

# Topic Legs Strategy with Technology Tools



## How to use the Topic Legs writing strategy with a concept mapping tool

Students can use the Topic Legs strategy paired with a concept map to begin writing about a topic. Students frequently choose a topic that they're interested in, yet don't have enough information to write about it. Topic Legs is a visual strategy that helps students as they decide on a topic to write about by letting them know which parts or subtopics they need to research to get more information. Topic Legs offers students a way to analyze their content in order to strengthen their organization and planning before drafting an essay.

To introduce this strategy to students begin by explaining that legs are the main idea of an argument. The legs need to be strong enough to support the argument. Use the example of a table. If the legs are weak, the table will fall over and break.

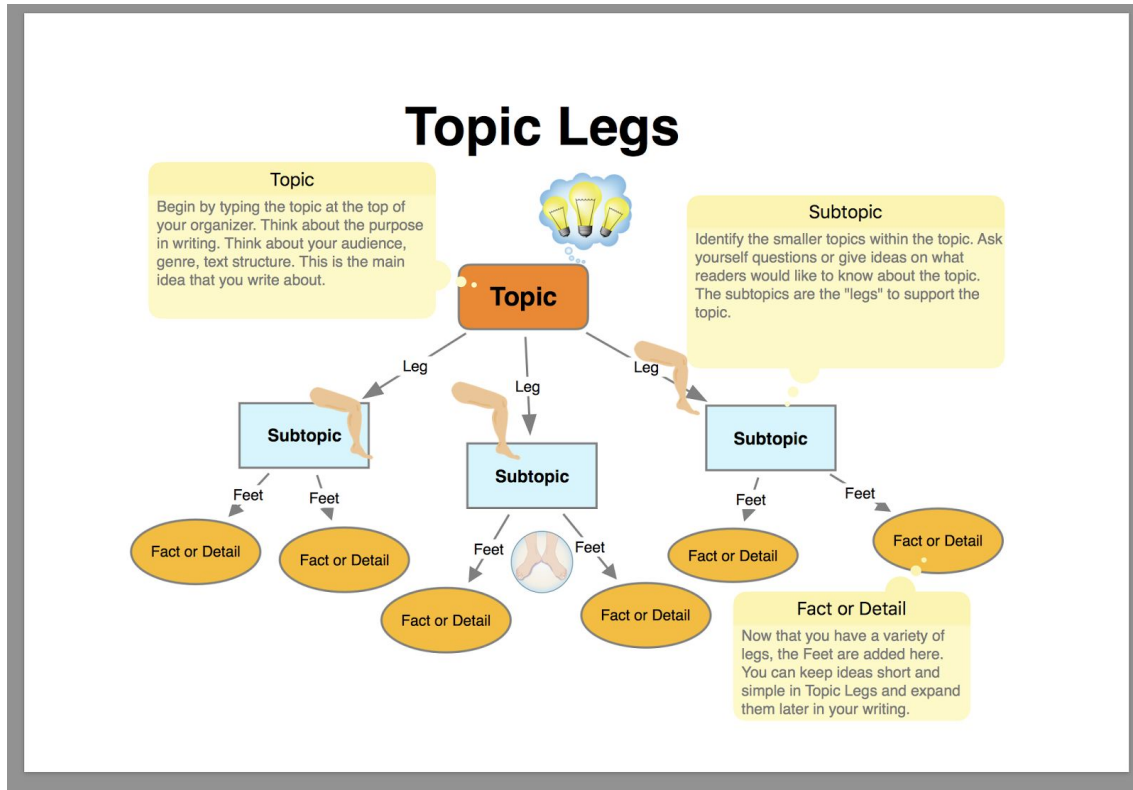


Next, introduce the concept of the feet which are supporting facts and details. Going back to the table analogy, explain that more feet on the table give it more stability. Just like adding more facts and details to a main idea of an argument gives the argument more stability and makes it even stronger.

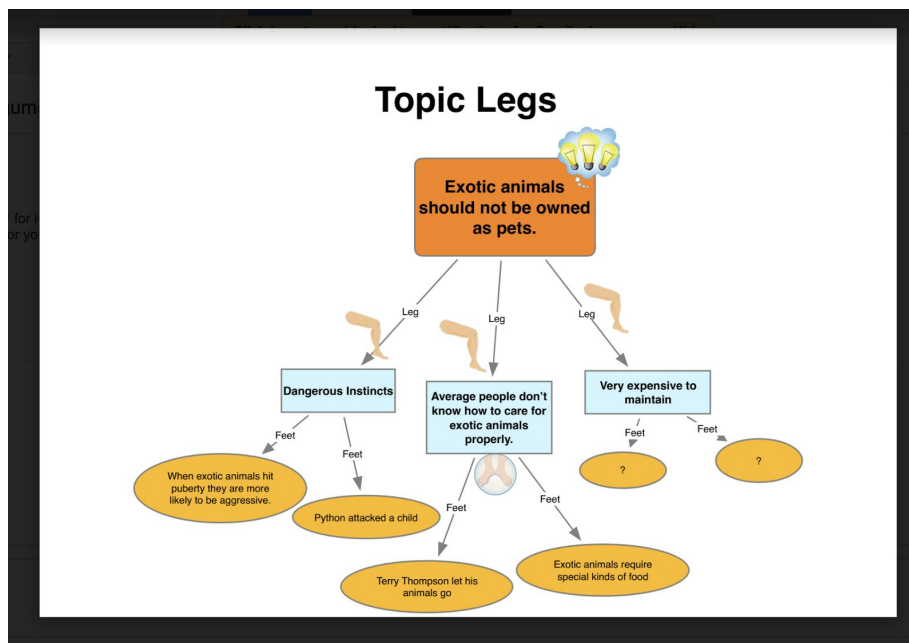
Students then put their ideas in a Topic Legs organizer. Once students see the map of their Topic Legs, they can tell right away if they have enough ideas and information to support the main topic of their essay.

Topic Legs paired with a concept mapping tool is perfect for writing ideas and helping students plan for their first draft.

One example of a concept mapping tool is Inspiration Maps. This app and others like it allow students to organize notes and ideas on their digital device. It gives students a fun way to move them around in order to better organize their writing. They can build their topic seeing a picture of their essay and how the legs and feet support the topic.



Here is another example of planning out an informational essay using the strategy with a concept map. Notice which subtopic legs support the main topic with facts and details.



Using the Topic Legs strategy with a concept map technology tool is a good pairing to help students support each main idea of a well written topic and meet their writing goals.