

Visual Organizers

Examples

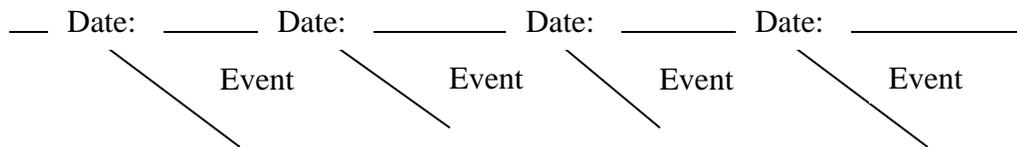
Visual organizers are simply drawings or formats used to represent information and to show relationships between ideas. Tables, charts, graphs, timelines, flowcharts, diagrams, and webs are all visual organizers.

The purpose of using visual organizers is to help you to think more critically and at higher levels of cognition than if you only focused on reading your text and taking notes in class. They help you to process the information at higher levels of comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. By thinking about and organizing information in this way, you help yourself to better understand and to recall the information.

Example:

Time line

To summarize and show the major events that led up to the Revolutionary War, you might choose a **time line**.



The following table shows how some of the most common visual organizers can be used for different types of conceptual relationships.

Graphing Various Types of Conceptual Relationships

Graphic Type	Relationships of ideas appropriate to this type graphic	Examples:		
		Humanities	Social Science	Physical/Life Science
<u>Web</u> (for a concept)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions • Attributes • Examples 	Characteristics of cubism in art	Attributes of the demand curve in economics	Attributes of sun spots in astronomy
<u>Tree</u> (for hierarchies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classification • Analysis • Structure 	Family tree of the Tudor Monarchy in England	Organization of the White House staff	Classes of isotopes in chemistry

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attributes • Examples 			
<u>Chart</u> (for similar concepts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare • Contrast • Attributes 	Comparison of imagery in poems by Anne Sexton	Comparison of the Viet Nam war to the 1988 war in the Persian Gulf	Comparison of planets of the solar system
<u>Chain</u> (for changes over time)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process • Sequence • Cause/Effect • Chronology 	Plot sequence of a novel	Stages of Piaget's theory of cognitive development	Process of cell division
<u>Sketch</u> (for visualizing a description)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical structures • Descriptions of places • Space relations • Concrete objects • Visual images 	Description of the Elizabethan stage set in a drama	Description of a complex apparatus for studying eye movements in reading	The structure of the epidermis and dermis, the two layers of skin

From: "Learning across the curriculum with creative graphing", by Linda Lee Johnson, *The Reading Teacher*, International Reading Association, 1990.