

Picture Prompts

General Description:

Pictures are a great way to get students thinking about a concept or topic. The brain thinks in pictures. As teachers, we can use this to our advantage. Even before students have formal language for concepts, they can use pictures to think about challenging ideas.

Directions:

Thinking about the concepts students need to learn, identify a picture or visual representation that exemplifies this information. Generate probing questions that engage students in examining the picture closely to begin to form foundational understandings about the concepts.

Picture prompts can be used to develop specific vocabulary or concepts.

Example:

Shape Search

Identify all the geometric shapes you can in this picture. Make a chart.



Polygon	# Sides	Tally
Triangle	3	
Quadrilateral	4	
Pentagon	5	
Hexagon	6	
Heptagon	7	

Picture prompts can be used to access prior knowledge or develop a context for new information.

Example:

Adaptations in Central Park

- What species are represented in this picture?
- How has each species adapted from the original uninhabited Manhattan Island to the cultivated and groomed Central Park?



Extensions:

- Dividing pictures into four quadrants, narrows their focus for more detailed analysis. Then putting the pictures back together after students have examined the parts deepens students' understanding by clarifying and extending their original observations.
- Use the SOAPS "Think" Sheet to analyze picture prompts.