



**GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS AS EFFECTIVE TOOLS IN PREWRITING STAGE OF ACADEMIC WRITING  
PROCESS**

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**ABSTRACT**

The article is devoted to the study of graphic organizers in writing process, particularly in prewriting stage. Here, the use of this kind of pedagogical technology is demonstrated with the help of several illustrations. The article challenges learners to use graphic organizers in order to make their writing easier and develop their skills for further writing.

**KEY WORDS**

Graphic organizers, strategy, technique, tool, writing, prewriting, stage, critical thinking, comprehension, mapping, webbing, mind-mapping, skill, brainstorming, free-writing, accuracy, fluency .

*“There is no rule on how to write. Sometimes it comes easily and perfectly: sometimes it’s like drilling rock and then blasting it out with charges.”*

*Ernest Hemingway*

**INTRODUCTION**

Writing is a challenging process. There are no strict rules for writing. The main thing is to achieve the aim. In academic writing many students have heard about prewriting stage. However, not every learner realize the essence of prewriting step as it has some effective strategies to make the further writing easier to concentrate and to construct. Prewriting stage suggests a variety of techniques to develop further writing. One of them the most productive and easily accepted ways is graphic organizers.

**MAIN PART**

Initially, let us briefly consider some definitions for the term a *graphic organizer*.

Graphic organizers are simple yet powerful tools that can help kids with dysgraphia, executive functioning issues, and other issues that can cause trouble with writing. A graphic organizer not only helps break an assignment into smaller steps. It also can help kids organize their thoughts in a very visual way.



Graphic organizers guide learners' thinking as they fill in and build upon a visual map or diagram. Graphic organizers are some of the most effective visual learning strategies for students and are applied across the curriculum to enhance learning and understanding of subject matter content. In a variety of formats dependent upon the task, graphic organizers facilitate students' learning by helping them identify areas of focus within a broad topic, such as a novel or article. Because they help the learner make connections and structure thinking, students often turn to graphic organizers for writing projects.

A graphic organizer is a visual display that demonstrates relationships between facts, concepts or ideas. A graphic organizer guides the learner's thinking as they fill in and build upon a visual map or diagram. They are also informally used as a term to describe all visual learning strategies such as concept mapping, webbing, mind mapping, and more.

Thus, graphic organizers are modern instructional tools that motivate students and facilitate their understanding in acquiring as well as applying new knowledge in all skills of learning a foreign language, writing respectively.

Academic writing is found difficult to the majority of the students in higher educational institutions in my country. On this occasion, I consider the following techniques useful for students who are willing to make their academic writing assignments easier to fulfill and more successful.

As soon as the topic of writing is clear, the main step is gathering ideas where a widely-known and well-approved technique brainstorming can be really helpful. Here students may write any related-to-the-topic word or an expression or a sentence which comes to their mind. The accuracy and fluency of ideas are not of great importance. Familiar ways here are making a list, making a map, free-writing, etc. obviously, if brainstorming is organized as a group work is more challenging. However, writing in often times is an individual activity.

#### **DATA ANALYSES**

Katherine S. McKnight in her book "The Teacher's Big Book of Graphic Organizers" suggests some graphic organizers to help students make brainstorming. Here are some examples:

As students brainstorm information, the ABC framework helps them organize their thoughts. Because a fact or point of information must be recorded for each letter of the alphabet, the students need to dig more deeply to retrieve information and ideas for this kind of brainstorm.

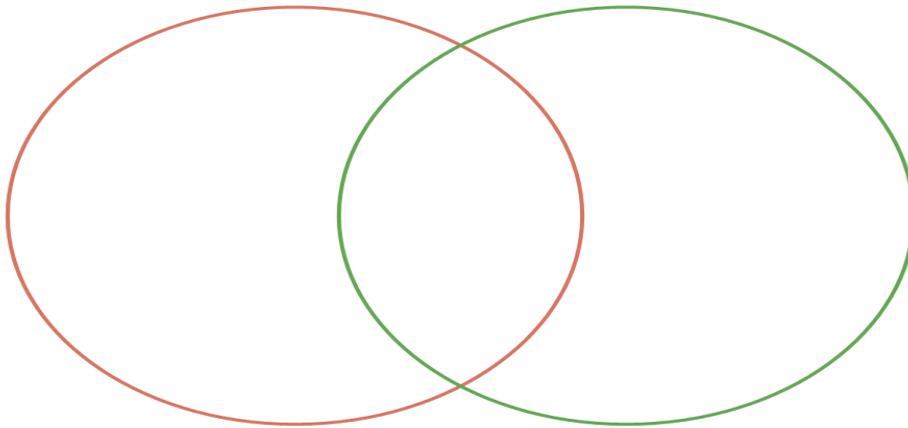
Topic <input style="width: 90%; border: none;" type="text"/>	
A	N
B	O
C	P
D	Q
E	R
F	S
G	T
H	U
I	V
K	X
L	Y
M	Z

According to the author, KWHL is a modified KWL that incorporates primary and secondary resources for research. Students are able to incorporate prior knowledge as they create a plan for investigating a topic. In the columns provided learners may any information not following the rules of accuracy and fluency if they have problems. The main thing here is to put down ideas in proper columns, firstly, in order to gather them.

Topic <input style="width: 90%; border: none;" type="text"/>			
K	W	H	L
<b>What I know.</b>	<b>What I want to know.</b>	<b>How am I going to find out?</b>	<b>What did I learn?</b>

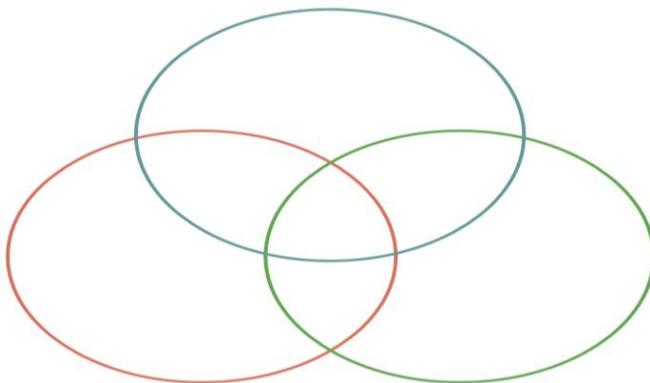
Venn diagram can be a good tool to organize ideas for compare and contrast essays. With the help of this technique, teaching compare and contrast essays are relatively easy to teach and understand. Students can typically understand how to generate similar and opposite ideas on a particular topic.

Besides, this organizer allows students develop independent and critical thinking skills in comparing and contrasting.



In both circles differences of two different ideas, concepts are written and overlapped field is to write their similarities.

Three concepts may also be easily studied with the help of Venn diagram. In such a form of a diagram differences are placed in three circles. And overlapped fields for similarities between two points as well as three notions are provided separately.



Katherine S. McKnight suggests another strategy for comparing and contrasting ideas:

	<b>Name 1</b>	<b>Name 2</b>
<b>Attribute 1</b>		
<b>Attribute 2</b>		
<b>Attribute 3</b>		

As it is evident from the graph above, two ideas may be put together. We can develop this organizer in the following way:

		Name 1	Name 2
<b>Attribute 1</b>	<i>s</i> <i>difference</i>		
	<i>s</i> <i>similaritie</i>		
<b>Attribute 2</b>	<i>s</i> <i>difference</i>		
	<i>s</i> <i>similaritie</i>		
<b>Attribute 3</b>	<i>s</i> <i>difference</i>		
	<i>s</i> <i>similaritie</i>		

In case of three ideas are put together, one more column may be added for Name 3.

Journalistic questions approach, the basis of which is the review of questions who, what, where, when and why, is also a well-received technique in prewriting stage.

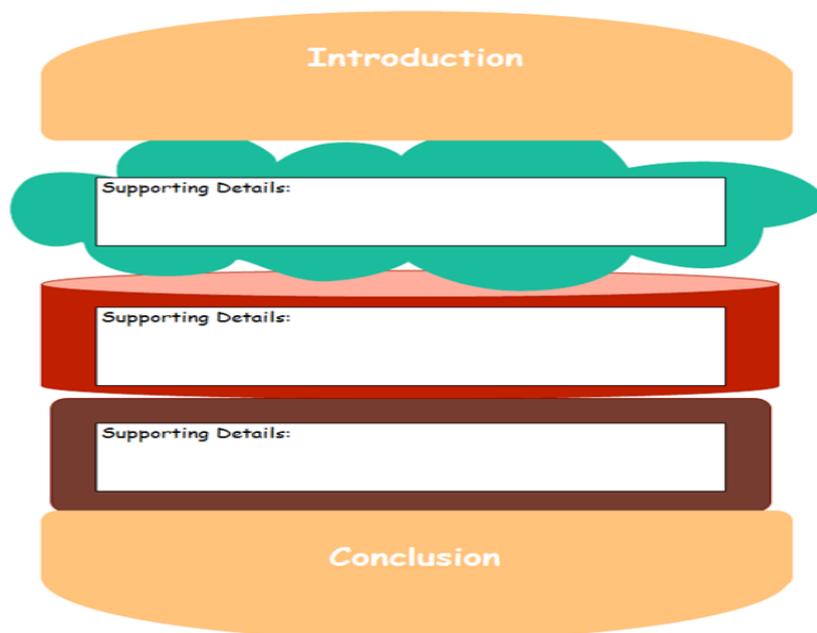


Like journalists, students answer the five Ws: Who, What, Where, When, and Why. These questions are essential for any kind of writing, particularly academic writing. This method helps students better organize their thoughts focusing on mainly the questions.

Website <https://www.edrawsoft.com/writing-graphic-organizer-templates.php> suggests some organizers for developing students' skills in academic writing.

#### Hamburger Writing Graphic Organizer

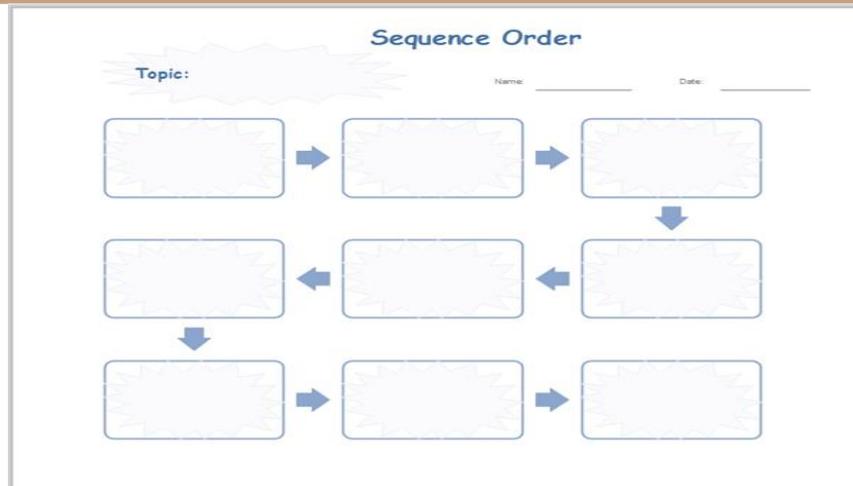
The hamburger model is a vivid method to teach students how to write essays. Using visual graphic make it more intuitive to understand, especially for young students.



The design is challenging. However, we would add here some layers above supporting details with the purpose of making the structure clear for students.

#### Sequence Writing Graphic Organizer

In a sequencing paragraph writing, students describe a series of events or a process in some sort of order. This chart can be used to instruct the sequence order writing. If the steps are too many or not enough, you can download the original file to modify. You can also change the color, format, or add more details as you like.



Internet is full of graphic organizers to develop academic writing skills. For prewriting step of any type of paragraphs or essays a variety of graphic organizers are provided. Furthermore, “The Teacher’s Big Book of Graphic Organizers” by Katherine S. McKnight provides several necessary tools for prewriting stage of academic writing. For instance, Power thinking, carousel brainstorm, KWL, KWS, Topic generation with 3 or 4 or 6 ideas in the form linear as well as circle model, idea web, fishbone, spider, anticipation guide, hypothesis guide and so forth.

### **CONCLUSION**

To conclude, one of the keys to succeed in writing is to make a strong foundation. Obviously, the foundation of whole writing process is prewriting as it opens a great range of possibilities to write. Effective tools, particularly, graphic organizers of prewriting process that develop students’ organizing skills and creative thinking, undoubtedly, contribute to successful outcome.

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