instruction across all subject areas, including science, social studies, math, and art;
- Using graphic organizers across the content areas to support the development of reading comprehension;
- Engaging students in text discussion to promote higher levels of understanding;
- Supporting staff collaboration through student work review discussions;
- Using assessment data to identify needs and inform instruction for struggling readers; and
- Providing reading interventions for students reading below grade level through targeted classroom instruction and supplemental reading classes designed to meet the needs of students requiring more intensive interventions.

Stoughton High School Stoughton, MA

Demographics

79% White

14% Black

3% Hispanic

4% Asian

19% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

2% English Language Learners

12% Special Education

Stoughton High School staff work collaboratively to improve students' reading skills and support reading instruction across the content areas. Features of the high school reading program include:

- A schoolwide approach to literacy intervention,
- Explicit vocabulary and reading comprehension instruction across content areas,
- ELL program designed to help students improve their comprehension and vocabulary skills,
- Comprehensive assessment program,
- Benchmarking approach to ensure consistent improvement in classroom and district testing across grade levels,
- Screening practices, diagnostic tests, and a data-driven process for identifying student needs and interventions,
- Ongoing involvement of special needs and reading teachers throughout the assessment process, and
- Intervention options of different intensity levels to facilitate individualized instruction for struggling students.

Full Transcript

Presentation Title Slide: Using Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers are a powerful strategy that teachers use to build student text comprehension. Using graphic organizers is an effective and simple way to explicitly teach comprehension strategies in all content areas.

Slide 1: What is a Graphic Organizer?

Graphic organizers come in many forms. Common types include: story maps, character analysis, cause and effect relationships, and sequence charts. They can be tailored to specific comprehension strategies or goals in any subject area, including social studies, science, math, and art.

Slide 2: Why Use It?

Graphic organizers help students identify, organize, and retain important information. They can be used before, during, or after reading to scaffold comprehension strategies such as generating ideas, making connections, comparing and contrasting concepts, inferring meaning, and sequencing information. They are most successful when taught explicitly and used consistently.

Slide 3: Generate Ideas

Spoke diagrams are often used to scaffold students in generating and organizing their ideas about a text. During this social studies lesson, the teacher begins by modeling and providing students with a rationale for using this specific organizer. Students then practice using the graphic organizer with teacher support until they are able to use it independently.

Slide 4: Recognize Text Structure

Many teachers use graphic organizers to help students recognize common elements of text structure, including cause and effect, compare and contrast, problem and solution, and sequential relationships. This organizer is used in a science class to identify environmental cause and effect relationships.

Slide 5: Identify Main Ideas

Since many students struggle to identify the most important information in a text, some teachers use this spider map to help. On this graphic organizer, students plot the main concepts in an art text on the slanted lines and provide details on the branches.

Slide 6: Make Connections

Graphic organizers can help students connect ideas and relationships in a text through formats such as maps, webs, graphs, or charts. In this example, a teacher asks students to create a visual showing the connections between their own experiences and those of a main character in a book.

Slide 7: Illustrate Concepts

Here, a teacher uses a three-column format to have students illustrate ideas in a text and make connections between character perspectives and their own ideas about concepts such as respect, acceptance, security, and friendship.

Slide 8: Compare and Contrast

Graphic organizers are commonly used by teachers as text becomes increasingly difficult. This organizer is used to help students compare and contrast themes in two stories and provide text evidence to support their conclusions.

Slide 9: Infer Meaning

An English teacher designed this organizer to help students analyze a fictional character. Students find and interpret quotes by or about the character and make inferences about the character, incorporating examples from the graphic organizer.

Slide 10: Sequence Information

Subject area teachers can use a variety of graphic organizers to improve comprehension. In this science class, students designed their own visual tool to represent three key discoveries they learned about from a reading on the history of cell theory. This helps the teacher prepare students for summarizing and sequencing important information from complex text.

Slide 11: Effective Uses of Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers can be effective in engaging students in understanding difficult text across grades and content areas. Teachers can use or adapt the graphic organizers shown here* or create their own to support the development of comprehension strategies.

* Download the Sample Material *Graphic Organizer Examples*.