Graphic Organizers
Est. Time: 30–40 Minutes

Objective

Understand how graphic organizers can help students organize information, process information, see the relationships between ideas, and more easily understand, remember, and apply information.

Overview

Many students, particularly those with learning disabilities (LD) and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder(ADHD), have difficulty processing information. More specifically, they might have trouble connecting new ideas and concepts to their prior knowledge, identifying main ideas and important pieces of information, and ignoring irrelevant information. **Graphic organizers**—a visual aid designed to help students organize and comprehend substantial amounts of text and content information—can help these students more easily process information.
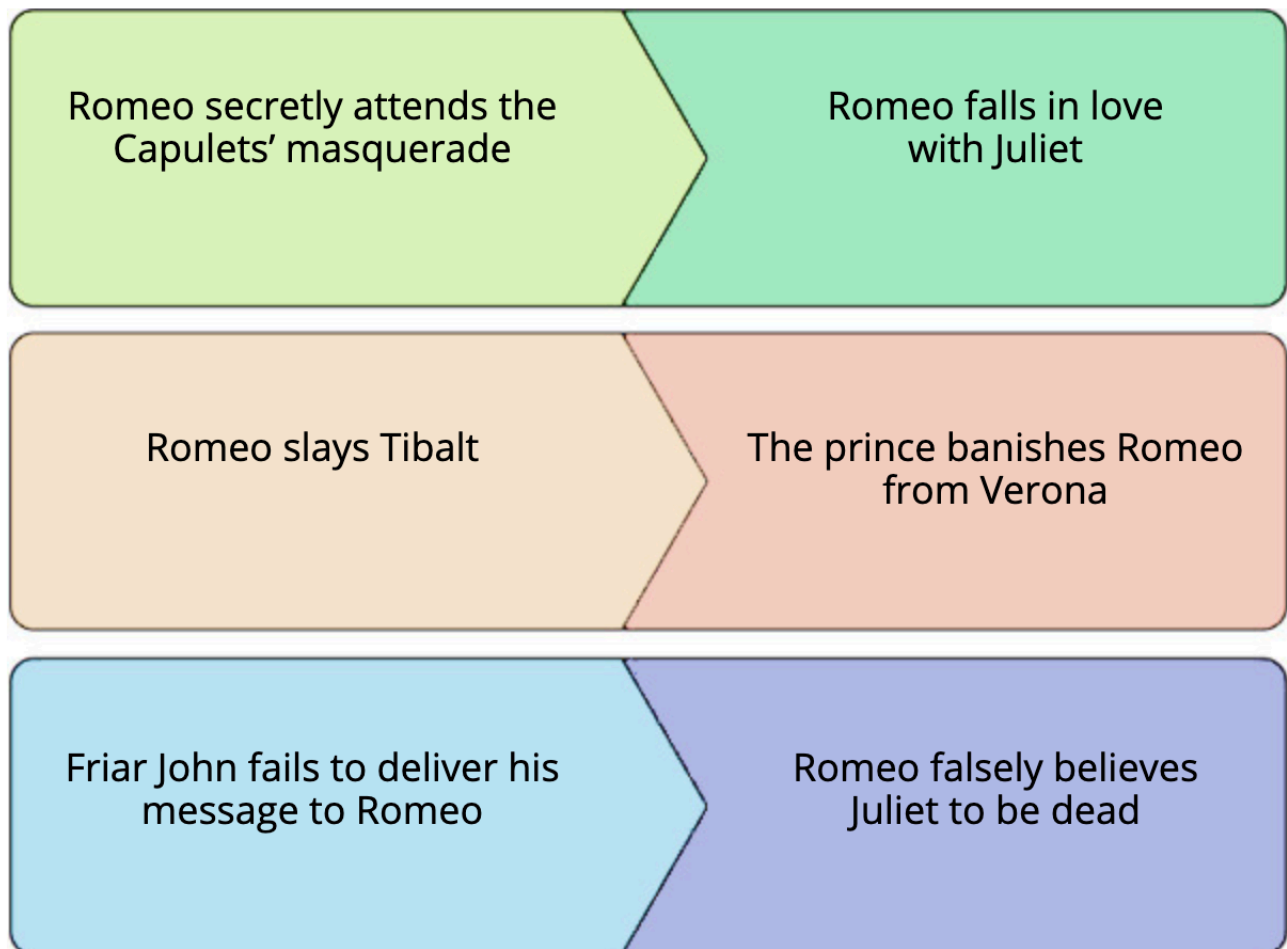
Although there are many kinds of graphic organizers, often students with LD and ADHD will use the same type of graphic organizer (e.g., web) for every situation. It is important for teachers to select those that will best convey the information and relationships they wish their students to learn and to explicitly teach students how to use them.

On the pages to follow, you will find descriptions of five different types of graphic organizers, each with a different purpose, and two examples of each type.
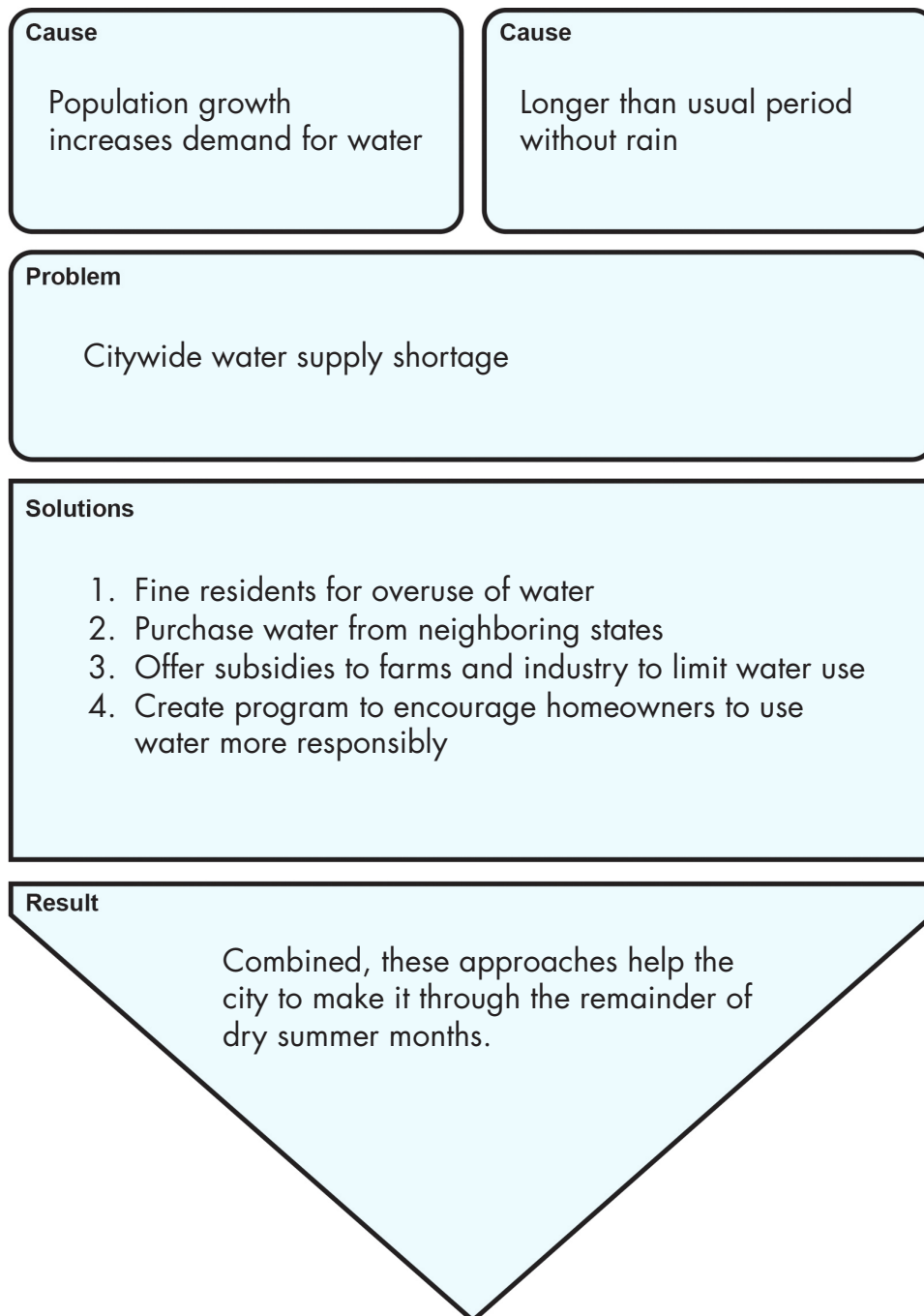
Cause and Effect

Cause and effect chain: Students can use this type of graphic organizer to clarify the relationship between specific events and the outcomes deriving from them, thus illustrating the concepts of consequences, inevitability, and causality.

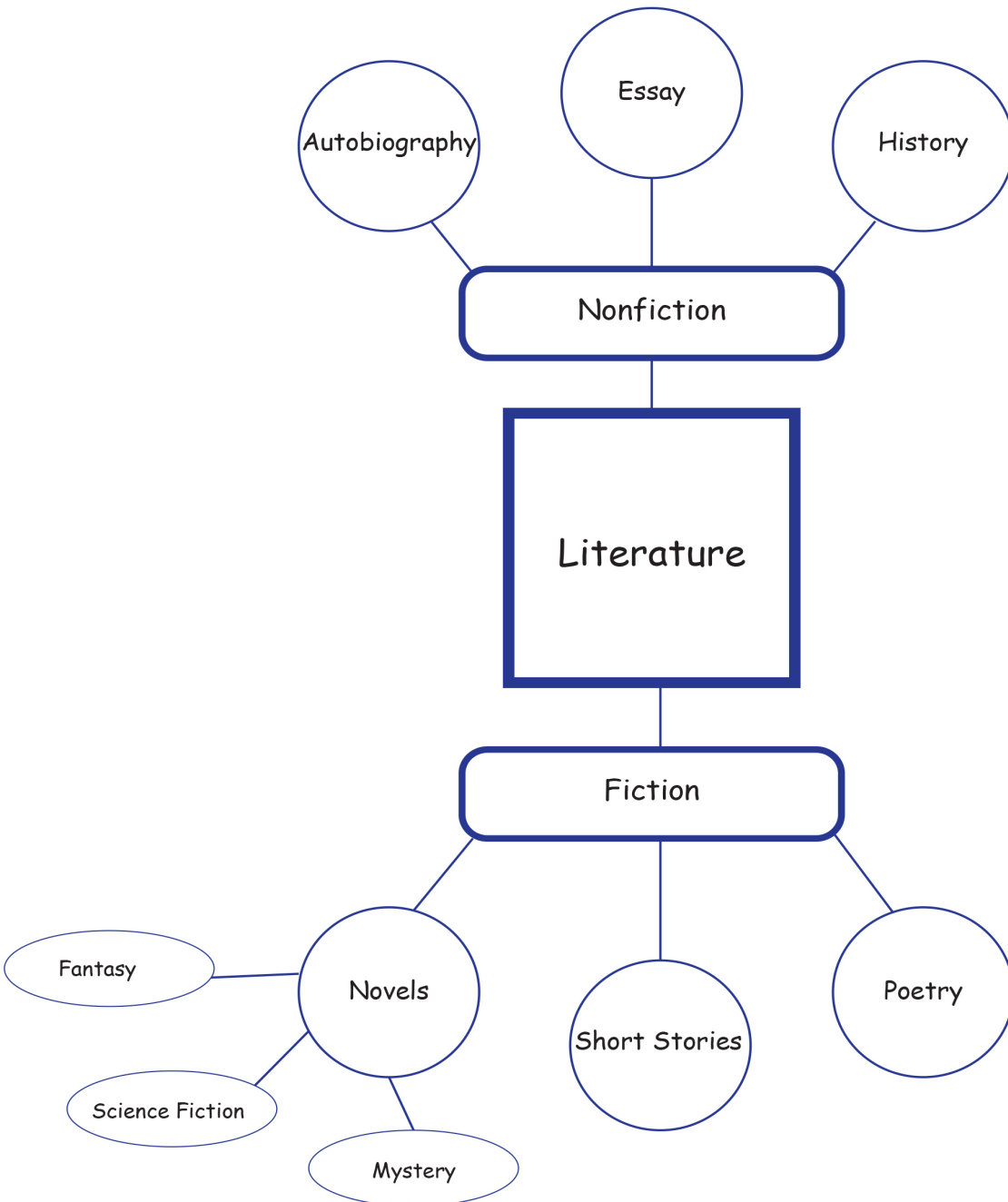|	
Romeo secretly attends the Capulets' masquerade	Romeo falls in love with Juliet
Romeo slays Tibalt	The prince banishes Romeo from Verona
Friar John fails to deliver his message to Romeo	Romeo falsely believes Juliet to be dead

Cause and Effect [CONT]

Problem-and-solution map: Obstacles, hindrances, and malfunctions often have a number of different possible solutions, and this type of graphic organizer can be an effective way to help students better visualize which of those will be most effective.

Cause

Population growth increases demand for water

Cause

Longer than usual period without rain

Problem

Citywide water supply shortage

Solutions

1. Fine residents for overuse of water
2. Purchase water from neighboring states
3. Offer subsidies to farms and industry to limit water use
4. Create program to encourage homeowners to use water more responsibly

Result

Combined, these approaches help the city to make it through the remainder of dry summer months.

Classifying

Web: Students can use a web to categorize or classify items.

Autobiography

Essay

History

Nonfiction

Literature

Fiction

Fantasy

Novels

Science Fiction
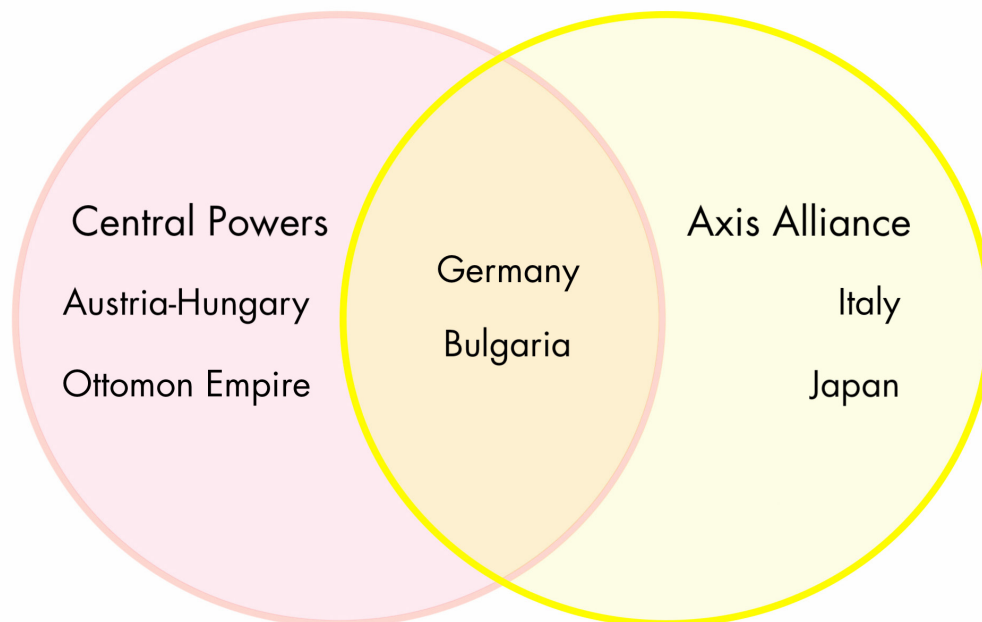
Mystery

Short Stories

Poetry

Classifying [CONT]

Classification table: Students can use this simple organizer to sort or classify information or objects into different categories.

Types of Rocks with Examples		
Igneous	**Sedimentary**	**Metamorphic**
Obsidian	Sandstone	Slate
Basalt	Shale	Marble
Pumice	Fossils	Quartzite
Granite	Limestone	Schist
Mica	Gypsum	Gneiss
Quartz		

Comparing and Contrasting

Venn diagram: Named after their creator, Venn diagrams are a type of graphic organizer used to show the overlapping relationships between various categories of ideas, things, events, mathematical expressions, or logical concepts.

Central Powers
Austria-Hungary
Ottomon Empire
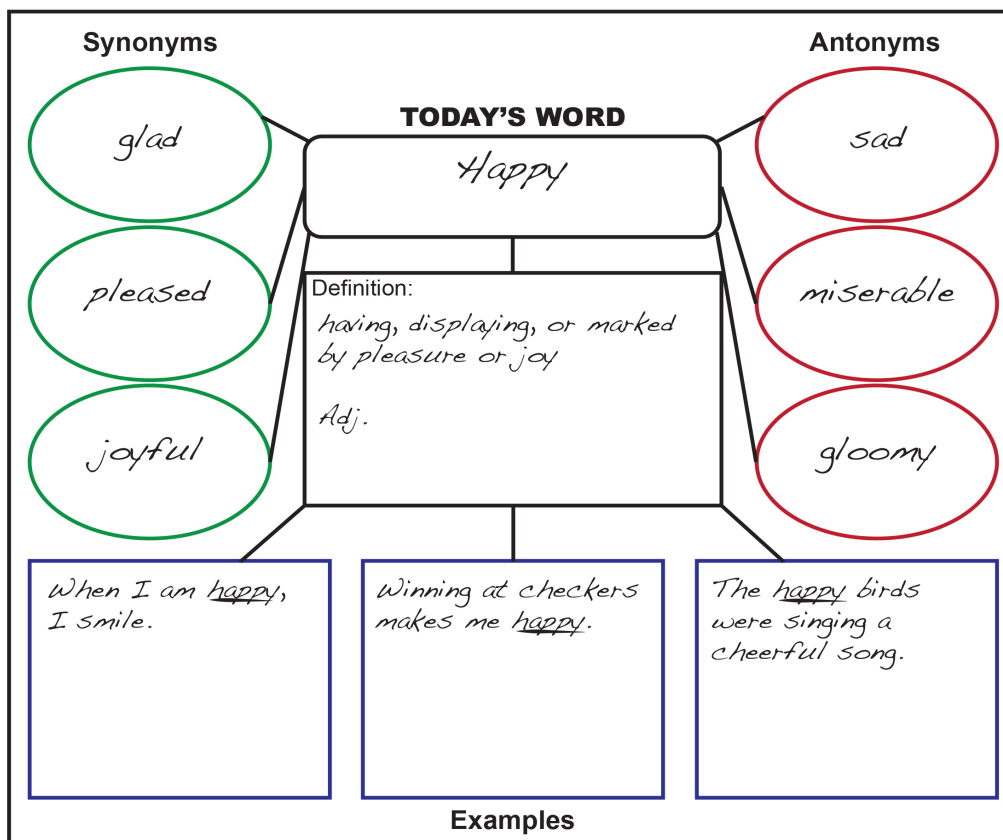
Germany
Bulgaria

Axis Alliance
Italy
Japan

Comparing and Contrasting [CONT]

Compare-contrast matrix: Students can use this type of graphic organizer to clarify what is the same and what is different about the selected people, places, or objects.

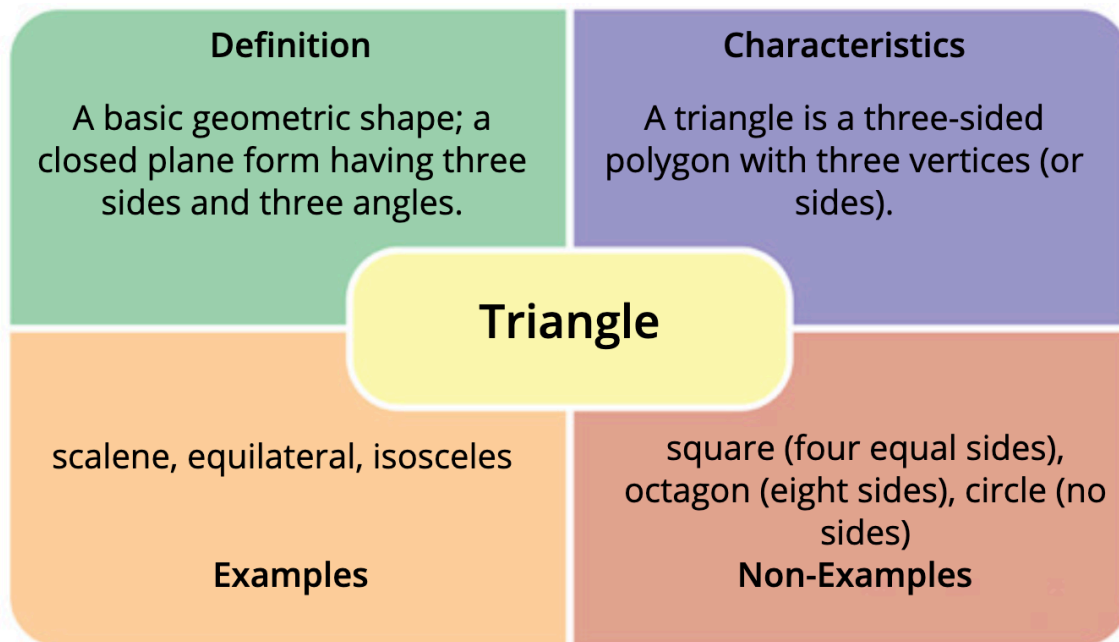| Attribute	Japan	China
Government	Unitary Parliament/ Constitutional Monarchy	Single-Party State
Official Language	Japanese	Mandarin
Population	127 Million	1.35 Billion
Geographic Location	Asia	Asia

Describing

Word web: Word webs are graphic organizers that help students to better understand a key vocabulary term by connecting it to related terms.

Synonyms

glad

pleased

joyful

TODAY'S WORD

Happy

Definition:
having, displaying, or marked by pleasure or joy

Adj.

Antonyms

sad

miserable

gloomy

When I am _happy_, I smile.

Winning at checkers makes me _happy_.

The _happy_ birds were singing a cheerful song.
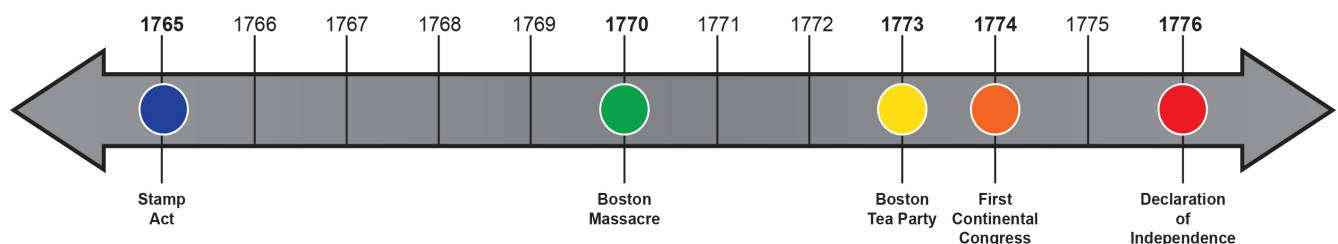
Examples

6

Describing [CONT]

Frayer Model: This type of graphic organizer is used to help students develop more comprehensive vocabulary skills by offering a definition, characteristics, examples, and non-examples of a given person, place, event, or thing.
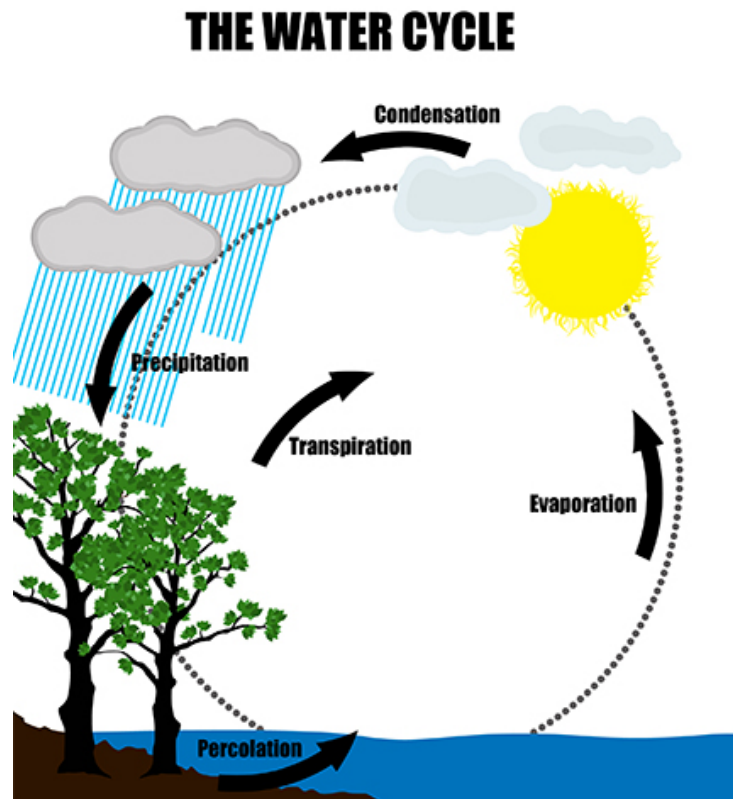
Definition	Characteristics
A basic geometric shape; a closed plane form having three sides and three angles.	A triangle is a three-sided polygon with three vertices (or sides).

Triangle

Examples	Non-Examples
scalene, equilateral, isosceles	square (four equal sides), octagon (eight sides), circle (no sides)

Sequencing

Timeline: This simple and familiar type of graphic organizer arranges events in chronological order to help students better grasp the relationship between historical occurrences or developments.

1765	1766	1767	1768	1769	1770	1771	1772	1773	1774	1775	1776
Stamp Act					Boston Massacre			Boston Tea Party	First Continental Congress		Declaration of Independence

Sequencing [CONT]

Cycle: This variety of graphic organizer can help students to more fully comprehend series of events or phenomena that take on recurrent patterns.

Activity

1. Use a graphic organizer to organize the information about the five types of graphic organizers described above.

2. Ms. Draper's 3rd-grade class is beginning a lesson on the difference between butterflies and moths. Select one type of graphic organizer that she can use to achieve this goal and explain why you chose it.

3. Mr. Gaikward, a high school geography teacher, wants his students to understand the social and economic importance of erosion and to consider how people can prevent erosion. Select one type of graphic organizer that he can use to meet this objective and explain why you chose it.

4. Given the grade level and subject content that you are teaching (or will be teaching), describe one topic for which you would use a sequencing graphic organizer. Explain why you chose this type of graphic organizer.