

Classification



This strategy allows students to demonstrate an understanding of **relationships between things** and helps them **clarify concepts**.

Used collaboratively, students develop **communication skills** and can **deepen their understanding** of the topic in hand.

- Select a number of categories within a topic.
- Identify the features that distinguish one category from another e.g. Irish History: Hunter Gatherers and the First Farmers nomadic v settled, Temporary dwellings v Wattle and Daub houses, Wild nuts and berries vs Cultivated crops.
- Ask the students to draw a table in their copies.
- The number of columns, 2 or more, will depend on the number of categories within the topic.
- The number of rows will depend on the number of distinguishing features of each category.
- Students are then asked to classify the distinguishing features under the correct category heading.
- Students should be able to defend their choices, identify items that don't fit and explain their reasoning.
- This is a useful strategy to use at the beginning of a lesson to test prior knowledge or after learning about categories and classification or when a unit is completed to review concepts and terms.

Tips

- Classification is central to all the sciences. It is also relevant to aspects of history, geography, home-economics etc.
- Structuring this activity in groups provides a means of improved communication and organisation of information for students.
- Move around each group to ensure they are on task.
- To further develop students understanding once they have classified the items into groups ask them to identify the features that distinguish one category from another.



Further Information

Further reading and support on implementing this strategy is available on www.jct.ie



Key Skills

- ▶ Managing information and thinking
- ▶ Managing myself
- ▶ Communicating
- ▶ Being literate
- ▶ Being creative
- ▶ Working with others

Resources

Pre-prepared list of categories and distinguishing features for each category

Room Layout

Arrange students in **groups of 4** around a desk

Assessment

Observe student understanding of material and inform future lessons

Supporting Homework

By developing their ability to classify information students develop a greater understanding of the topic in hand thus enabling them to apply the information to higher order questions