

Mental Jogging

What is it?

- A game structure for brainstorm
- Using prompts as in: *things to, reasons for, times when, ways to....etc.*
- Essentially, any prompt for which a list is the right response
- Originally described in a book entitled *Mental Jogging*, by Reid Daitzman

Jogs Are

- Timed (according to student attention span)
- Scored (number of items by individuals or groups)
- Shared (to illustrate the non-judgmental approach)
- Prompted (occasionally, to keep the action going)
- Rewarded (to emphasize the game: increase the motivation)

Motivate Jogging By

- Using the fitness metaphor to talk about length (of a physical jog) against a set time
- Stressing speed of response / length of list
- Making it competitive
- Sharing items after each jog so participants “get the hang of it”
- Using group approaches from time to time
- Always starting a session with some goofy sample jogs for fun

Help the joggers by

- Using occasional prompt words that might help them think
- Talking strategies (e.g. one-word descriptions of a whole idea; no judgements to slow you down)
- Keeping the pace up

Use the results of a jog

- Move from warm-up jogs to jogs that apply to the content under study
- Treat the results of these jogs as the beginning of informal or formal writing projects
- Add to the jog’s spontaneous results by moving into some researched additions to the list

Content Area Jogs

- Things people would want to see in a perfect city plan
- Everything I know about electric current
- Health hazards here in school...
- Events that led to Confederation
- Positive uses of genetic engineering
- Things I see in Picasso’s *Guerinca*
- Things I think should be on the set of our production of.....

What Can be Done with Lists?

- What questions can the list answer?
- How many groups could you create to sort the list, and what would you name them?
- When you have named groups of things, what additional things want to be added to the groups? Could you put all, or most of this information into just 2 groups? What titles would you give them?
- What items don’t belong in the list (or groups)? Remove them
- What additional items does the list need to make more sense?
- Can some items in the list become categories for other items?