

## 7. Cubing

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30-50  
min



Exhibits 7-1 to 7-3 and  
images



idea, organisation

### What is it?

It's a quick activity that provides students with a simple framework to generate text ideas by looking at a subject from multiple perspectives.

Cubing is a practical thinking skill which can benefit students in other fields of learning, such as critical reading.

### Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- describe the purpose of cubing by listening to a short lecture;
- define compare, contrast and analyze by recalling ideas from an exhibit and completing a practice exercise;
- apply the cubing framework by completing a writing exercise.

### Flow

#### Step 1 Introduction

Begin by mentioning two common writing problems:

- it's hard to start writing because students are not sure how or where to begin
- there's not enough detail in the first draft

Cubing is an easy-to-learn writing strategy that can solve both of these problems.

#### Step 2 Introduce Prompt

Copy or display Exhibit 7-1. Give students time to read and review.

##### ► Point Out

The cube is a metaphor for understanding. It has six sides. We can learn about something by asking six questions. Answers to these questions can provide lots of information which we can add to a story.

Not sure how to start a story or where to find extra information? Ask six questions.

#### Step 3 Review Model

Copy or display Exhibits 7-2 and 7-3.

In pairs, ask students to run through the six questions while talking about a picture of a burger and fries on Exhibit 7-2.

After the brainstorming dies down, review answers in class. Write notes on the board.

Give students time to read the sample story on Exhibit 7-3. Ask students to identify parts of the passage which answer each cubing question.

#### Step 4 Writing

Now it's time for students to demonstrate what they have learned.

Display a picture prompt and ask students to write a text using the cubing framework. Two images are included at the end of this lesson.

Student output should be 1 page.

## Exhibit 7-1 How to Use Cubing

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### Introduction

A cube is a shape with six sides. In this exercise, we use a cube to ask six kinds of questions about something.

Each question gives you a different way to look at an idea or object.

The answers to the questions give you lots of information. That information helps you add detail to your writing.

More detail means your writing will be more interesting.



*Figure 16: Die*

### Six Questions

1. DESCRIBE: What is the idea? What does the object look like? Describe it with words about the senses.
2. COMPARE: Is it similar to another idea or thing?
3. CONTRAST: How is it different from others? What makes it unique?
4. ANALYZE: Divide the whole thing into smaller parts.
5. APPLY: How can it be used? Who uses it? What can we learn from it?
6. ARGUE: What do you think about it? Good or bad? Right or wrong? Yes or no? Explain your decision with reasons.

Exhibit 7-2  
Cubing Practice

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## Instructions

Use the cubing framework to write a short passage about the things in this picture.

## Six Questions

1. DESCRIBE: What does it look like? Describe it with words about the senses.
2. COMPARE: Is it similar to another thing?
3. CONTRAST: How is it different from others? What makes it unique?
4. ANALYZE: Divide the whole thing into its smaller parts.
5. APPLY: Who uses it? What can we learn from it?
6. ARGUE: What do you think about it? Good or bad? Right or wrong? Explain your decision with reasons.



*Figure 17: Hamburger Food Burger*

Exhibit 7-3  
Cubing Practice: Sample Story

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## Sample Story

For people who love meat, this mouth-watering restaurant meal is a great choice for lunch, or dinner. It looks tasty, tastes greasy and smells wonderful.

Burgers are a regular part of family gatherings during the summer. Plumes of smoke rising from the grill and the sizzle of beef cooking over hot charcoal are two signs that it's almost time to eat. But, this burger set is better than what you'll find at a family BBQ. Not many people take the time to make a chicken bacon burger. It's a lot of work. Usually, my uncle cooks a beef patty and drops it on a naked bun.

Look at how much work was needed to build this big, beautiful burger: a grilled chicken breast with lettuce and two pieces of bacon inside a warm bun. And then there's the garden salad!

Did I mention careful cooking? That's what you need to make fries at home. Mine never turn out golden brown like the ones in a restaurant. Some are cold and some are burned.

Here's what I have learned after many kitchen disasters: if you want a really good burger with all the toppings, you have to eat out.

Unfortunately, I don't eat burgers anymore. I love them, but they don't love me. They make me fat. When I go to a restaurant, I order a big green salad, and skip the burger and fries.



*Figure 18: Children Fishing*



*Figure 19: Louvre Pyramid Paris*