Pre-Search Strategies

Every student research project should have a plan. Some students find it easy to take a yellow pad and prepare a formal outline. For others, it helps to draw some pictures to organize ideas and illustrate relationships, comparisons, and sequences.

• **Reading**
  Reading broadly on the topic to identify keywords.

• **Outlining**
  Students organize information for clear writing and presentation. Outlining helps structure student thoughts.

**Brainstorming Tools**

• **Questioning**
  Forming essential questions.

• **Graphic Organizers**
  To truly turn information into knowledge, many learners create abstract pictures in their minds. Graphic organizers are visual representations of knowledge. Why are they useful in the research process? Graphic organizers address the needs of visual learners. They are useful in classrooms for taking notes and in libraries for organizing observations, research, and ideas. They force students to practice higher-level thinking skills and actively process information.

  • **Diagrams**
    Students illustrate concepts and processes with a big picture. Diagramming tells the story of the topic.

  • **Concept Maps**
    Students illustrate ideas and relationships in a visual manner.

  • **Webbing**
    Webbing helps students categorize information and see connections between categories.

(Using graphical organizer software such as *Inspiration* can aid students in the PreSearch stage of the Information Process. See [http://www.graphic.org/goindex.html](http://www.graphic.org/goindex.html) for more ideas)

A variety of graphic organizers and other Pre-Search tools follow.