

# The Effective Application of Graphic Organizer in English Reading Teaching

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**Abstract:** Traditional English reading teaching emphasizes knowledge memorization, which makes students lack the opportunity to think, and it is more difficult to improve their higher-order thinking ability. With the advent of information society and the era of graph reading, graph organizer will be widely used in teaching as an important tool to enhance students' higher order thinking. This study expounds the definition and classification of graphic organizer and its application value in junior middle school English reading teaching. Based on some examples of English reading teaching, this paper discusses how to apply graphic organizer to English reading teaching effectively.

**Keywords:** Graphic Organizer; English Reading; Thinking Ability.

## 1. Introduction

As one of the five basic skills in English language learning, English reading plays an important role in middle school English teaching. However, in English reading, there exists a phenomenon that students only pay attention to the Chinese meaning of single words and phrases, and are unable to join them into sentences skillfully. This phenomenon leads to a certain deviation in students' understanding of the text. Therefore, under the premise of choosing appropriate reading materials, reasonable and appropriate reading strategy guidance or tool support is the key factor affecting whether students can successfully read.

Graphic organizer is a visual learning and teaching tool, which can provide learners with cognitive scaffolding, stimulate learners' active construction of knowledge, enhance their understanding of text, and finally effectively promote learners' deep processing of knowledge. As a strategy to promote generative learning, graphic organizer shows the hierarchical structure and internal correlation of text through clear and concise illustrations, which can transform abstract and complex text into specific and intuitive images, and finally promote learners' deep understanding of text.

## 2. Graphic Organizer

### 2.1. Definition of Graphic Organizer

A graphic organizer is a visual learning and teaching tool, also known as a knowledge map, concept map, or story map. It presents language and text to students in a variety of structured views or forms to deepen their understanding of knowledge content and learning tasks, effectively improve learning efficiency and save classroom teaching time. As an effective reading strategy to promote the deep processing of knowledge, graphic organizer can provide learners with cognitive scaffolding, stimulate learners' active construction of knowledge, and enhance their understanding of text.

### 2.2. Classification of Graphic Organizer

Graphic organizers are a type of instructional tool that can help students organize and present information. Common types of graphic organizers can be classified into the

following categories:

- (1). Hierarchical Graphic Organizers:
  - Tree Map: Organizes information in a hierarchical structure, showing the relationship between main topics and details.
  - Classification Chart: Divides information into different categories, highlighting their similarities and differences.
  - Bar Graph: Represents data using bars, allowing for the comparison of different categories' quantities or features.
- (2). Conceptual Graphic Organizers:
  - Mind Map: Connects various subtopics and keywords to a central theme, displaying the relationships between concepts.
  - Concept Map: Lists concepts in boxes and represents their relationships and hierarchies using lines.
- (3). Sequential Graphic Organizers:
  - Timeline: Shows the chronological order of events or processes.
  - Flowchart: Represents a series of steps or decisions using arrows and boxes to display the logical flow.
- (4). Relational Graphic Organizers:
  - Venn Diagram: Uses circles or intersecting areas to represent the relationships between sets, comparing common elements and differences.
  - Concept Map: Represents direct and indirect relationships between entities using lines and arrows.

### 2.3. The Application Value of Graphic Organizer in Reading Teaching

Graphic organizers in English reading teaching provide valuable benefits such as enhancing comprehension by visualizing text structure, promoting critical thinking skills, supporting language acquisition for English language learners, fostering active engagement, facilitating note-taking and summarization, accommodating different learning styles, and developing metacognitive skills. Overall, graphic organizers serve as valuable tools to improve comprehension, critical thinking, engagement, and language acquisition in English reading teaching.

### 3. How to Use Graphic Organizer in Reading Teaching

#### 3.1. Strategies for Incorporating Graphic Organizers

Incorporating graphic organizers into English reading lessons can be done using various strategies and techniques. Here are a few effective ways to utilize graphic organizers:

(1). Pre-Reading Activities: Introduce the text and activate students' prior knowledge by using graphic organizers like KWL charts (Know, Want to know, Learned) or concept maps. This helps students make connections between their existing knowledge and the upcoming reading material, setting a purpose for reading.

(2). During-Reading Activities: As students read, provide graphic organizers that encourage active engagement with the text. For example, story maps can help students track story elements like characters, setting, and plot, while a cause-and-effect chart can aid in identifying the relationships between events. These organizers support comprehension and help students analyze the text as they read.

(3). Post-Reading Activities: Use graphic organizers to summarize and review the main ideas, key details, and the overall structure of the text. Tools like summarizing pyramids, main idea webs, or Venn diagrams for comparing and contrasting can be employed. Such activities enable students to consolidate their understanding of the text and reinforce their comprehension skills.

(4). Collaborative Learning: Incorporate graphic organizers into group work or pair activities. This promotes collaborative learning and allows students to discuss their ideas, share different perspectives, and negotiate meaning. For instance, students can work together to complete a concept map or a problem-solution chart related to the text they have read.

(5). Technology Integration: Take advantage of digital tools and online platforms that offer interactive graphic organizers. These platforms allow students to create and modify organizers digitally, making it easier to customize and share their work with peers and teachers. This also enhances students' digital literacy and technology skills.

Remember, the key is to consistently and purposefully integrate graphic organizers into reading lessons, ensuring they align with the learning objectives, and provide meaningful support to students in comprehending, organizing, and applying their understanding of the text.

#### 3.2. How to Select Appropriate Graphic Organizers.

After we have discussed the various strategies and techniques for incorporating graphic organizers into English reading lessons. We need to know how to select appropriate graphic organizers based on different dimensions. Here's a breakdown of the factors to consider:

(1). Learning Objectives: Start by understanding the specific educational goals you want to achieve. Different graphic organizers lend themselves to different objectives, such as T-charts for comparisons or Venn diagrams for finding similarities and differences.

(2). Text Complexity: Assess the complexity of the reading material. Longer or more challenging texts might require more comprehensive organizers like flowcharts or concept maps to help students connect ideas and visualize relationships. Shorter texts or simpler concepts may only

require basic organizers such as KWL charts or story maps.

(3). Students' Proficiency Levels: Consider your students' language proficiency levels and prior knowledge. For beginners or lower proficiency levels, organizers with more visual cues and limited text may be more suitable. Intermediate or advanced students might benefit from more complex organizers like tree diagrams or problem-solution charts.

In summary, to select appropriate graphic organizers, align the organizers with the learning objectives you wish to accomplish, match the complexity of the text with the level of detail provided by the organizers, and consider the proficiency levels and prior knowledge of your students. Adapting the organizers to suit these factors will ensure that they effectively support students' comprehension and learning needs.

#### 3.3. Examples and Case Studies.

Here are a few examples and case studies that demonstrate the effective use of graphic organizers in improving reading comprehension:

##### (1). Example: KWL Chart

A teacher introduces a new text about the solar system to a class of elementary students. Before reading, the teacher asks students to fill out a KWL chart. Students write down what they already know about the topic (K), what they want to learn (W), and after reading, what they have learned (L). This organizer helps activate prior knowledge, set reading goals, and provide a framework for reflection. Students engage with the text actively, filling in the "learned" section as they read, improving their comprehension and metacognitive skills.

##### (2). Example: Story Map

A middle school teacher assigns a narrative text to their students. Before reading, students create a story map to chart the story's elements, such as the characters, setting, problem, events, and resolution. As students read, they update the story map, adding details and analyzing the story's structure. The story map helps students track the narrative's progression, understand key plot points, and improve their comprehension of the story's overall arc.

##### (3). Case Study: Flowchart

In a history class, students are studying the causes and effects of a particular historical event. The teacher provides a flowchart graphic organizer for students to visually represent the sequence of events and their consequences. As they read and research, students complete the flowchart, linking events and analyzing their impact. The graphic organizer helps students grasp the complexities of historical causation, enhancing their comprehension and critical thinking skills.

These examples and case studies illustrate how graphic organizers can effectively support reading comprehension by providing visual frameworks for organizing information, making connections, and analyzing text components.

### 4. Conclusion

Graphic organizer can transform abstract and complex words into concrete, clear and vivid visual images. In this way, students will actively think and expand their thinking when reading images, and gradually clarify the knowledge information, context structure and author's writing intention of the article, so as to actively and meaningfully construct knowledge. It not only increases the interest of learning, but also cultivates students' analytical ability, comparative ability and creativity. Therefore, teachers should make reasonable

and effective use of the graphic organizer in teaching, so that students can constantly improve themselves and break through themselves in the process of learning and creation, and become a lifelong learner with innovative ability.

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