

## Strategy: CONCEPT MAP

### Overview:

Concept mapping is an instructional strategy that represents knowledge through visuals. Concept maps help students “talk through” their thoughts and share ideas, and these maps are beneficial to both auditory and visual learners. Concept maps can be used to generate ideas during brainstorming sessions, to aid learning by integrating new and old knowledge, to assess understanding, or to diagnose misunderstanding; and concept maps can be used in a variety of ways to help students organize their learning.

The instructional activity below is an example of how a concept map can be used as an instructional strategy.

### Instructional Strategy:

You may want to demonstrate for your class how to create a concept map. Begin with a central idea, topic, or term and add characteristics, definitions, relationships, or other attributes related to current study. A concept map helps students’ practice critical thinking by finding and describing relationships.

When students are ready to concept map on their own, have them select the most important word from a unit, story, or informational passage. Have them place the word in the center of a piece of paper. Encourage them to think about the word and then circle it or draw a box around it. Ask them to write other important words outside the circles and then use arrows to connect the words in graphics, establishing a relationship between the terms.

***You are ready to TeachItNow! Here’s how you can use the “concept map” strategy to teach characterization. A learning target, instructional activity, and assessment technique are provided.***

### Learning Target:

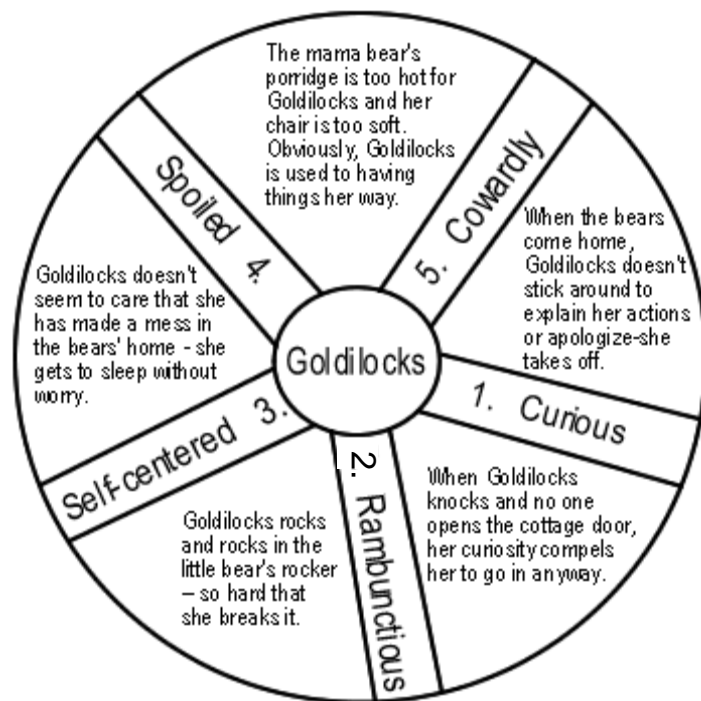
Students will identify attributes for a selected character in a story. Students will also explain each attribute based on the action of the character.

### Instructional Activity:

#### Teach Characterization with the “CONCEPT MAP” Strategy

First, model the development of the concept map of a character well known to students, such as Goldilocks from *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. Students draw a simple circle in the center of

a page and write the name of the character in its center. In a circular pattern around the character name, draw spokes. On each spoke, write an attribute of that character based on the story. For example, students could write what the character says her actions, what others say about her, how the character speaks, or what the writer directly states about the character. Between the spokes, in a circular pattern, students write evidence that supports each attribute. After you have modeled the activity, have students create a similar map for the character they have chosen from their own reading. See the sample concept map that follows.



### Formative Assessment:

Place students into groups based on the characters that they chose to discuss their concept maps. Ask students to compare and contrast their maps and determine the 3 most important attributes of their character. After completing the group discussion, a spokesperson from each group will report the 3 important attributes of the group's character and why those 3 traits were chosen.