

Graphic organisers

What is a graphic organiser?

A graphic organiser is a means of presenting information so that the important points are immediately obvious. The information may be presented using keywords/phrases or pictures/symbols representing specific information.

There are a number of graphic organiser styles, each of which is suited for a particular purpose. The basic design of any organiser may be adapted to meet the requirements of a specific task and level of ability.

Purpose	Examples
concept development	concept map, spider map, word map, character map, mind map, story map, story star, concept web, summary chart, matrix
presenting data	bar graph, pictograph, line graph, pie graph, labelled diagram
determining sequences	word chain, sequence chain, word wheel, cycle wheel, ladder, cartoon and picture strip, action plan
evaluating	PMI chart, plus/minus T-chart
determining relationships	fishbone map, decision tree, network tree
categorising and classifying	Venn diagram, Carroll diagram, tree diagram

Why use graphic organisers?

- Graphic organisers show the key facts, ideas or results of a given situation or topic.
- They help to clarify thoughts and to determine how to proceed.
- The information illustrated is immediately obvious without the need for reading and analysing lengthy text.
- Students learn that presenting information in this way is an important means of communicating ideas and information.
- It demonstrates understanding of their own research and similar representations in the media worldwide.

Using a graphic

To gain confidence in completing and studying graphic organisers, students need to be:

- presented with many tasks which require pictorial representation
- guided in their choice of style(s) and in the conventions of that style, so they can develop effective representations related to a given purpose and audience.

Teachers need to discuss and model each style of organiser as it is introduced, explaining how it works for a given purpose and how it can be adapted if required.

Examples of graphic organisers for use in 'Culture and Costume'.

Concept map

Can be used to map knowledge about a specific country.

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    graph TD
      Country[Country] --- Neighbouring[Neighbouring countries]
      Country --- NationalCostume[National costume]
      Country --- SpecialFestivals[Special festivals]
      Country --- FamousPeople[Famous people (past/present)]
      Country --- CapitalCity[Capital city]
      Country --- NationalDishes[National dishes]
      Country --- Currency[Currency]
      Country --- NationalFlag[National flag]
      Country --- NationalEmblems[National emblems]
      Country --- NationalFlag2[National flag]
  
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- The level of information and means of representing it can be adapted to suit the ability of the students.

Venn diagram

- A Venn diagram could be used to compare and contrast things about different countries; for example, the colours of their flags.

Examples of some other graphic organisers.

Flow chart

Chain

Pie graph

Whole

Fishbone chart

Fishbone

Story star

5-point story star