

Placemat Activity

When using a placemat graphic organizer, each student has the opportunity to track the thinking and discussion in each group or at different stations (for example on a gallery walk). Then upon returning to their original groups, students can relay information and create a summary in the center of the placement. All of the processes are important in synthesizing and organizing information.

Gallery Walk

The gallery walk is a useful way to have students share their ideas and work, get responses, and provide the stimulation for discussions.

Individual or small groups of students first create a visible response to a question or problem, or even ask a question of their own. The response can be in visual form, such as a picture map that tells the journey of their thinking, a thinking chart, a Venn diagram, etc., or it can be simply written on chart paper.

Have students post their work. Have students count off by 1's and 2's, then give half the students in the classroom time to walk around the "gallery of work" and listen as the "presenters" who stayed at home with their work talk about what they have done. An informal discussion can ensue between presenter and visitor, or as a larger group, once everyone has seen all the work presentations.

Keep time short, asking students to visit for or five exhibits in a 6-8 minute time block. Then ask the gallery walkers to return to their work, and allow those who were presenting to tour the gallery of exhibits.

Those visiting can write responses on sticky notes, and then post these on or near the exhibit they are commenting on. These can be helpful comments about what to do next, ideas to add or consider, questions, or just general responses about things they noticed or learned from the exhibit and its presentation. Post-it notes can be initialed, so that presenters can take the Post-its and follow up with the questioner.

As a group, students can begin to look for commonalities, differences, themes, new questions to pursue, etc., across the exhibits that can then be categorized, e.g., "What do they notice, wonder, or question" when perusing the gallery of ideas? The collated notes and feedback from this activity can then form the basis for a whole class discussion.

Individual

Group

How are people who have had their children forcibly removed from their homes changed by this experience?