Know–Want to Know–Learned Plus (KWL+)

KWL is traceable to Emmet Betts' (1957) cornerstone text, *Foundations of Reading Instruction* (654), and closely parallels the effective reading-learning process. More recently researched by Eileen Carr and Donna Ogle (1987), it can be used as a total lesson plan since it has prereading, guided silent reading, and postreading components. Its most significant contribution, however, is in activating prior knowledge in such a way that it stirs students to be able to say what they **Know (K),** realize what it is they **Want (W)** to know from the textual material, and what they have **Learned (L)** following reading. The **Plus** refers to the mapping or summarizing step that seemed to provide the additional active ingredient that an earlier version of this method needed to bring about more predictable benefits.

STEPS IN KWL+

Before Reading

Step 1 The teacher helps students "brainstorm" what they know about a topic. The information is noted in the "K" (Know) column of a three-column chart.

Step 2 Students categorize information they have generated and anticipate categories of information that they may find in the selection.

Step 3 The teacher models categorizing by "thinking aloud" while combining and classifying information.

Step 4 Students generate a list of questions they want answered as they read. Questions are written in the "W" column of the KWL chart.

Silent Reading

Step 5 During reading, students pause to answer the questions raised in the "want to know" list. (New questions can be added as they read.)

Step 6 Students list things they have learned while reading.

Postreading

Step 7 Discussion of what was learned takes place, and questions raised before reading are reviewed to determine whether they were resolved.

Follow-up

Step 8 Students are guided in developing a graphic organizer for the information from their "learned" list.

A KWL lesson offers several opportunities for having students work collaboratively in pairs or small groups. The next method also is a good way to get kids talking—constructively and creatively.

KWL+ is a near description of the reading-learning process.