


## Draw to Understand

**Grade:** K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12, UNIV

**Type:** Read Actively / Develop Language (MLL)

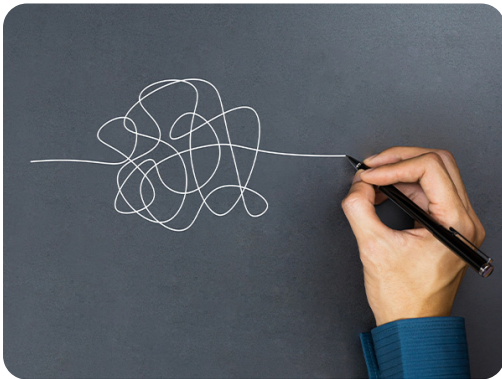
 **20-30** MINUTES

**When:**  
During reading

**Materials:**  
Paper and drawing materials



## Description



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Draw to Understand is an active reading strategy where students pause to interpret and visualize what they are listening to or reading and then represent it through drawing. Drawing not only increases comprehension and retention, but it also promotes creative thinking and diverse perspectives, as students see and discuss various interpretations of the text.



## Procedure

- ① Invite students to listen to a passage or excerpt of text, or ask students to read the text independently, in pairs, or in small groups.
- ② Encourage students to think about what they listened to or read. Ask them to visually represent their thinking, adding words, phrases, or quotes as desired. Depending on the learning goals, you may provide a focus question or purpose for their drawing.
- ③ Students share their representations with a partner, a group, or the whole class, using evidence from the text to support their thinking.



## Differentiation

**Important Ideas Sketch:** For students who would benefit from the added challenge of evaluating information, invite them to choose the most important quote, sentence, or detail from the text and use that to create their drawing. In their sharing, students will explain why this is the most important idea in the text.



## Multilingual Learning Support

**Beginning Proficiency:** Use visual vocabulary cards and text chunking to scaffold students' understanding. Model text-to-visual connections through think-alouds. Have students create bilingual labels and symbol

keys for their drawings. Provide basic sentence frames (e.g., "In my drawing...", "This picture shows...") and gestures to support sharing. **Intermediate Proficiency:** Support text-to-visual connections with graphic organizers like a **T-Chart** or a **2-Circle Venn Diagram** where students pair textual evidence with their drawings. Provide sentence frames (e.g., "I represented this by...") and relevant vocabulary to help students articulate how their artistic choices reflect specific textual elements.

**Advanced Proficiency:** Guide students to create layered visual interpretations that capture both literal and symbolic text elements. Have them explain their artistic choices using academic vocabulary, connecting specific visual elements to textual evidence and themes. During discussions, facilitate students' analysis of different interpretations, examining how varying artistic approaches reflect diverse understandings of the text.



## Variations

**Group Sketches:** Place students in small groups and invite them to create a sketch together. Students may assign each member a stage, phase, or part of the drawing, or divide work so that some students draw, others label, and others explain the drawing to the class.