

Paint the Picture

Paint the Picture is a strategy that is used after students have had opportunities to learn about a concept or topic and gives learners a creative and unique way to visually represent their understanding. Use of the strategy may also bring misconceptions or incomplete understanding to light. Students are presented with a question and must design a drawing with no notes or labels that describes their thinking and answers the question. Learning is supported in at least two ways: 1) when students plan and create the actual picture, and 2) when students describe and explain their representations to others.

How to implement the strategy:

1. Design a question that will allow students to demonstrate their conceptual understanding of the concept or topic of study.
2. Provide drawing materials: paper (either regular or poster-sized), markers, colored pencils, etc.
3. Tell students they should draw a picture that answers the question. They may not use labels or notes of any kind.
4. When students have completed their drawings, they should describe what their picture means and how it represents their thinking about the question. This may be done in a number of ways:
 - a. Form small groups randomly and have students take turns presenting their pictures to each other.
 - b. Form small groups based on similarities or differences in the pictures and have students take turns presenting their pictures to each other.
 - c. If students created the pictures in collaborative small groups, each group may present their thinking to the whole class.
5. Circulate as students work and present their pictures to provide feedback, ask probing questions, and note any misconceptions.

Adapted from:

- Keeley, P. (2008). *Science Formative Assessment: 75 Practical Strategies for Linking Assessment, Instruction, and Learning*, Thousand Oaks CA. Corwin Press.