



## Literacy at Hartford Public High School

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### K-W-L

From Pre-reading Activities for Content Area Reading and Learning

The use of KWL charts is a popular and effective pre-reading strategy. Its implementation takes place in three steps. First, students list what they know about a topic that is going to be studied; second, they list information that they want to find out about the topic; third, at the conclusion of the lesson, they add information about what they learned about the topic.

K = **K**now

W = **W**ant to learn

L = **W**hat I **L**earned

The strategy activates background, or prior, knowledge, greatly increasing the chances that students will integrate new knowledge with previously learned information. By listing what they want to learn, students re independently setting goals and purposes for reading and learning. This should increase their motivation as they search for answers to these questions. As they list what they have learned after reading, they are practicing summary-writing skills, which enhance the comprehension process.

A handout for this activity would contain three columns, labeled K, W, and L. Assign students the topic that is going to be studied, asking them to fill in what they already know under the K column. For example, if the topic were hurricanes, the chart might look like this:

K	W	L
-Powerful wind, rains -Flooding -Named after people -Lots of damage		

At this point, you might have a short classroom discussion, allowing the students to share their brainstormed knowledge. After sharing their thoughts and listening to the ideas of others—which they might incorporate into their own charts, students should move to the W column and list question that they may have about the topic.

K	W	L
-Powerful wind, rains -Flooding -Named after people -Lots of damage	How do they form? Where do they form? When do they occur? What are the most famous ones?	

As students read the learn information, they will focus on the answers to these questions. Once they have finished reading about hurricanes, they fill in the L column, where they will list the answers to their questions, along with other things that they have learned.

K	W	L
-Powerful wind, rains -Flooding -Named after people -Lots of damage	How do they form? Where do they form? When do they occur? What are the most famous ones?	Warm water meets jetstream air Coast of western Africa June-November Hugo, Andrew Must have winds of 74 mph or more

The completed form serves as an excellent tool for classroom discussion of the topic studied.