

Team Webbing

Team webbing is a cooperative-group writing activity in which each team starts a web of ideas and then moves from station to station around the room, adding their ideas to the webs that other groups started. When the teams return to the webs they started, they read the ideas that have been added, discuss their responses, and raise questions.

This strategy incorporates reading, writing, speaking, and listening in a natural, fluid way.

Instructional benefits:

- helps students think about what they know and write it in their own words
- cements learning by having students restate ideas orally and in writing
- encourages students to listen to and read each other's ideas
- encourages students to generate their own questions about things they've learned or are studying

When to use it:

- after a lesson or unit to review and restate the information
- before a lesson or unit to activate prior-knowledge and set purposes

Strategy step by step:

This is a whole-class activity. Students may need to do it a few times before they can move smoothly and make good written contributions to the webs.

Organize the class into four or five teams and establish a home base for each team, which can simply be an area where desks are pushed together. Home base should be positioned so that students can move easily from one to another. There should also be enough space around each base for teams to gather and write. You may want to have students push their chairs under their desks and stand during the whole activity.

2. Give each team a large sheet of sturdy paper (A3 or larger) and ballpoint pens or pencils **of the same colour**, for example, Team A gets red pens, Team B gets blue pens, Team C gets green pens, and so on. All members of a team will need a pen.

3. Have someone on each team to write the topic in the centre of the paper and draw a circle around it. You can give each team the same topic, or you can assign a different topic to each team, perhaps subtopics of a main topic you are studying.

4. Have each team create a web of ideas around the topic by writing things that they know about the topic on lines that radiate from the circled topic. Have students write statements (sentences) or single words or phrases. All students should write at the same time and talk about what they're writing if they want to. Give the teams five minutes or more to write. Then stop everyone at once.

5. Have students take their pens with them and move to the next station. Have teams move in the same direction (clockwise or counter clockwise) to keep the movement smooth.

When they get to the next station, they should do the following:

- read what is written already,

- identify one or two statements they think are especially good or interesting and share them with the whole class,
- if they can't think of words to write, they can sketch what they're thinking (this is a good alternative for literacy students or visual/tactile learners)

6. Have students rotate through all stations, reading and writing, until they return to their home base. At their home base, they should do the following:

- Read all the ideas on the web they started.
- Think -of one or two: questions they have about the items the other teams added to their web.