



Thinking Maps



Circle Map

The Circle Map is used to define a concept, word, or idea.

It is a great map to use to:

- diagnose prior knowledge
- brainstorm before writing
- use as a lesson closure

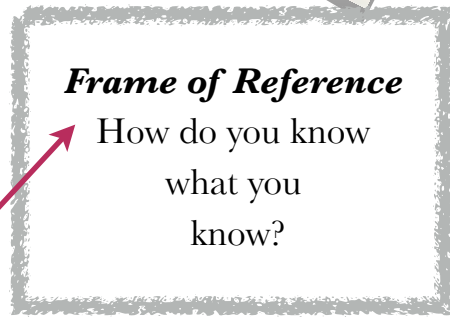
This can be words, numbers, pictures, symbols, etc. to represent the object, person, or ideas you are trying to understand or define.

Introduce your students to the Circle Map within the first weeks of school. Use the map throughout the curriculum. Students can work in cooperative learning groups or as a whole class to brainstorm what they know about a topic. Students can share their knowledge prior to a unit being

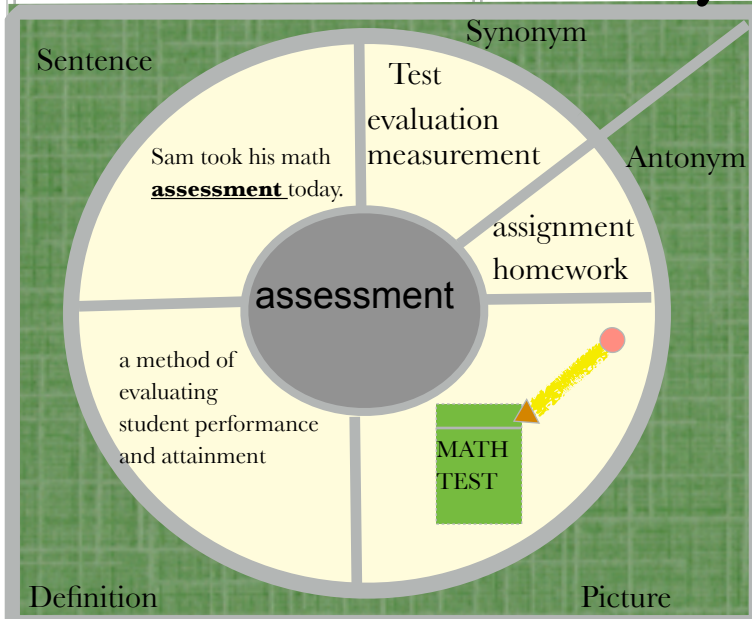
taught and/or at the end of the unit.

The Circle Map is used to **brainstorm ideas** and **show what you already know** about a topic by using context information. This can be words, numbers, pictures, symbols, etc. to **represent** the object, person, or ideas you are trying to understand or **define**.

Written in the inner circle is some "thing" you are trying to define. It is represented by a word or symbol. In the outer circle, information is written or drawn that puts the "thing" in context. The square around the circles is called the frame of reference. This is where "how you know what you know" is added to the map.



Remember Vocabulary



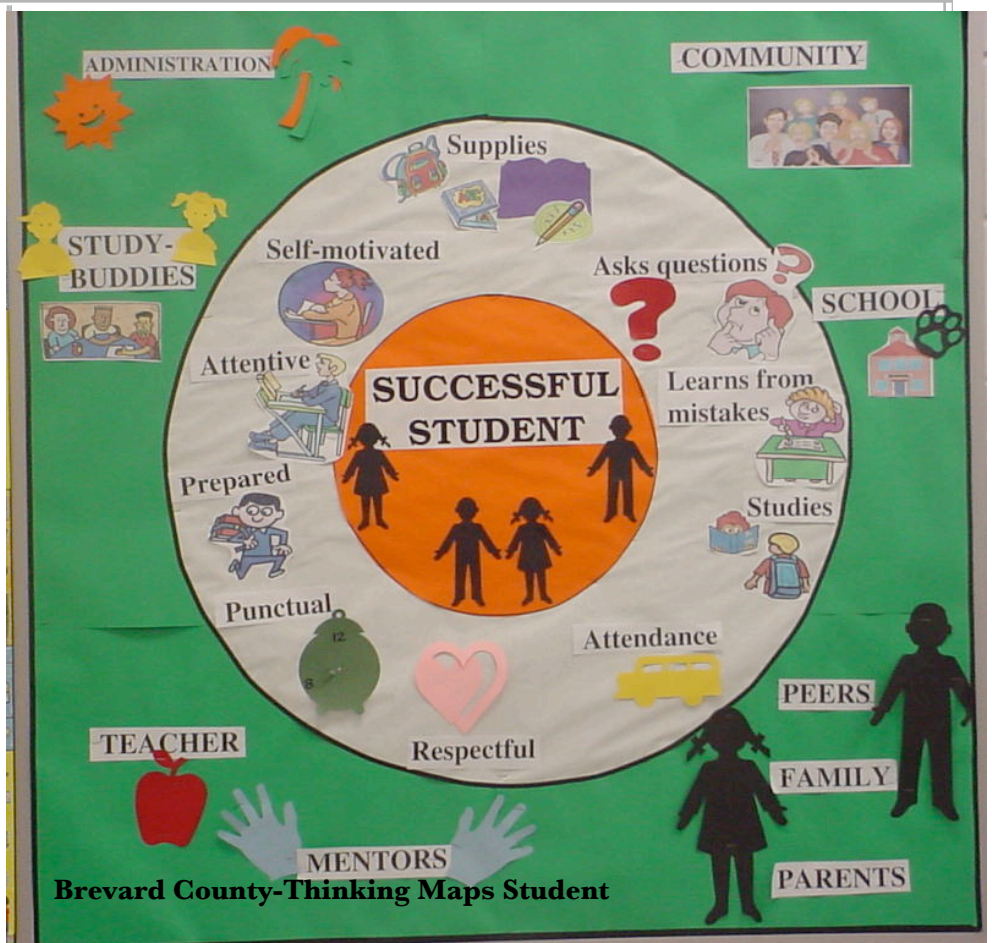
Vocabulary is essential in the development of reading comprehension. Students need to connect the vocabulary words to their prior knowledge to develop a strong understanding of the new word. They need to hear it, see it in a sentence, picture it, and connect other vocabulary words to it for it to become part of their permanent vocabulary. The Circle Map is a great tool to use when building a student's vocabulary.

Activities and Tips

Whole School Activities:

1. Create a School Wide Circle Map and place it in the cafeteria or in the main lobby of your school.
2. The map can define the school principal, the community, the school or a successful student.
3. Select a book to be read school wide, and use a School Wide Circle Map to define the book or a main character.

Home Tips: Have your child brainstorm ways the family could spend the summer vacation, their favorite books, gifts they could make for a grandparent, their favorite holiday activities.



Extensions of the Circle Map
Use color to show learning over time.

