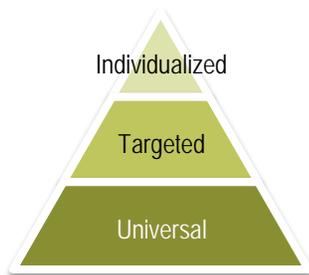


# Graphic Organizers



Graphic Organizers are powerful tools used for gathering, organizing, and representing information in a visual format. They use words, pictures, and graphic cues to help students generate ideas, record and organize information, and see relationships. Two common types of organizers include process diagrams, to show sequencing, and structure diagrams, to show relationships. The term graphic organizers is also used to describe other visual learning strategies such as concept mapping, webbing, and mind mapping.



A teacher's understanding of their students' learning needs helps determine when to provide universal, targeted, or individualized instructional strategies. For some students, universal instructional strategies may be enough to meet their learning needs. For others, more targeted instructional strategies are the starting point for implementing the curriculum. The strategy described is a guideline that teachers can use depending on the learning context.

## Why use this strategy in an inclusive learning environment

- Supports students to demonstrate what they know in a visual format.
- Shows how ideas are connected and how information can be grouped and organized.
- Helps students to represent concepts and to see relationships and patterns.
- Provides a model of structured note-taking to help students organize their ideas as they navigate through information.

## How this strategy could be used in an inclusive learning environment

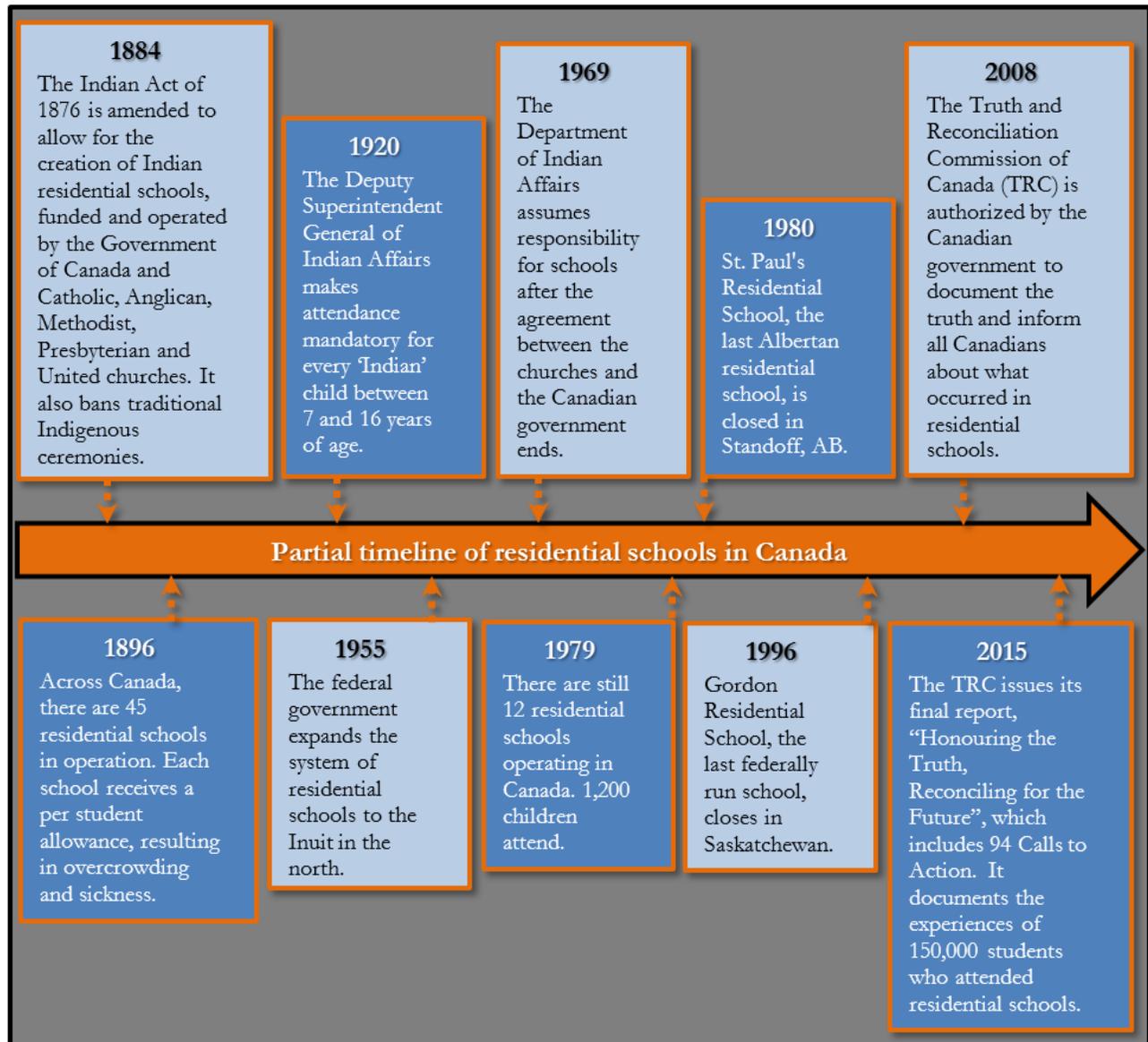
1. Select a graphic organizer to introduce to students, discussing its unique purpose, structure, and how it will help students organize their ideas and structure their writing.
  - a. Use a graphic organizer **before** instruction to determine students' background knowledge and show similarities and differences between ideas; for example, [Venn Diagram](#) or Comparison Table.
  - b. Use a graphic organizer **during** instruction to help students identify, process, and reorganize key information. This approach ensures students have the necessary content prior to creating a text/story; for example, [Concept Map](#) or Tree Diagram.
  - c. Use a graphic organizer **after** instruction to encourage students to make connections between prior knowledge, what was learned, and to identify relationships between those ideas; for example, [KWL Chart](#).



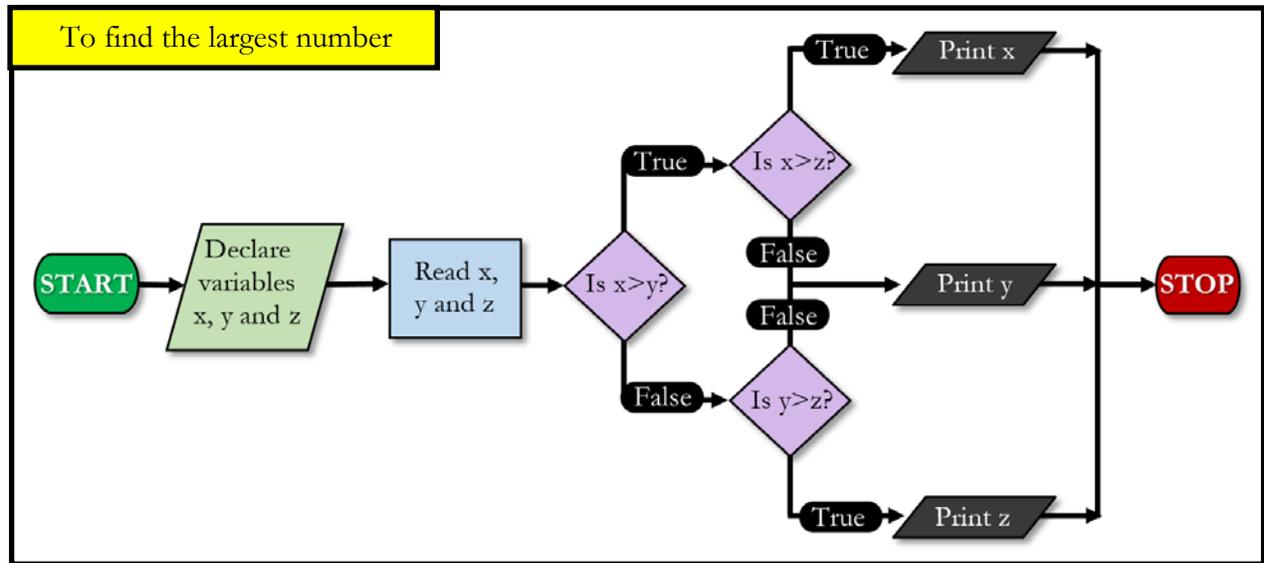
2. Model using the graphic organizer with a think-aloud to highlight the process of summarizing, making connections to the concept, and how it is used as a tool to structure text creation.
3. Students can then construct their own organizers to elaborate, research, and create their own text/story.

## Examples – Process Diagrams (to show sequence)

### Timeline

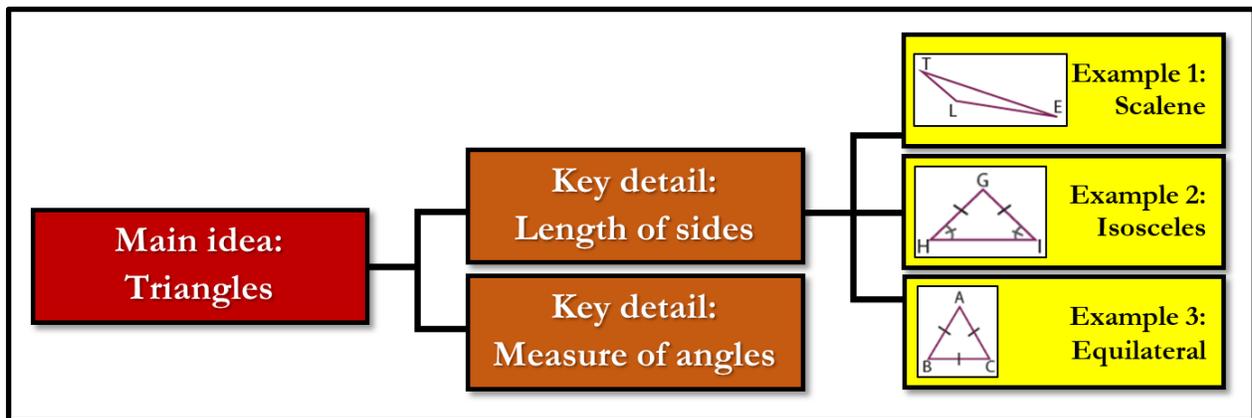


## Flow Chart



## Examples – Structure Diagrams (to show relationships)

### Tree Diagram



## Comparison Table

Characteristics of Vertebrates				
	How it breathes	Warm/cold blooded	Born alive/eggs	Body covering
Birds	Lungs	Warm	Eggs	Feathers
Mammals	Lungs	Warm	Live (except platypus)	Skin, hair, fur
Reptiles	Lungs	Cold	Eggs	Scales
Fish	Gills	Cold	Eggs	Scales



## Tips for individualized supports

- Use familiar concepts in the graphic organizer so that students can see how information is arranged.
- Start with a completed graphic organizer that students are familiar with and have students identify the essential components.
- Use key words, visuals or provide graphic organizers in a digital format and provide text-to-speech options.
- Complete the graphic organizer orally or have students vote on the statements through visuals or physical movement (e.g., selecting images, using voting paddles or hand signals to agree or disagree).
- Use the same graphic organizer format to interpret different concepts (i.e., use a comparison table in Language Arts to compare examples of dystopian settings in novels or in Science to compare terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems).
- Use a different graphic organizer format to interpret the same concept (i.e., use a timeline or a storyboard to sequence the events in a story).
- Have students work with a peer or in small groups, providing key [academic vocabulary](#) in a student's first language using peer translation or a bilingual dictionary, to complete or create a graphic organizer.

