

Get Rid of Boring 2 Dimensional Organizers - Go Three Dimensional!

Foldables are three dimensional graphic organizers. They are great little assignments for any subject area that help students take notes and make comparisons. In many ways they are just like their two dimensional counterparts - but students find them to be much more fun and engaging.

The method for making a foldable is simple, and it can be varied according to your needs. The basic type of foldable organizer involves folding a piece of paper lengthwise and cutting one side of the paper up to the crease.

This creates little tabs which can be flipped up. On the front of the tab, write a title of some sort. Then, lift the tab up and write down any information that pertains to the title.

Different Formats for Foldables

Before we get into the uses for foldables, let's take a look at some common formats.

The two simplest types involve one fold. The example shown in the first picture is often called a hotdog - because it is folded like a hotdog bun.

Fold the paper along the longer axis. Cut along the dotted line up to the crease. This creates two tabs that can be flipped up for note-taking.

This can easily be modified to include more tabs by adding more cuts. You should be able to fit four or five tabs comfortably.

One variation on this is called the hamburger fold. It is exactly the same, except you fold the paper along the short axis. This provides a differently shaped tab - use whichever shape allows your students to comfortably write and display the required information.

One slightly more complex variation involves two folds. Orient the paper so that the long side is horizontal. Then fold each end in to the middle of the page. This creates three sections - two small outside sections and one large middle section.

Now, cut from the middle out to the creases. This will create four (or more if you want) little tabs that open out to the left or right. Look at the second picture to see an example of this. This is called a window foldable.

There are dozens of other variations you could make - but this should be enough to get you started.

That's Great - Now What Do I Do With Them?

The uses are endless - and it's all up to you.

First, you need to decide what the students are writing on these foldables. As an example, let's assume the students are using a hotdog foldable to create a visual timeline.

Go about your instruction as normal. Introduce your students to the topic, give them an overview of the information, and identify the events that they should summarize on the timeline.

Next, you should hand out a blue-print. It helps to draw in the folds and cuts on a piece of paper for the students so that they have guidelines to follow. Also create a sample for yourself - and show this to the students as you explain the process.

Once the students have created the structure, they label the events on the tabs. Then, they lift the tabs and begin to write down the information on the inside.

Voila! Organized notes and a wonderful product to place on your wall.

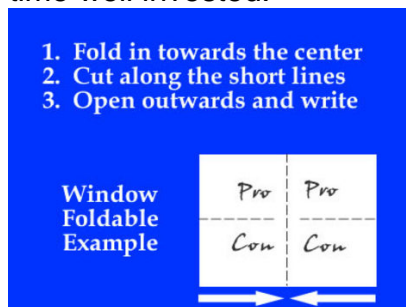
Some Other Ideas for Foldable Organizers

A hamburger fold with one cut would be useful for a science lab. Have students write their expectations (hypotheses) on the left hand side and their results on the right hand side.

The window fold is useful for comparing the pros and cons of two things. You might have the students write down the pros and cons of the Articles of Confederation on the left and the pros and cons of the Constitution on the right. Then, they can use the chart to make an evaluation.

A hot dog or window fold could be used to create little biographies for characters in a drama or novel. Create four tabs. The students would draw a picture (or label the name) of a character on the front of the tab and write a short bio for that character on the inside.

Be creative. Anything that you would normally use a graphic organizer for can be done with a foldable - often with better results. It will take your students a little time to master the concept at first, but it is time well invested.



This is an example of a more complex, window foldable. Fold the two ends of the paper in, then cut out to the crease. Voila! Four little tabs.