



1 Write your objectives in student-friendly language.

2 What makes you say that?

What do you wonder about this image?



My sequence of thought:

- 1.) What does this mean?
- 2.) To me, this means....
- 3.) Can I connect anything else to this?
- 4.) I know that in science, I can use this method to figure out....

Word Walls with Images



teamwork

collaboration



harmony

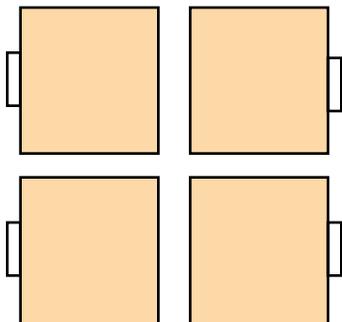
8

3

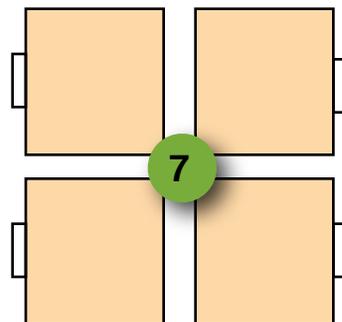
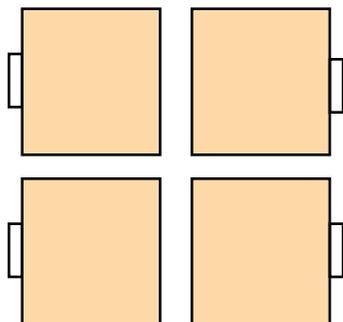
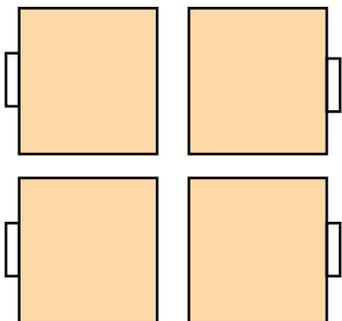
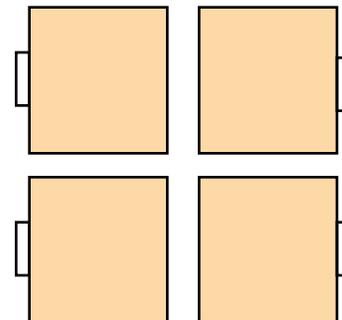
4

5

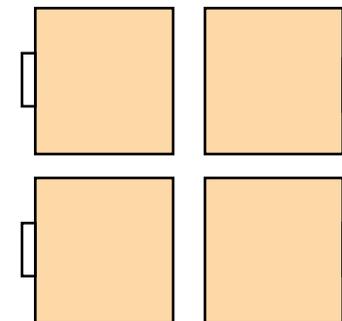
Brain-Friendly Classroom Organizer



6



7



1 Objectives

Students need a clear and concise purpose for the lesson. The brain likes to make meaning through predictable patterns. By providing student-friendly objectives each lesson, students immediately know where to find the meaning for the day's lesson. Ironically, this is the step I see teachers skipping the most when it is one of the most essential.

2 Ask probing questions

In order for the brain to make cross-connections, the synapses must be required to extend their range of fire. By asking probing, open-ended questions, students cannot simply "find the file" in their brain. They must make a connection between two or more "files" to create their own unique understanding.

Use other media

3

Text-heavy classrooms fail to take into account the brain's need to "see" things. Images make a much more powerful impact on the brain and allows for memory recall much more quickly because images (and other media) make an emotional connection. A feeling is much easier for the brain to remember than a piece of text. Brain friendly classrooms bring in rich media from a variety of sources for students.

Model sequenced thinking

4

By providing a model of your own sequenced thinking, you are both allowing students to follow through your own reasoning and gain a model to use for themselves, and giving the brain a clear pattern for rational thought through a problem.

Using text and images together

5

Similar to number 3, this extends that concept further into having students actually "read" an image. By aligning the image with the vocabulary, reading becomes a multi-sensory skill. Additionally, by providing a common vocabulary across contents within the classroom, students begin to make natural connections and explore those terms more deeply.

Media Cart in the Middle

6

By placing the media cart with the projector, computer and other media tools in the center of the room, it sends the message that technology is important and that it is accessible to all - not just the teacher. Further, by placing it in the center of the room, it is much more likely to be used throughout the day!

Collaborative Groupings

7

Arranging desks in groups of 4-5 is important for fostering collaboration skills. However, to best use this feature, it is important to allow multiple groups to work together. Because the brain becomes most innovative when you take it out of its comfort zone, movement from one area to another is key. By allowing groups from opposite sides of the room to work together, you are forcing the brain to gain oxygen through the movement to the other area and to work at its highest capacity - outside of its "regular" comfort zone.

Student Portfolio Shelf

8

Allowing students to house their chosen work is a critical element in students taking ownership of their own educational processes. I like this particular unit because there are bins to house work that can be sorted by groups later on. Students can then look through their group bin to find the pieces they would most like to place in the portfolio binder above. This is just one example of how to use this shelf system. There are many others (including ways to use it with portfolios being electronic). The point is to have the shelf system in the classroom itself and to make room for it - it's not just a piece of furniture!