

Concept of Definition Word Maps

Purpose:

To support vocabulary and concept learning by giving students a strategy for defining and clarifying the meaning of unknown words.

Information about concepts can be organized according to three relationships:

- the general class or category in which the concept belongs
- the properties of the concept which distinguish it from other members of the category
- examples or illustrations of the concept.

The CD word map gives students a visual representation of these relationships.

To construct a CD word map students begin by writing the concept being studied in the center of the map. Next they answer the question "What is it?" by writing a word that describes the general class or category. Students answer the question "What are some examples?" by giving three examples of the concept. Students give three properties of the concept by answering the question "What is it like?" Students can also make a comparison of the concept by writing a different concept that belongs to the same category.

Two things to remember about CD word maps:

- they work best with nouns
- they should not be used for defining lists of vocabulary words

See example of CD word map