


Sample District Blog Devoted to Keys to Literacy

The Burlington School District in Massachusetts has developed a blog newsletter devoted to supporting implementation of KTL routines. They used "Blogger", a free website that makes it easy to set up blogs (https://www.blogger.com/about/?r=1-null_user). Peer coaches and administrators take turns posting items on the blog, and teachers in the district receive notices about new blog posts. Below you will see screen shots from the blog site.

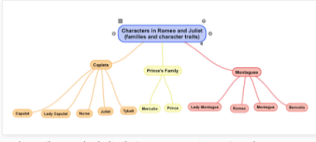
Keys in Burlington



Student Work Examples Resources for Teachers Resources for Students Technology Resources

Technology Resources

Simplemind+ is an app that allows students and teachers to develop top-down webs. Students need to take screenshots to upload their webs to email or Google Classroom. Below is an example of a web made with this app.



Popplet.com is another app/website that you can use to create webs.

Keys to Literacy Blog



Keys to Literacy in Action

Today

Showing events after 9/5. [Look for earlier events](#)
Showing events until 10/15. [Look for more](#)

KTL Newsletter 6 - More Ideas On Categorizing

You have seen emails recently about top down webs and other aspect of Keys to Literacy, but we wanted to give you some new ideas for **Categorizing**.




image via <https://www.pinterest.com/keystoliteracy/>

A great way to begin categorizing is to start with an **everyday example**. You can talk about categories for everyday items such as **school supplies** (have students place the school supplies in the correct bucket, coming up with an appropriate category label). You might put tools for measuring in one bucket, writing utensils in another, art supplies in another, etc.


One way to make this activity more **interactive** is to have buckets set up around your classroom. You can take, for example, the vocabulary from any unit of study, and have students place them in the **correct category bucket**. For instance, a social studies unit could have categories such as Economy, Government, Physical Features etc. of a particular area. If possible, each child would receive a term to sort appropriately, with one student in charge of making sure the others are putting the correct terms into the category.

You can also do this with **smaller groups**, and have them sort all the terms and then come up with **their own categories or labels** for each bucket. If you want to keep it simple, you could use a **worksheet** to categorize; start off having students sort vocabulary/terms into assigned categories and eventually have them come up with the **category label themselves**.

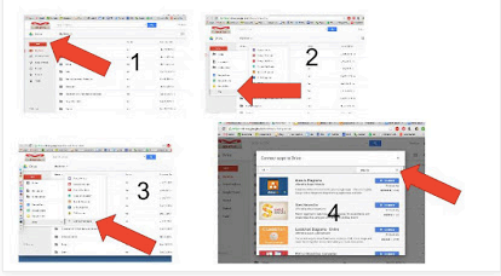
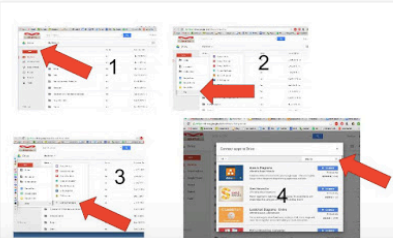
KTL Newsletter 4 - Draw.io For Top-Down Webs

Hi all!

I hope you had a restful Thanksgiving holiday! As we gear up to Thursday's PD day, I thought I'd share something I found while developing top-down webs. There is a drive extension called **draw.io** which is a fairly easy to use application that will allow you to create top down webs in the suggested Keys to Literacy design. In order to find it, try the following steps.



1. Go into your drive and tap the red box that says "new".
2. Look down until you see "more." Click that.
3. A side popup will appear, and it will say at the bottom "connect more apps." Click that.
4. When the popup box appears, use the search tool at the top and type in **draw.io**.
5. The icon is a orange square with 3 white boxes in it. (See image above)
6. On the left, it will say connect. That should do it!



Advantages of **draw.io** include not having to erase and recreate if doing it on paper, and the ability to create an answer key version, then make a copy of it and remove the text if necessary. At the beginning of the year, I left many text options filled in, and worked with the students to fill in the missing blanks. As the year progresses, I am leaving many more blanks open. At some point soon, I will only make a master key for myself and allow them to create their own. However, for students who struggle, this is a good alternative!

Draw.io is the only app or extension that I have found that allows you to change the shape AND the color as you go. Apps like poplet do not allow for shape changing, which is critical in a Top Down web.

Unfortunately, a major drawback is that it is "not" iPad friendly. At this point, I am creating them on my laptop and printing them out for students, or projecting my completed key. I have been in contact with them and hope to see an app, or an iPad friendly chrome version soon.

If you need any help with **draw.io**, please reach out and ask! It takes some trial and error, but now that I have it figured out, I won't go back to paper and pen!