

HANDOUT to accompany **MAKES SENSE STRATEGIES** video, Part 1

Please print this handout and make copies available to all teachers who view Part 1 of the Makes Sense Strategies video

The **MAKES SENSE** approach ...

Helps students make sense of complex information
Makes the information more *learnable*
Makes sense to teachers

Doable

Teachers like what happens when the strategies are used

The **MAKES SENSE** approach features ...

Thinking deeply about what students need to know
Focusing on making sense of big ideas rather than memorizing details
Teaching in ways that actively involves students while enhancing their learning
Integrating critical, analytical & creative thinking skills into the curriculum
Learning HOW to learn Learning HOW to think

A couple of big ideas of this approach ...

Elaborating to learn... Learning to elaborate
Organizing to learn ... Learning to organize

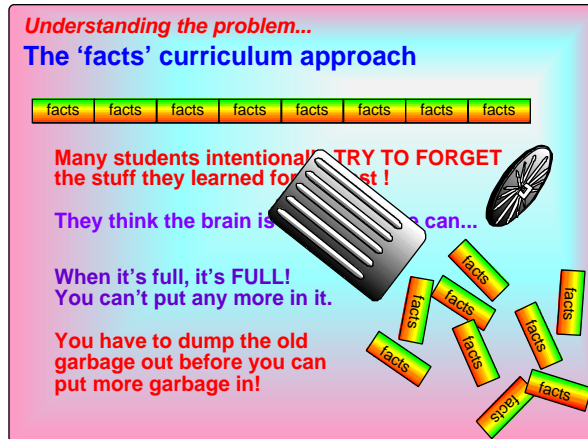
What's on the tests we give reflect what we expect students to learn

So what do the tests commonly reflect? lots of FACTS

Although a single lesson that is facts oriented doesn't seem like too big a deal...
The long range effect doesn't look too meaningful

You can end up with a curriculum that is a mile wide & an inch deep
Because of pressure to "cover" the curriculum, we end up spray'n & pray'n!
Spray kids with a LOT of information and pray some of it sticks!

Students learn.... *Intellectual bulimia*
Many students intentionally TRY TO FORGET the stuff they learned for the test !



Tests rarely reflect an assessment of students' understanding of:

big ideas
major concepts
unfolding trends
important implications

... the big picture stuff



Important big ideas of this era...

- * Europeanization of the Western Hemisphere
- * Origins of how we came to be as we are now
- * How competition between European countries for resources led to justification for exploitation of original new world inhabitants
 - * murdering
 - * enslaving
 - * stealing
- * Competition for resources often is used to justify exploitation of people in weaker positions
 - How this idea has repeatedly shows-up across the ages
 - How the idea shows up in today's world
 - What we try to do to prevent it from showing up

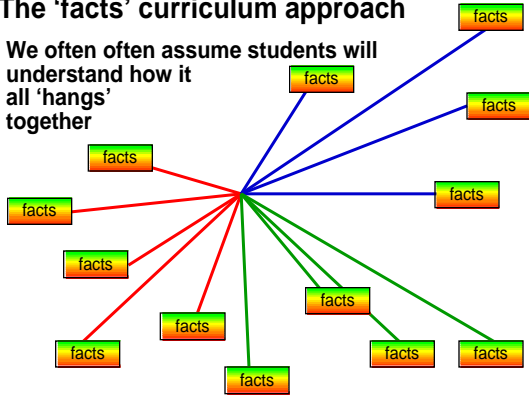
Kids are well prepared to play "millionaire"...

.. they can tell who Cortez was, who discovered the Mississippi River, who was searching for the Fountain of Youth...But totally "NOT GET" the bigger picture or understand the relevancy of the information

Understanding the problem...

The 'facts' curriculum approach

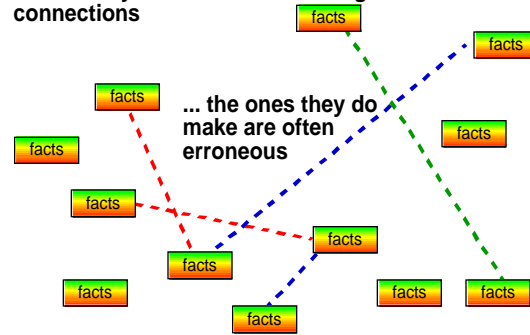
We often assume students will understand how it all 'hangs' together



Understanding the problem...

The 'facts' curriculum approach

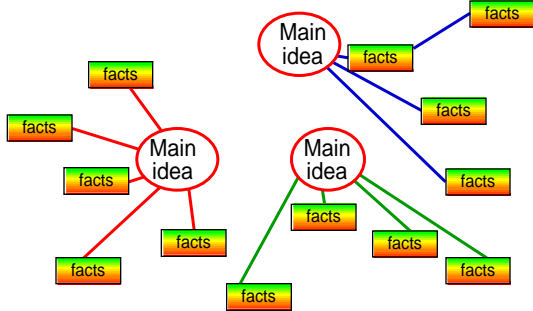
... but many students don't make good connections



Understanding the problem...

The 'facts' curriculum approach

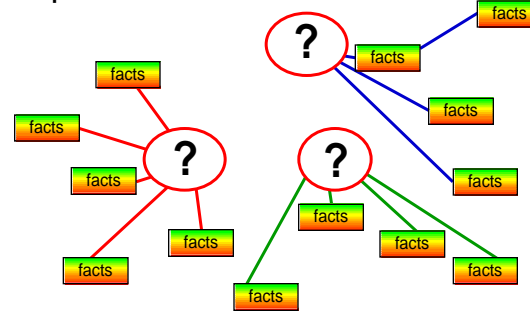
We often assume students can & will identify main ideas...



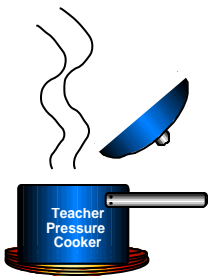
Understanding the problem...

The 'facts' curriculum approach

Often, they cannot & sometimes totally miss the point...



2 powerful strategies for blowing the lid off the pressure cooker



Differentiate the curriculum

Use ROBUST instruction

DIFFERENTIATING THE CURRICULUM MEANS...

Separating curriculum into three levels

- * CORE ideas that ALL will learn
 - Teach extensively
 - Assess
- * Interesting/entertaining ideas that some will learn
 - Do teach
 - Do NOT assess
- * Specialized knowledge (trivia) that few will learn
 - Do NOT teach
 - Do NOT assess

CORE ideas are reflected in state course of study or learning standards

Textbooks tend to be PACKED with trivia!

Differentiating the curriculum is NOT...

- * Students who learn the most trivia get As
- * Providing a separate, dumbed-down curriculum

Features of ROBUST instruction

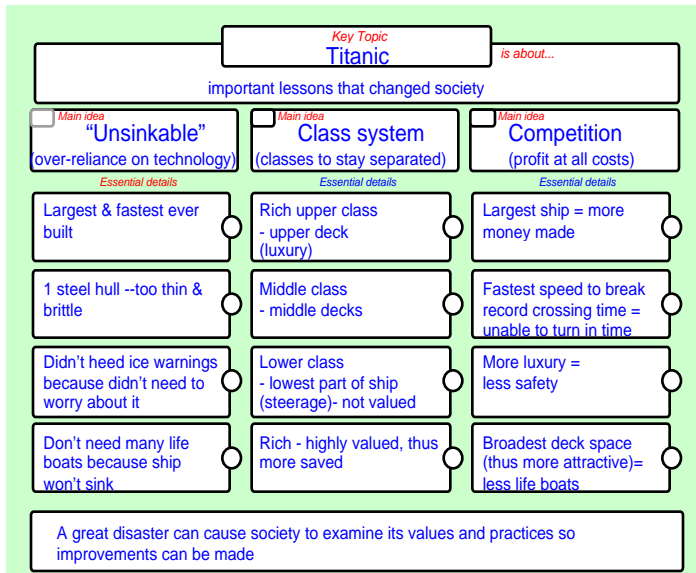
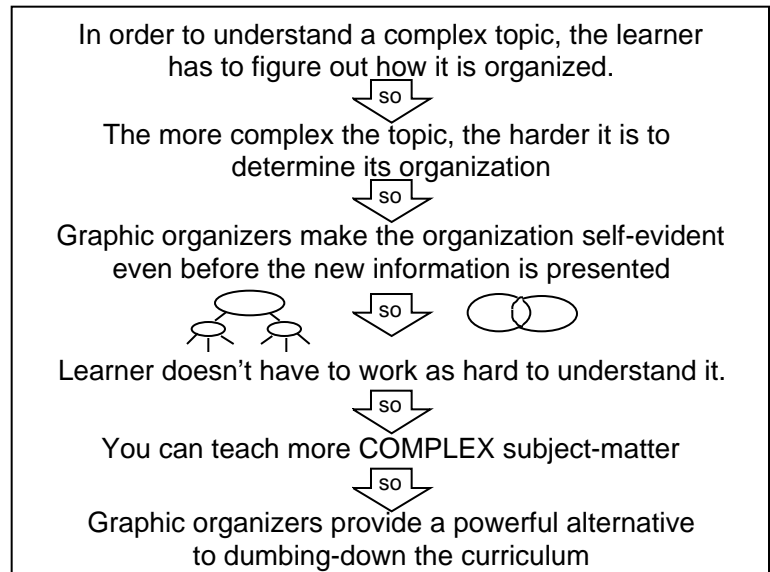
- * Focuses on relational understanding, not memorizing
- * Making connections & elaborations
- * Understanding how ideas hang together
- * Making organization self-evident

An example of a “robust” instructional tool -- graphic organizers

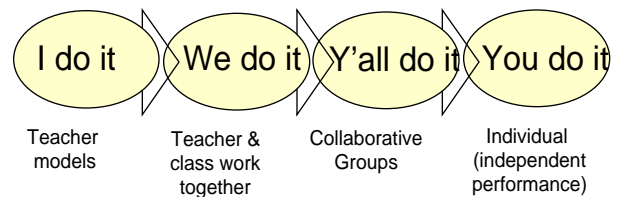
The “frame” is an example of one of the *Makes Sense* tools

You can use it to differentiate the curriculum so the focus is on big ideas

It is a robust tool that works well across the grades and across curriculum areas

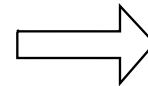


Four stages of scaffolded assistance

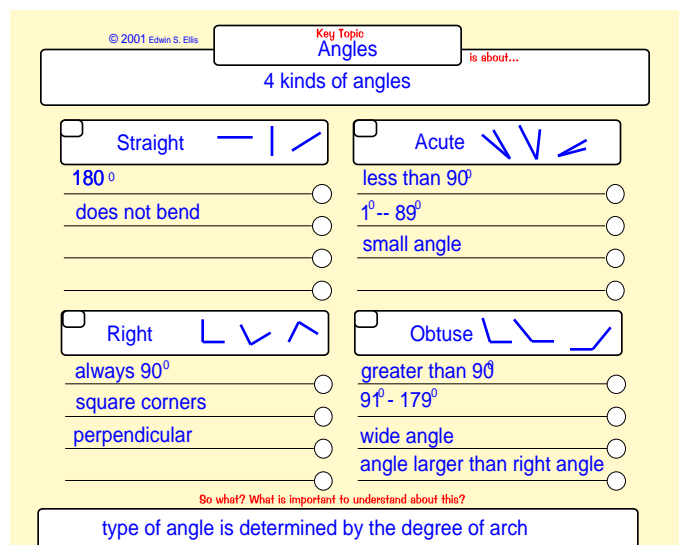
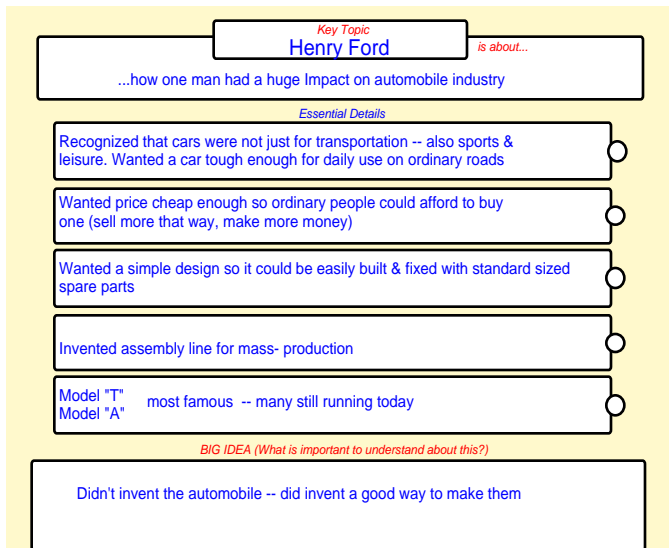


A common mistake I've made many times ...

Provide a model
I DO IT



Give the assignment
YOU DO IT



The PLAN writing strategy

Preview

Audience & goals

Words to use

List ideas

Assign order

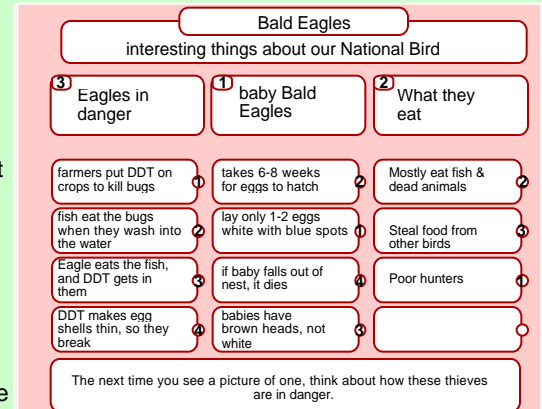
Note ideas in complete sentences

You probably know that the Bald Eagle is our national bird, and you have seen it on U.S. symbols and money. There are many interesting things about Bald Eagles.

Bald Eagles don't have many babies. They usually lay only one or two eggs at a time. The eggs are white with blue spots. It takes about six to eight weeks for them to hatch. Baby Bald Eagles have brown heads. If the baby falls out of its nest, it dies.

Although they seem mighty, Bald Eagles are actually poor hunters. They get their a lot of their food by stealing from other birds. They eat fish and dead animals. Not many people know that our national bird is a thief!

Bald Eagles are in danger. Farmers put a poison called DDT on their crops to kill bugs. Bugs eat the DDT and then die. Fish eat the dead bugs when they wash into the water. When the Bald Eagle eats the in them too. The DDT causes egg shells to be too thin, so they break easily. Babies can not hatch from the few eggs Bald Eagles lay. So the next time you see a picture of a majestic Bald Eagle, remember that it is a thief in danger!



1st TRIPS text perusal

Scope out the whole chapter

Title & "is about" statement

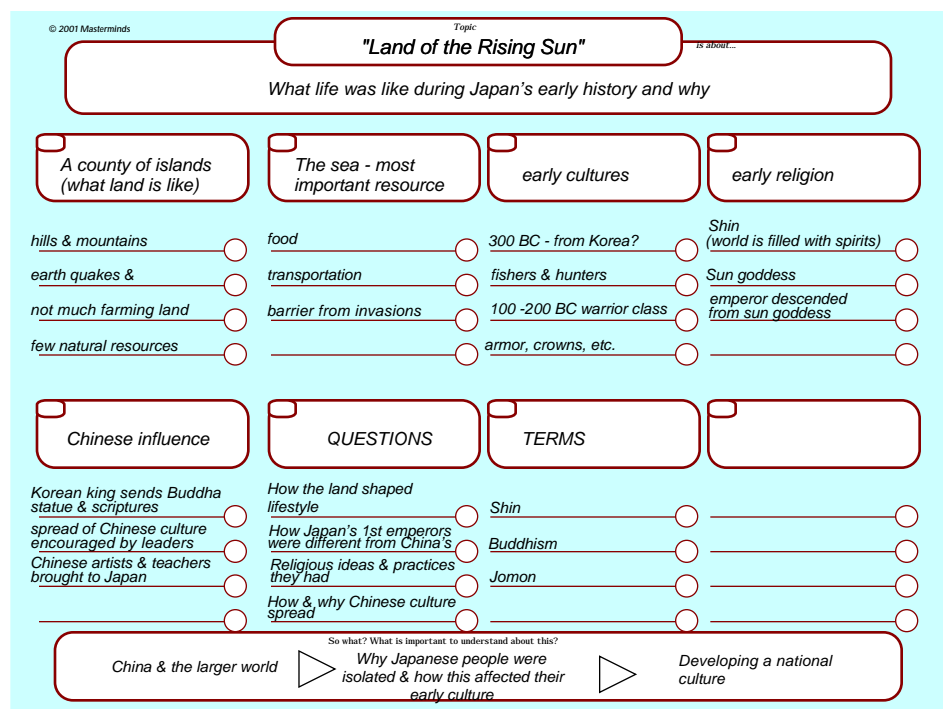
Topics listed from Introduction & summary

Relationships of headings & subheadings listed

Identify new terms

Pictures & graphics summarized

Summary of past, present, future chapters



Using "frame" has multiple impacts

LEARNING CONTENT Students may increase test scores by approximately 18%

WRITING - Writing scores increased in every category (except spelling) ... 97+ word increase in fluency

READING- Significant reading comprehension increases

NOTE TAKING - Relevance, accuracy, completeness

Using graphic organizers when teaching content...

Makes information easier to understand

Focuses on big ideas

Reduces information processing

demands needed to understand new information

Separates the important from the trivia

Organization of ideas is self-evident to students

Allow you to teach information at MORE COMPLEX levels instead of dumbing it down because kids didn't get it"