K-W-L Charts

K stands for Know
What do I already know about this topic?

W stands for Will or Want
What do I think I will learn about this topic? What do I want to know?

L stands for Learned
What have I learned?

HOW DOES IT WORK?

1. Draw three columns on the chalkboard, overhead, handout, or students' individual papers.

2. Label Column 1 "K," Column 2 "W," and Column 3 "L."

3. Before instruction, students fill in the ***Know*** column with everything they already know about the topic. This helps activate their background knowledge.

4. Have students predict what they might learn about the topic by writing in the ***Will*** column. This might follow a quick glance at pictures, charts, or classroom materials that relate to the topic of study. This helps set their purpose for learning and focuses their attention on key ideas.

5. Alternatively, you might label the middle column ***Want*** and have students list what they want to learn about the topic.

6. After study of a topic, students should fill in their new knowledge by writing in the ***Learned*** column. They can also clear up misconceptions about the topic that might have shown up in the *Know* column before they actually read anything. This is the stage of metacognition: did they get it or not?