

# Alphabet Brainstorming

The Alphabet Brainstorming procedure is an effective way to elicit students' prior knowledge before learning. It is intended to engage students in brainstorming what they know and have learned. This strategy should be used with broad topic areas.

## PROCEDURE

1. Provide each student with a blank Alphabet Brainstorming chart. (Students can work in collaborative teams, though each individual student should fill in a personal copy of the chart).
2. Students work with partners or in groups to generate a related term or meaningful association that begins with each letter of the alphabet. Ask students to fill in as many boxes as possible within a designated time period (about 7-8 minutes).
3. Ask groups to explain their terms with the entire class and briefly justify how each term fits with the topic.
4. After reading and expanding their understandings, groups can return to their alphabet charts and add new meaningful items related to the topic of study in different color ink.

## Advantages

\*Students prepare for the study of new material and the knowledge demands of complex texts.

\*Students are more motivated to read material that can be related to something they already know.

\* Student share background knowledge with their peers so all students can begin reading with some familiarity of the topic.

\*Student misconceptions about the material that appear during brainstorming are in the open to be corrected during instruction.

\*Students assume the responsibility for raising questions, seeking clarifications, and engaging in discussion about the topic.

\*Students can revisit their lists after learning to add new information or to eliminate erroneous information.

NEPF Connections

### Instructional Standards

S1.1 & S1.4  
S2.1, S2.2, S2.3, S2.4  
S3.1, S3.3, 3.4  
S5.1, S5.4

Alphabet Brainstorming TOPIC			
A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P
Q	R	S	T
U	V	W	XYZ

