



Literacy at Hartford Public High School

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Thoughts for the Day

How are you helping your students prepare for their exam in your class?

Have you told them exactly what to review for their exam?

Have you told them how the exam will be scored?

Have you told them how their grades will be determined?

Have you thought beyond the marking period exam to the CAPT, modeling your questions on those used by the State?

Which approach do you emphasize: recalling specific facts and information or using the material in ways that require the students to show understanding, to react, to connect, and to evaluate?

How is your exam similar to the Reading for Information portion of the CAPT?

Do you include on your exam open-ended questions that require students to support their responses with information taken from reading passages that are an actual part of the exam?

How is your exam similar to the Writing across the Curriculum portion of the CAPT?

Do you require your students to use the information that they know or that they read during the exam period to write a persuasive essay?

Does your exam prepare students to take standardized tests?

Concept Mapping

When you use concept maps with your students, point out questions that a complete definition would answer: What is it? What is it like? What are some examples of it?

Model how to use a concept map by selecting a familiar concept and soliciting the relevant information for the map from the class.

For example, students responding to a map for *cheese* might identify it as *food* or a *dairy product*. Properties such as *is usually soft, is usually white or yellow, is made from milk, and is kept cold* could be entered into the boxes labeled "Properties." As examples or illustrations of cheese, students might offer *cheddar, swiss, mozzarella, and limburger*.

Assigning students to create concept maps for key terms and concepts from their reading can provide information that can be used for review and study guides for tests.

Remember: Concept mapping ...

- Activates prior knowledge
- Focuses students' attention
- Helps students select relevant details
- Organizes information
- Helps students integrate what they know
- Allows students to apply their knowledge

Concept mapping, because it is a graphic representation, helps students who are visual learners.

Ask students to write a complete definition for a word using all the information on their map.