Roadmap

Using Inspiration to Present Concepts

Most people think of Inspiration as a substitute for a paper graphic organizer. It can be, but if you think of it as a way to present content to your students, you are more likely to find effective ways to integrate it into your classroom instruction.

1. Think about the content you want to present

- Are you starting a new topic of instruction?
- Are you building on information previously learned?
- Can the information you are teaching be grouped or categorized?

Most of what we teach students is more than a list of facts. Concepts are related to each other. When kids understand how the information you are giving them is related to what they already know, then they are more likely to understand and learn.
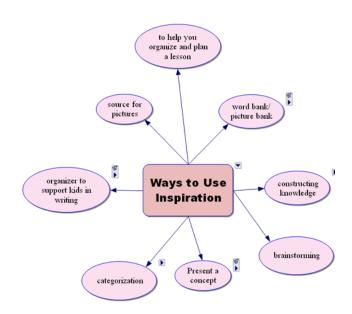
2. Plan your instruction using Inspiration

Before you start planning your lesson, open Inspiration to help you organize what you want to teach. There is no better way to learn and understand the features of a software program than by using it yourself.

- Brainstorm all the things you want to do in your new unit – activities you want to use, concepts you want to explain, skills you want kids to demonstrate, and vocabulary the students will need to understand
    - o Use the "Rapid Fire" function in inspiration
    - o Then drag the ideas you created into logical group
    - o Color code the groups – then drag the concepts into an order you would like to teach them

3. Present a lesson to students using Inspiration

- Create a graphic that provides an overview of the concepts of a unit and how they relate to each other as an introductory lesson to a new unit
- Do the same as above with a single concept for one lesson
- Show a timeline of events with embedded pictures or video
- Do a KWL with the class – type in the students' ideas using the Rapid Fire function – then organize them together with the class

4. Provide an assignment for students to complete using Inspiration as a tool

- Create an organizer for students to complete as they learn details about big ideas
- Ask students to synthesize what they know about a concept and their understanding of how the ideas relate to each other by creating an organizer with the key points
- After brainstorming with the class, have the students work in small groups to organize the ideas and show their relationships to each other
- Offer Inspiration as an alternative note-taking tool for reading assignments or lecture

Some of these ideas lend themselves to printing an organizer prepared in advance. Others require that students have access to a computer for small group or individual work.

Tips

- Don't get stuck thinking that all kids need to complete an assignment using the same tools. You can have some kids use Inspiration while others complete an assignment in different ways. You don't need enough computers for everyone to use Inspiration effectively during instruction.
- Don't get stuck thinking you need the computer lab every time you plan to use Inspiration. Use Inspiration as a station in your classroom, for small group work, or by allowing small groups to go to the media center.
- Quick Guides and video help are at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/hiat/tech_quick_guides