

Creating Clusters

Purpose

Students will practice organizing related ideas together to help them maintain a consistent focus in their writing.

Materials

For the teacher: transparency of Black Line Master (BLM) *Creating Clusters*, overhead projector

For the students: enlarged copies of BLM *Creating Clusters*, popcorn balls, pencils

Activity

A. Pre-Activity Discussion

1. Place a popcorn ball in the center of each student table or grouping.
2. Ask students to describe what they see.
3. Ask students why it could be called a cluster [popcorn kernels are stuck together in a group].
4. Tell students that today you are going to talk about another type of cluster which will help them organize their ideas when writing.

B. Activity

1. Give each student a copy of the BLM *Creating Clusters*.
2. Decide, as a group, on a topic for a story or report, such as "How to Care for Your Pet."
3. Have students write the topic in the center circle.
4. Write the topic on the transparency.
5. Brainstorm main ideas about this topic.
6. Have students write in each main idea in the center of the smaller circles as you do so on the transparency.
7. Give students time to write in details on the short lines attached to each main idea circle.
8. Share students' ideas with the class and fill in the BLM transparency.

(continued)

EXTENDING
THE



ACTIVITY

Have students write a report using their organized cluster as a pre-write. Tell students that they may use their own cluster or the example you completed together.

MEETING
INDIVIDUAL



NEEDS

Have students who find this activity difficult start with a simpler cluster. Help them place the topic in the center of the circle and then brainstorm as many related words and phrases as they can. Write them on rays drawn from the center circle. The teacher or support person may help the students group the ideas in their cluster.

Standards Links
2.4.1, 2.4.3

Activity (continued)


C. Close the Activity


1. Discuss with students how an organized cluster helps them to plan out what they are going to write in their report or story.
2. Ask students how the BLM *Creating Clusters* would look different if it were based on a different topic.
3. Explain to students that this organized cluster is a pre-write for a report on the topic. Tell students that the group of ideas in each small cluster should become a separate paragraph in the report.
4. Allow students time to fill out a new BLM about a new topic of their choice.

Questions for Review

Basic Concepts and Processes

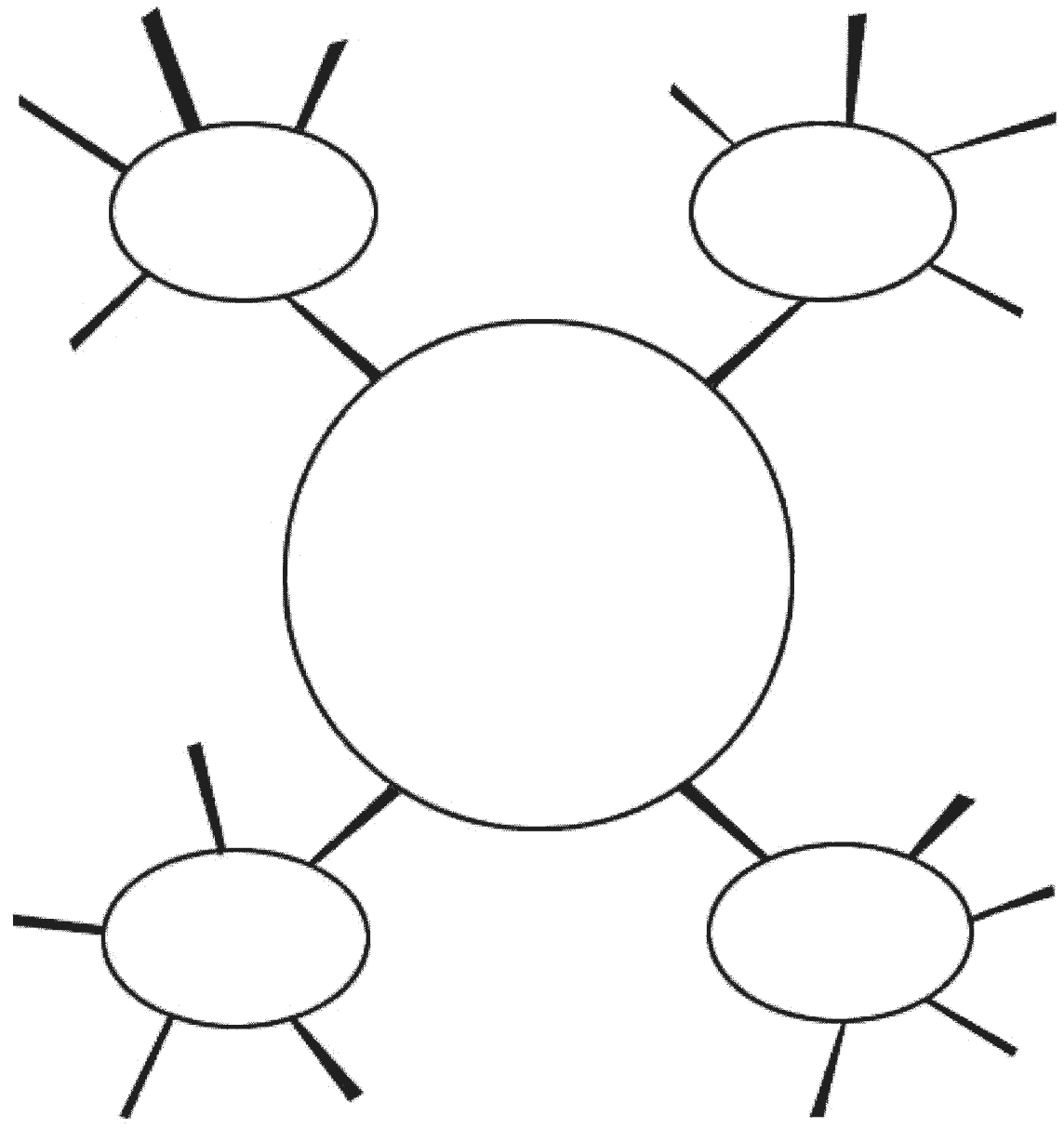
Ask students the following questions at the completion of the activity:

 What is the purpose of an organized cluster?

 How do you fill it out?

Name: _____

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Teacher Directions

Distribute the BLM *Creating Clusters*, and tell students that their ideas do not have to be written in sentence form on the BLM. Inform students that they are brainstorming words and phrases to help them write sentences later when they are writing the actual report or story. Students may fill in the details independently or with a partner.

Answer Key

Answers will vary. Example:

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR DOG

Feeding: clean dishes, fresh water, plenty of food, no table scraps

Grooming: baths, brush fur, milk bones, clean ears, clip nails

Training: sit, stay, come here, heel, tricks like roll over

Exercising: walk, play, fetch with a ball or stick