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## THE SCHOOL Administrator September 2001

### **A Field Guide to Using Visual Tools**

*By David Hyerle*

**Reviewed by Paul A. Roberts**  
**Principal, Glen Grove Elementary School,**  
**Glenview, Ill.**

Thinking outside the box may or may not be the appropriate point of view as you experience *A Field Guide to Using Visual Tools* by David Hyerle.

The "box" is a point of reference for graphic organizers and reflects a frame of reference that formally adds a new dimension to visual maps. This sequel to *Visual Tools for Constructing Knowledge* deals with the practical applications of thinking-process maps and gives real-life school examples.

Each chapter begins with an overview followed by samples and discussions of different maps that span all grade levels. These illustrate the leveraging of learning that takes place when using visual tools rather than linear presentations in the classroom. Hyerle references one student, who claims the use of maps helped him organize his ideas and provided better retention of information.

One appendix demonstrates the impact that thinking maps have on standardized testing when used schoolwide or districtwide. Extensive training preceded and followed the use of graphic instruments, and the positive results reflected institutional efforts to increase student understanding and performance.

These ideas closely follow Peter Senge's notion of double-loop learning organizations and the need for core values and a common language.

Fluency in the use of tools and a common toolbox of graphic organizers will facilitate student learning and allow them to construct their own knowledge, says Hyerle, who is an independent consultant and researcher on visual tools and systemic change based in Lyme, N.H.

(*A Field Guide to Using Visual Tools* by David Hyerle, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1703 N. Beauregard St., Alexandria, Va. 22311-1714, 2000, 147 pp., \$23.95 softcover)

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