

# Lesson Skill: Organizing writing to convey a central idea

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**Strand** Writing

**SOL** 4.7

5.7

## Materials

- Dogwood Facts Cards (attached)
- Dogwood Facts Cards key (attached)
- Chart paper (optional)

## Lesson

1. Choose a portion of a story, and read, out of order, a number of sentences. Ask students comprehension questions about the reading. When they are unable to give clear responses, talk to them about the need to organize writing to convey the central idea. Relate this to when they create a list of ideas to compose a piece of their own writing, and how they need to sort those ideas into categories.
2. Give each pair of students a set of the 14 attached Dogwood Facts Cards, and ask them to put them into four categories of facts. Have them name each of the four categories of facts according to the cards in each group and write these category names on the four blank cards.
3. On chart paper or on the board, write Roman numerals for an outline, as shown below, leaving sufficient space between the Roman numerals for subheadings to fit.
  - I.
  - II.
  - III.
  - IV.
4. Ask students to attach the category-name facts cards beside the Roman numerals. Then, have them attach the other facts cards under the proper categories and add the letters A, B, C, etc. for completing the outline.
5. Instruct students to draft an informational article, using the four headings as topics for four paragraphs.

# Dogwood Facts Cards Key

## I. Governmental Symbol Uses

- A. Dogwood is the state flower of Virginia.
- B. Dogwood is the official flower of the province of British Columbia, Canada.
- C. Dogwood is the state flower of Missouri and North Carolina.

## II. Description

- A. Tree is rarely more than 40 feet high.
- B. In the fall, leaves turn scarlet.
- C. Flowers are white or pink.
- D. Wood is very hard and strong.

## III. Types

- A. There are forty different types of dogwood.
- B. Fifteen varieties of dogwood are native to North America.
- C. Other names are *false boxwood*, *spindle tree*, and *bird cherry*.
- D. A species of dogwood grows in Australia.

## IV. Historical Uses

- A. Pioneers would peel off the bark, bite the twig, and use the wood as a toothbrush.
- B. Wood was used for making the shuttles of looms.
- C. Wood was used for making tool handles.

# Dogwood Facts Cards

 <p>Tree is rarely more than 40 feet high.</p>	 <p>Wood is very hard and strong.</p>
 <p>Flowers are white or pink.</p>	 <p>Dogwood is the state flower of Virginia.</p>
 <p>Pioneers would peel off the bark, bite the twig, and use the wood as a toothbrush.</p>	 <p>Other names are <i>false boxwood</i>, <i>spindle tree</i>, and <i>bird cherry</i>.</p>
 <p>A species of dogwood grows in Australia.</p>	 <p>Wood was used for making the shuttles of looms.</p>
 <p>Dogwood is the official flower of the province British Columbia, Canada.</p>	 <p>In the fall, leaves turn scarlet.</p>
 <p>Wood was used for making tool handles.</p>	 <p>There are forty different types of dogwood.</p>
 <p>Fifteen varieties of dogwood are native to North America.</p>	 <p>Dogwood is the state flower of Missouri and North Carolina.</p>
 <p>_____</p> <p>Write the category here.</p>	 <p>_____</p> <p>Write the category here.</p>
 <p>_____</p> <p>Write the category here.</p>	 <p>_____</p> <p>Write the category here.</p>