SUPPORTING IDEA GENERATION & ORGANIZATION THROUGH VISUAL SCAFFOLDING

Making thinking visible before putting it into words



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WHAT WE'LL DO TODAY

Feel







Connect

Reflect





FEEL

Feel - Let’s start with a topic

With a partner, answer this question.

Share as many ideas as possible.

(*Don’t worry about language accuracy.*

-> Just focus on what you could say.)







Feel - What happened?

- What did you struggle with as you brainstormed ideas?
- What might our students struggle with?



DRAW

DRAW - MAKE YOUR THINKING VISIBLE

In your group:

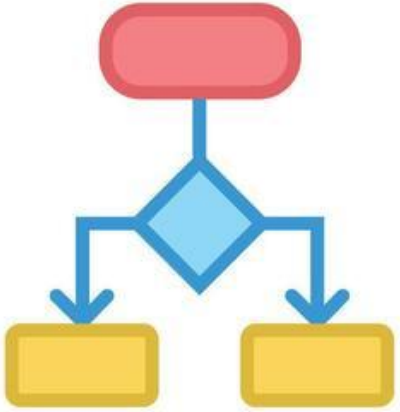
- Imagine you are preparing a presentation on the question.
- Use **simple visuals** to represent your ideas.
- Arrange the visuals so that the relationship between ideas are clear.
- **No words or captions on the presentation paper.**

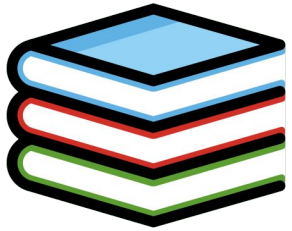


DRAW - MAKE YOUR THINKING VISIBLE

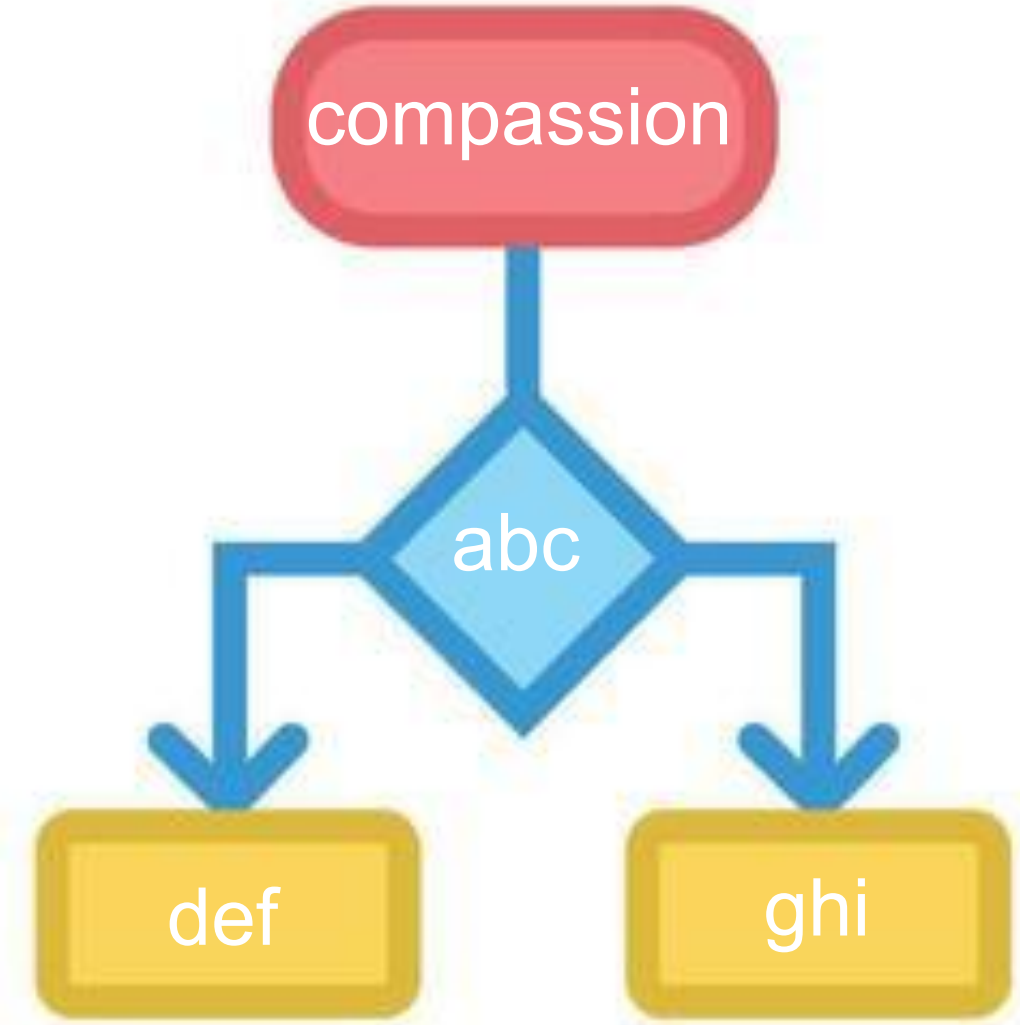








DRAW - MAKE YOUR THINKING VISIBLE





DRAW IT - DON'T WRITE IT

- Ask yourself:

  What could represent this idea?

  What comes before/after it?

  How are the ideas connected?



DRAW - MAKE YOUR THINKING VISIBLE

In your group:

- Imagine you are preparing a presentation on the question.
- Use **simple visuals** to represent your ideas.
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- **No words or captions on the presentation paper.**

Time: 6 minutes



Draw it.
Don't write it.



CONNECT

STEAL!

You have the ideas. Now find the language.

- Look at the vocabulary bank.
- Choose up to **3 words/phrases** from the bank.

But…

- Don’t choose just because you like it.
- You should be ready to answer:

How does this word/phrase connect to your visual ideas?



STEAL!

You have the ideas. Now find the language.

- When you're ready, shout "**STEAL!**"
- Then say the name of the section and number of the word/phrase you want to steal.

But…

- You can only steal ONE item at a time.



STEAL!

You have the ideas. Now find the language.






Educators
1 show patience
2 build trust
3 create a sense of safety
4 increase participation
5 encourage risk-taking
6 change learners' perception of mistakes/failure
7 make learners more receptive to feedback
8 reduce anxiety
9 encourage reflection rather than self-criticism
STEAL!!
Peers
1 encourage each other
2 build trust
3 create a sense of belonging
4 collaborate more
5 share ideas
6 be less resistant to different opinions
7 participate more
8 respond to mistakes with understanding
Learners
1 self-compassion
2 motivation
3 confidence
4 take risks
5 emotional recovery
6 accept mistakes
7 become more receptive to feedback
8 change their perception of mistakes/failure
9 keep trying after setbacks
10 manage stress

C O N N E C T

Now, connect the language to your thinking.

As a group:

1. Review the expressions you stole.
2. Decide where each one belongs.
3. Write the captions onto your presentation.
4. Make sure the language adds meaning to your visuals.









★ Make sure the language adds meaning to your visuals.

You have **3** minutes.

Educators

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2. build trust
3. create a sense of safety
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STEAL!!

Peers

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GALLERY WALK

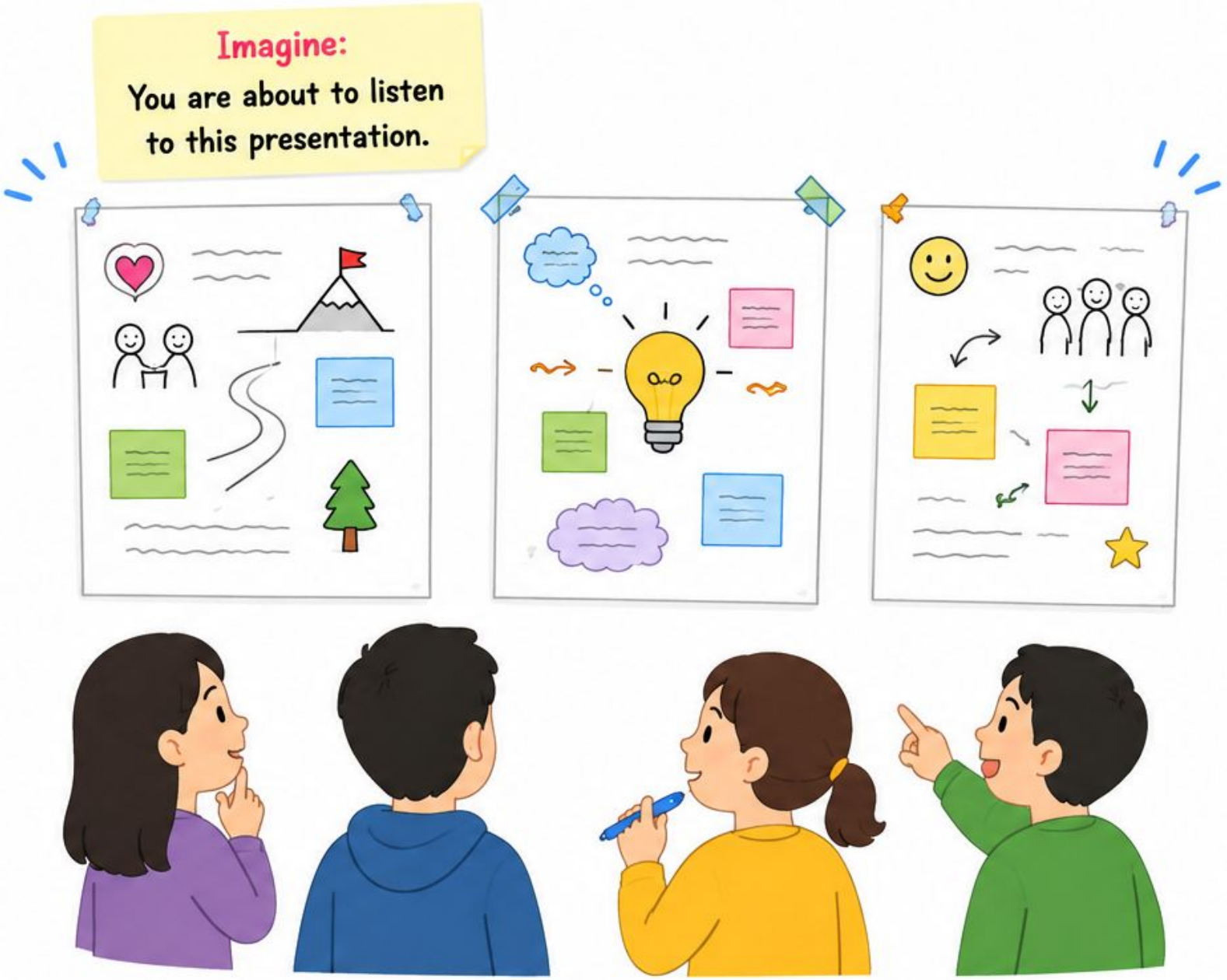
Be the audience

- Put up your group’s presentation paper on the wall.



GALLERY WALK

Be the audience

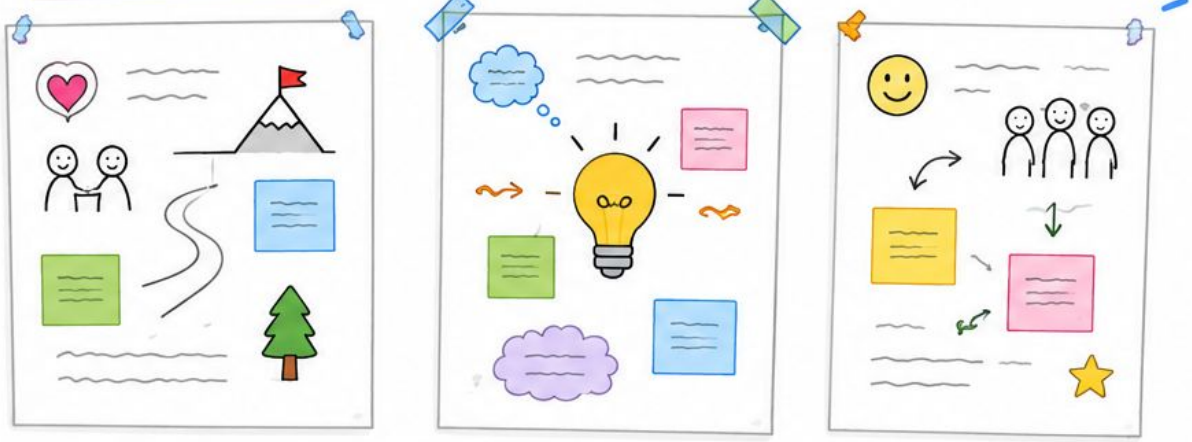


GALLERY WALK

Be the audience



Imagine:
You are about to listen to this presentation.



2 **Be the audience.**
Look at the presentation.
Ask a question.



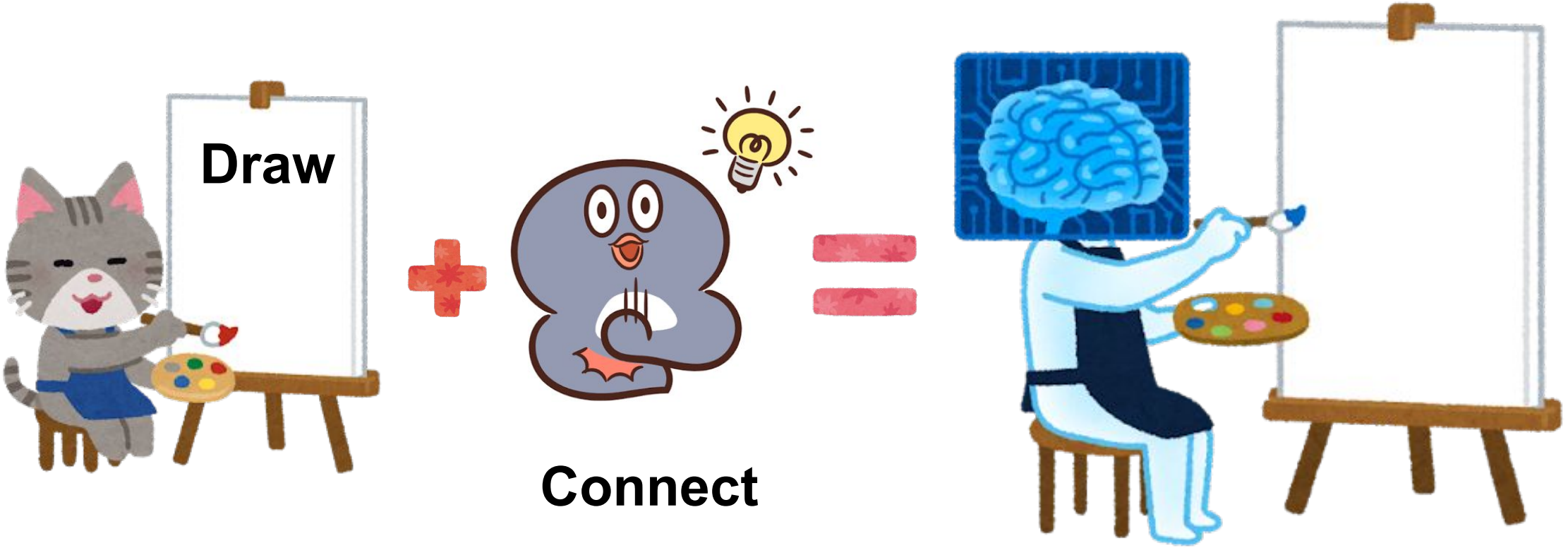


Your question might:

- ask for clarification
- ask about a relationship between two ideas
- ask for an example
- ask why or how
- invite the presenters to develop an idea further

What are you still curious about?

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

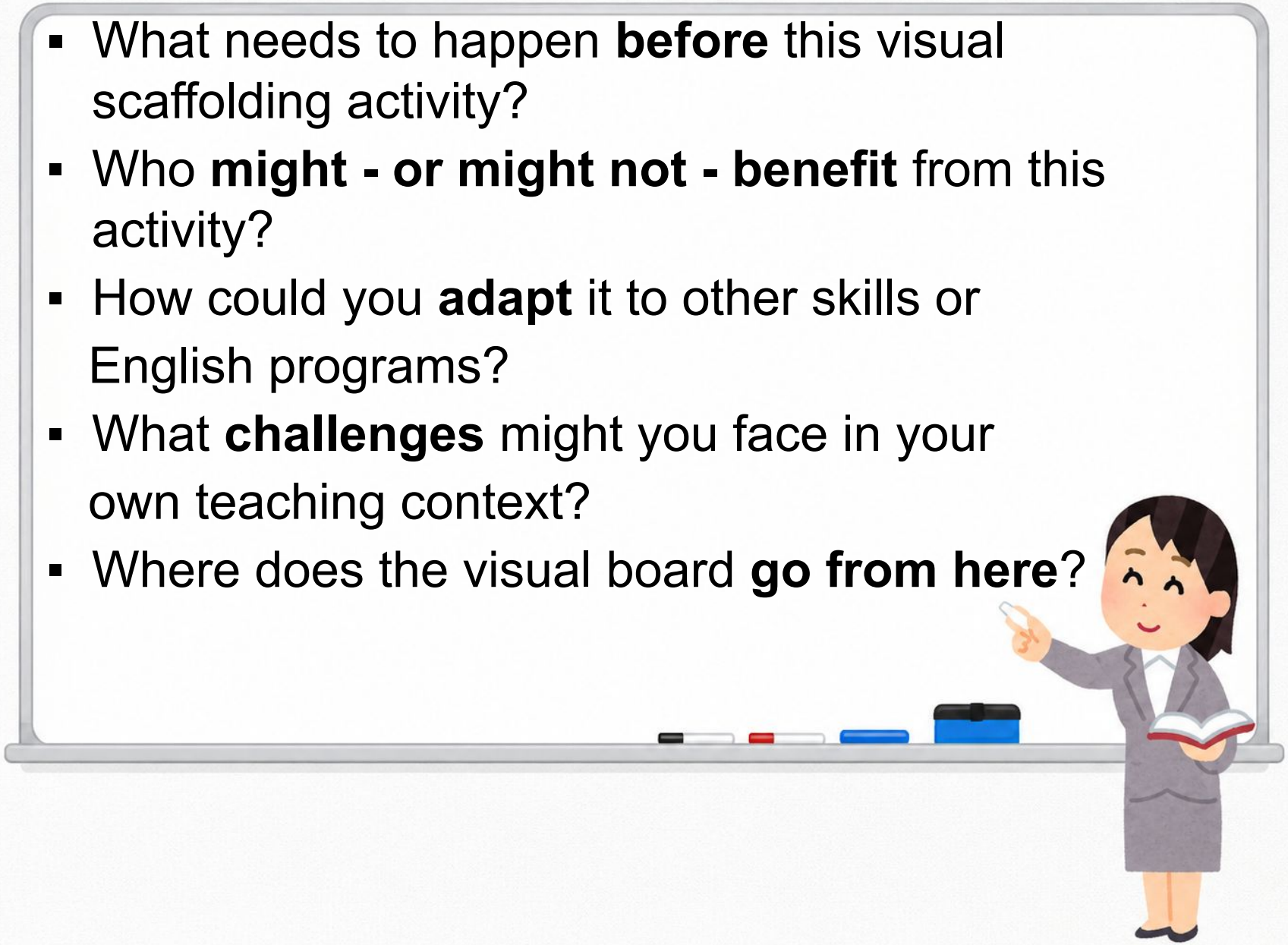


REFLECT

REFLECTION

Now, think like a teacher.

- What needs to happen **before** this visual scaffolding activity?
- Who **might - or might not - benefit** from this activity?
- How could you **adapt** it to other skills or English programs?
- What **challenges** might you face in your own teaching context?
- Where does the visual board **go from here**?



Where does the visual board go from here?

Same ideas.
More clarity.
Stronger writing.

One possible pathway: From visual board → writing

1 Reflect

Have Ss take the board down and read their classmates' questions/comments.



2 Present

Have Ss present their group's visual board to the class (1–2 minutes).



Teacher/peer feedback can be given at this stage.

3 Outline

Have Ss use the board and feedback to create a group outline.



Ss can show their outline on paper, shared slides, a whiteboard or Padlet.

4 Write

Have Ss write an individual paragraph based on the group outline (under a time limit).



5 Revise

Have Ss return to the visual board and the outline to check their writing.



Check clarity, relevance and organization.

6 Reflect

Have Ss compare their finished paragraph with the group's original ideas.



What did you learn about your own thinking and writing through this process?

From ideas on paper... ...to language on the page.

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RMIT Classification: Trusted

ADAPTATIONS

1-to-1 / Online lessons

1 Generate ideas



2 Visualize



Teacher can:

- draw as a peer, or
- guide with questions (depending on the student's level).

3 Add language



4 Produce



IELTS Speaking – Part 2

Draw a story board

Topic: A story of compassion

1 Generate ideas



2 Visualize



3 Add language



4 Produce

Tell your partner's story!

- Speed-storytelling
- Cross-storytelling



IELTS Speaking – Part 3

Map and develop ideas

Why do some people have high compassion while others have low compassion?

1 Generate ideas



2 Visualize



3 Add language



Move around and choose useful words

4 Produce



Large classes





Large classes (45 minutes)

Keep it flexible:
Use the steps that work for your lesson!

1 Draw



2 Share

Swap with a nearby group



3 Add language

Send a representative to collect useful words



4 Connect & Produce

Add captions, then present (or assign writing as homework)



Writing can be given as homework.

Q&A

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TAKEAWAYS

RMIT Classification: Trusted

Visual Pre-Writing Scaffold

SET THE TASK & GENERATE	VISUALIZE	ORGANIZE	ADD LANGUAGE	PRODUCE
Give learners a short opportunity to generate ideas.	Represent ideas without relying on language.	Arrange visuals to show relationships and progression.	Introduce/ select useful words and expressions.	Turn the visual plan into writing or speaking.

Adapting the Scaffold

If the students struggle with …. Try….

Generating Ideas	Organizing ideas	Explaining Relationships	Finding Language	Producing language
pictures, objects, icons, visual prompts	sequences, mind maps, flow charts	arrows, cause -> effect visuals	targeted vocabulary/ phrase banks	Writing -> visual pre-writing plans Speaking -> visual speaking notes

Useful (Free) Illustration sites

https://www.irasutoya.com/

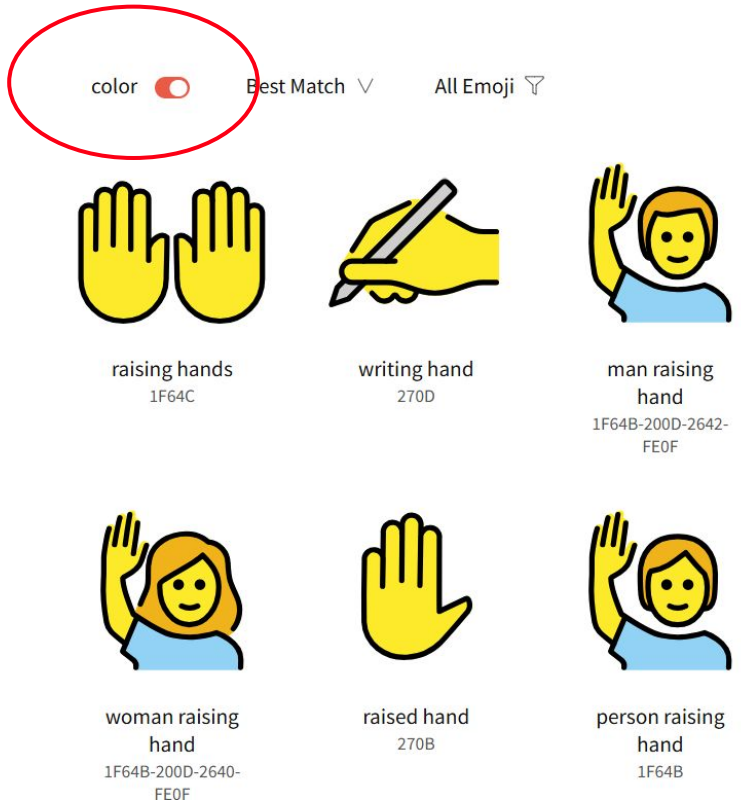
(Cute Japanese textbook style, designed to be accessible to English speakers)

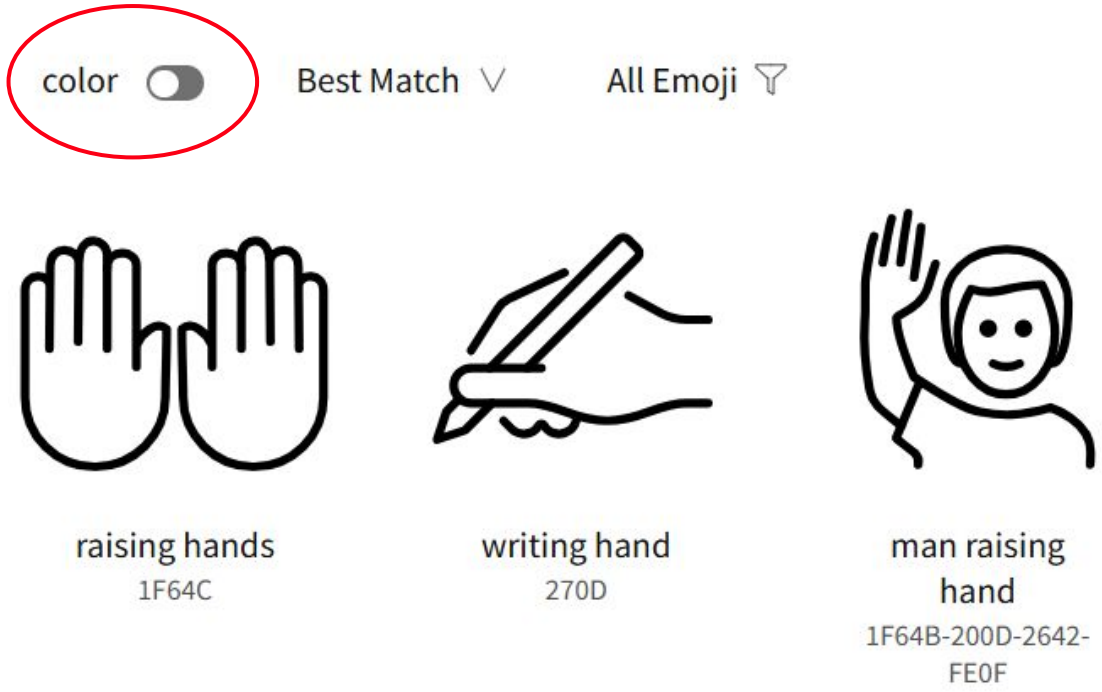


Useful (Free) Illustration sites

https://openmoji.org/

(Icons for concepts, emotions, objects and actions -> students who are not particularly confident in their drawing skills may find this site useful)

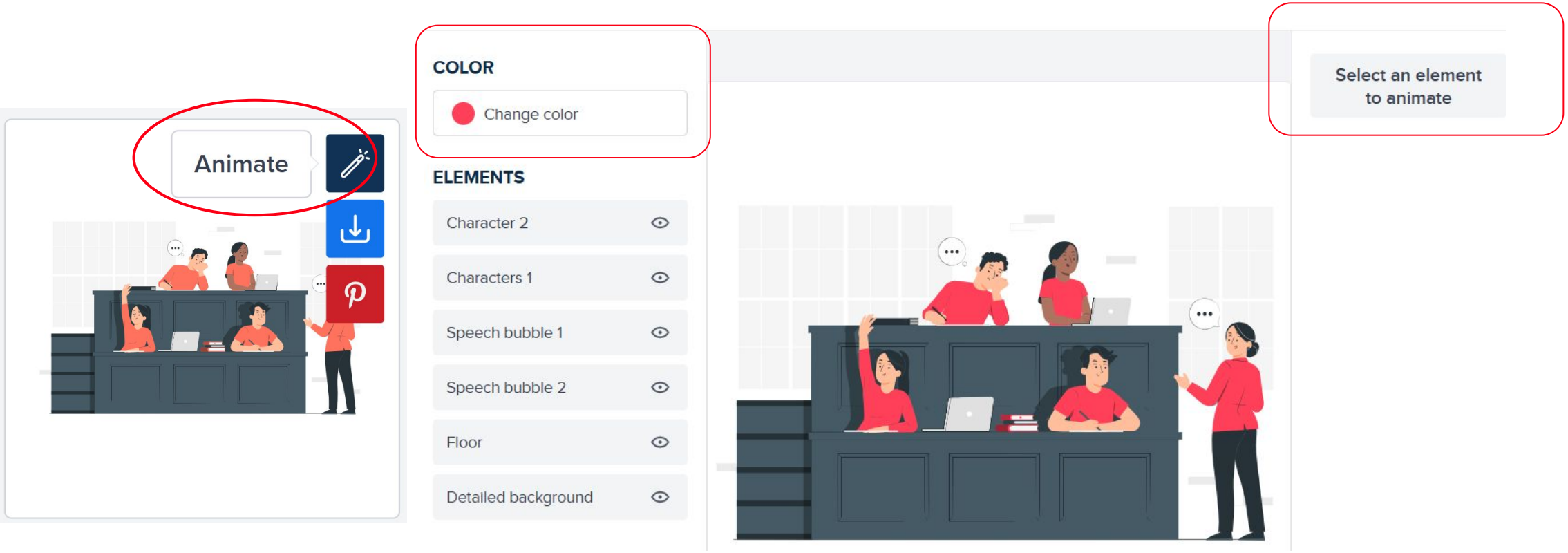




Useful (Free) Illustration sites

https://storyset.com/

(customizable and animated illustrations -> esp. useful for online classes)



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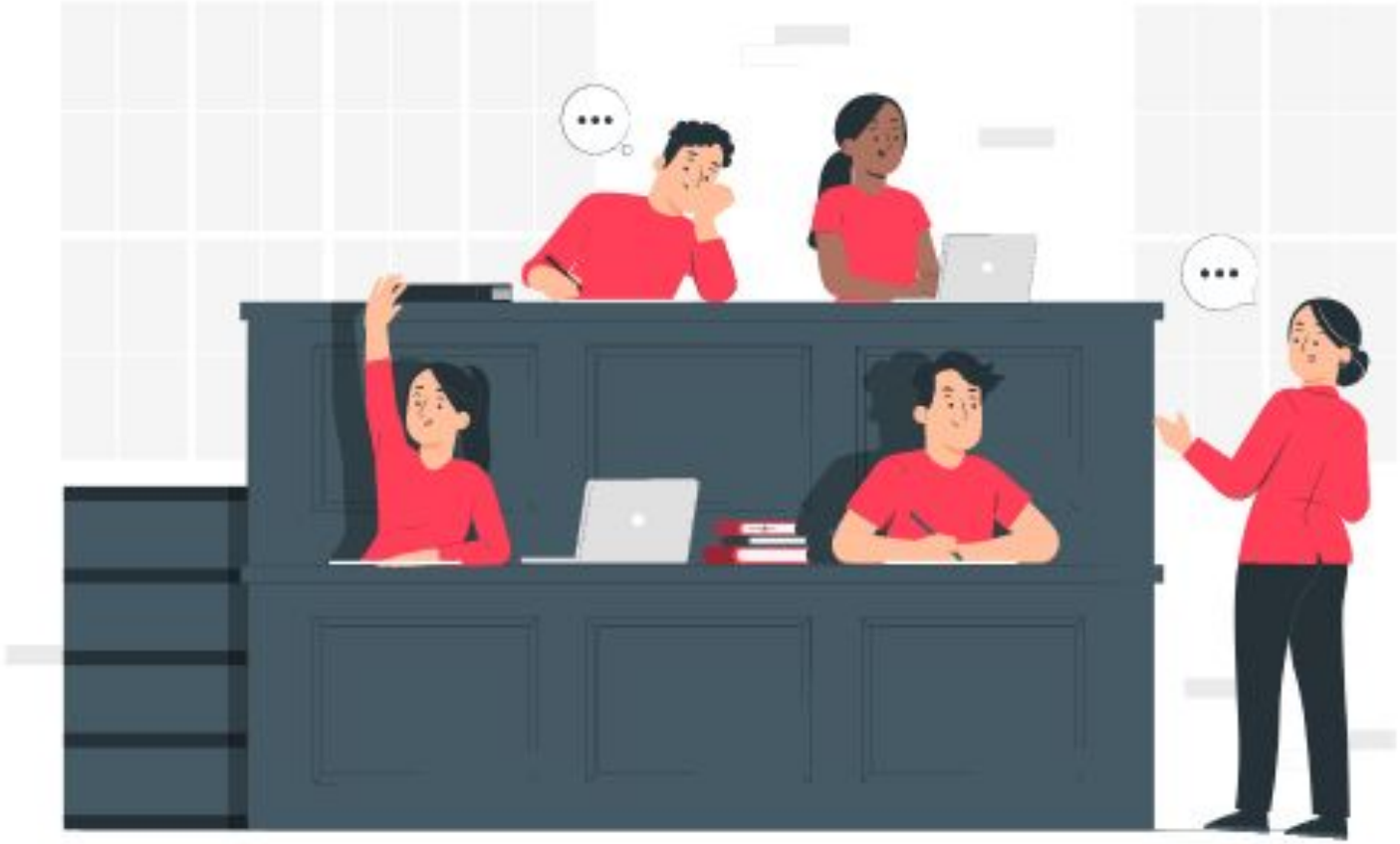

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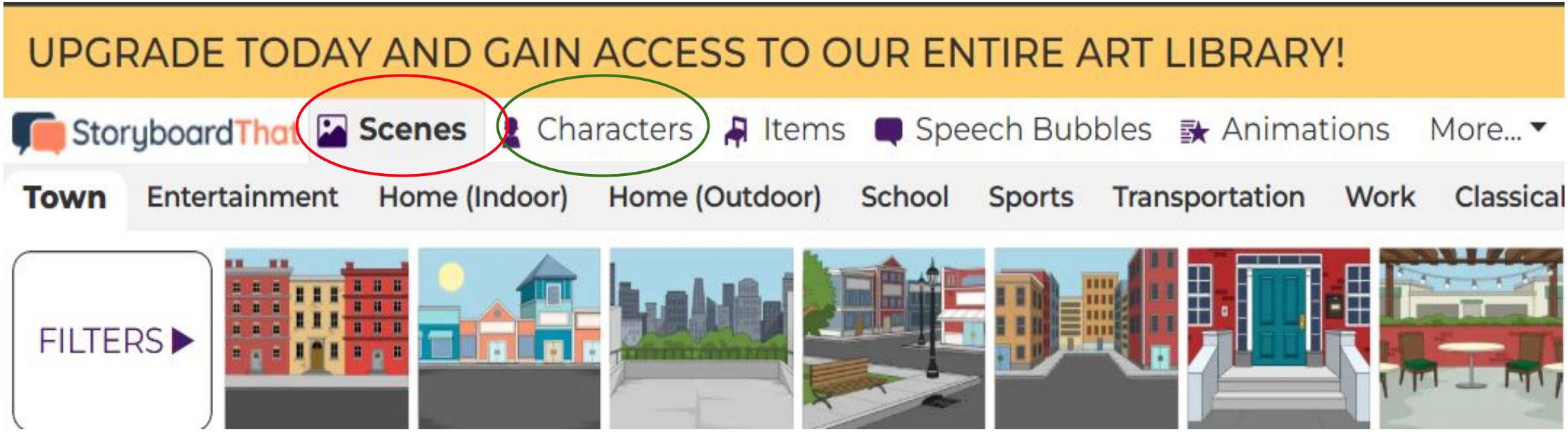

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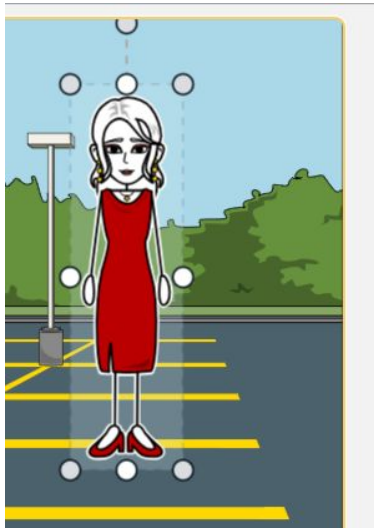

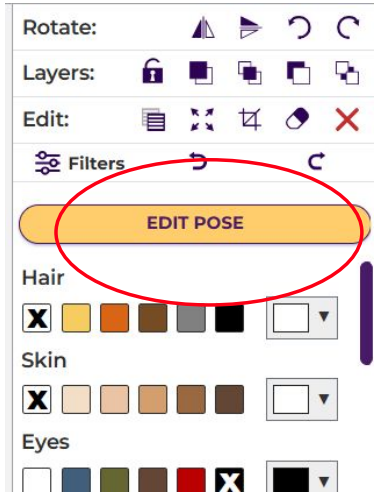

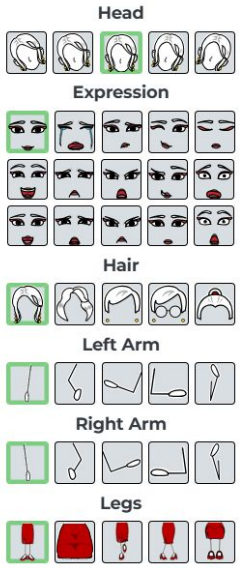

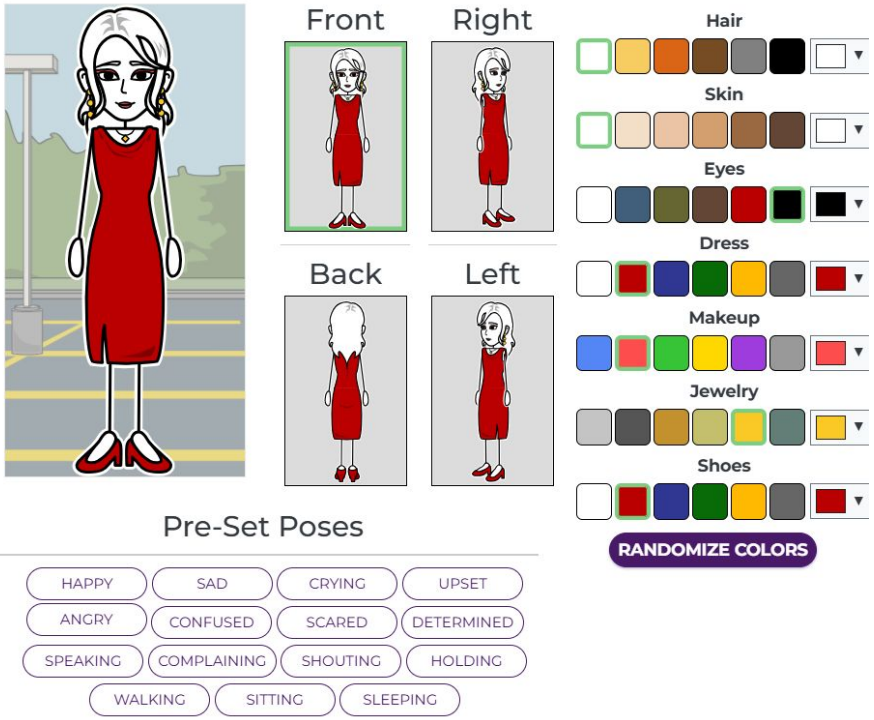

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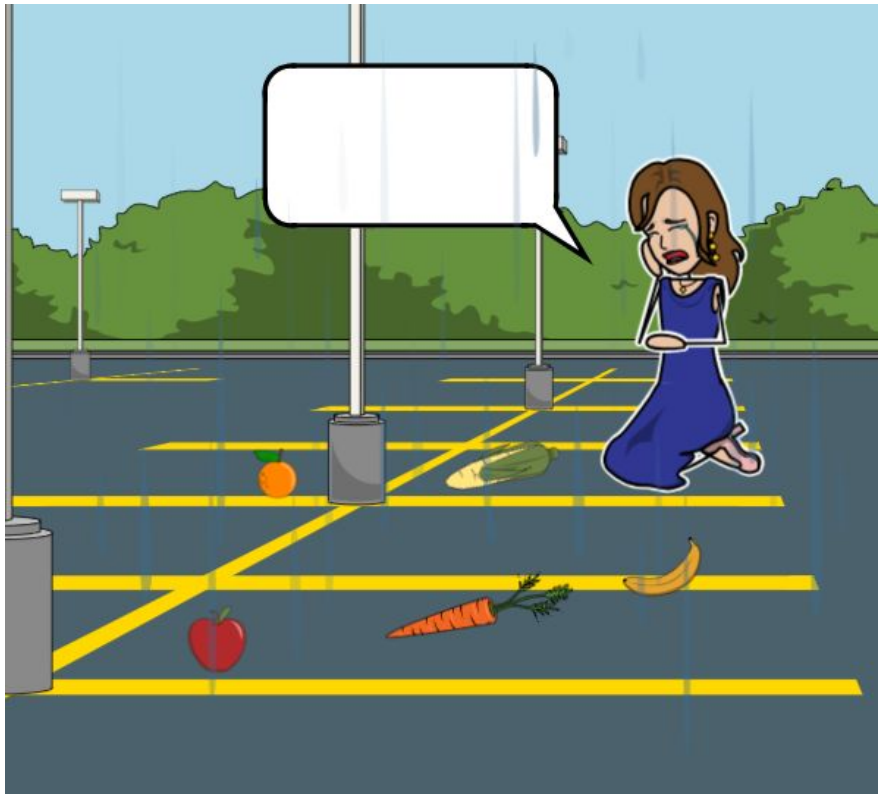



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https://www.ac-illust.com/

https://ponkotsu-ilst.com/

https://pixta.jp/

Final Takeaway

Visual scaffolding needs to be adapted to suit different learners and learning contexts.

But when students struggle to verbalize their thoughts, **giving them a way to visualize those thoughts first** may help.

It can also create space for learners to explore **different ways of approaching a topic and organizing their ideas.**

Thank you

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