

Generate – Sort – Connect – Elaborate: Concept Map

Purpose: To activate prior knowledge and help generate ideas about a topic. It also facilitates making connections between ideas.

Description: Select a topic, concept or issue. Generate a list of ideas and initial thoughts that come to mind when you think about this topic. Sort ideas according to how central they are. Place central ideas near the centre and other ideas toward the outside of the page. Connect ideas by drawing connecting lines between ideas that have something in common and write a short sentence explaining how they are connected. Elaborate on any ideas/thoughts by adding new ideas that expand, extend or add to initial ideas.

Process:

- Explain the purpose of a concept map to the students as a way of showing one's thinking.
- **Generate** a list of words, ideas or initial thoughts associated with the topic. This can be done as a whole class with all ideas placed on the board for them to copy onto their map later.
- **Sort** – Invite the students to sort ideas according to how important they are to the topic. Place central ideas near the centre and less important ideas (peripheral ideas) towards the outside. This often results in rich dialogue. Students complete this step with a partner, along with the next two steps.
- **Connect** – Students, with their partner, connect their ideas by drawing lines between ideas that have something in common. They write a brief sentence along the line explaining this connection.
- **Elaborate** – Students pick a few of the central ideas and elaborate on them, creating subcategories that break the ideas into smaller parts.
- Students pair up with another pair to share concept maps. They focus their discussion on the choices made in constructing the map and when asking questions about placement or connections.

Adapted from: <https://thinkingpathwayz.weebly.com/thinkingroutines.html>

