

# Carousel Brainstorm

(Write Around)

[www.readingquest.org](http://www.readingquest.org):  
Making Sense in Social Studies

## Why?

- Use to activate prior knowledge and to build schema
- Allows teacher to check for understanding before or after studying a particular topic
- Students begin to see the interrelationships between ideas within a major subject

## How?

- Select your main topic and make a list of subheadings or subtopics.
- Label each sheet of chart paper with one of the subtopics.
- Place students in small groups (3 or 4) and designate one student in each as the recorder.
- Give the groups a limited time (1 minute) to dictate and write all of the terms or phrases they associate with the subtopic.
- Cap the markers and pass the sheets in a pre-determined path and begin again. Students review and discuss the previously written terms and then add ideas to the new sheet. You'll need to extend the time with each passing of the sheets to allow time for review, brainstorming and for writing new ideas.
- When the sheets are returned to the groups that started with them, they review everything that has been added and circle the most important or essential terms
- This activity is similar to *Graffiti*, another brainstorming or prewriting activity to activate prior knowledge. The subtopic chart paper is posted on the wall and students move from sheet to sheet, adding terms and ideas.

