

CLONING AN AUTHOR

Short, K. G., Harste, J. C. with Burke, C. 1996. Creating Classrooms for Authors and Inquirers. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Successful reading and writing involve creating a text world in which meaning is organized and unified. The *Cloning an Author* strategy actively involves readers in the process of synthesizing what is read into a set of key ideas. It supports readers in creating meaning from text.

Materials:

- Multiple copies of a selection to read
- Stack of eight 3" x 5" cards or slips of papers for each student

Procedures:

1. Provide each student with a copy of text to be read and 8 cards.
2. As students to identify what they see as the eight key concepts in the text and write each on a separate card. This can be done as they read or after finishing the text. Complete sentences are not required.
3. Students review the eight concepts and select what they see as the five key concepts and put aside the remaining cards.
4. Using the five key concepts, students identify the most central concept for the text they have read. The central concept is placed in the center of their desk or tabletop. If they cannot determine a central concept from the five, they may cross out one of the concept and write what they think is the central concept.
5. Once the central concept is selected, the remaining cards are placed around it, reflecting how they see the concepts tied to the central concept and to each other.
6. Working in pairs, students take turns explaining to their partner their reasons for selecting the center concept and how they see the other concepts relating to the central concepts and to each other.
7. As a group (whole or small), students discuss what commonalities as well as differences existed across readers and why such variations exist among readers.

Variation:

1. After # 6 above, have pairs explain their thinking with another pair.
2. Have the students negotiate which of their concepts is the group's central concept and select four additional concepts related to teach other and to the central concept.
3. Each group of 4 presents their new concept web to the rest of the class
4. Whole class discussion - # 7 above.

Online Variation:

- 1ol. Provide each student with a link to the text to be read
- 2ol. Create “Break-out Rooms” of 4 students (either randomly or assigned)
- 3ol. After reading the text, independently (or a reader can be assigned), each individual student identifies their eight key concepts first, and then narrows them down to five.
- 4ol. In small group, students share their five concepts and explain their thinking to each other. [Option: this may be done orally or each student can create their own *Google Jamboard* or *padlet*.]
- 5ol. As a group of 4 they determine the group’s five key concepts and determine their central concept.
- 6ol. Using an app such as *Google Jamboard*, *Google Draw* or *padlet*, the group creates a concept web.
- 7ol. Using the Zoom screen share option, each group explains their concept web.

OR

- 7ol. Each group inserts their concept web on a *Google slide* that the teacher has previously created with the right number of slides for each group to have their own. Remember to assign each group a number corresponding to the slide they will be working on. Students groups work simultaneously on their slide. Assign an ending time. Some of these tasks could also be assigned for homework.
- 8ol. Engage the whole group in a *Gallery Walk* to carry out the discussion as described in the original # 7