

Handy Handouts®

Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students

More About Graphic Organizers

by Rynette R. Kjesbo, M.S., CCC-SLP

Graphic organizers are visual tools that can help students organize thoughts, think creatively, plan assignments, summarize information, process ideas, and understand concepts. Graphic organizers use shapes, lines, images, words, and the arrangement of words on a page to make information more meaningful and memorable. They can be especially helpful for students who have learning disabilities or for students with special needs.

Graphic organizers are used to illustrate associations between words and concepts. They can be used for:



- **Comparing and contrasting** – How are two concepts or ideas similar? How are they different?



- **Classifying ideas** – What category does a concept fall into? What are some similar concepts?



- **Giving examples** – What are some illustrations of the concept?

- **Showing the order of events in time** – What happened first? What happened next? What happened last?

- **Explaining the steps in a sequence** – Where do you begin? What do you do next? What is the final step?

- **Revealing cause and effect relationships** – What caused something to happen? What is the end result?

There are many different types of graphic organizers. Venn diagrams, Four-Squares, and KWL Charts (which stands for “What I Know, what I Want to know, and what I Learned”) are three common examples. (See [Handy Handout #203](#), “A Beginner’s Guide to Graphic Organizers” for more information about these three types of graphic organizers.) Another popular way to organize information is by using a mind map (also known as a concept map, brainstorming web, spider diagram, or spray diagram).



Handy Handouts®

Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students
(cont.)

Graphic organizers are visual tools that can help students organize thoughts, think creatively, plan assignments, summarize information, process ideas, and understand concepts. Graphic organizers use shapes, lines, images, words, and the arrangement of words on a page to make information more meaningful and memorable. They can be especially helpful for students who have learning disabilities or for students with special needs.



Related Handy Handouts®:

- [203 – A Beginner’s Guide to Graphic Organizers](#)
- [56 – Help Kids Learn Routines with Visual Schedules](#)
- [492 – Visual Schedules for Daily Routines](#)

For more FREE Handy Handouts®, go to www.handyhandouts.com