

Advance Organizers

What is an advance organizer?

Advance organizers are tools to aid your students' understanding of new information by connecting it to already existing knowledge. Prior to delving into a topic or lesson, you would have your students complete an advance organizer. While many advance organizers fall under the category of graphic organizers, you can also use text-based organizers.

Why should you use an advance organizer?

Advance organizers accomplish several things:

- they allow teachers to assess students' prior knowledge
- they help students organize existing knowledge
- they pull relevant information into working memory, allowing the students to connect new information with existing information (known as priming)
- they provide students with a tool that can aid in reflection and metacognition

What are different types of advance organizers?

There are multiple types of advance organizers. Some types of advance organizers - narrative, expository, and skimming - focus more on previewing and organizing new information before presentation. However, we want to focus on organizers that tap into students pre-existing, or prior, knowledge. These types of organizers typically fall under graphic, KWL, or analogies and metaphors.

Graphic organizers

Graphic organizers can help compare and contrast, show relationships, illustrate order or process, and organize into categories. Some example types include, but are not limited to:

- comparison and contrast chart
- concept maps
- venn diagram
- fishbone
- flow charts
- chains
- cycle

Know-Wonder-Learn (KWL)

A K-W-L is an advanced organizer and lets you know about students' background knowledge.

Ask students to divide a sheet of paper into three columns: K, W, and L.

K = What you already KNOW; W = What you WANT to know; L = What did you LEARN.

Students fill in K and W columns before beginning the lesson. Ask students to share their responses before beginning the lesson. The L column is filled in at the end of the lesson and can be collected as a tool to know what students took away from the day's lesson.

Analogies and Metaphors

If you're teaching a complex topic that you want to help break down into simpler parts, start by using an analogy or metaphor with an everyday object or something familiar to most students. For example, if you're teaching about the brain and memory, computers are often used as a metaphor. If you're teaching about the eye, you may use a camera as a metaphor. Start by asking students what they already know about the analogy/metaphor. Then, connect the new information to their existing knowledge to enhance understanding.

K What do you <u>know</u> ?	W What do you <u>want to know</u> ?	L What have you <u>learned</u> ?