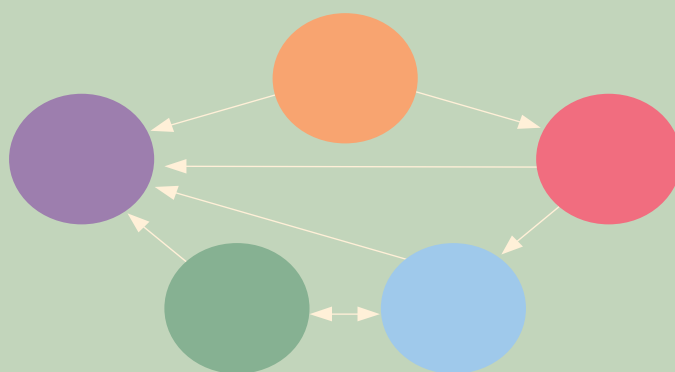


INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES



Sociograms

This strategy can be used before, during, or after a reading to help students analyze character relationships and represent them visually.

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SOCIOGRAMS

Summary

A sociogram is a visual representation of the relationships between characters in a story. Students use symbols, images, colors, size, distance, and lines to denote the quality of relationships, the important characters, tone, motivation, and other details about the cast of characters, promoting higher order thinking.

Procedure

1. Students identify characters in the story and write each character's name on a slip of paper.
2. The characters' names are organized in relation to the central character's name, showing the closeness of the characters' relationships to the central character through the distance between them.
3. Once students have settled on a design that they feel correctly represents the relationships in the story, they move the design onto a sheet of paper either by pasting the design onto the page or drawing/writing it.
4. With their characters' names on the page, students use colors, arrows, size, shape, and other visual means to create an in-depth sociogram of the relationships between those characters. Teachers can assign the symbols students use, or students can choose them. Lists of some of the more commonly used symbols used to denote different aspects of the character relationships can be found online, but students should be encouraged to try their own ideas—as long as they contribute to an easy understanding of the relationships in the story.

Johnson, T. D., & Louis, D. R. (1987). Literacy through literature. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.