



Five Words—Three Words

Source: Louise Thompson

A variation of brainstorming, Five Words asks students, working on their own, to list five words that come to mind when they think of a particular topic. Students then get into pairs, trios or groups of four to share and discuss their words. Finally each small group selects three words to share and explain to the entire class.

Examples:

Write five words or phrases that come to mind when you think of:

- animal habitats
- William Shakespeare
- prepositions
- geography
- fractions
- drugs
- the solar system
- Mexico
- The Middle East

Suggestions, Applications and Variations:

- Use recycled paper cut to the size of index cards; students write one word or phrase per card. When they start to sort and select from fives to three they can easily eliminate duplicates and see all of the ideas under consideration. They could also sort into categories and nominate three categories rather than three words.
- Collect the three ideas from each group on a chart or graphic organizer to be revisited during and after the study of the topic.