List-Group-Label

Purpose:
To engage an entire class in a "risk-free" task that allows all to examine prior knowledge about a topic. This activity also allows a teacher to help dispel misconceptions students may have on a topic. This is a good prereading activity.

Procedure:

1. Introduce a key term or topic and encourage the students to come up with related words.

2. Write all brainstormed ideas on the board. Avoid questioning the validity of any of the responses.

3. After 25+ words have been written on the board, engage students in examining their responses. Ask the entire class the relevance of words that do not seem to have a direct connection to the topic. Allow students to change and refine their suggestions. This is the time to dispel any misconceptions the students may have about the topic

4. Now ask students to group the words into semantic categories, encouraging them to subdivide large groupings. Suggest the idea of a "misfit" category for words that do not seem to have a connection to any other words.

5. Have students create a label for each group.

See Linda L. Thistlethwaite's *Critical Reading Series Book B: Critical Reading Strategies: Questioning, Organizing, and Evaluating* for more information.