

# SOS SPOTLIGHT ON STRATEGIES

Simple instructional strategies that incorporate digital media in meaningful, effective, and practical ways.

## PLACEMAT



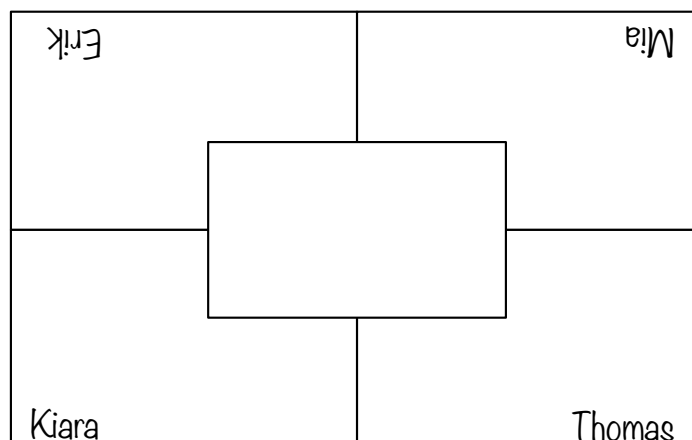
When students have adequate think time, the quality of their responses improves. The Placemat strategy is designed to allow each student time to think. It also provides a venue for them to share their perspectives while encouraging them to listen to and appreciate the thoughts and ideas of other team members. The outcome of student participation in this strategy is a summary response that is better than what an individual student could produce alone.

Bennett, B. & Rolheiser, C. (2001). *Beyond Monet: The artful science of instructional integration*. Toronto, Ontario: Bookation.



Materials: Discovery Education media (reading passage, video, and/or image), large piece of paper to use as the Placemat, pen or pencil

1. Select media that aligns with your curriculum.
2. Review the media and decide what ideas are most important. Develop a related question or prompt to guide student reflection.
3. Arrange students into groups. (Groups of four work well.)
4. Provide each group with a piece of chart paper, and make sure each student has a pen or pencil.
5. Set up the Placemat organizer by asking students to divide the paper into parts based on the number of members in the group, leaving a central square or circle. Also have each student select a different portion of the organizer as their work area.



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6. Share the media with students, along with the question or prompt to guide their thinking and processing.
7. Ask students to reflect on the material by writing their ideas in their work area.
8. When students have recorded their ideas, ask them to share as a group and then synthesize the common ideas they all share in the center area of the organizer.



The Placemat strategy helps students learn how to build on the ideas of others and combine common thoughts into a synthesized statement. When students have the opportunity to discuss and reflect on a topic, learning is retained and students are actively engaged in the thinking process.



Use the Placemat strategy as a jumping off point for a writing piece, a research opportunity, or a culminating project. When students generate their own ideas and thoughts, they are more engaged and have more ownership in the final product.