

POSTCARD MUSEUM

Organizing Visual Information

This technique helps students understand that there are many ways to represent themselves visually and to categorize and organize information.

Invite people to stand in a circle. Hand each person a postcard and instruct people to examine the front, which will be visible to all, and the back, which may provide further information that only they see. Explain that everyone is going to build a museum exhibit together.

Choose one image to start the museum exhibit process. Walk around and show it to everyone. Lay it in the floor. Invite people to lay down their postcards—without talking—where they see a connection. They might find patterns, colors, subject matter, eras, and a variety of other details that connect. Like dominoes, the exhibit will expand, and people can connect with any images on the floor.

When all are done, ask who was the first and why. Eventually, everyone should share reasons. “There was sky in both.” “I saw similar patterns.” “They all have dogs.” After hearing the reasons -- the context -- for others’ decisions, students might want to do some rearranging. “Let’s make a dog wing.” “All the abstract art should be together.” Anyone may move any postcard. The exhibit is not finished until everyone agrees that it is finished, consensus is part of the process.

Step away and admire the exhibit. What would a newcomer to the room think? Do you see how many different ways this exhibit could go? What should the exhibit be named?