Effective Instruction for Middle School Students with Reading Difficulties:

The Reading Teacher's Sourcebook

Authors: Carolyn Denton, Deanna Bryan, Jade Wexler, Deborah Reed, and Sharon Vaughn

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Chapter 7: Vocabulary

Developed under funding from The Meadows Foundation and the Texas Education Agency

www.texasreading.org

Chapter 7
Vocabulary

TERMS TO KNOW

Academic words	More complex, frequently occurring words; words that students will see and use often in academic settings
Common words	Most basic words such as *run*, *dog*, and *play*, used in everyday conversation
Content-specific words	Highly specialized words that are related to a specific discipline and not frequently encountered
Context clues	Surrounding words or phrases that provide a reader with information about the meaning of unfamiliar words
Vocabulary	The words a student is able to recognize and use orally or in writing

Bos & Vaughn, 2006; Beck, Mckeown, & Kucan, 2002; Encarta World English Dictionary; Baumann, Font, Edwards, & Boland, 2005

INTRODUCTION

Comprehension, or understanding, is the ultimate goal of reading (NICHD, 2000). The goal of instruction in **vocabulary**, fluency, and word recognition, then, is to improve reading comprehension. The next sections include lessons to improve vocabulary, word recognition, and fluency skills. These skills are important and necessary because of their relationship to the ultimate goal: comprehension.

Vocabulary Instruction➔Fluency Instruction➔
Word Recognition Instruction➔Comprehension

The next set of lessons will focus on vocabulary instruction. This section will focus on reading vocabulary, or words in print that a student understands. Minimal vocabulary instruction is designed to support the reading of the text, whereas more elaborate instruction shifts the focus from the story to the words. This type of elaborate instruction is particularly important for English language learners (Stahl, 1999).

In order to design effective vocabulary instruction for all students, it is important to know:

- How to identify common, academic, and content-specific words.
- How to choose words to teach.
- How to plan for instruction.

WORD TYPES

In their book *Bringing Words to Life*, Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2002) suggest that a literate person's vocabulary consists of three tiers, or levels, of words. The first level, which we will call **common words**, includes the most basic words such as *dog*, *go*, *happy*, *walk*, etc. These words, especially in upper grades and with native English speakers, do not normally require explicit instruction. The third level includes **content-specific** words that are rarely seen or used. Content-specific words such as *neptunium* or *sonata* are best taught when students need to know the word in order to understand what they are reading or during a specialized lesson in a content area or elective class.

Teachers should prioritize instruction to focus on **academic words**, or words that students will see often and use often in a variety of settings. (Examples include *coincidence*, *pollution*, *neutral*, and *fortunate*.) These words are particularly important for comprehending textbook material, literature, and academic lectures and conversations.

Figure 54. Which Words Do I Teach?

Which Words do I Teach? 3-Tier Vocabulary			
Type	Definition	Examples	Instruction
Common words	Basic words used often in everyday conversation	dog go happy drink phone play afraid	These words do not need to be explicitly taught, especially in upper grades with native English speakers.
Academic words	More complex, frequently occurring words in academic settings	coincidence pollution neutral fortunate admire plead represent environment collaborate	Teach these words. Students will see and use these words often in academic texts.
Content-specific words	Highly specialized words that are related to a specific discipline	pogrom quagmire locution polyglot neptunium sonata isosceles nova	Teach these words when a specific lesson requires knowledge of the word and underlying concept.

Based on Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2002). Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction. *New York: Guilford.*

CHOOSING WORDS TO TEACH

One mistake that even good teachers make is relying solely on **context clues** to provide word meaning to students. As a teacher of older struggling readers, many of whom with impoverished vocabularies, it is easy to be overwhelmed by the number of words that students need to learn. Heavy reliance on context clues, however, is simply not adequate vocabulary instruction (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002). Teachers can make instructional time more efficient by choosing the correct words to teach.

First, preview reading material in search of academic words.

When previewing text, remember to choose words that:

- Students *must know* in order to understand what they read.
- Students *are likely to use and encounter frequently*.

(Lehr, Osborn, & Hiebert, 2004)

In *Narrowing the Language Gap: The Case for Explicit Vocabulary Instruction*, Feldman and Kinsella (2005) suggest guidelines for choosing words to teach:

> **Big-idea words:** These are the words that directly relate to what is being read. Teachers can waste valuable time teaching words that are unfamiliar to students and that are not critical to their understanding of the text. Feldman and Kinsella refer to this as "lexical accessorizing [or] … spending an inordinate amount of time explicating words peripheral to the central themes and issues, yet intriguing to the teacher or a small cadre of precocious students" (p. 9). Similarly, many textbook editions feature vocabulary lists full of rare and unusual words that are indeed unfamiliar to students, but are also unlikely ever to be used or encountered frequently by students (Lehr, Osborn, & Hiebert, 2004). Effective teachers preview the text that students are going to read and teach academic and content-specific words that students must understand in order to comprehend the text.
>
> **Multiple-meaning words:** It may be particularly important to teach multiple-meaning words, or words that have different meaning in different subject areas. An ocean *wave* in science is different from a *wave* of fear in literature, and these concepts may confuse students if not directly addressed. Multiple-meaning words can be particularly confusing for English language learners. Even simple words like *run* can confuse an English language learner when the word is used to mean very different things in different sentences (e.g., a *run* on a bank versus a *run* in a stocking). In general, it is important to teach words that students are not likely to learn outside of school but that students will encounter again in academic settings.

Here is a helpful checklist for planning vocabulary instruction:

Figure 55. Checklist for Planning Vocabulary Instruction.

Planning for Vocabulary Instruction Checklist	
	PREVIEW the text.
IDENTIFY: (You may not be able to directly teach all of these words.)	
	Academic words and *critical* content-specific words.
	Big-idea and multiple-meaning words.
	Words students must understand in order to comprehend the text.
	Words that may be unfamiliar to students.
ELIMINATE:	
	Words that are adequately defined in context. Discuss these words while reading instead of pre-teaching the words.
	Words likely to be in students' background knowledge. Discuss these words during the activation of prior knowledge part of the lesson.
	Words students may know based on structure: prefix, suffix, or base word. Discuss the meaning of these word parts before or during reading, as necessary.

Based on Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2002). Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction. *New York: Guilford; Feldman, K., & Kinsella, K. (2005).* Narrowing the language gap: The case for explicit vocabulary instruction. *New York: Scholastic; and Lehr, F., Osborn, J., & Hiebert, E. H. (2004).* A focus on vocabulary. *Honolulu, HI: Pacific Resources for Education and Learning.*

The following sections include vocabulary lessons designed to empower students with knowledge of words and their meaning, the ability to understand and use the words they learn, and a curiosity about the words around them. The goal is to give students ownership of their own vocabulary.

The vocabulary lessons are organized in the following manner:

Word knowledge	Semantic mapping Semantic feature analysis Generating examples and nonexamples of words
Word consciousness	Prepared participation Possible sentences
Word learning	Word parts Context clues Vocabulary strategy

WORD KNOWLEDGE

Semantic mapping (Heimlich & Pittleman, 1986; Reyes & Bos, 1998; Scanlon, Duran, Reyes, & Gallego, 1992; Schifini, 1994), semantic feature analysis (Anders & Bos, 1986; Bos & Anders, 1992; Reyes & Bos, 1998), and generating examples and nonexamples of questions (Baumann & Kame'enui, 1999; Blachowicz & Fisher, 2000; Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986) are research-based instructional practices designed to teach word meaning. Research suggests that knowledge is stored in categories and that words are linked in our memory to other words, or concepts, based on their relationships to each other (Rumelheart, 1980; Anderson, 1980), so a student's ability to retain new word meaning is directly related to that student's ability to associate the new word with his/her prior knowledge. Therefore, it is important to activate a student's background knowledge when introducing a new word or concept. This approach helps improve retention of new word meaning.

English language learners, in particular, benefit from instruction showing relationships between words, especially synonyms, antonyms, and word family associations (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2004; Grognet et al., 2000). It is also helpful to give examples of a new word in different parts of speech (e.g. *enthusiasm*, *enthusiastic*, *enthusiastically*). Provide a meaningful sentence for each word.

Semantic mapping, semantic feature analysis, and word maps are effective because:

- They are flexible, adaptable, and require minimal preparation time.
- They activate students' prior knowledge of words or concepts.
- They help students understand the relationship between words.
- They may improve students' recall of word meaning.

WORD CONSCIOUSNESS

"Word consciousness" refers to a student's interest in and awareness of words (Graves, Juel, & Graves, 1998). A word-conscious student is interested in learning new words and knows a lot of words. This kind of student loves to use words, pursues the discovery of interesting words, and understands that words can be used to communicate precisely and clearly (Graves, Juel, & Graves, 1998). Teachers should encourage students to be word-conscious by modeling their own love of words. Teachers can model their interest in words by pointing out unique or intriguing words during in-class reading. Teachers can also model the use of precise words by explaining to students their own word choices. For example, a teacher may start the day by telling students that during the storms the previous night the winds were howling. Then the teacher could explain that *howling* is a good word to use when describing how strong winds sound because the word *howling* makes us think of the sound of a howling animal. In addition to modeling a love of words and the use of effective words, it is important to praise students for their use of clever or precise words in their speaking or writing (Graves, Juel, & Graves, 1998).

Further suggestions for promoting word consciousness:

- Guide students to understand the difference between the ways words are used in written language and conversation.

- Have students keep a journal of effective written language, including well-written descriptions, figurative language, or dialogue.
- Write a dull version of a particularly well-written paragraph or chapter, and read both versions to the class. Discuss the differences and what makes language effective and exciting.
- Incorporate word plays such as palindromes, puns, jokes, and riddles into your instructional routines (Stahl, 1999).

(Texas Reading Initiative, 2000)

WORD LEARNING

Teachers cannot directly teach students every single word they need to know. They can, however, teach some words directly and then equip students with independent word-learning tools, or ways to figure out word meaning on their own as they read. Teaching students how to recognize and analyze word parts is one such independent word-learning tool. Another way to teach independent word learning is through the use of context clues to infer the meaning of unknown words. Recent research on teaching word learning to middle school students suggests that combining word part clue and context clue strategies is a powerful way to increase your students' ability to discover word meaning independently (Baumann, Font, Edwards, & Boland, 2005; Andersen & Nagy, 1992; Sternberg, 1987). Word parts and context clues may be taught separately, but should eventually be combined so that students realize that they might have to try more than one strategy in order to figure out a word's meaning while they are reading.

WORD KNOWLEDGE **SAMPLE LESSON**

Semantic Mapping

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Based on Heimlich, J. E., & Pittelman, S. V. (1986). *Semantic mapping: Classroom applications*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

TERMS TO KNOW

Criteria chart	A list of standards that define and clarify a task or assignment. This list should be brainstormed and developed with your students.
Rubric	A scoring guide in which the standards from the criteria chart are assigned a point value

INTRODUCTION

The following sample lesson is based on the short story *The Ghost of the Lagoon* by Armstrong Sperry. Semantic mapping can be used with simple or advanced concepts and is equally effective with both narrative and expository text.

OBJECTIVE

The students will associate new word meaning with prior knowledge through the use of a semantic map.

MATERIALS

- Text (narrative or expository).
- Overhead projector, chalkboard, or chart paper.

PREPARATION

Preview the text, looking for academic words, or challenging words that students are likely to see and use often in academic settings. Identify content-specific words that students must know in order to understand the text.

Figure 56. Sample Word List.

The Ghost of the Lagoon by Armstrong Sperry
TARGET WORDS
Island
Harpoon
Phosphorus
Lagoon
Risk
Expedition
Reef
Native
Canoe

Sperry, A. (1984). The ghost of the lagoon. In C. G. Waugh & M. H. Greenberg (Eds.), The Newbery Award Reader: A collection of short fiction by writers who have won the John Newbery Medal *(pp. 261–270). Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.*

DAILY REVIEW

Teacher:
Yesterday we talked about people we know or have read about who are brave. Who is one person we talked about, Philip? Why was he or she brave?

Accept and briefly discuss responses.

What is one thing a brave person might do? Can anyone think of another word for *brave*?

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Teacher:
Today we are going to create a semantic map. Researchers tell us that knowledge is stored in your brain in categories or groups. Words in your memory are linked to other words based on their relationships. So, if you can connect a new word with a word you already know, you will be better able to remember the new word. I'm going to show you how to go through this process today by developing a semantic map. First, I want to introduce you to our story.

We will read *The Ghost of the Lagoon* by Armstrong Sperry. This is a story about a courageous boy, Mako, who lives on the island of Bora Bora. An island is a piece of land surrounded by what? Yes, water. What are some bodies of water that could surround an island?

Accept responses. When a student gives the answer "sea," write "SEA" on the board (or overhead) or just tell the students that in this story the island is in the sea.

MODEL AND TEACH

Genre: Narrative or expository
Grouping: Whole class

1. Ask students to brainstorm or think of words related to the sea. List all of the words on one-half of the board (or overhead). Write down all appropriate student responses.

   Ask questions to lead students to say target words from the story. For example, if you want students to add *risk* to the list, you might ask, "Sara, you said the sea could be dangerous. What is another word for *danger*?" If you want to add *harpoon*, you might ask, "Does anyone know the name of a spear used to kill sea animals?"

   Some target words may be unknown to students. Add unfamiliar words to the list and give a brief definition for each.

   Here is what the board (or overhead) might look like at this point:

   Figure 57. Sample Semantic Map: Phase 1.

   SEA

   water ocean island shark whale fish beach shells dangerous starfish blue boat ship waves surfing reef nature risk coral algae adventure

   Harpoon — *spear-like weapon used to kill fish*

   Phosphorus — *glowing substance*

   Lagoon — *shallow water separated from the sea by coral reefs or sandbars*

2. Draw a circle with the topic in the middle.

3. Read through the list of brainstormed words and model how to come up with categories to group the words. Think aloud.

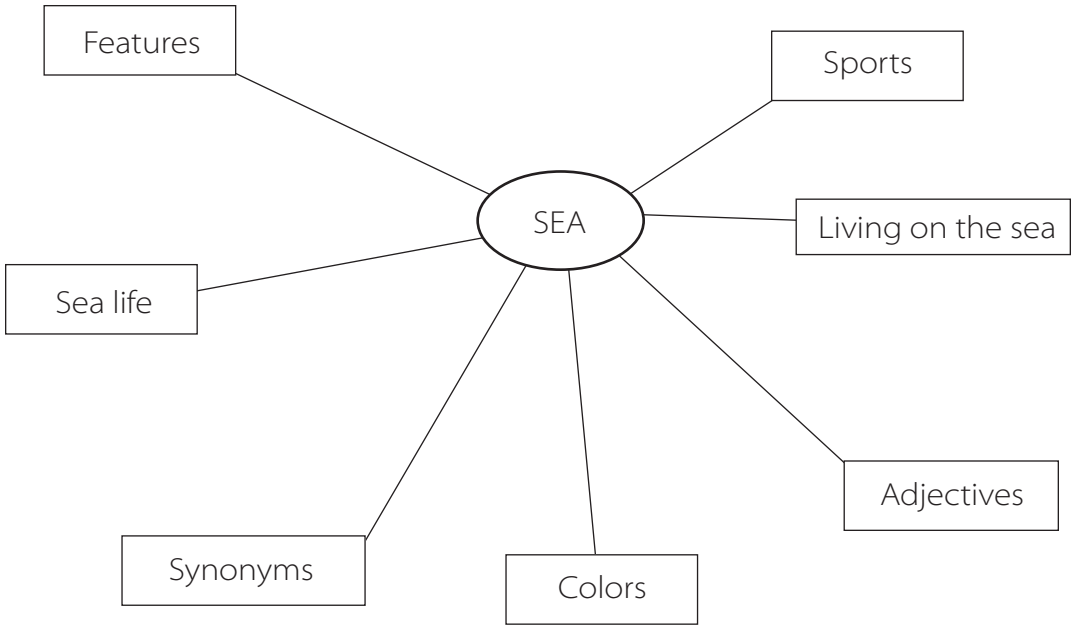
   Teacher:
   I see the words *starfish*, *sharks*, *whales*, *coral*, *algae* … What do these words have in common? They are not all animals, but they are all living. We could have a "sea life" category.

3. Ask students to come up with categories. Write each category in a circle and connect it to the topic.

4. If students have difficulty generating categories, you may need to think aloud and model how to come up with categories several times. You may need to start with a few words at a time. For example:

   Teacher:
   Let's look at a few words together. Would *shark* and *beach* be in the same category? Well, a shark lives in the sea near a beach, but they are not really in the same category. How about *shark* and *starfish*? Yes, both sharks and starfish are animals that live in the sea. So, raise your hand if you can think of a category that both shark and starfish would belong to? Yes, sea animals or sea life would be a good category. Look at our list of words, and raise your hand if you see any other words that would fit into this category...

Figure 58. Sample Semantic Map: Phase 2.



Based on Heimlich, J. E., & Pittelman, S. V. (1986). Semantic mapping: Classroom applications. *Newark, DE: International Reading Association.*

GUIDED PRACTICE

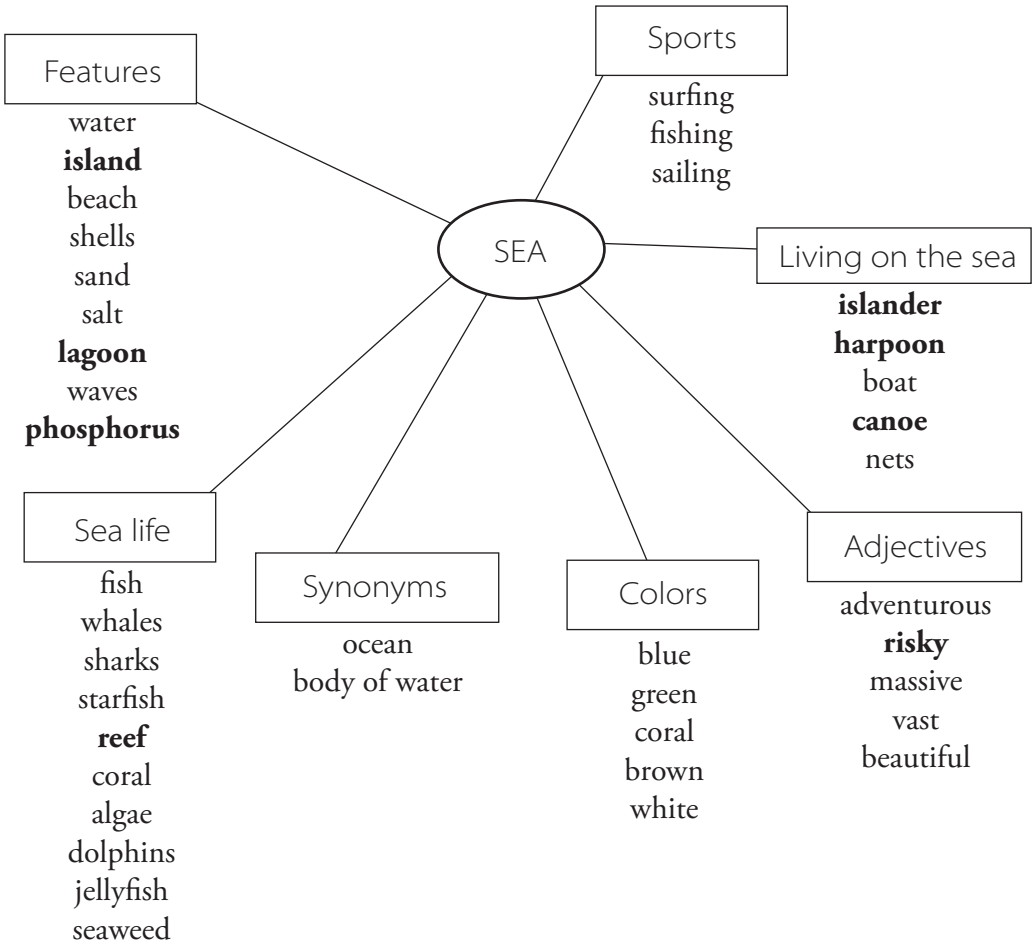
Grouping: Partners

1. Assign partners.
2. Have pairs copy the map. Then ask pairs to generate any remaining category titles and to categorize the brainstormed words.
3. Ask students to come up with additional words for each category.
4. Circulate around the room and be available for guidance and feedback. Check in with each pair of students to check for understanding. Be prepared to model again if needed.

5. Ask pairs to add a blank category to their log to fill in after they read the story or chapter.

On the following sample master map, the target vocabulary words are in bold.

Figure 59. Sample Semantic Map: Phase 3.



As you circulate around the classroom, ask leading questions to guide student responses. For example, if you hear one pair of students talking about features of the sea, ask them, "Which one of our new words is a feature with shallow water?"

6. Return to the map on the board and whole-class grouping.
7. Ask for student responses to each category and write appropriate responses on a master map. Allow students to add words to their maps based on class discussion and the master map.

READ SELECTION

Grouping: Partners, small group, or whole class

Read the selection: *Ghost of the Lagoon*. Remind students to be aware of target words in the reading and to look for other categories they might want to add to their maps.

AFTER READING

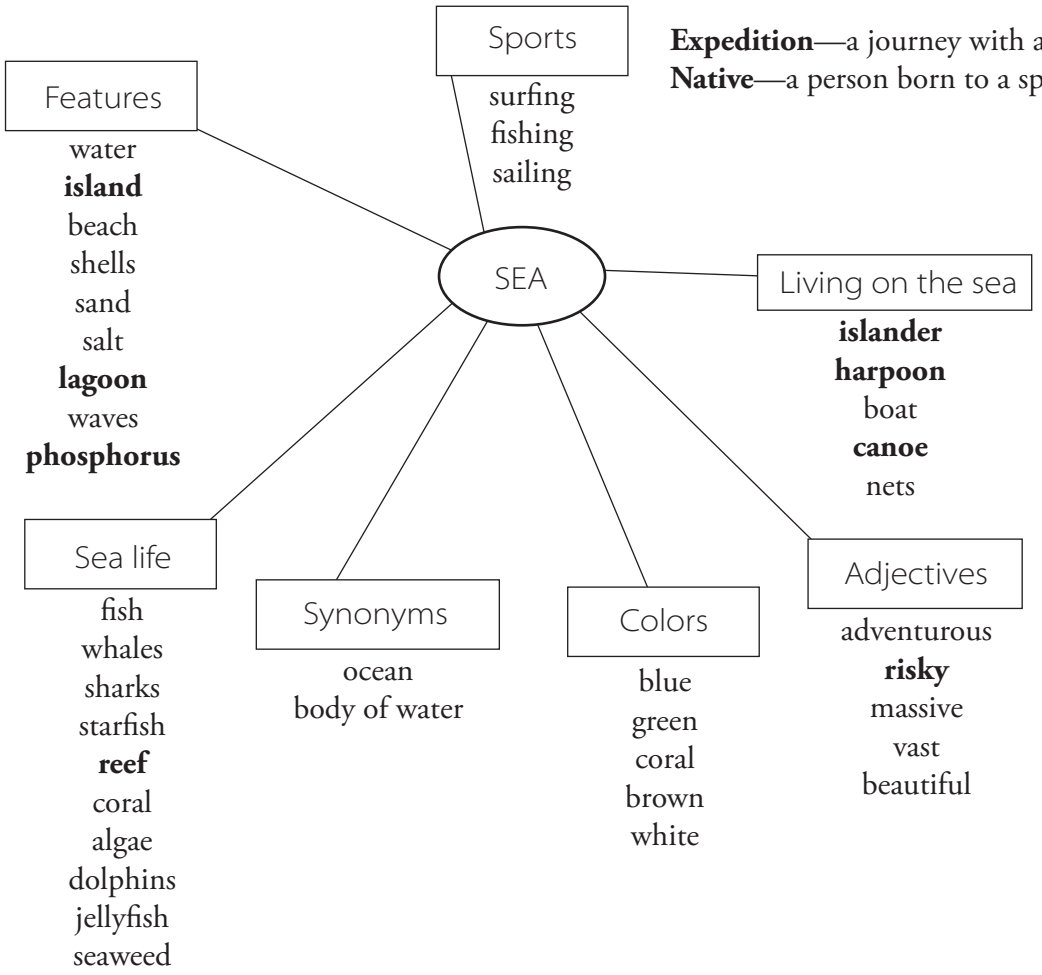
Grouping: Partners

1. When the class is finished reading the selection, return to the master map on the board (or overhead).
2. Discuss the concepts included in the reading. Add new concepts learned during reading such as expedition and native (see following sample map).
3. Ask students whether they discovered any other categories, or groups of things with common characteristics, in the reading. If needed, think aloud for the class.

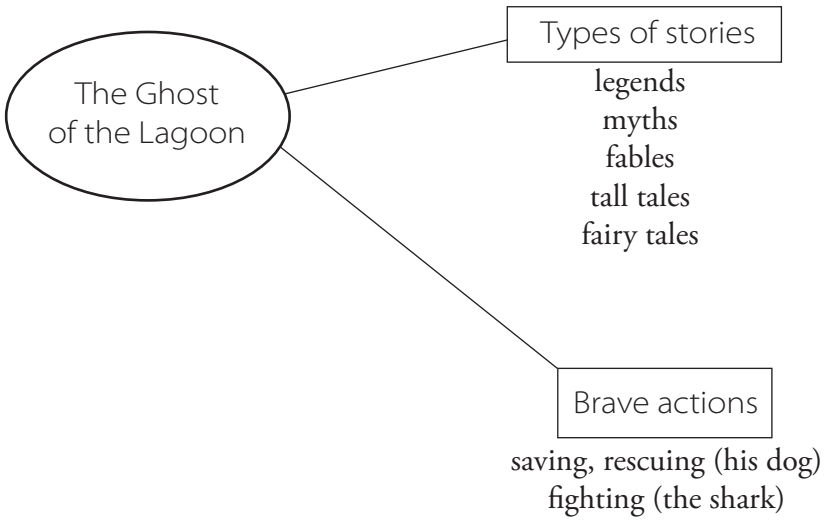
   Teacher:
   Mako was brave several times during the story. So, we could have a category labeled "Brave Actions". Now, find a word in the story that is a brave action.

   Call on students and write responses under the category Brave Actions.
4. Continue to ask students for examples of new categories.
5. Have students work with partners to fill in examples under each new category.
6. When students are finished, ask for responses and discuss. See the following sample of a completed map and additional categories brainstormed after reading.

Figure 60. Completed Sample Semantic Map.



Categories added after reading:



INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

1. Before reading a passage or selection, preview the text for challenging words that students will use and see often (see procedure at the beginning of this lesson).
2. Tell students the topic of the reading passage or selection and lead students to brainstorm a list of words related to the topic. Discuss background knowledge of the topic and help students make connections between what they already know and what they will learn while reading.
3. Working in small groups or partners, ask students to create a semantic map by categorizing the brainstormed list of words. This includes generating logical category titles and placing words in appropriate categories.
4. Return to whole group and discuss students' maps.

GENERALIZATION

Teacher:
Can anyone think of a way we might use a semantic map in our other classes?

Student:
Sometimes our social studies teacher gives us lots of new words to learn.

Teacher:
How could a semantic map help you understand your social studies reading?

Student:
We could put all the new words in a semantic map.

Teacher:
What would that look like? What would be the first step? Think about our *Ghost of the Lagoon* map.

Student:
We wrote the word in the middle first.

Teacher:
That's right. The word in the middle represents the topic of the reading—one word that tells what the reading is about. What are you reading about in social studies right now?

Student:
We're reading about Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks.

Teacher:
Good. So, the topic of your semantic map could be civil rights. Let's quickly brainstorm some words related to civil rights so you can get an idea of how this might look in your other classes.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Check maps for completion and check that words are accurately matched with categories.

Give students a list of the target vocabulary words along with a few other words from the map. Ask students to write a story that includes 10–12 of the words on the list. Check that students are able to use the words correctly in their writing.

Figure 61. Sample Vocabulary Writing Assignment.

Name of Selection:

Ghost of the Lagoon

Directions:

Look at the words below. Write a story that includes 10–12 words from the list. Underline each word in your story.

Vocabulary Word List:

island, lagoon, risk, expedition, native, canoe, phosphorus, harpoon, shark, beach, sea, adventure, massive, waves, coral reef

Your Story:

HELPFUL HABIT

Struggling readers are usually struggling writers. In order to encourage your students to write creatively, do not penalize students for every writing error. Make a **criteria chart** with students for this assignment, such as the one in Figure 62. Make it clear that there will be no penalty for spelling errors, except for the words on the list and frequently occurring words for which they are responsible, such as *what*, *who*, and *they*. A list of these everyday words may be posted in the room or in students' folders. Tell the students that you expect them to practice spelling the vocabulary words on the new list correctly.

Figure 62. Sample Criteria Chart for Vocabulary Writing Assignment.

Criteria for Writing Assignment
• The story has a beginning, middle, and end. • The story uses 10–12 of the words on the list (vocabulary words). • The vocabulary words are underlined in the story. • The vocabulary words are spelled correctly. • All sentences start with a capital letter and end with a period, question mark, or exclamation point. • The story is interesting and fun to read. • The vocabulary words and our everyday words are used correctly.

Develop a **rubric** (see Figure 63) based on the criteria chart that can be used to grade students' writing.

Figure 63. Sample Rubric for Vocabulary Writing Assignment.

Rubric for Writing Assignment		
The story has a beginning, middle, and an end.		10 pts
Each sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a period, question mark, or exclamation point.		25 pts
Vocabulary Words		
	10–12 included	10 pts
	Underlined	10 pts
	Spelled correctly	10 pts
	Used correctly	25 pts
	Everyday words spelled correctly	10 pts
	TOTAL	100 pts

PERIODIC REVIEW/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

When introducing a new concept, follow the semantic mapping procedure. Semantic mapping helps students understand the connections between words by organizing them visually on a map. This is an excellent instructional activity for use in content areas.

WORD KNOWLEDGE **SAMPLE LESSON**

Semantic Feature Analysis

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Based on Anders, P. L., & Boss, C. S. (1986). Semantic feature analysis: An interactive strategy for vocabulary development and text comprehension. *Journal of Reading, 29*, 610–161.

INTRODUCTION

Semantic feature analysis is very similar to semantic mapping in that it draws upon students' prior knowledge, teaches the relationships between words in a visual way, and incorporates discussion as a key element.

Instead of a map, semantic feature analysis uses a grid to organize connections between words. The grid is based on a subject or concept. Down the left side, the teacher writes several words related to the concept. Across the top, the teacher writes several features or characteristics that each word may or may not exhibit.

Discussion is a key element in the effectiveness of this strategy. Encourage students to talk about *how* they decided whether a certain feature applies to a word.

The following sample lesson is based on a typical textbook chapter about the digestive system.

OBJECTIVE

The students will complete a semantic feature analysis grid by drawing from prior knowledge to discuss and identify important features and/or characteristics of words.

MATERIALS

- Textbook chapter or passage.
- Transparency of a blank semantic feature analysis grid (see Appendix).
- Blank semantic feature analysis grids—a teacher copy and student copies (one for each pair/group).

PREPARATION

Preview the chapter, looking for academic words, or challenging words students are likely to see and use often.

Identify content-specific words that students must know in order to comprehend the text.

Figure 64. Sample Word List from a Chapter on the Digestive System.

Digestion	The body's process of breaking down food
Mouth	Opening where food is taken in
Saliva	Clear liquid in the mouth that moistens food and starts the breakdown of starches
Esophagus	Muscular tube where food moves from the mouth to the stomach
Liver	The organ that makes bile and filters blood
Stomach	Muscular organ between esophagus and small intestine where food is broken down and partially digested
Pancreas	Organ near the stomach that produces enzymes that help break down starches, proteins, and fats
Enzyme	A protein that causes a chemical reaction in the body. Our bodies make several different types of enzymes
Mucus	A clear, slimy substance that coats and protects the linings of body passages
Peristalsis	Waves of muscle contractions in the esophagus and intestines that push food through
Small Intestine	Part of the intestine between the stomach and the large intestine. Most chemical digestion takes place here.
Large Intestine	The end section of the digestive system. This intestine is larger in diameter than the small intestine. Its job is to absorb water and form waste to be eliminated from the body.

Encarta World English Dictionary (Online); Prentice Hall Science Explorer: Grade 7, 2002

DAILY REVIEW

Teacher:
Yesterday we read Chapter 4: The Digestive System. Who can remember an organ in our digestive system and its important function?

Accept responses and briefly review the main ideas of the chapter.

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Teacher:
Today we are going to complete a semantic feature analysis grid using some of the words we learned reading the chapter. I know this is a long title, but it is easy to remember when you know what the title means. Semantic means the meaning of words, a feature is a characteristic, and analysis (or analyze) means to study or examine. So, we are going to analyze or examine the words we learned by looking at their features, or characteristics. This will help you understand more fully the words and concepts in our reading.

It may be helpful to point to the words of the title—"Semantic," "Feature," and "Analysis"— as you explain the meaning.

MODEL AND TEACH

Genre: Expository or narrative
Grouping: Whole class

Teacher:
Before we look at the words from our chapter, I want to show you how a semantic feature analysis grid works. First of all, we have to figure out what idea or concept we will discuss. Let's say our concept is mammals. Raise your hand if you can give me an example of a mammal.

Accept responses and write the examples down the left side of the grid.

Your grid may look like the following:

Figure 65. Creating a Semantic Feature Analysis Grid: Step 1.

Concept: Mammals

Examples \ Features										
Bear										
Bat										
Lion										
Seal										
Kangaroo										
Whale										
Ferret										
Human										

Teacher:
Now across the top, we are going to write features, or characteristics, that any or all mammals have. For example, I know that all mammals have hair. I also know that mammals are vertebrates and that some mammals live on land while others live at sea. So I will write these features across the top. Raise you hand if you can give me another characteristic of mammals.

Accept and guide responses as necessary. Ask guiding questions such as, "What do mammals eat?" or "How do mammals move around?".

Your grid may now look something like the sample grid below:

Figure 66. Creating a Semantic Feature Analysis Grid: Step 2.

Concept: Mammals

Examples / Features	Has hair	Vertebrate	Lives on land (terrestrial)	Lives at sea (aquatic)	Able to fly	Herbivore (primary consumer)	Carnivore (secondary consumer)	Omnivore	Marsupial	Produces milk
Bear										
Bat										
Lion										
Seal										
Kangaroo										
Whale										
Ferret										
Human										

Teacher:
Now I am going to look at each animal and place a plus sign if the animal exhibits the feature, a minus sign if the animal does not exhibit the feature, and a question mark if I'm not sure (Stahl, 1999). Watch as I think through the first mammal on our list. The first mammal is a bear. I know that bears have hair and are vertebrates. I also know they live on land, not in the sea. Bears definitely don't fly. I know that bears eat meat, but they also eat plants and berries, so I am going to put a plus sign under "Omnivore". Bears don't have pouches, so they are not marsupials. But they do produce milk to feed their young.

Figure 67. Creating a Semantic Feature Analysis Grid: Step 3.

Concept: Mammals

Features / Examples	Has hair	Vertebrate	Lives on land (terrestrial)	Lives at sea (aquatic)	Able to fly	Herbivore (primary consumer)	Carnivore (secondary consumer)	Omnivore	Marsupial	Produces milk
Bear	+	+	+	–	–	–	–	+	–	+
Bat										
Lion										
Seal										
Kangaroo										
Whale										
Ferret										
Human										

Call on students individually to come up to the board or overhead and fill in one animal at a time. Discuss answers with the whole class.

A finished chart may look like the following:

Figure 68. Semantic Feature Analysis Grid: Completed Example.

Concept: Mammals

Examples / Features	Has hair	Vertebrate	Lives on land (terrestrial)	Lives at sea (aquatic)	Able to fly	Herbivore (primary consumer)	Carnivore (secondary consumer)	Omnivore	Marsupial	Produces milk
Bear	+	+	+	–	–	–	–	+	–	+
Bat	+	+	+	–	+	+	+	–	–	+
Lion	+	+	+	–	–	–	+	–	–	+
Seal	+	+	–	+	–	–	+	–	–	+
Kangaroo	+	+	+	–	–	+	–	–	+	+
Whale	+	+	–	+	–	–	+	–	–	+
Ferret	+	+	+	–	–	–	+	–	–	+
Human	+	+	+	–	–	–	–	+	–	+

GUIDED PRACTICE

Grouping: Whole class, sitting with partners

Ask students to open their textbooks to the chapter on the digestive system.

> **Teacher**:
> We are going to complete a grid for the concept: the digestive system. Skim through the chapter and raise your hand if you can tell me a very important word we learned about when reading this chapter. Remember, important words or concepts are often bold, in italics, or found in illustrations. Also, don't forget to look at titles and headings.

Accept responses and then show students the following blank grid on an overhead.

Figure 69. Creating a Semantic Feature Analysis Grid: Example 2a.

Concept: The Digestive System

Examples / Features	A process	An organ	A substance	Part of chemical digestion	Part of mechanical digestion	Breaks down starch	Breaks down protein	Breaks down fat
Digestion								
Mouth								
Saliva								
Esophagus								
Liver								
Stomach								
Pancreas								
Enzyme								
Mucus								
Peristalsis								
Small Intestine								
Large Intestine								

Teacher:
Listen as I think through the first item on our list. Is digestion a process? Yes, I know that digestion is the process of breaking down food, absorbing nutrients, and eliminating waste. Raise your hand if you can tell me what I need to put in this box. That's right, Lucia, I need to put a plus sign because digestion is a process.

Continue to think aloud through the rest of the features. Remember, discussion is a key element of this strategy.

Teacher:
Now let's look at *mouth*. Working with your partner, put a plus sign if a mouth displays the feature, a minus sign if it does not display the feature, and put a question mark in the square if you are not sure.

Allow students to look at their chapter and give them 3–4 minutes to complete the row for "mouth". Circulate around the room and be available for guidance.

Return to the overhead and ask for a volunteer to share their answers. Take time to discuss each answer with the class.

Continue the process above for the next 5–6 terms.

Below is an example of a completed chart. Remember, your class chart may look a little different depending on the discussion with your students. For example, some students may say that mucus is a part of chemical digestion because it lines the stomach and protects it from being burned by the strong acids. Therefore, mucus plays a role in chemical digestion. Other students may say that mucus is not a part of chemical digestion because the substance itself does not chemically break down food. Discussion is the key element of this type of activity. It is OK for students to disagree, as long as they are presenting arguments based on accurate information.

Figure 70. Creating a Semantic Feature Analysis Grid: Example 2b.

Concept: The Digestive System

Examples / Features	A process	An organ	A substance	Part of chemical digestion	Part of mechanical digestion	Breaks down starch	Breaks down protein	Breaks down fat
Digestion	+	–	–	+	+	+	+	+
Mouth	–	+	–	+	+	+	–	–
Saliva	–	–	+	+	+	+	–	–
Esophagus	–	+	–	–	?	–	–	–
Liver	–	+	–	+	–	–	–	+
Stomach	–	+	–	+	+	–	+	–
Pancreas	–	+	–	+	–	+	+	+
Enzyme	–	–	+	+	–	+	+	+
Mucus	–	–	+	–	+	–	–	–
Peristalsis	+	–	–	–	?	–	–	–
Small Intestine	–	+	–	+	–	–	+	–
Large Intestine	–	+	–	+	–	–	–	–

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners

1. If after guiding your students through the first half of the terms on the grid your students are ready to move on to independent practice, allow them to continue working with their partners to complete the last half of the semantic feature analysis grid.
2. Continue to circulate around the room and be available for guidance as your students are working.
3. Return to the overhead and ask for volunteers to share their answers for each row. Discuss answers with the class.
4. If students think of any other key terms or features, have them fill in the blank row or column.

GENERALIZATION

Teacher:
How could you use the semantic feature analysis grid in your other classes?

Student:
We could use it to study words in our other classes.

Teacher:
Think about your social studies class. How could the grid help you learn new words in social studies?

Student:
We could work with a partner to make a grid using words related to the subject we are studying.

Teacher:
That's right. When you put words you need to learn in this grid and discuss their characteristics, you are able to see the relationship between those words, which can help you remember what each word means. When learning new words, it always helps to think first about what you already know about the word. Using a semantic feature analysis grid can be helpful when reading new chapters in textbooks and novels. It allows you to keep track of and learn new words. It can also serve as a resource to go back to for a review of the words.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Check grids for completion and accuracy.

Give students a list of the terms along with other key terms from the chapter. Ask students to use the terms in complete sentences. Figure 71 provides a sample format for the assignment.

Figure 71. Sample Vocabulary Writing Assignment.

Writing based on:

Chapter 4, Section 1

Directions:

Using words from the list below, write 10 complete sentences. Each sentence must:

- Begin with a capital letter and end with a period, question mark, or exclamation point.
- Make sense.
- Include two words from the following list.

Vocabulary Word List:

digestion, mouth, saliva, absorption, nutrients, esophagus, liver, bile, churning, function, stomach, pancreas, enzyme, starch, protein, fats, health, mucus, peristalsis, small intestine, large intestine, produce, lining, diameter

Your Sentences:

This strategy can be used with both expository and narrative text. The following grids are samples of semantic feature analysis grids based on a novel and a social studies text.

Figure 72. Semantic Feature Analysis Grid: Narrative Text Example.

Subject: Characters in a Novel
Example: *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry

Examples / Features	Brave	Soothing	Belligerent	Unwavering	Jewish	Talented	Imaginative	Gentle	Threatening
Annemarie									
Ellen									
Kristi									
Mrs. Johansen									
Mr. Johansen									
Mr. And Mrs. Rosen									
German soldiers									

Lowry, L. (1989). Number the stars. *New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Books for Young Readers.*

Figure 73. Semantic Feature Analysis Grid: Expository Text Example.

Subject: Historical Documents

Examples \ Features	Lists grievances of colonists to express dissatisfaction with British rule	Gives government the authority to make, apply, and enforce rules and laws	Written after Constitution was sent to states for ratification	Document continues to be relevant in U.S. society today	Influenced the vote in favor of ratification and shaped future interpretations of the Constitution	Reflects values and principles of American democracy	Precedent for documents that followed	Expresses the right to freedom of assembly	Emphasizes government as a means to securing rights
Magna Carta (1215)									
English Bill of Rights (1689)									
Mayflower Compact (1620)									
Declaration of Independence (1776)									
Federalist Papers (1787)									
Anti-Federalist Writings (1787)									
U.S. Constitution (1787)									
Bill of Rights (1791)									

WORD KNOWLEDGE **SAMPLE LESSON**

Generating Examples and Nonexamples

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Adapted with permission from Frayer, D. A., Frederick, W. C., & Klausmeier, H. G. (1969). *A schema for testing the level of concept mastery* (Technical report No. 16). Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning.

INTRODUCTION

There are two reasons for providing students with, or having them generate, examples and nonexamples of unfamiliar words.

First, providing both examples and nonexamples can help clarify the meaning of words—students who receive vocabulary instruction that provides more contextual information outperform students who receive only definitions of words (Baumann & Kame'enui, 1991; Blachowicz & Fisher, 2000; Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986). For example, you might read the following sentence, "In the logographic phase beginners recognize nonphonemic characteristics." A straightforward definition for logographic is "representing words or ideas rather than sounds." Even after hearing this definition, the meaning of the word is probably not perfectly clear. Providing examples and nonexamples of things that are logographic should help you have a sharper understanding of the term. An example of a logographic language is Chinese, and logos found in advertising materials are also logographic. English, Spanish, and Italian are not examples of logographic languages. Your background knowledge will probably help you understand that characters or symbols in logographic languages represent whole words or ideas rather than sounds, as is the case in alphabetic languages. Beginning readers recognize logos (such as the McDonald's arches) or whole words (such as Wal-Mart) and connect them with ideas rather than using letter-sound relationships to read the words.

The second reason to provide students with examples and nonexamples of words, or to have students generate examples and nonexamples, is that this can help them develop an understanding of the concepts underlying key content-specific words. For example, it is critical that students understand various science concepts such as *matter*, *energy*, and *reactions*. When students engage in generating examples and nonexamples of these key concept words, they develop a deeper understanding of the concepts themselves.

One framework for organizing examples and nonexamples of words is a graphic organizer known as the Frayer Model (Frayer, Frederick, & Klausmeier, 1969). This lesson will focus on teaching students to use the Frayer Model, focusing on a science term—*amphibian*. Although this lesson is based on a science text, reading teachers may use the same process to help students learn to generate examples and nonexamples of words in any expository or narrative text. It can be important for reading teachers to teach lessons actually using students' content area textbooks, to encourage students to generalize what they are learning in the reading class to other classes throughout the day.

OBJECTIVE

Students will develop a deep understanding of key words by generating examples and nonexamples of words.

MATERIALS

- Text (narrative or expository).
- Overhead projector, chalkboard, or chart paper.
- Two overhead transparencies of a blank Frayer Model graphic organizer (or drawn on chart paper or on the board; see Appendix).
- Copies of blank Frayer Model graphic organizers for students.

PREPARATION

Preview text looking for academic words and key content-specific words that represent central concepts in the text. Identify one or two important words that are closely related to the topic of the text and that are good candidates for teaching students to generate examples and nonexamples of words. If it is difficult for the teacher to think of clear examples and nonexamples of a term, it is not a good choice to use when students are just learning the strategy.

DAILY REVIEW

Teacher:
We have learned that scientists classify animals as vertebrates or invertebrates according to whether the animals have a…what…Joseph? Yes, a backbone, or spine running down their bodies. Yesterday we learned that we can separate the vertebrates into classes, or smaller groups. What class of vertebrates live in water and breathe with gills…Samantha? Yes, fish. Today you will learn about another class of vertebrates.

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Teacher:
Today we are going to learn to generate examples and nonexamples of important vocabulary words. Listing examples and nonexamples of words can help you have a better understanding of important words and can help you remember these words.

MODEL AND TEACH

Genre: Narrative or expository
Grouping: Whole class

1. Explain the concept of examples and nonexamples using a simple word.

   Teacher:
   Let's think about the word *animals*. What are some examples of animals?

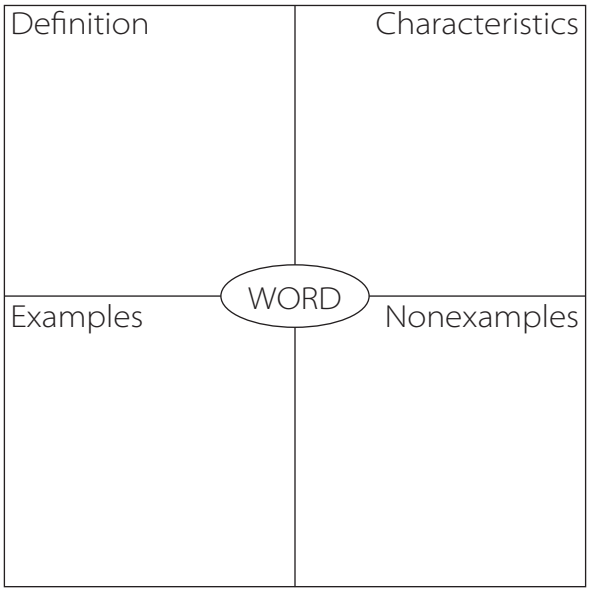
   Accept a few student responses. Don't allow more than a minute or so for this.

   Yes, dogs, snakes, goldfish, and tigers are all examples of animals. A nonexample would be a word that is *not* an example of an animal. That could be almost anything, couldn't it? After all, a boat is not an animal. Neither is a house. But, these nonexamples won't help us understand and remember what animals are. The trick is to come up with nonexamples that are related to the word, but that are not examples of the word. A nonexample of an animal would be a bean plant. Plants are like animals because they are living things, but they are not examples of animals. Another nonexample of an animal is a bacteria. Bacteria are living things but they are not animals. What are some other nonexamples of animals?

   Accept student responses and provide guidance as necessary.

2. Show students the transparency of the blank Frayer Model graphic organizer. Tell them that they will be using it as a framework as they talk about examples and nonexamples of words. Point out that the word will be placed in the center, and that there are spaces to write a definition, characteristics, examples, and nonexamples of the word.

Figure 74. Blank Frayer Model.



Adapted with permission from Frayer, D. A., Frederick, W. C., & Klausmeier, H. G. (1969). A schema for testing the level of concept mastery *(Technical report No. 16). Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning.*

3. Distribute blank Frayer Model graphic organizers to students and ask them to copy the information from the transparency as you model the process. Tell them that they will be completing several of these graphic organizers and that they should keep them to use as study guides.

4. Model completing the Frayer Model graphic organizer for the classification *amphibian*. Place the word *amphibian* in the center of the graphic organizer. Think aloud as you write a definition of the term, list characteristics of amphibians, list examples of amphibians, and list animals that are not amphibians in the "Nonexample" space.

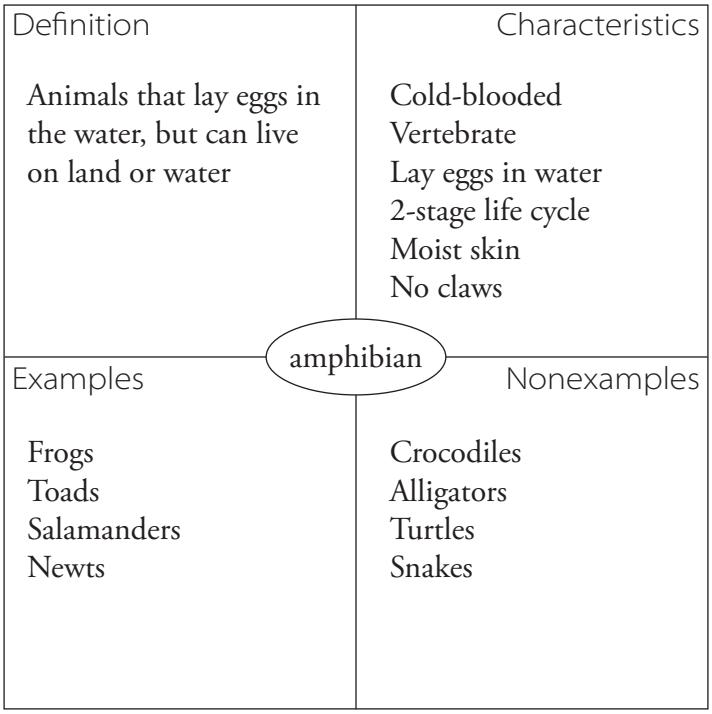
   Teacher:
   Yesterday we learned about the class of vertebrates called amphibians. I'm going to put the word *amphibian* in the center of the diagram. We learned that a scientist would define an amphibian as an animal that lays eggs in the water, but can live on land or water. I'll write that definition in the first box. That definition had some of the characteristics of amphibians in it, but I know some other characteristics of amphibians. They are cold-blooded vertebrates, they lay eggs in water, they have a two-stage life cycle, they have moist skin, and they have no claws. I'll put those in the box called "Characteristics". Now I need some examples of amphibians. What are some examples you know of…Ta'Michael? Good, a frog is one example. A toad is also an amphibian, so I'll add that.

Accept answers from the class. Ask students to tell why their examples are classified as amphibians. If any suggested answers are not examples of amphibians, talk about why this is true.

Now for nonexamples of amphibians—I could write the words *boat* and *story*, but those words wouldn't help me understand more about what an amphibian is, would they? I want to choose words that are related to the word *amphibian*, but are not amphibians. I'm going to write *crocodiles*, since a crocodile is a vertebrate but not an amphibian. Let's add three more nonexamples. Crystal, can you think of one?

Your completed graphic organizer may look something like this:

Figure 75. Completed Frayer Model Example.



Adapted with permission from Frayer, D. A., Frederick, W. C., & Klausmeier, H. G. (1969). A schema for testing the level of concept mastery *(Technical report No. 16). Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning.*

GUIDED PRACTICE

Grouping: Whole class or small group and partners

1. Put a blank Frayer Model transparency on the overhead and distribute blank Frayer Model sheets to partners.
2. Write the key content-specific word in the middle of your graphic organizer and ask students to do the same.
3. Tell students that they will complete the graphic organizer together as they read the part of the lesson. Before reading the text, provide clear "student-friendly" definitions of the key content-specific word and any other key vocabulary and have students quickly preview the selection, examining illustrations, headings, subheadings, etc. Previewing should take no longer than 1–2 minutes. Ask students what they think they will learn in the selection. Allow no more than 3–5 minutes for this discussion.
4. Have students read the first part of the lesson with their partners. (See directions for partner reading on page 225.)
5. After students have read the first section of the text, work as a class to complete any part of the Frayer Model graphic organizer that can be finished based on that section. Ask students to tell *why* the terms they identify are examples and nonexamples of amphibians.
6. Read the next section of text and continue to add to the graphic organizer as appropriate.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners

When students are comfortable with the process, have them continue to work in partners, reading and adding to their graphic organizers. Monitor student work carefully and provide scaffolding and feedback as needed.

GENERALIZATION

Teacher:
How might writing down examples and nonexamples of words help you in your other classes?

Student:
We can use them to study for our science or social studies tests.

Teacher:
Yes, the Frayer Model graphic organizers can be helpful as study guides. How might completing them help you understand what you are reading?

Student:
If we don't really understand the important words we won't know what the book is trying to say.

Student:
Yes, we can work together and do the examples and nonexamples of important words in social studies like *colonies*, which we are studying now. Then we might understand the book better and make better grades.

Teacher:
That's a good idea. All of your teachers are getting together to talk about using these Frayer Models in different classes, so your other teachers may give you time to work on them when you read your textbooks. If not, you could do them during study hall or after school to help you study.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Check graphic organizers for completion and accuracy. Ask students to tell why they put certain words in the "Example" or "Nonexample" boxes.

PERIODIC REVIEW/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

1. The next day, review the use of the Frayer Model and the concepts related to the term *amphibian*. If needed, allow students to refer to the Frayer Models they completed the day before to help them recall characteristics, etc., of amphibians. This helps illustrate to students that these models may be helpful study guides. Frequently, have students work in partners to generate examples and nonexamples of key concept words before reading a text selection. This is especially helpful for expository text. Use students' science, math, or social studies textbooks for review and practice of the strategy.
2. On other days, ask students questions that require them to connect two unrelated vocabulary words (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002). These may be words that were learned at different times associated with different text. For example, you might ask:
    - Can an *amphibian* live in a *lagoon*? Why or why not?
    - How is *digestion* like an *expedition*?
    - How would you find the *diameter* of a *crustacean*?
    - Could an adventurous person be *renowned*?
    - When might a *courageous* person escape from a dangerous place?
    - Can you be unaware of an *audible* sound?
    - How is being *suspicious* different from being *thoughtful*?
    - Can *collaboration* be *compulsory*?

Always ask students to give reasons for their answers. There can be more than one correct answer to these questions. The important thing is that the student's reasoning reflects the true meaning of the vocabulary words.

12. Use vocabulary words often in the classroom in the course of normal conversation and provide many opportunities and encouragement to students to use vocabulary words, especially academic words. (See p. 137 for a definition of *academic words*.)

WORD CONSCIOUSNESS
SAMPLE LESSON
Prepared Participation

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Based on Feldman, K., & Kinsella, K. (2005). *Narrowing the language gap: The case for explicit vocabulary instruction*. New York: Scholastic.

INTRODUCTION

The Prepared Participation activity, as described by Feldman and Kinsella (2005), gives students the opportunity to use vocabulary words during a classroom discussion, as opposed to reading the words and hearing them used by the teacher. This practice works especially well with both English language learners and students with impoverished vocabularies.

The following lesson is based on a practice suggested by Feldman and Kinsella in *Narrowing the Language Gap: The Case for Explicit Vocabulary Instruction*. It can be used with novel reading (as seen in the example below), chapter reading, or even short passages. Before planning this type of lesson, identify the topic of discussion as well as any academic words in the reading that are related to the topic.

Remember the previous discussion of how to choose words to teach. Preview the text and choose words that:

- Students must know in order to understand what they read.
- Students are likely to use and encounter frequently.

For example, in the novel *Holes*, by Louis Sachar, one important topic is the issue of bullying. In Chapter 30 of *Holes*, a few "big-idea words" related to bullying are *uneasy*, *astonished*, and the phrase *feeble attempt*. These words are used as examples in the following sample lesson.

OBJECTIVE

The student will use new vocabulary words in small-group and whole-class discussions.

MATERIALS

- Textbook or novel.
- Overhead projector, chart paper, or chalkboard.

DAILY REVIEW

Teacher:
Yesterday we completed Part 1 of *Holes*. Can anyone tell me…? Who remembers…?

Quickly review from a chart or board:

- List of character names.
- Setting locations.
- Major plot events.

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Teacher:
Today we are going to have a class discussion about bullying. I am going to give you an opportunity to use some of our vocabulary words. First, we will prepare for our discussion, and then we will all participate in the discussion. Using new words in a discussion is an opportunity to practice and learn the new words. Also, the more you actually use a word the more it becomes your own.

MODEL AND TEACH

Grouping: Whole class and partners

1. List several words from the story or passage to be read. Tell the students that the words are in the passage. The following sample words are from *Holes* by Louis Sachar.

   Topic:
   Bullying: Teasing or picking on someone who does not deserve it.

   Related words:

   - *Uneasy*: Feeling uncomfortable.
   - *Feeble attempt*: A failed or weak try.
   - *Astonished*: Surprised.

2. Ask students to make (with partners) a list of examples of bullying they have seen or heard.

3. After students write several examples, ask individual students to read and share items from their lists. Write several examples on the board or overhead.

HELPFUL HABIT | Asking students to read exactly what they wrote will encourage them to be specific in their writing and will discourage students who like to share lengthy stories with the class but refuse to write anything down.

4. Give a few sentence starters and show students how to use their background knowledge about bullying to complete a sentence that includes one of their vocabulary words. For example:

    - "One example of bullying I have seen at our school is…"
    - "I was astonished when I saw…"

5. Model the activity by thinking aloud.

    Teacher:
    We just wrote down several examples of bullying. One example that sticks out to me is the eighth-grader who was teasing the sixth-grader at the bus stop every day. So, if I wanted to complete the first sentence starter, I might write: "One example of bullying I have seen at our school is teasing at the bus stop."

    Record on the board or overhead.

    Or I could write: "I was astonished when I saw the large eighth-grade boy picking on a much smaller sixth-grade boy at the bus stop right next to the school!"

    Record on board or overhead.

    Raise your hand if you can tell me what *astonished* means? That's right. *Astonished* means surprised. So, I was surprised to see such a big kid picking on a smaller kid at the bus stop that was so near to school.

6. Give a few more sentence starters and allow students a few minutes to work with their partners to complete more sentence starters. For example:

    - "Once I made a feeble attempt to stop a bully by …"
    - "Bullying makes me uneasy because …"

7. Circulate around the room and check for understanding. Check that students' sentences are complete, make sense, and that vocabulary words are used appropriately. Ask several volunteers to share one of their sentences and write a few examples on the board or overhead.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners

1. Explain that in few minutes you are going to have a class discussion about bullying and that you want each student to be armed with several sentences about their own experience in order to contribute to the discussion. Ask students to expand their current list by writing additional sentences about bullying using sentence starters, vocabulary words, and their own experience as a guide. Circulate around the room and be available to guide as needed.
2. Have students rehearse their sentences with their partners.
3. Lead a structured discussion of the topic. Now that students have practiced reading their sentences, it is time to participate.
4. One at a time, allow students to read one of their rehearsed sentences to the class.
5. Have students elaborate on their sentences and comment on other students' sentences as appropriate.

GENERALIZATION

Teacher:
How could you use this activity in your other classes?

Student:
We could use it to practice our new vocabulary words.

Teacher:
That's right. Remember, the more you use a word, the more it becomes your own. When I was in college, I used to write my new vocabulary words on an index card and keep the stack of cards in my backpack. I would try to use each of the words during normal conversation at least once each day.

Student:
So we could do that, too. We could even keep track of how many times we use the word each day.

Student:
Yeah, we could keep score.

Teacher:
Or we could keep a chart in the classroom of some important words we need to learn. When any of you use one of the words either in another class or talking to your friends or family, we will keep track on the chart.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

During the class discussion, listen and check for the following:

- Are students using topic and related words correctly?
- Are students responding appropriately to each other's ideas during discussion?

PERIODIC REVIEW/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

The Word Wizard activity (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2001, 2002) involves giving students points or rewards for noticing or using their vocabulary words after initial instruction. This can be accomplished by adding tally marks next to students' names on a Word Wizard chart. Using Word Wizard in your classroom may help you incorporate frequent review and encourage word awareness in your students. This is important because students are not likely to learn and use new words without thinking about and practicing the words after initial vocabulary instruction (Beck & McKeown, 2001).

Keep a list of vocabulary words posted on a word wall or chart. These may be words students used in the Prepared Participation activity. Add a tally next to a word each time a student uses the word correctly in class or each time a student notices or uses the word outside of class and can give the context in which the word was used.

Reward the class with the highest tally marks at the end of each week or each month.

WORD CONSCIOUSNESS
SAMPLE LESSON
Possible Sentences

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Based on Moore, D. W., & Moore, S. A. (1986). Possible sentences. In E. K. Dishner, T. W. Bean, J. E. Readence, & D. W. Moore (Eds.), *Reading in the content areas* (pp. 174–178). Dubuque, IA: Kendall-Hunt; and Stahl, S. A., & Kapinus, B. A. (1991). Possible sentences: Predicting word meanings to teach content area vocabulary. *The Reading Teacher, 45*, 36–43.

INTRODUCTION

The Possible Sentences activity is designed to improve students' comprehension and retention of what they learn (Stahl & Kapinus, 1991). It taps into students' prior knowledge and asks them to make predictions about sentences they might read in a particular passage or chapter. This instructional activity was found to improve students' recall of word meaning and passage comprehension (Stahl & Kapinus, 1991). It is easy to implement; works well with narrative, expository, and content area text; and requires little preparation.

PREPARATION

Preview the text, looking for academic words, or challenging words that students are likely to see and use often.

Choose 6–8 words that are related to the content of the text and might be difficult for students.

Choose 4–6 words that students likely know and can use to form logical sentences with the more difficult words.

Write the 10–12 words on the board or overhead.

Figure 76. Sample Word List for a Passage or Chapter about Frederick Douglass.

Renowned	Slavery
Eloquence	Escape
Abolitionist	Freedom
Emancipation	Brutality
Advocate	Persuade
Recruit	

OBJECTIVE

The students will use prior knowledge to make predictions about sentences they might read in a particular passage or chapter.

MATERIALS

- Chapter or passage.
- Overhead projector, chart paper, or chalkboard.

DAILY REVIEW

Sample Review of Narrative Text

Teacher:
We have been reading the novel, "Amos Fortune". Can anyone give me a word to describe Amos?

Accept responses.

How do we know that Amos is patient? Courageous? … etc.

Sample Review of Expository Text

Teacher:
You have been studying the Civil War in your social studies class. Who can tell me one thing that you have learned about the Civil War?

Accept responses.

Who are some of the important people involved in this war?

Accept and discuss responses.

HELPFUL HABIT

Repeat students' accurate responses. For example, if a student responds, "Abraham Lincoln," you would immediately say, "Yes, that is correct, Cyndi. Abraham Lincoln was an important Civil War figure." And then extend, "Can anyone tell me why Abraham Lincoln was important?"

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Genre: Narrative or expository

> **Teacher:**
> Today we are going to read a passage (or chapter) about Frederick Douglass. Frederick Douglass was an important figure of the Civil War. He was born into slavery. During his lifetime, he escaped from slavery, became known worldwide as an advocate for freedom and the anti-slavery movement, worked for the national government, and had a personal relationship with Abraham Lincoln. Before we read about him, we will review some words included in the passage about him. We will use those words to generate a list of possible sentences that we might read in the chapter. Using your prior knowledge to make predictions about the ideas that will be discussed in the chapter will help you remember important words and understand what you read.

MODEL AND TEACH

Grouping: Whole class

Refer to the 10–12 words written on the board or overhead. Read each word aloud and have students repeat words after you.

HELPFUL HABIT

Even struggling readers like the challenge of reading a few words in front of the class. After you have read each word and had the entire class repeat them, stop and ask for a volunteer to read the first row or first five words. Then ask for another volunteer to read the final five. Next, ask a volunteer to read the entire list and maybe a final volunteer to read the list starting with the last word and moving to the first. This takes only 2 or 3 minutes, but it helps the students solidify the pronunciation of the words. If students have difficulty pronouncing a word, model reading the word one syllable at a time, then reading the whole word, and have students do the same after you.

Ask students to raise their hands if they know what any of the words mean.

Accept responses and write students' definitions next to the word. Clarify or correct students' definitions through questioning. Example: A student says that *escape* means "to run away". Ask follow-up questions to encourage the student to extend the definition.

> **Teacher:**
> Is escaping a special kind of running away? For example, if my dog was playing catch with me in the back yard and ran away from me each time I threw the ball, would I say he was escaping? Why not?

If any words are undefined, you may provide a brief, student-friendly definition next to those words.

> **Teacher:**
> I am thinking about what I already know about slavery and the Civil War. We are about to read a passage (or chapter) about Frederick Douglass. I'm asking myself what type of sentences might we read. Using our preview words, I will predict some possible sentences we might find in our passage. Each sentence must contain at least two of our preview words.

For example, I might think, "I see the word *abolish* in *abolitionist*. *Abolish* means 'to get rid of,' and the abolitionists worked to get rid of slavery." So I could write: "Frederick Douglass supported the abolitionists, who fought to get rid of slavery."

GUIDED PRACTICE

Grouping: Whole class and partners

1. Brainstorm possible sentences.

   At this point, the board or overhead might look like this:

Figure 77. Setup for Possible Sentences Example.

Preview Words
Slavery: Being forced to work for somebody else.
Escape: To free yourself; get away from danger or harm.
Renowned: Famous.
Persuade: Make someone believe something.
Brutality: Cruel behavior.
Abolitionist: A person who wanted to get rid of slavery.
Eloquence: Speaking with expression and persuasion.
Freedom: Ability to live the way you choose.
Emancipation: The process of setting someone free.
Recruit: To get a person to be involved in or work for a cause.
Advocate: To support or speak in favor of something.
Example Possible Sentence: Frederick Douglass supported the abolitionists who fought to get rid of slavery.

With partners, ask students to think of and write another possible sentence they might read in the chapter or passage. In this way, students are essentially predicting ideas that will be emphasized in the passage. Remind the class that a possible sentence must make sense and include at least two preview words.

Give students 2–3 minutes to think and write. Circulate around the room and be available for guidance and clarification.

Return to the board or overhead and ask several students to share their sentence. Write all possible sentences on the board or overhead. Do not discuss at this point whether the sentence is correct.

Repeat steps 1–3 a few more times or until all preview words are used at least once.

2. Read the chapter or passage.

   With their partners, have students read the passage (or chapter) aloud to each other. Direct pairs to alternate reading one paragraph at a time.

   After each paragraph has been read, ask the reader to tell his or her partner briefly what the paragraph was about.

   Circulate the room, pausing at each pair of students to listen to their reading.

3. Discuss and revise possible sentences.

   After students have read the passage (or chapter), return to the sentences on the board.

   Think aloud: Model the thinking process for the students. Read a sentence and decide, based on the reading, whether the sentence makes sense. If it does, leave it alone. If it does not, think aloud ways to change the sentence to make it correct. For example, if the word *renowned* is used incorrectly in a possible sentence, you might say, "I'm going to look back at the chapter and see how the word *renowned* is used." Then locate and read examples from the text. Discuss how to modify the sentence to make it make sense.

4. Partner practice: Ask students to work with a partner to read through and modify the remaining possible sentences.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners

Follow the procedure before reading a selection or a chapter:

1. Preview text for academic words.
2. Write target and known words on the board.
3. As a class, discuss the meaning of each word.
4. With their partners, students generate a list of possible sentences using the procedures described above.
5. Record sentences on the board.
6. With their partners, students read the selection or chapter.
7. With their partners, students read each sentence and decide whether it is logical and based on the word meaning and what was read in the selection or chapter. If a sentence does not make sense, students are expected to change it.
8. Conduct a class discussion. Read through each possible sentence and discuss its accuracy.

GENERALIZATION

Teacher:
Did thinking of possible sentences help you understand our reading about Frederick Douglas?

Student:
Yes. It made me pay attention. When I saw one of the words we used in the possible sentences, I looked carefully because I wanted to see whether I used it correctly in the possible sentence.

Teacher:
Good. Do you think you could make possible sentences in your other classes?

Student:
Yes. We could make a list of the boldface words in the chapter before we start reading. Then we could think of what types of sentences we might read in the chapter and make possible sentences with the boldface words.

Teacher:
Very good thinking. When you make predictions about what you are going to read, it helps you to anticipate what you are going to learn and to understand the text better, and when you use the vocabulary words in your predictions, it helps you to learn the meaning of the new words.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Grouping: Whole group

Check students' revisions of possible sentences for accuracy and understanding of word meaning.

PERIODIC REVIEW/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRACTICE

Have students generate additional sentences or a story using the vocabulary words. Assign points when a student uses one of the vocabulary words correctly during class discussion. Explain to students that they "own" their words when they can use them in writing or conversation.

Word Pairs

Using current and previously studied vocabulary words, make a chart like the following sample.

Figure 78. Sample Word Pairs Chart: Uncompleted.

	Similar	Different	No Relation
renowned unknown			
slavery emancipation			
abolitionist astonish			
eloquence persuade			
eloquence brutality			
feeble bully			

Stahl, S., & Kapinus, B. (2001). Word power: What every educator needs to know about teaching vocabulary. *Washington, DC: National Education Association. Reprinted with permission of the NEA Professional Library.*

Ask students to mark an *X* in the box or boxes that indicate the relationship of the words. For example, students may mark that *slavery* and *emancipation* are different. The beauty of this activity is the discussion of the relationships between the words. Discussion about relationships encourages deeper thinking about word meaning.

Your completed chart might look like this:

Figure 79. Sample Word Pairs Chart: Uncompleted.

	Similar	Different	No Relation
renowned unknown		X	
slavery emancipation		X	
abolitionist astonish			X
eloquence persuade	X		
eloquence brutality			X
feeble bully		X	

Stahl, S., & Kapinus, B. (2001). Word power: What every educator needs to know about teaching vocabulary. *Washington, DC: National Education Association. Reprinted with permission of the NEA Professional Library.*

WORD LEARNING **SAMPLE LESSON**
Teaching Word Parts

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Carnine, D. W., Silbert, J., Kame'enui, E. J., & Tarver, S. G. (2004). *Direct instruction reading*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education; and Stahl, S. A., & Shiel, T. G. (1992). Teaching meaning vocabulary: Productive approaches for poor readers. *Reading and Writing Quarterly: Overcoming Learning Difficulties, 8*, 223–241.

TERMS TO KNOW

Affix	Any part that is added to a word; a prefix or a suffix
Base word	A word that can stand alone and to which affixes can be added
Prefix	A word part that is attached to the beginning of a word
Root	A unit of meaning that cannot stand alone but that can be used to form words with related meanings
Suffix	A word part that is attached to the end of a word

(Encarta World English Dictionary; Moats, 2000)

INTRODUCTION

It is common for secondary teachers to assume that their older students already have a grasp on the parts that make up words, such as roots, prefixes, and suffixes. All too often, this assumption is wrong for struggling readers. Content and vocabulary become more complex as students get older, and this may frustrate or overwhelm struggling readers. Even more advanced readers can benefit from knowledge of Greek and Latin roots. Therefore, it is important to teach students how to break complex words into smaller parts.

Teaching word parts can help struggling readers:

- Recognize words.

- Decode words quickly and accurately.
- Understand the meaning of words.

Teaching Prefixes

Prefixes may be the easiest word parts to teach because their definitions tend to be more consistent. Whereas suffixes usually indicate a word's part of speech, prefixes usually have a concrete definition. Just 20 prefixes make up approximately 97 percent of prefixed words used in school English (White, Sowell, & Yanagihara, 1989; see Figure 83). Even teaching the top 9 prefixes on this list (if not all 20) will improve students' vocabulary learning (Stahl, 1999; White et al., 1989). Prefix instruction should include abundant examples along with nonexamples and even silly words. It is important to provide nonexamples, or words that look like they have prefixes but that are not really prefixed words. Students must understand that identifying word parts is not always straightforward, and does not always "work" as they expect it to. Giving—and generating—examples of silly words can help students understand how **affixes** work to change the meanings of words.

For instance, instruction of the prefix *re-* (meaning *again*) might include:

- Examples: *Redo*, *rewrite*, *replay*, *reclaim*, *rewind*, *recycle*
- Nonexamples: *Ready*, *reason*, *really*, *regular* (words that begin with *re-* but are not prefixed words)
- Silly words: *Resleep* (to sleep again), *reswim* (to swim again), *redine* (to eat again) (Emphasize that these are not real words.)

Teaching Suffixes

Suffixes are often more difficult to teach because their definitions are not as consistent or concrete. Some suffixes contribute to meaning (*-s* in *books* = more than one book), and others show parts of speech (*-ly* in *patiently* = adverb). Therefore, Stahl (1999) suggests that it is better for students to have a lot of experience with suffixed words rather than learning definitions for specific suffixes. See Figure 84 for a list of common suffixes.

Teaching Roots and Base Words

Roots and base words contain the basic meaning of a word. It is important that students understand this so that they are able to isolate roots and base words. When students are able to recognize and recall the meanings of common roots and base words, they are more able to determine the meaning of complex words.

The most common roots in the English language are Anglo-Saxon, Latin, and Greek. About 60 percent of all English words have Latin and Greek roots (Ebbers, 2003). See Figure 85 for a list of common Latin and Greek roots.

If Latin and Greek roots are not directly taught to students, some struggling readers will look for familiar English words within a larger word and will not be able to isolate the root. For example, if a struggling reader with no knowledge of Latin roots is asked to find the root word of *incredible*, the student may conclude, "I see the word *red*. *Red* is the root." But if a student is familiar with the Latin root *cred*, he or she may be able to deduce: "I see the prefix *in-* and the suffix *-ible*. The root *cred* means *to believe*—and the prefix *in-* means *not*. So *incredible* may mean 'not able to believe.'" This is, of course, the type of logical

thinking we want to instill in our students, but they will not do it automatically.

Teaching How Word Parts Work

First, it is important that students understand the function of word parts. Explain to the students that many words are made of parts that carry meaning. These word parts work together to alter, or change, a word's meaning. As an overall introduction to word parts, define the parts simply. For example:

Prefix: A word part that is attached to the beginning of a word.

Suffix: A word part that is attached to the end of a word.

Root or base word: The basic part of a word that carries meaning. A **base word** can stand alone (example: *depend* in *independent*). A **root** is a word part that carries meaning but cannot stand alone (example: *cred* in *incredible*).

It is important that students understand how word parts function together and not just focus on the definition of the terms prefix, suffix, and root (Stahl, 1999). Explain and give multiple examples of affixes being attached to the beginning or end of words. Then, discuss how the affixes change, or alter, the meaning of the words. Give your students multiple opportunities to manipulate word parts. Activities may include:

- Using a pocket chart, demonstrate how to manipulate word parts to make real words. Discuss how adding or removing an affix changes the meaning of a word.
- Write word parts on index cards and have the students make real words with a partner or in small groups. Have students discuss how adding or removing an affix changes the meaning of each word.
- Give partners or small groups of students a stack of index cards containing prefixes, suffixes, and base words. Have partners or groups work together to make a complete list of real words with their stack of word parts.
- Have students use word part cards to generate silly words, or "words" that are not real words but that illustrate how prefixes and suffixes can change the meaning of words. This is most effective for prefixes, as suffixes often change a word's part of speech rather than clearly altering the word's meaning.

Directly Teaching Word Parts

Directly teaching two parts of the word part strategy will enable students to better understand words independently as they are reading:

- Directly teach the most commonly used affixes and roots.
- Give students strategies for chunking, or breaking words apart.

The following sample lesson illustrates direct instruction in the Latin root *port*, meaning "to carry".

OBJECTIVE

Students will recognize the Latin root *port* in words and will learn and apply the meaning of that root.

MATERIALS

- Chalkboard or overhead.
- Pictures illustrating the words *aware* and *unaware* (optional).
- Small poster board or chart paper.
- Pocket chart.
- Index cards.
- Pictures illustrating the words *port*, *transportation*, *portable*, *import*, *export*, and *porter*.
- Word Part Clue Evaluation Charts (see Appendix).

DAILY REVIEW

In this example, the teacher reviews the meaning of the prefix *un-*. The students will encounter the word *unaware* in their reading selection on this day.

Write the target word on the board or overhead. Have students copy the word into their notebooks.

> **Teacher:**
> This word is *unaware*. What word?
>
> **Students:**
> *Unaware*.
>
> **Teacher:**
> Raise your hand if you see a familiar word within this word. Remember, if there is a prefix, cover it and see whether you recognize a word. If not, look for a suffix. If there is one, cover it and look for a familiar word.

When a student responds that he or she sees the word "aware," ask the student to come up to the board or overhead and demonstrate how he or she found the word. The student should cover the prefix "un-," leaving the word "aware" exposed.

> **Teacher:**
> What does it mean to be aware?

Accept responses.

> That's right, *aware* means to notice things and to know what is happening. Raise your hand if you remember what the prefix *un-* means? Correct, the prefix *un-* means "not". So who can

tell me what the word *unaware* means?

Accept responses. Students should be able to say that "unaware" means "not aware" or "not noticing what is going on".

Give the students scenarios and/or show pictures of people being aware and unaware of their surroundings. Have students reply "aware" or "unaware" to each situation.

Aware:

- A child looks both ways before crossing the street.
- A man carries an umbrella on a cloudy day.
- A student notices the words *pop quiz* on the board and takes out her notes to study.

Unaware:

- A mother talks on her cell phone while her child darts across a busy street.
- A man tells a joke about his boss while his boss is standing behind him.
- While a teacher helps a small group of students, another student throws a paper airplane while the principal is looking in the window. (The teacher is unaware of the paper airplane and the student is unaware of the principal.)

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Teacher:
You have learned that looking for word parts can help you read and understand the meaning of complicated words, and you know the meaning of several common prefixes. Today you will learn a common root. Most of the roots and base words in our language come from Anglo-Saxon, Greek, or Latin. When you can recognize some of these roots and know what they mean, it will unlock the meaning of many words you read. This should help you learn new vocabulary words more easily in all your subjects.

Today we'll learn a common Latin root—*port*.

Optional: If this is the first time you are introducing Latin or Greek roots, you may want to tell students the story about how the English language came to be built from parts of several other languages. This story is found in the Appendix.

MODEL AND TEACH

Grouping: Whole class or small group

Write "port" at the top of a small piece of poster board or chart paper.

Teacher:
The Latin root *port* means "to carry."

Write the meaning "to carry" under the root "port" on the poster board or chart paper.

> **Teacher:**
> Do you know some English words that have the root word *port* in them?

Call on individuals. Students may recognize that "port" is an English word itself. Support them to understand that a port is a place where things are put on ships or taken off ships. Discuss the relationship between this idea and the meaning "to carry."

> **Teacher:**
> Yes, ships come to a port to unload the goods, or things, that are on them and to load up other things to take away to other places. We learned that the root *port* means "to carry." How is a port where ships come and go related to carrying something?

Accept responses.

> Yes, ships carry things across the water, and things are carried off and onto the ships at ports.

If students cannot generate words, ask questions or give clues to help them think of the words "transport" or "transportation," "portable" or "porter". For example, you might prompt students by saying something like:

> **Teacher:**
> I have a big CD player at my house. It is not something I can carry around very easily, but I have a little CD player that I can put in my purse and listen to with headphones. When something is easy to carry around we say it is _____.

Simply tell students any words that they cannot easily generate themselves.

Model using word parts as clues to the meanings of words containing the root "port". Give brief, simple definitions of the example words, and write these words on the poster board or chart paper:

Write "transport" on the poster or paper.

> **Teacher:**
> The word part *trans* means "across". Since *port* means "to carry," *transport* means "to carry something across something" or "to carry things from one place to another". You can transport furniture in a truck, and you can transport people in your car.

Write "export" on the poster.

> The word part *ex* can mean "out". *Export* means "to send out things that are made in one country to a different country". Many of the things we buy are made in China and exported to the United States.

Continue this process with the rest of the words on the list:

- Import: The prefix *im-* can mean "into". *Import* means "to bring (or carry) things into one country from a different country". We import many things from China.
- Portable: The suffix *-able* means "able to," so if something is portable, we are able to carry it.
- Porter: The ending *-er* can mean "someone who". A porter is someone who carries suitcases or other things. If you go to an airport, a porter may carry your suitcases.

Read the completed word list to the students and have them repeat each word after you. Then have the students read the list together. If necessary, have them read it again, starting from the last word and going to the first word. Then call on individuals to read the list.

Teacher:
So, what does the word part *port* mean?

Students:
To carry.

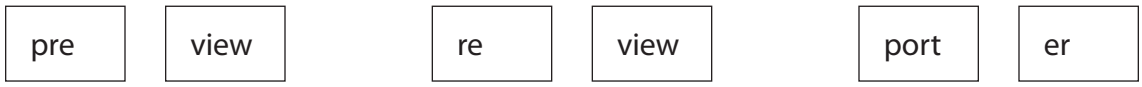
Note: Greek and Latin roots can be used to build a family of words with related meanings, but these words will not always have clear relationships with prefixes and suffixes. For example, the Latin root *aud* means "to hear". It is found in the words *auditorium*, *audience*, and *audiovisual*. When you teach Greek or Latin roots, be sure students understand that the roots may be found in long words, even if these long words do not have recognizable prefixes and suffixes.

GUIDED PRACTICE

Grouping: Whole class or small group

Use a pocket chart to provide students the opportunity to practice word parts they have previously learned along with the newly learned root *port*. Form words in the pocket chart using index cards with previously learned prefixes, suffixes, base words, and roots written on them. Include a card with the new Latin root *port* on it. Have students read the words and tell the class the meaning of the word parts and of the words.

Figure 80. Sample Word Part Cards.

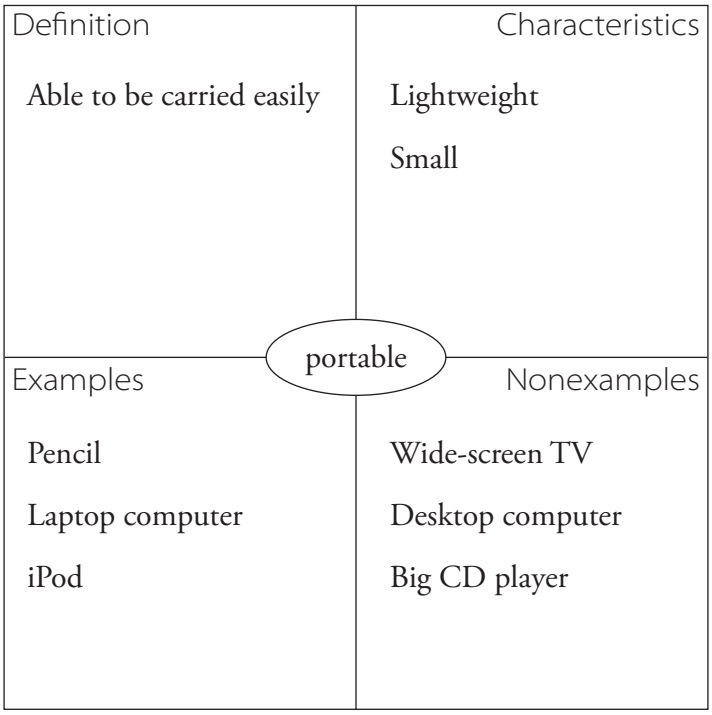


INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners

Have students work with partners to complete Frayer Model graphic organizers for the words *portable* and *transport* or *transportation*. Assign one of these words to each pair of students. Have students use the definitions you provided for the words during the Model and Teach portion of the lesson, and generate examples and nonexamples of the words.

Figure 81. Sample Frayer Model Used in Learning Word Parts.



Adapted with permission from Frayer, D. A., Frederick, W. C., & Klausmeier, H. G. (1969). A schema for testing the level of concept mastery *(Technical report No. 16). Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning.*

GENERALIZATION

Ask students for examples of situations in which using the word part strategy would be helpful when they come to unfamiliar words as they are reading. Emphasize the fact that they can use the strategy every time they read.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Check students' understanding of the concept by rotating among partners, asking questions, and checking their graphic organizers. Ask students to explain how the word parts contribute to the meaning of the words they form.

PERIODIC/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

Teachers should emphasize and model the word part strategy whenever the opportunity presents itself. Some examples are:

- **Within a vocabulary lesson**: If you are planning a larger vocabulary lesson such as Semantic Mapping or Possible Sentences, and one of the target words has a prefix or suffix, you can emphasize the word parts during the discussion of that specific word.
- **Discussion during reading**: You may come across a prefixed or suffixed word while preparing for a selection to be read with your class. If the students do not need to understand the word in order to comprehend the selection, this word does not necessarily need to be pretaught. However, you may use the word to review the word part strategy within the context of whole-class or small-group discussion.
- **Frequent modeling and use of word part strategy**: Students benefit when teachers frequently model the word part strategy through think alouds and give students ample opportunities to practice identifying roots, base words, and affixes.

Think aloud with your students. For example, say you encounter this sentence in your reading: "The librarian has asked us to transport our class set of research books to the library." In this case, you should begin by writing the word *transport* on the board.

> **Teacher**:
> I know that the Latin root *port* means "to carry" and that the prefix *trans-* means "across or from one to another," so *transport* must mean "to carry from one place to another". Sylvia, what does the librarian want us to do with our research books?

WORD PART ANALYSIS

Note: This would be taught in a separate lesson.

It is important to mention that the analysis of word parts may not always work as we expect it to work. Students need to be taught to recognize and think about word parts, not just plug them into a formula. One way to help students think about word parts in this way is to use a Word Part Clue Evaluation Chart (see Appendix for blank template). This type of chart is discussed in Core Literacy Library's *Vocabulary Handbook* (2006) and is an excellent tool to help students understand and think about word parts. Initially, find words in a reading text or content area text that are appropriate to illustrate each column in the chart. The following figure is an example of such a chart.

Figure 82. Sample Word Part Clue Evaluation Chart.

	No Prefix and Root Word	Prefix and Root Word	Prefix + Root = Meaning	Prefix + Root ≠ Meaning
Unhealthy		Un + healthy	Not healthy	
Interest	In + terest			
Depart		De + part		To leave or go away
Return		Re + turn	To turn again; to come back	
Distance	Dis + tance			

Adapted with permission from Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2006). Vocabulary handbook. *Berkeley, CA: Consortium on Reading Excellence. Reproduction of this material is prohibited without permission from the publisher.*

The key element of this chart is the discussion of each word with your students. Model the process of analyzing word parts through think alouds. For instance:

> **Teacher:**
> The first word is *unhealthy*. First, I see the prefix *un-* and the root word *health* with the suffix *-y*: *healthy*.

Demonstrate covering the prefix with your thumb to reveal the root word.

> So there is a prefix and a root word.

Fill in the second column.

> Now I know the prefix *un-* means "not," so does *unhealthy* mean "not healthy"? Yes, it does.

Fill in the third column.

> Now I am going to look at the next word, *interest*. I know that *in-* is a prefix. Is *terest* a word or a root? No, *terest* is not a real word or a root. So, *interest* does not have a prefix and root word.

Fill in the first column.

As students get older, they are expected to read more multisyllabic words. This can be overwhelming to a struggling reader. Teaching students to both recognize and analyze word parts is a powerful tool to help them unlock the meaning of the many multisyllabic words they are expected to understand.

Figure 83. Common Prefixes.

PREFIX	% of All Prefixed Words	MEANING	EXAMPLES
Un-	26	Not, opposite of	Unaware, unbelievable, unsure
Re-	14	Again	Redo, replay
Im-, in-, il-, ir-	11	Not	Impossible, incapable, illogical, irregular
Dis-	7	Not, opposite of	Dishonest, disgraceful, discover
En-, em-	4	Cause to	Enable, emblaze
Non-	4	Not	Nonstick, nonfiction, nonexistent
In-, im-	3	In, into	Inject
Over-	3	Too much	Overtime, overeat
Mis-	3	Wrongly	Misunderstand, misuse
Sub-	3	Under	Subsurface, subway
Pre-	3	Before	Prepay, preschool
Inter-	3	Between	International, interact
Fore-	3	Before	Forethought
De-	2	Opposite of	Decaffeinated, dehydrate
Trans-	2	Across	Transatlantic
Super-	1	Above	Superhero, supermodel
Semi-	1	Half	Semiannual, semicolon
Anti-	1	Against	Antiwar, antisocial
Mid-	1	Middle	Midyear, midnight
Under-	1	Too little	Underweight, underpaid
All others	3		

Top 20 prefixes from Carroll, J. B., Davies, P., & Richman, B. (1971). The American heritage world frequency book. *Boston: Houghten Mifflin; as cited in White, Sowell, & Yanagihara, 1989.*

Figure 84. Common Suffixes.

SUFFIX	% OF ALL SUFFIXED WORDS	PART OF SPEECH	EXAMPLES
-s, -es	31	Plural of noun	Cats, boxes
-ed	20	Past tense of verb	Sailed
-ing	14	Progressive tense of verb	Jumping, racing
-ly	7	Usually an adverb; sometimes an adjective	Slowly, lovely
-er, -or (agent)	4	Noun (agent)	Runner, professor
-tion, -ation, -ition	4	Noun	Action, transition, vacation
-able, -ible	2	Adjective	Lovable, incredible
-al, -ial	1	Adjective	Global, logical, partial
-y	1	Adjective	Funny
-ness	1	Abstract noun	Kindness
-ity, -ty	1	Noun	Activity
-ment	1	Noun	Merriment
-ic	1	Adjective	Historic
-ous, -eous, -ious	1	Adjective	Hideous, spacious
-en	1	Verb	Quicken, thicken
-er (comparative)	1	Adjective	Bigger
-ive, -ative, -tive	1	Adjective	Alternative, pensive
-ful	1	Adjective	Wonderful
-less	1	Adjective	Effortless
-est	1	Adjective	Strongest
All others	7		

Top 20 suffixes from Carroll, J. B., Davies, P., & Richman, B. (1971). The American heritage world frequency book. *Boston: Houghten Mifflin; as cited in White, Sowell, & Yanagihara, 1989.*

Figure 85. Common Latin and Greek Roots.

ROOT	ORIGIN	MEANING	EXAMPLES
aud	Latin	Hear	Auditorium, audition, audience, audible, audiovisual
astro	Greek	Star	Astronaut, astronomy, asterisk, asteroid, astrology
bio	Greek	Life	Biology, biography, biochemistry
cept	Latin	Take	Intercept, accept, reception
dict	Latin	Speak or tell	Dictation, dictate, predict, contradict, dictator
duct	Latin	Lead	Conduct, induct
geo	Greek	Earth	Geography, geology, geometry, geophysics
graph	Greek	Write	Autograph, biography, photograph
ject	Latin	Throw	Eject, reject, projectile, inject
meter	Greek	Measure	Thermometer, barometer, centimeter, diameter
min	Latin	Little or small	Miniature, minimum, minimal
mit or mis	Latin	Send	Mission, transmit, missile, dismiss, submit
ped	Latin	Foot	Pedal, pedestal, pedestrian
phon	Greek	Sound	Telephone, symphony, microphone, phonics, phoneme
port	Latin	Carry	Transport, portable, import, export, porter
rupt	Latin	Break	Disrupt, erupt, rupture, interrupt, bankrupt
scrib or script	Latin	Write	Scribble, scribe, inscribe, describe, prescribe, manuscript, prescription, script, transcript, scripture
spect	Latin	See	Inspect, suspect, respect, spectacle, spectator
struct	Latin	Build or form	Construct, destruct, instruct, structure
tele	Greek	From afar	Telephone, telegraph, teleport
tract	Latin	Pull	Traction, tractor, attract, subtract, extract
vers	Latin	Turn	Reverse, inverse

Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2006). Vocabulary handbook. *Berkeley, CA: Consortium on Reading Excellence; Ebbers, S. (2005).* Language links to Latin, Greek, and Anglo-Saxon: Increasing spelling, word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension through roots and affixes. *Presented at The University of Texas, Austin, TX; and Stahl, S., & Kapinus, B. (2001).* Word power: What every educator needs to know about teaching vocabulary. *Washington, DC: National Education Association.*

WORD LEARNING **SAMPLE LESSON**

Using Context Clues

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Baumann, J. F., Font, G., Edwards, E. C., & Boland, E. (2005). Strategies for teaching middle-grade students to use word-part and context clues. In E. H. Hiebert & M. L. Kamil (Eds.), *Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing research to practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates; and Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2006). *Vocabulary handbook*. Berkeley, CA: Consortium on Reading Excellence.

INTRODUCTION

Context clues give students an idea, or hint, of what an unfamiliar word might mean. Such clues are found in both the text and/or illustrations surrounding the unknown word. The different types of context clues that can be used to infer a word's meaning are listed in Figure 87, along with examples of how those clues might appear in text. Students benefit from explicit instruction in a strategy for finding and using context clues, such as the one below.

Figure 86. Context Clue Strategy.

1. Reread the sentence that contains the unknown word. Be on the lookout for signal words or punctuation.
2. Reread the sentences before and after the sentence that contains the unknown word.
3. Based on the clues, try to figure out the meaning of the word.
4. Insert your meaning in the original sentence to see whether it makes sense.

Figure 87. Types of Context Clues to be Directly Taught.

TYPE OF CONTEXT CLUE	EXAMPLE*
Definition: The author explains the meaning of the word in the sentence or selection.	When Sara was hiking, she accidentally walked through a patch of **brambles**, *prickly vines and shrubs*, which resulted in many scratches to her legs.
Synonym: The author uses a word similar in meaning.	Josh walked into the living room and accidentally tripped over the **ottoman**. He then mumbled, "I wish people would not leave the *footstool* right in the middle of the room. That's dangerous!"
Antonym: The author uses a word nearly opposite in meaning.	The supermarket manager complained, "Why do we have such a **plethora** of boxes of cereal on the shelves? *In contrast*, we have a real *shortage* of pancake and waffle mix. We've got to do a better job ordering."
Example: The author provides one or more example words or ideas.	There are many members of the **canine** family. *For example*, *wolves*, *foxes*, *coyotes*, and pets such as *collies*, *beagles*, and *golden retrievers* are all canines.
General: The author provides several words or statements that give clues to the word's meaning.	It was a **sultry** day. The day was *very hot and humid*. If you moved at all, you would *break out in a sweat*. It was one of those days to *drink water* and *stay in the shade*.

*__Note__: In Example column, words in italics provide context clues for bold words.

Reprinted with permission. Baumann, J. F., Font, G., Edwards, E. C., & Boland, E. (2005). Strategies for teaching middle-grade students to use word-part and context clues. In E. H. Hiebert & M. L. Kamil (Eds.), Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing research to practice. *Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.*

Explain to students that finding and interpreting context clues is not a formula; it is a tool to be tried alongside other tools such as word part clues. Some context clues can be misleading, and students must realize that word-learning strategies involve thinking, not just plugging words into a formula. The following lesson is an introductory context clue lesson that teaches the first type of clue, the definition clue. This lesson can be used as a guide to teach the other four types of context clues: synonym, antonym, example, and general clues.

OBJECTIVE

Students will learn to find and interpret context clues to help figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words. Students will be able to recognize and interpret five types of context clues: definition, synonym, antonym, example, and general.

MATERIALS

- Types of Context Clues chart (see Appendix).
- Transparency of sample sentences.
- Student copies of sentences.
- Context Clue Strategy chart (see Appendix).
- Using Context Clues chart (see Appendix).

DAILY REVIEW

Teacher:
Yesterday we looked for word part clues to help us figure out the meanings of unfamiliar words. Raise your hand if you can tell me one type of word part that will give us a clue, or hint, to a word's meaning. Billy? Yes, a prefix may help us determine a word's meaning. Sheila? Yes, if we can find a root word and know what it means, that will help us determine the meaning of the unknown word.

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Genre: Expository (or narrative)

Teacher:
As you read—whether it is your textbook, a newspaper, a magazine, or a story—there will be words that are not familiar to you. Since you will not always have someone nearby to help you, and I can't teach you every word you need to know, I want to teach you several ways to figure out unfamiliar words on your own. One way to figure out a word is to look for word parts such as prefixes, suffixes, and roots. Another strategy is to look at the sentences and illustrations around the unknown word. Today I am going to teach you how to find clues in the words and phrases that come before and after a particular word. These clues are called *context clues* because they are found in the context, or words and phrases, around the unfamiliar word. Learning to recognize and analyze context clues will help you discover the meaning of words on your own.

MODEL AND TEACH

Grouping: Whole class

Teacher:
There are several types of context clues. Over the next few weeks, I am going to teach you five different types of context clues to look for.

Briefly show the following chart and simply list the different types of clues.

Figure 88. Types of Context Clues.

TYPE OF CONTEXT CLUE	WHAT TO LOOK FOR	SIGNAL WORDS	SAMPLE SENTENCE
Definition	A definition in the sentence	*Is*, *are, is called*, *means*, *or* Signal punctuation: Set off by commas	Brick made of sun-dried clay *is called* **adobe**. The Native Americans used **adobe***, or* bricks made of sun-dried clay, to build their homes.
Synonym	A word with a similar meaning to the unknown word	*Also*, *as*, *like*, *same*, *similarly*, *too*	The Zuni built their homes with brick made of sun-dried clay. The Hopi *also* used **adobe** to build their homes.
Antonym	A word or phrase with the opposite meaning of the unknown word	*But*, *however*, *in contrast*, *on the other hand*, *though*, *unlike*	The Hopi lived in single-family houses, *but* the Iroquois lived in **longhouses**.
Example	Several examples in a list	*Such as*, *for example*, *for instance*, *like*, *including*	The Pueblo people grew many **crops** *such as* corn, beans, and squash.
General	General or inexact clues		After 1700, the Pueblos got sheep from the Spanish, and wool replaced cotton as the most important **textile**.

Based on Baumann, J. F, Font, G., Edwards, E. C., & Boland, E. (2005). Strategies for teaching middle-grade students to use word-part and context clues. In E. H. Hiebert & M. L. Kamil (Eds.), Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing research to practice. *Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.*

A copy of Figure 88 is found in the Appendix. It may be distributed to students as a handout, but you

may consider developing sample sentences with content matter that is familiar to the grade level of your students.

Teacher:
Today we are going to concentrate on just one type of context clue—the definition.

Display the entire chart in Figure 88, but place a large, laminated arrow pointing to the Definition section. Students can see the big picture, but also focus on the type of context clue being taught.

Teacher:
A definition clue provides the meaning of the word right in the sentence. If you see any of the signal words—*is*, *are*, *is called*, or *means*—be on the lookout for a definition. You can also look for signal punctuation to help to find definition clues. If you see the signal word *or* and a phrase set apart by commas, be on the lookout for a definition. Look at the following sentences:

Place sample sentences on the overhead.

Figure 89. Sample Sentences Using Definition Context Clues.

Brick made of sun-dried clay is called **adobe**.
The Navajo lived in **hogans**, or dome-shaped houses that were made of logs and mud.

Cover sentences on the transparency so that only the first sentence is visible. Think aloud.

Teacher:
The first sentence says, "Brick made of sun-dried clay is called adobe." I don't know what adobe is.

Circle the word "adobe".

So I'm going to look at the words and phrases around the word, or context clues, to help me figure out the meaning. First I am going to reread the sentence.

Reread the sentence.

I see the signal words *is called*.

Underline "is called" on the transparency.

OK, what is called *adobe*?

Point to the beginning of the sentence.

Brick made of sun-dried clay is called adobe. So, adobe is brick made of clay that is dried in the sun. This type of context clue is simple. I just have to be on the lookout for the signal words—like a detective searching for clues.

Now I'm going to look at the next sentence.

Read the sentence.

I do not know what hogans are.

Circle the word "hogans".

First I am going to reread the sentence.

Reread the sentence.

I see the signal word *or*, and I also see two commas.

Underline the word "or" and circle the two commas.

I am going to read the phrase between the two commas.

Read the phrase.

Hogans must be dome-shaped houses. If I insert my definition into the sentence it would read: "The Navajo lived in dome-shaped houses made of logs and mud." That makes sense.

In both of theses sentences, the definition was right in the sentence. This kind of context clue is called a definition context clue.

GUIDED PRACTICE

Grouping: Whole class/partners

1. Place 4–6 more sentences on the overhead. These sentences can easily be taken directly from your students' science or social studies texts, or you can write sentences using any content that is relevant to your students' curriculum.

Figure 90. More Sample Sentences Using Definition Context Clues.

> Everyone has different physical characteristics, or traits. Some of us are tall, while others are short. Some of us have brown eyes, while others have green.
>
> Heredity is the passing of traits from parents to their children.
>
> The things that control such traits are called genes.
>
> Gregor Mendel founded genetics, or the study of heredity and genes, in the 19th century.

2. Give students a copy of the sentences.
3. Review the following chart. A copy is provided in the Appendix.

Figure 91. Context Clue Strategy.

1. Reread the sentence that contains the unknown word. Be on the lookout for signal words or punctuation.
2. Reread the sentences before and after the sentence that contains the unknown word.
3. Based on the clues, try to figure out the meaning of the word.
4. Insert your meaning in the original sentence to see whether it makes sense.

Based on Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2006). Vocabulary handbook. *Berkeley, CA: Consortium on Reading Excellence.*

4. Lead the students through finding the meaning of the underlined word in the first sentence by looking for definition context clues.

   Ask for a volunteer to read the sentence.

   Teacher:
   I don't know what traits are.

   Circle the word "traits" and ask students to do the same on their paper.

   What is the first thing I need to do when I come to a word that is unfamiliar to me?

   Accept student responses.

   That's right, I need to reread the sentence. What do I need to look for, like a detective?

   Accept student responses.

   Yes, I need to look for signal words or punctuation.

   Point to the Types of Context Clues chart and ask a student to read the signal words and punctuation for a definition context clue. Ask a volunteer to reread the sentence and ask the class to be on the lookout for signal words and punctuation. After the volunteer has reread the sentence, ask students to turn to their partners and point to any signal words or punctuation they see.

   Did anyone see any signal words or punctuation?

   Accept student responses.

   On the overhead, underline the word "or" and circle the comma. Ask students to do the same.

   In this case, the unfamiliar word is set apart by the comma and the signal word *or*.

   Where should I look, then, to find the definition?

   Accept student responses.

   That's right. The words right before the signal word are *physical characteristics*. So *traits* must mean "physical characteristics".

Let's try it in the sentence: "Everyone has different traits." Everyone has different physical characteristics. Does that definition make sense? Yes. Raise your hand if you can tell me the definition of *traits*. Yes, traits are physical characteristics. Let's look at the following sentence to see whether we can find some examples of traits.

5. Allow partners 3 to 4 minutes to find the meaning of the underlined word in the second sentence by looking for definition context clues. Circulate around the room and be available for guidance. After 3 to 4 minutes, work through the sentence on the overhead with the class. Follow the same procedure for the last two sentences.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners

1. Provide partners with a short passage that you create or take directly from a student textbook. Sample text:

Figure 92. Sample Passage for Practice Using Definition Context Clues.

> When someone who is not very well known unexpectedly wins a nomination for public office, they are called a dark horse candidate. James A. Polk, a dark horse candidate, won the Democratic presidential nomination in 1844. Polk was in favor of the annexation, or the adding of a territory to another country, of both Texas and Oregon. Henry Clay, Polk's opponent, was also in favor of annexation.

2. Tell students that they are going to practice using definition context clues to find the meaning of the underlined words.

3. Give students a chart like the one below to guide their work:

Figure 93. Sample Context Clues Chart.

Unfamiliar Word	Signal Word or Punctuation	Our Definition
Dark horse candidate		
Annexation		

Based on Baumann, J. F., Font, G., Edwards, E. C., & Boland, E. (2005). Strategies for teaching middle-grade students to use word-part and context clues. In E. H. Hiebert & M. L. Kamil (Eds.), Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing research to practice. *Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Adapted from Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2006).* Vocabulary handbook. *Berkeley, CA: Consortium on Reading Excellence.*

4. Circulate around the room and be available for guidance.

Figure 94. Sample Context Clues Chart: Completed

Unfamiliar Word	Signal Word or Punctuation	Our Definition
Dark horse candidate	Are called	When someone who is not famous wins a political nomination unexpectedly
Annexation	Commas, or	Adding a territory to another country

Based on Baumann, J. F., Font, G., Edwards, E. C., & Boland, E. (2005). Strategies for teaching middle-grade students to use word-part and context clues. In E. H. Hiebert & M. L. Kamil (Eds.), Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing research to practice. *Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Adapted from Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2006).* Vocabulary handbook. *Berkeley, CA: Consortium on Reading Excellence.*

GENERALIZATION

Teacher:
Think about your other classes. Do you think using context clues might help you with any of your reading outside of this class?

Student:
I think I've seen definition context clues in our science book.

Teacher:
I'm sure you have. Textbook authors want you to understand what you are reading and will help you by planting clues in the text to help you understand new words. Raise your hand if you can tell me what signal words or punctuation marks you can look for to help you find definition context clues.

Student:
We can look for the signal words *is called* or for phrases set apart by commas.

Teacher:
That's right. Be on the lookout for context clues in your other classes.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Check Figure 94, above, for appropriate responses, including:

- Correct identification of signal words and punctuation.
- Correct definitions derived from the context clues.

PERIODIC REVIEW/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

Periodically give students a passage that you either create or take directly from students' textbooks. Underline words that may be unfamiliar to students, and have them work either independently or with partners to find the meaning of the underlined words.

Once you have taught other types of context clues, modify the guide so that students must identify and use the different kinds of context clues.

Figure 95. Using Context Clues Chart.

Unfamiliar Word	Signal Word or Punctuation	TYPE OF CONTEXT CLUE Definition, Synonym, Antonym, Example, or General	My Definition

Based on Baumann, J. F., Font, G., Edwards, E. C., & Boland, E. (2005). Strategies for teaching middle-grade students to use word-part and context clues. In E. H. Hiebert & M. L. Kamil (Eds.), Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing research to practice. *Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Adapted from Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2006).* Vocabulary handbook. *Berkeley, CA: Consortium on Reading Excellence.*

WORD LEARNING **SAMPLE LESSON**

The Vocabulary Strategy

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Baumann, J. F., Font, G., Edwards, E. C., & Boland, E. (2005). Strategies for teaching middle-grade students to use word-part and context clues. In E. H. Hiebert & M. L. Kamil (Eds.), *Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing research to practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates; and Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2006). *Vocabulary handbook*. Berkeley, CA: Consortium on Reading Excellence.

INTRODUCTION

Once you have taught students about word parts and context clues, you can teach them how to combine these two strategies into a system, or routine, for figuring out the meaning of unknown words. The Vocabulary Strategy is a systematic way of thinking through the process of discovering the meaning of an unknown word during reading. The goal, of course, is for your students to use this strategy independently and in a variety of settings.

OBJECTIVE

Students will use the Vocabulary Strategy worksheet to guide them through the process of using word parts and context clues to figure out the meaning of unknown words.

MATERIALS

- Vocabulary Strategy Chart (see Appendix).
- Vocabulary Strategy Worksheet transparency and student copies (see Appendix).
- Sample text with vocabulary words.
- Dictionaries.
- Science or social studies text.

DAILY REVIEW

Teacher:
When you are reading on your own and you come to a word for which you do not know the meaning, what is one way you can figure out the meaning of the word?

Accept responses.

Yes, Candace, you can try to break the word into parts. What are some of the parts that may give you a clue to the word's meaning?

Accept responses.

Correct, you can look at prefixes, suffixes, and root words. Can anyone remember another way to find out what a word means?

Accept responses.

Yes, we can look at context clues. Where do we find context clues?

Accept responses.

Exactly, in the words and phrases around the unknown word. Raise your hand if you can remember one type of context clue that we have learned.

Quickly review the five types of context clues you have already taught: definition, synonym, antonym, example, and general.

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Genre: Expository or narrative

Teacher:
You have already learned several different ways to figure out unknown words by yourself as you are reading. Today I am going to show you how to think through using both word parts and context clues to figure out the meaning of unknown words as you read. Raise your hand if you can tell me what might happen if you just skip over words that you don't know.

Accept responses.

That's right, you probably won't understand what you are reading. What does the prefix *mis-* mean, Sylvia? Yes, *mis-* means "wrong". So, Sylvia, if you misunderstand what you are reading, you do what? Yes, you understand it wrong. Would that be confusing? Good, so today I am going to teach you the Vocabulary Strategy. This strategy will help you use your knowledge of word parts and context clues to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words.

MODEL AND TEACH

Grouping: Whole class

1. Present the following chart to the class and read through each step.

Figure 96. The Vocabulary Strategy Chart.

The Vocabulary Strategy
If you read a word that you do not understand: 1. Look for CONTEXT CLUES. Reread the sentence and the surrounding sentences. 2. Can you break the WORD into PARTS? (If not, go to Step 3.) a. Is there a PREFIX? What does it mean? b. Is there a SUFFIX? What does it mean? c. Is there a ROOT WORD? What does it mean? d. Put the meaning of the word parts together. What is the meaning of the whole word? 3. GUESS what the word means. 4. INSERT your meaning into the original sentence to see whether it makes sense. 5. If needed, use the DICTIONARY to confirm your meaning.

Based on Baumann, J. F., Font, G., Edwards, E. C., & Boland, E. (2005). Strategies for teaching middle-grade students to use word-part and context clues. In E. H. Hiebert & M. L. Kamil (Eds.), Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing research to practice. *Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Adapted with permission from Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2006).* Vocabulary handbook. *Berkeley, CA: Consortium on Reading Excellence. Reproduction of this material is prohibited without permission.*

Teacher:
This chart is going to guide your thinking as you work through trying to find out what an unknown word means. Eventually, I would like for you to be able to go through this thinking process on your own. But for now, this chart is going to be our guide.

2. Choose a passage from your text and display it on the overhead. For example:

> Sam Houston was the first president of the Texas **republic**. He sent an **ambassador**, an official who represents a country, to the United States. This ambassador's job was to ask that Texas be **annexed**, or added to the country. President Jackson **disapproved**. So, Texas remained an **independent** nation for 10 years.

Teacher:
As I read this passage aloud, follow along and read the last word of every sentence.

Follow along with your finger as you read.

Teacher:
Sam Houston was the first president of the Texas …

Students:
Republic.

Teacher:
He sent an ambassador, an official who represents a country, to the United …

Students:
States.

Continue in this way until you have read the entire passage.

3. Model word one.

Teacher:
OK, the first word with which I am unfamiliar is *republic*. The first step of the Vocabulary Strategy tells us to look for context clues. I'm going to reread the sentence. "Sam Houston was the first president of the Texas republic." OK, so a republic has a president. What else do I know that has a president? A country has a president, so maybe a republic is a country. I don't see an example or a definition of a republic; this clue is kind of general.

The second step asks whether I can break the word into parts. Well, I see the prefix *re-*. *Re-* means "again". And the root word looks like *public*. So if this were a prefix and a root word, the whole word would mean "to be public again". I don't think that makes much sense. Maybe this isn't really a prefix and a root word. I'm going to keep that in mind and move on to Step 3.

Step 3 says to guess what the word means. I think the best definition I have so far is that a republic is a country.

So I'm going to insert my meaning into the original sentence and see whether it makes sense. "Sam Houston was the first president of the Texas country … or country of Texas." Well, that would make sense if Texas were a country at the time.

I'm going to double-check by looking in the dictionary. Caleb, will you turn to page 300 of the dictionary and read the definition of *republic* for us?

HELPFUL HABIT

You can look up the definition before the lesson so that you don't waste any class time waiting on students to locate the word. You can either direct the students to the page or tab the page for them. The most important thing is that students learn to use the dictionary to double-check their own thinking.

Student:
The dictionary says that a republic is "a state or country in which people elect representatives to exercise power for them."

Teacher:
OK, so that makes sense. Texas was a republic, or state or country, and they elected Sam Houston as their president.

4. Model word two.

Teacher:
The next word I am going to try to figure out is *ambassador*. Look at the chart and

raise your hand if you can tell me the first thing I need to do.

Accept responses.

Teacher:
That's right, I'm going to look for context clues by rereading the sentence and the surrounding sentences.

Reread the sentence.

Teacher:
"He sent an ambassador, an official who represents a country, to the United States." There are no signal words, but there is signal punctuation: two commas surrounding the phrase, "an official who represents a country." So I think that is the definition.

I will still look at the next step and see whether I can break the word into smaller parts. I don't see any way to break *ambassador* into parts, so I will move on to Step 3.

Step 3 asks me to guess the meaning of *ambassador*. Well, I think it is an official person who represents a country. The definition context clue told me that.

So now I am going to insert it and see whether it makes sense. "He sent an official person who represents a country to the United States." Yes, that makes sense. Sam Houston sent someone to represent the country of Texas to the United States.

I can check the dictionary to make sure on this one, but usually if the context clue is a definition clue like this, I can be pretty confident that I have the right definition. Let's look, though. Maria, will you look on page 20 of the dictionary and tell me what *ambassador* means.

Student:
An ambassador is "an official of the highest ranking sent by one country as its representative to another country".

Teacher:
So was my definition correct, everyone?

Students:
Yes.

5. Model word three.

Teacher:
Now I want to figure out the meaning of the word *independent*. What is the first thing I need to do, Juanita?

Accept response.

Yes, I need to look for context clues. Step 1 tells me to reread the sentence and surrounding sentences, looking for clues.

Reread the sentence.

Teacher:
"So, Texas remained an independent nation for 10 years." OK, I don't see any clues

or signal words in that sentence. So I will reread the sentence before.

Reread the sentence.

Teacher:
"President Jackson disapproved." That doesn't really give me any clues, but, logically, I wonder what President Jackson disapproved of? If I look at the sentence before, it says that he disapproved of Texas being added to the country. So Texas is not part of the United States; it is by itself. So maybe *independent* means "by yourself".

What should I do next, Tamika?

Accept response.

Teacher:
Yes, now I need to try to break the word into parts. I see the prefix *in-*, which means "not". And the root word is *dependent* or *depend*. I know that a child might depend on his Mom or be dependent on his Mom. What might that word mean, Julie?

Accept response.

Teacher:
Yes, Julie, *depend* might mean "to need someone or something". So if I put those two meanings together, *independent* might mean "to not need someone or something".

Step 3 asks me to guess the meaning of the word. If I put both clues together—the context clues and the word part clues—I think *independent* means "to be alright alone and not need anyone else".

To follow Step 4, I will insert my meaning into the sentence. "So, Texas remained a nation by itself, not needing anyone else, for 10 years." That sort of makes sense.

I'm going to follow Step 5 and check the dictionary to make sure. Joel, will you turn to page 100 of the dictionary and tell us the definition for *independent*?

Student:
The dictionary says that *independent* means "free from any authority or control of something else and able to operate and stand on its own".

Teacher:
So my definition was close, but the dictionary definition makes complete sense. Texas was free from authority from any other nation and able to operate on its own for 10 years. Sometimes the Vocabulary Strategy will give you an idea of the word's meaning, but word parts and context clues may not help you understand *exactly* what a word means.

GUIDED PRACTICE

Grouping: Whole class/sitting with partners

1. Introduce the guided practice activity.

Teacher:
Today I am going to show you how to use the Vocabulary Strategy worksheet to guide you through the process of using the Vocabulary Strategy (see Figure 96).

Figure 97. The Vocabulary Strategy Worksheet.

The Vocabulary Strategy Worksheet

Word _____

Context Sentence _____

_____

1. Look for context clues.
   a. Reread the sentence, looking for signal words and punctuation.

Signal Words and Punctuation:

   b. Reread the sentences before and after the sentence with the word in it.

Context Clues:

2. Look for word parts you know. Tell what each word part means.

Prefix:

Suffix:

Root:

Put the parts together. What does this mean?

3. What do you think the word means? _____

_____

4. Try your meaning in the context sentence. Does it make sense? _____
5. Check the word with a dictionary if you need to. Remember that many words have more than one meaning, so look for the one that goes with the sentence in the book. Were you right? _____

Based on Baumann, J. F., Font, G., Edwards, E. C., & Boland, E. (2005). Strategies for teaching middle-grade students to use word-part and context clues. In E. H. Hiebert & M. L. Kamil (Eds.), Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing research to practice. *Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates; and Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2006).* Vocabulary handbook. *Berkeley, CA: Consortium on Reading Excellence.*

Give each student two copies of a blank Vocabulary Strategy worksheet and project a blank worksheet on the overhead. (For blank worksheets, see Appendix.)

Teacher:
Using the same social studies passage we worked with yesterday, we are going to look for clues to find the meaning of the words *annexed* and *disapproved*. Let's start with the word *annexed*. The first space asks for me to write the unknown word. Our unknown word is *annexed*, so I am going to write *annexed* here. Fill in the first blank on the worksheet.

Teacher:
Below that we need to write our context sentence. The context sentence is the sentence that contains the unknown word. What sentence will I need to write here, Steven?

Student:
"This ambassador's job was to ask that Texas be annexed, or added to the country."

Teacher:
That is correct. I am going to write the context sentence here.

Fill in the second blank.

Now when I look at the rest of the worksheet, I can see that there are five main boxes and that each one leads me through the steps on the Vocabulary Strategy Chart.

2. Continue to guide students as they complete the chart in partners. Focus first on context clues.

Teacher:
The first step tells us to reread the context sentence and surrounding sentences. With your partner, I want you to reread the sentence, looking for context clues. If you find any signal words or punctuation, write them here (*point to the Signal Words box*), and if you see any clues, write them here (*point to the Context Clue box*).

Review signal words and punctuation if necessary.

Allow partners 3–5 minutes to reread and document any context clues or signal words/punctuation. Circulate around the room and be available to help.

Return to the overhead and ask for volunteers to share context clues and signal words/punctuation. Record answers on the overhead.

Students should have found the signal word "or," preceded by a comma. Also, they should have been able to locate the definition clue "added to the country".

3. Proceed in the same way as you focus on word part clues.

Teacher:
Step 2 asks whether we can break the word into parts. Do I see a prefix? No, so I will draw a slash here and here. Do I see a suffix? Yes, *-ed* is a suffix, and I know that means "past tense," but that doesn't really tell me anything.

Record on worksheet.

Raise your hand if you can tell me the root word. Accept responses. Yes, the root word is *annex*. I will write that here, but the word part clues haven't given us very much information about the meaning of the word. If I put the meanings together, all I know is that *annexed* is the past tense of *annex*.

4. Guide students through Step 3 of the strategy.

   Teacher:
   Step 3 asks us what we think the word means. With your partner, use the context clues and word part clues to come up with a definition. Write your answers under Step 3.

   Allow students a few minutes to discuss and write. They should be able to locate and write the definition clue "added to a country".

   Raise your hand if you can give me a definition.

   Accept responses.

   That's right, we found a definition context clue that gives us the definition! So let's try it in our sentence.

5. Guide students as they complete Step 4, trying the word in a sentence to see whether it makes sense.

   Teacher:
   Please read the sentence with our definition inserted, Marcus.

   Student:
   "This ambassador's job was to ask that Texas be added to the country."

   Teacher:
   Does that make sense?

   Students:
   Yes.

6. Have students verify their answer using a dictionary.

   Teacher:
   OK, we feel pretty confident because our context clue was a definition clue, but let's look it up in the dictionary, just to make sure. Gina, would you look on page 22 and read us the definition of *annex*?

   Student:
   Annex means "to take over a territory and incorporate it with another country or state".

   Teacher:
   We can assume that *incorporate* means "add," so does our definition still make sense?

   Students:
   Yes.

   Teacher:
   Yes, it does. Nice work.

7. Following the same procedure as above, lead the students through each step of the worksheet, one section at a time. This time students will find the meaning of a second word (*disapproved*). Make sure that students understand that each worksheet is used to find the definition for one word.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners

- Choose a selection from the students' science or social studies text.
- Highlight or write 2–4 words that may be unknown to your students.
- Working with a partner, have the students read the text and determine the meaning of the unknown words. Ask pairs to follow the Vocabulary Strategy worksheet and complete one worksheet for each word.
- Circulate around the room and be available for guidance.

GENERALIZATION

Teacher:
Raise your hand if you can tell me a way that the Vocabulary Strategy can help you in your other classes.

Student:
Well, when we come to a word we don't understand, we can remember to look for context clues and also for word parts. Then we can use what clues we've found to guess what the word means.

Teacher:
Right! You don't have to have a form like the one we used as we learned the strategy. You just need to remember to look for *both* word part clues and context clues. Now if any of you use this strategy to figure out the meaning of a word in another class, let me know. I'd love for you to share your experience with the rest of the class.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Check worksheets for appropriate responses.

PERIODIC REVIEW/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

Periodically have students complete a Vocabulary Strategy worksheet with a word or words in an instructional-level passage (guided practice) or an independent-level passage (independent practice).

Choose a section from the students' science or social studies text and highlight a few words that the students might not know. Have the students figure out the meaning of the unknown word or words by following the Vocabulary Strategy—with the Vocabulary Strategy worksheet at first.

Keep the steps of the Vocabulary Strategy posted in your room so that students can refer to it when they come to a word they do not know.

Always remind students that they can use this strategy in their other classes and any time they read. It is most important that students are able to generalize the strategies you teach them.