What is Categorizing?

Categorizing involves grouping objects or ideas according to criteria that describe common features or the relationships among all members of that group. This procedure enables students to see patterns and connections; it develops students' abilities to manage or organize information.

What is its purpose?

- to provide an opportunity to share existing knowledge and understanding
- to extend students' thinking and understanding by requiring them to organize ideas and incorporate new ones
- to encourage students to practice acceptance and understanding of diverse ideas and viewpoints
- to demonstrate that information can be grouped or classified in more than one way

How can I do it?

- Introductory categorization procedures should focus on concrete objects such as toys or materials readily available in the classroom.
- Initially, the teacher will provide the criteria by which objects are to be grouped such as size, colour, shape or use. Students will later develop their own classification guidelines.
- Encourage students to explain their reasons for placing items in particular categories.
- Ensure that all students see and understand the relationships.
- Encourage students to question each other's categorizations.
- Provide opportunities for students to categorize their objects according to criteria of their choosing.
- Demonstrate this strategy with the whole class, then progress to small group and individual categorizing activities.
- Students should move from concrete objects to categorizing pictures, labels, words and information.

How can I adapt it?

- In kindergarten and grade 1 classrooms, categorize students' names, their preferences, objects and classroom labels.
- Categorizing activities should be used in all subject areas.
- Categorizing can follow listening and brainstorming sessions. After a quantity of ideas has been shared, students can categorize those ideas.
- Story grammar, story mapping, and webbing are forms of categorizing information.
- Categorize books by drawing attention to the similarities and differences of formats, language use, authors' styles, and comparing characters and events in various selections.
- Categorize related ideas for writing paragraphs.

Assessment & Evaluation Considerations

- Monitor students' ability to understand relationships among items.
- Observe students' ability to categorize items using more than one criteria or category.
- Note students' ability to categorize items independently.

**Teachers Resources**

- [Categorizing and Classifying Animals (Gr.2-8)](http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/pd/instr/strats/categorizing/index.html)
- [Amazing Animals (K-1)](http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/pd/instr/strats/categorizing/index.html)
- [Categorizing Ideas: Helping Kids Develop Reasoning Skills](http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/pd/instr/strats/categorizing/index.html)
- [Book Sorting: Using Observation and Comprehension to Categorize Books](http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/pd/instr/strats/categorizing/index.html)

This is from http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/pd/instr/strats/categorizing/index.html