

## Writing to Learn Guided Writing Procedure

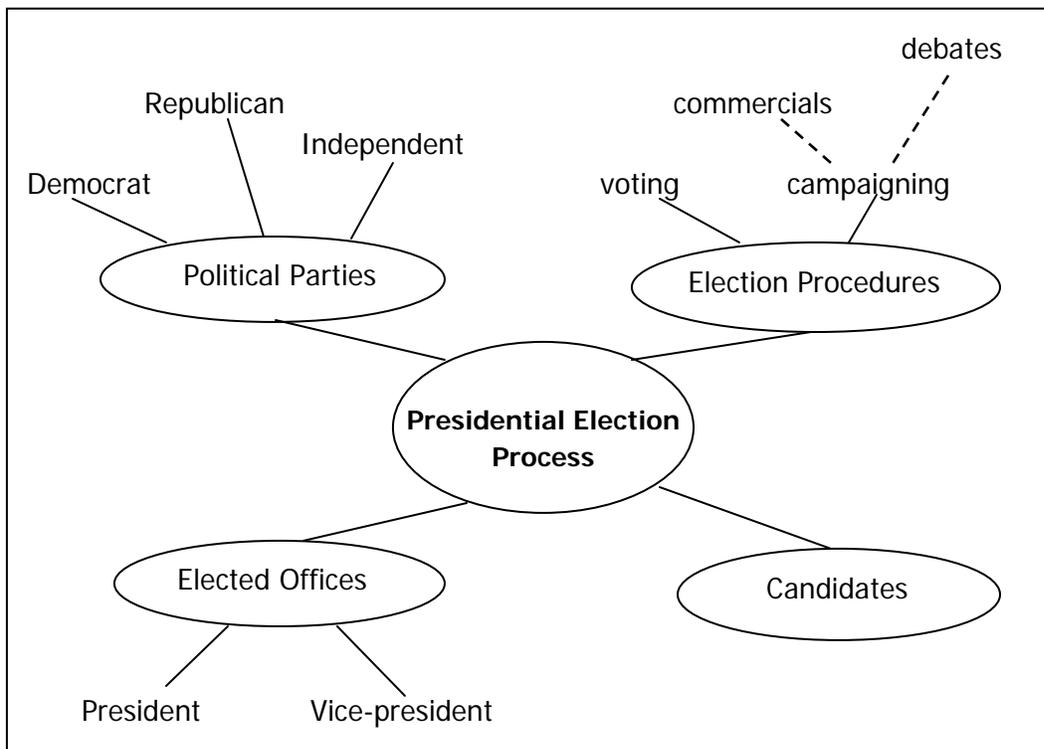
1. Ask students to brainstorm what they already know about an upcoming topic of study. For this example, the topic will be the presidential election process in the United States. Record their responses on the chalkboard. A possible list is shown below.

vote	candidate
republican	commercials
campaign	president
democrat	debates
vice president	independent

2. Explain to students that their responses can be categorized by looking at how the ideas are similar. Identify categories that encompass the brainstormed terms. List the category titles on the chalkboard. Sample category titles may include:

political parties  
election procedures  
elected offices  
candidates

3. Guide the students through dividing the brainstormed ideas into the appropriate categories. Display this information in a web format or as an outline. A sample web and outline are shown below.



## *Outline for Presidential Election Process*

- I. Political Parties
    - A. Republican
    - B. Democrat
    - C. Independent
  
  - II. Election Procedures
    - A. Voting
    - B. Campaigning
      - 1. commercials
      - 2. debates
  
  - III. Elected Offices
    - A. President
    - B. Vice-President
  
  - IV. Candidates
4. Ask students to write about the topic using the information from the web or outline. Provide approximately 10 minutes for students to complete this task. Ask students what types of information they need to make their writing clearer and more informative. Ask them what types of information are missing from their papers. List this information on the board.
  
  5. Provide students with a short passage about presidential elections. The passage can be from their social studies textbook or other informational text. Tell students to look for additional information to add to their web or outline. Ask them to concentrate on looking for the types of information that are missing from their web or outline. Incorporate new information into the map or web.
  
  6. Revisit the map or outline several times during the study of presidential elections. Ask students to keep an ongoing list of new information which can be added. Incorporate the new information into the map or web on a regular basis.
  
  7. Near the end of the unit of study, ask students to write a paper which incorporates the information from the map or web. This can be done as a teacher-led, whole class activity for review, or it can be completed by small groups or individual students.

John, J. L., & Lenski, S. D. (1997). Improving reading: A handbook of strategies. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.