

Making Meaning



Add On

Respond

Make
Connections



Write
Your Own
Definition

Record
A
Question

Purpose

What kind of thinking does this routine encourage?

This routine asks learners to explore an already familiar topic, concept, idea, or event through connection making, wondering, building explanations, and synthesising in order to achieve deeper learning. This routine highlights the notion of building understanding in a collaborative way.

Application

When and where can it be used?

Use this routine:

- When students bring a lot of prior knowledge to the topic, concept, idea or event
- When the class has been exploring a topic, concept, idea or event for a period of time

Assessment

How can I use this routine as an assessment?

- What kind of vocabulary are students responding with?
- Are contributions related to the concept or are they peripheral?
- Do contributions provide layers of complexity and depth rather than restatement?
- How are they responding to the postings of others?
- What connections are being identified? What level of depth do they show?
- Are there misconceptions that appear?

Launch

What are the steps needed for starting and using this routine?

1. **Set Up** → place a large sheet of paper on the table of each group and a coloured marker for each group member.
2. **Present the Topic** → one student writes the word/ concept/ topic in the center of the page. Invite learners to think about what words come to mind when they hear this word.
3. **Respond With A Word** → one at a time, each group member records the word that comes to mind. Each word needs to be different. Space the words around the page so they are not all gathered in one place. Pass coloured markers to the next group to start a new round.
4. **Add On** → one at a time, each member adds on to someone else's word using another word or turning it into a phrase. 1:1 correspondence is not necessary, which means two learners could add on to the same word. Pass coloured markers again.
5. **Make Connections** → discuss the connections they see between ideas on the page. Draw a line between the connected ideas and write on the line what the connection is. Pass the markers.
6. **Record a Question** → record a question about the original topic
7. **Write a Definition** → using a post-it note each learner writes their current definition of the topic/ concept/ idea based on the group exploration. Share with group and post it on the paper.
8. **Share Thinking** → undertake a gallery walk to view the making meaning of other groups. Discuss similarities and differences between groups.