I found this project on line several years ago. I like it because it really makes my students think about the function of each organelle…not just memorize them. It can also be adapted for lower or higher levels of students.

I tell the students that they are to find an analogy picture for each of the following organelles: plasma membrane, cytoplasm, nucleus, Golgi apparatus, vacuole, lysosome, endoplasmic reticulum, cytoplasm, mitochondria, nucleolus, chromosomes, and chloroplast. The teacher could add or subtract organelles as needed. An example would be to find an analogy for the plasma membrane; it could be a wall with gates, because a gate controls movement in and out of the walled area. Students would find a picture of a wall with gates.

Students would collect a picture for each analogy approximately 3x5 inches in size, and bring them to class.

I give students an 8x10 picture of a cell with labels and a piece of poster-size construction paper. They glue stick the cell picture in the middle of the poster. For each organelle I have designated, they glue their picture around the cell picture, make a line pointing to the organelle, and they write an analogy beneath the picture. In the example above, the student would glue the picture near the plasma membrane, make a line pointing to the plasma membrane, and write something like: “A gate is like a plasma membrane because it controls movement in and out of the gated area.”

Students can be very creative as long as the analogy works for the function of the organelle. Pictures printed off the internet work best because they are easier to find and can be sized.