

Lesson Plan about Clustering

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| Intended learners | Intended learners are instructors and designers in this course: <i>The Competent Instructor.</i> |
| Description | This plan describes a procedural action to cluster ideas in a mind map to break “writer’s block.” |
| Goal | The lesson’s goal is to model a simple empowerment process. |
| Objective | <p>The objective of the working task is this:</p> <p>Given five minutes, a blank page and pencil, and an incentive to begin a “first-time” writing task on a topic, the learner displays on the page freely-associated ideas grouped around a central topic.</p> <p>The output is a mind map representing a breakthrough insight about —</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how to organize the writing task.• initiation of an outline or matrix on paper to begin organizing the task. |
| Assumptions | <p>The lesson plan designer assumes that the intended learners —</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• have not already learned how to do task of clustering.• can read and write to Grade 8 standards.• can grasp the meaning of — and follow — written directions.• have conducted adult learning classes, if not designed courses for adult learners. |
| Timeframe | <p>The individual task of clustering takes less than ten minutes.</p> <p>The process of modeling clustering takes about 25 minutes.</p> |
| Site | <p>Your learning space or classroom is the site for this lesson.</p> <p>More...</p> |

More... Lesson Plan about Clustering

Before you begin

Before you begin the task, have available to each learner the article on clustering, a pencil, and blank paper.

Action

Follow these steps to empower learners for clustering.

| Step | Action |
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| 1 | <p>Create experience which stimulates interest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask how many have experienced writer’s block. • Guarantee that clustering will solve the problem. |
| 2 | <p>Tell learners to observe in silence as you cluster a new mind map about a new course design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw it large on chart paper turned sideways. • Pretend to be “stalled” and doodle. • Think out loud while drawing the mind map. |
| 3 | <p>Ask learners to help you while you cluster a second mind map.</p> <p>Ask questions which check their understanding of the —</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • procedural action steps. • clues about when to proceed, when to stop. • critical attributes of an acceptable clustering procedure. |
| 4 | <p>Assign practice-clustering with instructor’s guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask learners to practice individually on their own topics. • Move about the classroom to monitor their progress. • Help each one as needed to complete the procedure successfully. |
| 5 | <p>Tell learners to cluster another topic independently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell them you will evaluate and approve finished clusters. • Remain silent while learners work independently. <p><i>Note:</i> Silence sends the message “I expect you to do this on your own,” and builds learner confidence.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Close the lesson by asking random learners to —</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tag what they have learned. • explain the clustering action in their own words. • tell how they will use clustering action outside the class. • predict what will happen at work when they use newly-learned action of clustering. |

The Clustering Action

Action Follow these steps to create a cluster.

| Step | Action |
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| 1 | Begin with a nucleus word — circled — on a fresh page. |
| 2 | Let go of judgment and begin to free-associate with any flow of connections which come into your head. |
| 3 | Write these down — <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rapidly, • each in its own circle, <i>and</i> • radiating outward from the center in any direction. |
| 4 | Connect each new word or phrase with a line to the preceding circle. |
| 5 | Begin again at the central nucleus and radiate outward when something new and different strikes you. |
| 6 | Stop clustering when you exhaust those associations. |
| 7 | Use only the ideas in your cluster that you prefer, then ignore others. |

Example of clustering result

Here is one result of clustering, using “proposal” as the nucleus word.

Note: Color added for focus of attention only.

