

KWL



This strategy serves several purposes: it elicits prior knowledge of the text, it sets a purpose for reading and it helps students monitor their comprehension.

By being aware of students' interests and prior knowledge the teacher has the ability to create projects and assignments that are challenging and that the students will enjoy. A KWL chart is a tool that can be used to inform teaching as well as guide student learning.

- Choose a topic/text.
- Ask the students to brainstorm words, terms or phrases that they associate with the topic. The students record these in the K column of the KWL chart.
- Next, ask students what they want to learn about the topic. This is recorded in the W column. If the students respond with a statement turn them into questions before recording them in the W column.
- While engaging with the topic/text the students find the answers to the questions in their W column. Students can fill out their L columns either during or after completing the task/topic.
- Finally, discuss the information that students recorded in the L column.

Tips

- Come prepared with your own questions to add to the W column. You might want students to focus on ideas on which the students' questions are not likely to focus on.
- Encourage students to explain their words/associations especially vague ones and ask 'what made you think of that?'
- In addition to answering the W column questions, encourage students to write anything they found especially interesting in the L column, using a star to differentiate them from the things they have learned.
- There are many KWL charts online, KWL Creator is an example of KWL the student can complete online.

Further Information

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

Key Skills

- ▶ Managing information and thinking
- ▶ Managing myself
- ▶ Being literate

Resources

- ▶ KWL template (this could be photocopied for each student or students can draw it into their copies)

Room Layout

No specific room layout required

Assessment

The KWL chart is a useful way to assess your instruction informally. Have students complete the **Know** and **Want to Know** sections of the chart prior to the lesson and the **Learned** section after the lesson is finished. Did the students successfully master the intentions of the lesson?

Supporting Homework

The K column could be given as a homework exercise and reviewed at the beginning of the next lesson.

