

Descriptor Wheels

Purpose

Students will use descriptive words in their writing, using all of their senses.

Materials

For the teacher: chalk, chalkboard, object to describe
For the students: copies of Black Line Master (BLM) *Concept Wheel*, pencils

Activity

A. Pre-Activity Preparation

Draw a large concept wheel on the chalkboard.

B. Pre-Activity Discussion

1. Inform students that they will be doing some brainstorming to come up with words that describe an object, a person, a place, or an event.
2. Explain to students that they will be using all of their senses to do this.

C. Class Activity

1. Demonstrate the activity by doing it once as a class.
2. Choose an item to be described, and write it in the center of the concept wheel on the chalkboard.
3. Label each section on the concept wheel with a sensory word, such as color, sounds, taste, smells, texture (feels), size, and shape.
4. Have students suggest and fill in descriptors for each category on the concept wheel.
5. Write a brief descriptive paragraph on the chalkboard about the object, using details from the concept wheel as a group.

D. Independent Activity

1. Have students write the object, person, place, or event that they will be describing in the center of their concept wheels.

(continued)

EXTENDING THE ACTIVITY



Repeat this activity with more advanced concepts such as characters from a current story or book being read in class. Use it with abstract ideas such as "happy" to help create descriptive poetry.

connecting across the curriculum



Science/ Social Studies

Repeat this activity with a science or social studies concept. Have students read or research about the topic to come up with accurate descriptors.

Standards Links 2.5.4, 2.5.6

Activity (continued)

2. Help the students choose the headings for each section of the wheel. Suggested headings include sensory words, personality attributes, special features, problems, and anything else that would apply as a descriptor category.
3. Instruct students to fill in descriptors or examples in each category about the main idea.
4. Have students write a paragraph describing their object using details from their concept wheel.
5. Require students to use a certain number of descriptors in their paragraph.

E. Close the Activity

1. Play a guessing game by allowing students to share their descriptors, and have the rest of the class try to guess the main idea or concept.
2. Suggest that students tell the category of the item such as object, person, place, or event.

Questions for Review

Basic Concepts and Processes

Ask the following questions during the activity to help students self-evaluate and revise their writing piece:



How do you write a good description?



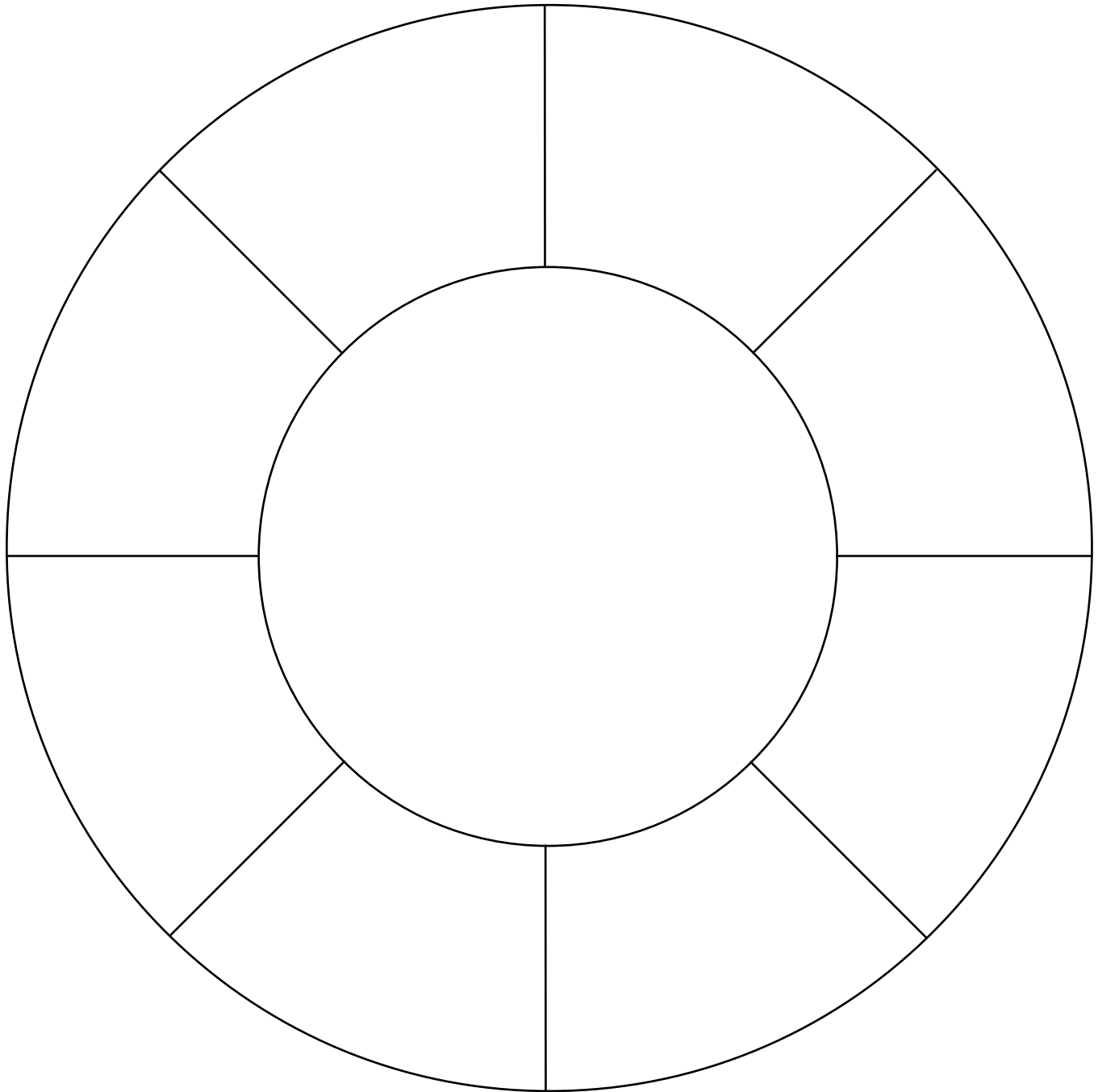
What are the senses you can use to describe something?



What is a good describing word?

Name: _____

Concept Wheel



Concept Wheel

Teacher Directions

Distribute the BLM *Concept Wheel* to students and have them fill it out. Have them write a paragraph based on the information contained in their concept wheels.

Answer Key

Students' concept wheels will be different, depending on the object that they have chosen to describe. After you collect students' BLMs and paragraphs, assess the following:

- Did the students choose descriptors that match the senses and categories that they have labeled on their wheels?
- Did the students include at least one descriptor in their paragraph from each heading on their concept wheel?