Vocabulary Strategies

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Vocabulary Strategies

Analogies: (Sejnost & Thiese, 2001) – Procedure: (a) select a concept and explain how it relates to a concept that the students recognize (e.g. see the example below), (b) model the graphic organizer on an overhead, (c) have small groups generate similarities and differences, and (d) ask students to identify categories (e.g. rule making that comprise the basis for comparison).

Example: Analogies

Analogies

Similarities and Differences Between the Concepts of:

Congress and a School Principal	
Similarities	Differences
Congress and a principal both set rules and reaulations.	Congress has more members and rules and reaulations.
Both organizations need to work together to achieve aoals.	Congress has nationwide goals.
Neither has complete power regarding issues.	Congress has a Senate and president; a principal has a superintendent and a school board
Both organizations represent other groups of people.	Congress rules the nation; principals rule the school community.
Both have committees.	Congress has joint committees; principals have assistants and parent advisors.
Both have processes for achieving goals.	Congress votes; principals make rulings based on input from others.

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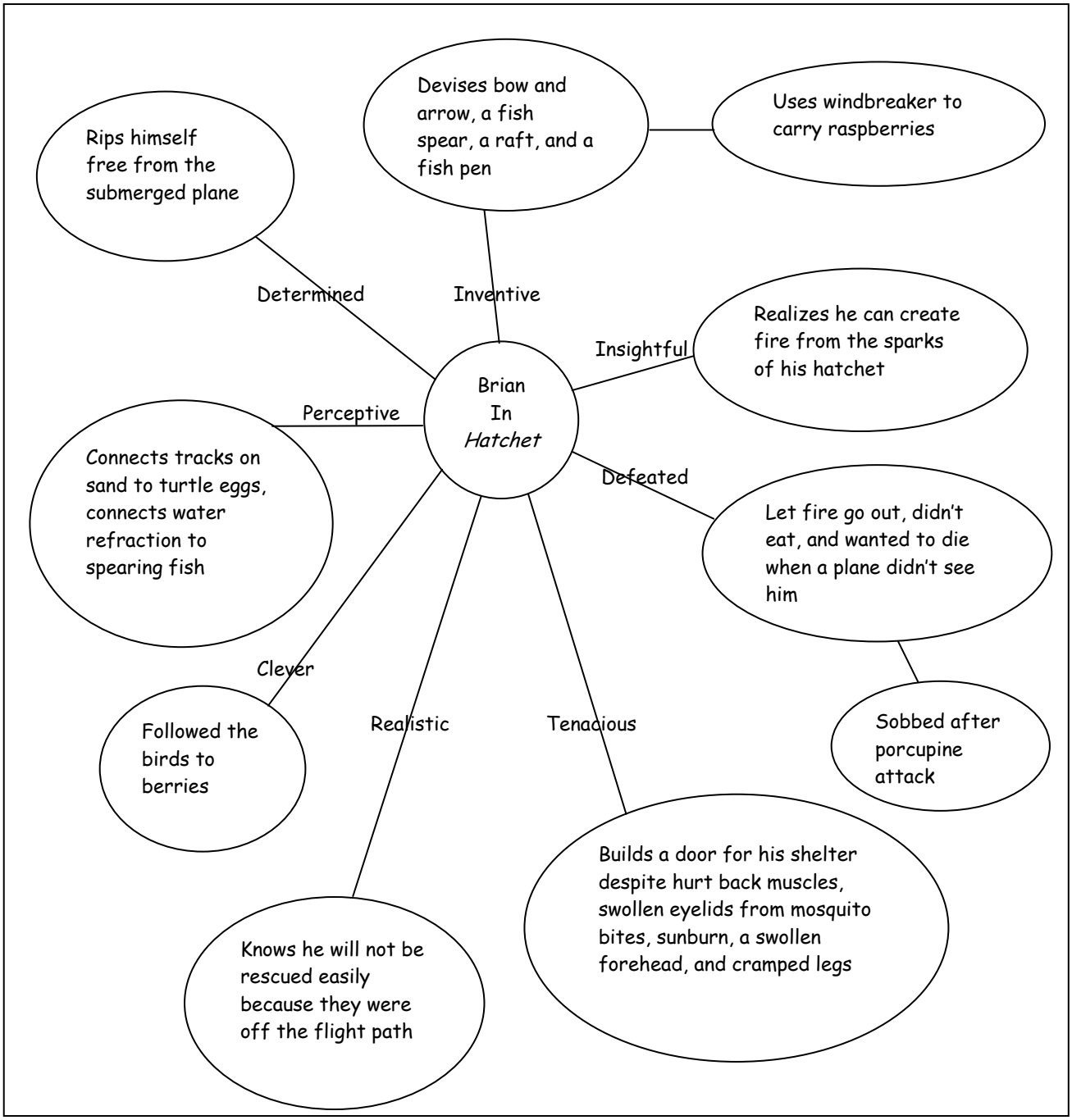
Character Trait Maps: - (Burns, 1999) – Words for labeling character traits are often missing in student's vocabularies. Even if the words are known, students are often unable to distinguish the subtle differences among connotations. Procedure: (a) after reading, have the class discuss the characters and in pairs have them try to visually verbalize the character traits (see example that follows), and (b) as a class, again, have the students compare their maps in order to select the words they think work best.



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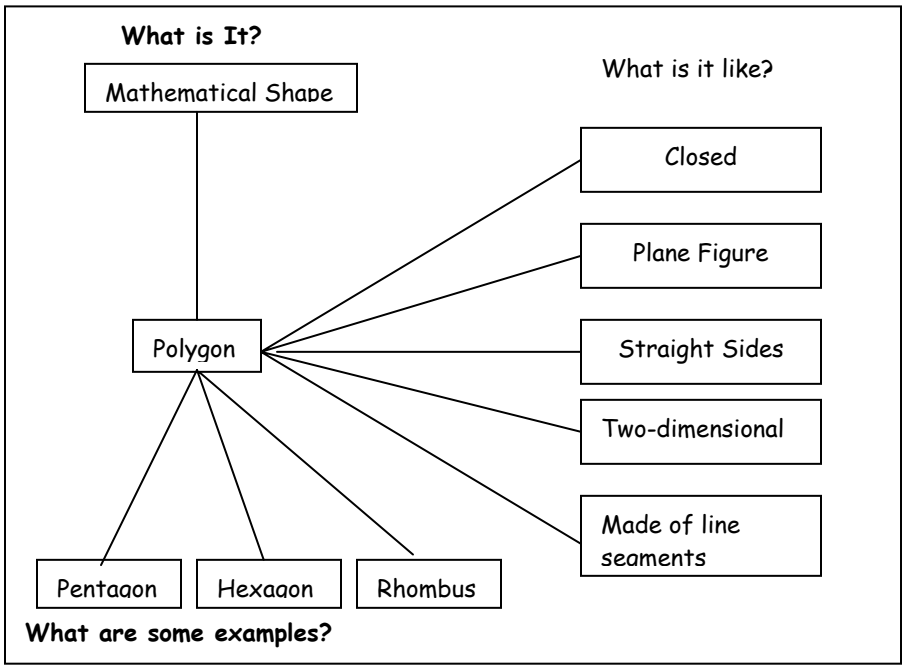
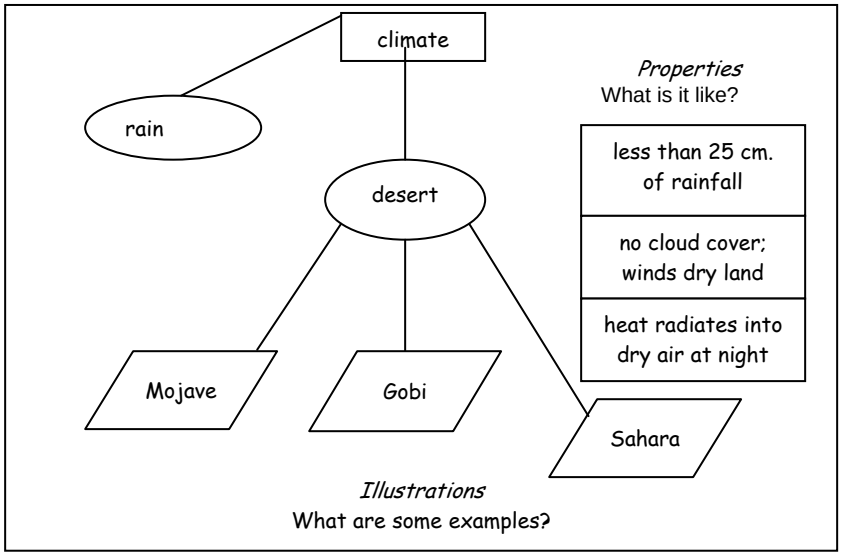
Click and Clunk – (Sadler, 2001) – Have students create two columns on a paper labeled "click" and "clunk." They read a passage and then list words they understand or don't understand in the two columns. Direct instruction or group discussion is used to clarify meanings of the words.

Concept Definition Mapping - (Billmeyer & Barton, 1998) - This strategy teaches students the meaning of key concepts by helping them understand the essential attributes, qualities, or characteristics of a word's meaning. Procedure: (a) use an overhead to display an example of a concept definition map (b) select a term and have students brainstorm information for such a map, (c) have students work in pairs to complete a map with a term you have chosen from the unit, and (d) instruct students to write a complete definition, using the information from their maps. See examples below.





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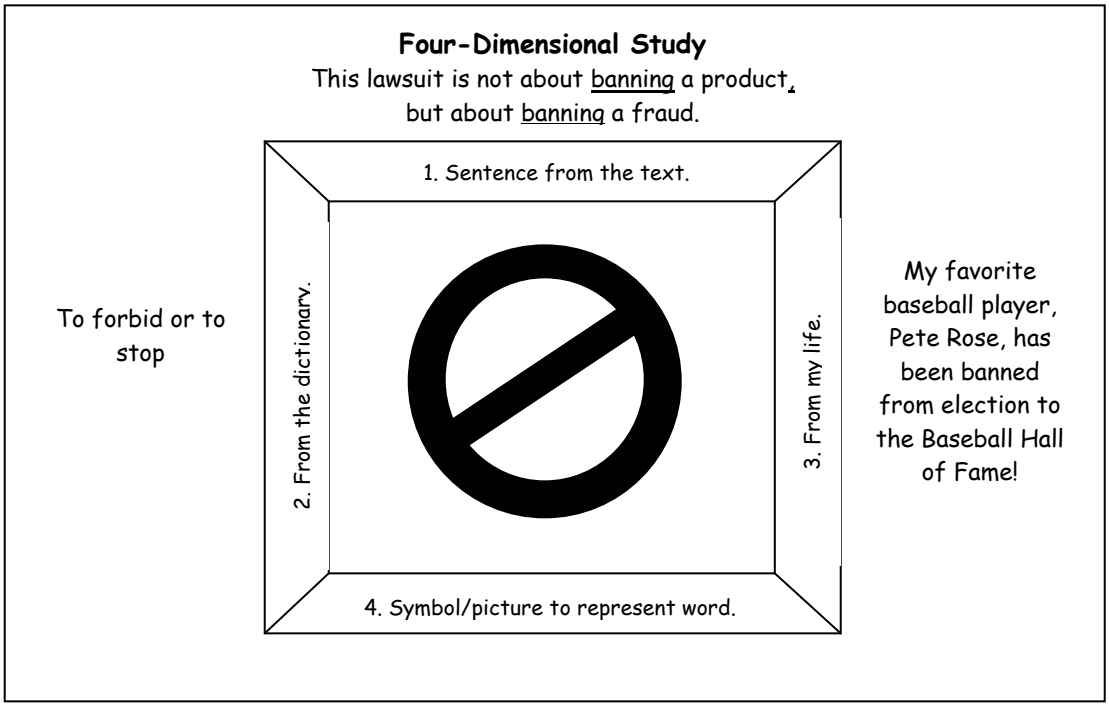
Connect-Two - (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000) - A vocabulary strategy which can be used before, during or after reading text. Procedure: Given a list of words, students try to identify connections between any two words on the list and explain the rationale. For example, they might explain the connections between "benefit" and "benefactor."

Contextual Redefinition - (Readence, Moore, & Rickelman, 2001) - It is essential that readers are able to use context clues to derive meaning; this strategy provides a format for students to realize this importance. Procedure: (a) select unfamiliar words from the text that are central to comprehending important concepts, (b) write a sentence for each word onto a transparency, (c) ask groups of students to provide a meaning for each word and to defend their guess, (d) then present the words in the original text, and (e) students consult a dictionary for verification. In essence, appropriate reading behavior is being modeled for the class.

Find Someone Who - (Kagan, 1992) - This is an interactive strategy to help students practice new vocabulary. Procedure: (a) prepare a *Find Someone Who* ... form that looks similar to a bingo card, (b) in each space put a new vocabulary word, (c) give one form to each student and give the class about ten minutes to roam and get definitions (i.e. the name of the student and what he or she gives as the meaning of the word or concept), and (d) the student who gets most of the spaces filled without using anyone twice 'wins.' Translations into the mother tongue are acceptable.

Four-Dimensional Study - (Stejnost & Thiese, 2001) - This strategy encourages students to learn vocabulary from different approaches: context clues, dictionary definitions, application, and visual. Procedure: (a) choose 5 to 10 words that are unfamiliar, (b) instruct students to do the following on an index card - copy a sentence from the text that uses the word, write the dictionary meaning, write a personal knowledge or experience, and draw a picture. See example below.



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4-Square Vocabulary Approach - (Stephens & Brown, 2000) - This provides an interactive way to introduce key vocabulary words and helps students to draw on their prior knowledge and personal experience. The strategy takes less time as students learn how to use the strategy on their own. Procedure: (a) have the students fold and number their papers into four squares, (b) in square 1, students write the key term while the teacher presents the word in context and explains its definition, (c) in square 2 students write an example from personal experience that fits the term (can be done in the mother tongue if necessary), (d) in square 3 students write a non-example of the term, and (e) in square 4 students write their own definition of the word. See the example below.

(square 1) compromise compromised compromising	(square 2) Sometimes people have to settle things by giving up something they want. Some government delegates had to agree to give up some things they anted to reach an agreement.
(square 3) The fighting couple could not settle their differences and so they divorced. An agreement between the two counties was not reached, and so a war was started.	(square 4) A compromise is an agreement between two or more people or groups where both must give up something.

Frayer Model - (Billmeyer & Barton, 1998) - This is a word categorization strategy which provides students with different ways to think about the meaning of word concepts and develop understanding of content area reading vocabulary. Students form hierarchical word relationships by listing essentials, examples, non-essentials, and non-examples of a particular word (i.e. knowing what a concept isn't can help define what it is). Procedure: (a) assign concepts to groups, (b) explain the attributes of the Frayer model, (c) complete one with the class, (d) have students work in pairs to complete their concepts, and (f) have students share and then display their boards so the concepts can be continuously during the unit of study. See the example on the following page.

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DINOSAURS - PREHISTORIC REPTILES	
ESSENTIALS: prehistoric reptiles: backbone, lay eggs, straight legs, walk or run fast	NON-ESSENTIALS: cold blooded (some may have been warm blooded); eat meat (some eat plants): chew food, hunt in packs
EXAMPLES: brontosaurus, allosaurus, stegosaurus, diplodocus	NON-EXAMPLES: snakes, crocodiles, turtles, lizards

Knowledge Rating - (Stejnost & Thiese, 2001) - Procedure: (a) distribute a list of words appropriate to the topic, (b) ask students to respond individually to each category by placing an 'x' in the boxes, (c) have students share their responses in small groups, and (d) have a whole class discussion to foster prior knowledge about the topic. See examples below.

Knowledge Rating for Science						
Word	**Have Seen or Heard**	**Can Say**	**Can Define**	**Can Spell**	**Can Use in a Sentence**	**Don't Know at All**
diffusion	X					
permeable						X
glucose	X	X		X		
dialysis	X	X	X	X	X	
endocytosis						X
phagocytosis						X
impermeable						X
osmosis	X	X	X	X	X	

Knowledge Rating for Social Studies						
Word	**Have Seen or Heard**	**Can Say**	**Can Define**	**Can Spell**	**Can Use in a Sentence**	**Don't Know at All**
oligarchy						X
anarchy	X	X	X	X	X	
democracy	X		X			
communism		X		X		
socialism						X
impeachment	X	X				
monarchy		X		X		
banishment	X					

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Independent Word Learning Strategies - (Barton, 2001) - These three methods consistently help students learn to determine meaning of unfamiliar words on their own:

1. Modeling context clues - When you are reading together with your students, be on the lookout for words you think they might not know. Stop and ask them what they think the words might mean in this text. Walk them through the process of looking around the unfamiliar word for words that offer clues to meaning, and tell them they are using context clues. Modeling this strategy on a regular basis a few times a week will help students begin to apply them on their own;
2. Structural analysis - Reading also offers many opportunities for this strategy. Structural analysis means to look within an unfamiliar word for familiar word parts. Students can learn through your modeling to use this strategy if you explicitly show them how it works and practice with them regularly; and
3. Using the dictionary - It is worth the time to teach students how to use the dictionary to look up unknown words since they tend to note only the first few words that appear in the dictionary definition when they look up a word. A practical format for helping students use the dictionary productively is to have them answer two questions when they define a word: "What larger group of 'things' does this word belong to?" and "What makes this word different from the rest of its group?"

Magnet Summaries - (Buehl, 2001) - This strategy involves the identification of key words - magnet words from a reading- that students then use to organize information into a summary (prewriting). Procedure: (a) have students read a short portion of text, looking for key terms to which the details in the passage seem to connect, (b) on a transparency model writing details from the passage that are connected to the magnet word, (c) distribute index cards for recording magnet words while students read the rest of the passage (tell younger students they should identify a magnet word for each paragraph or heading), (d) in groups have students share their words and decide on the best magnet words and generate the details, (e) model for students how the information can be organized into a sentence, (f) have students construct sentences for their remaining cards (on scratch paper first and then on the back of the cards), and (g) direct students to arrange the cards in the order they want their summary to read. See example on following page.

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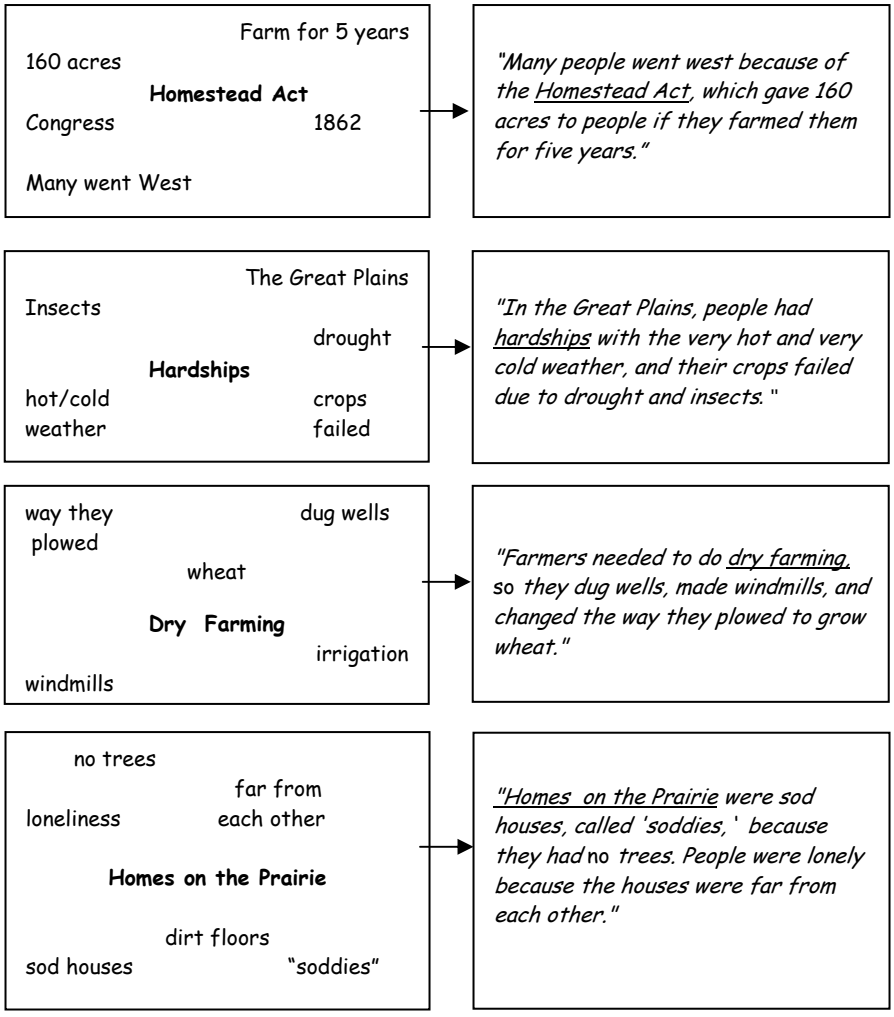
MAGNET SUMMARIES FOR HISTORY



Missing Words - (Stephens & Brown, 2000) - Missing words - an adaptation of the cloze procedure - engages students in reading a selection with certain words deleted, and then predicting in writing the missing words. It helps students learn to draw upon prior knowledge, use meta-cognitive skills, think inferentially, and understand relationships. Procedure: (a) the teacher selects a passage that the students haven't read and deletes certain words - leaving the beginning and ending sentences intact- (the deleted words may be key vocabulary words, certain parts of speech, or based on a numerical pattern like every seventh word), (b) the teacher also models - using a different passage - how to skim a passage for an overview and how to read the material looking for clues, (c) the teacher uses a think-aloud to model the meta-cognitive process of rereading the passage - monitoring the word choices and their effect upon the meaning of the passage.

Open Word Sort - (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000) - A strategy for before, during or after reading text. Procedure: (a) Student pairs are given words written on individual strips of paper, (b) they collaborate to categorize the words by identifying and explaining relationships among them, (c) students then read and reorganize the words in a way that would be effective for teaching key

information to others, and (d) following the reading they use the resorted words to explain the reading or answer questions.

Semantic Feature Analysis – (Johnson & Pearson, 1978) - This develops vocabulary concepts and categorization skills when students find similarities and differences in related words. Procedure: (a) write a category above a matrix, (b) list words or examples in the category vertically in the matrix, (c) write features horizontally on the matrix, and (d) have students study each feature and write a '+' if the word contains the feature and a '-' if the word does not. The strategy helps students form broader vocabulary concepts and review information by comparing and contrasting words in the same category. See example below.

DINOSAURS

	Triassic (220m)	Jurassic (213m)	Cretaceous (144m)	Meat Eaters	Plant Eaters	Large	Small
Tyrannosaur	--	--	+	+	--	+	--
Coelophysis	+	--	--	+	--	--	+
Bronotosauris	--	+	--	--	+	+	--
Trodan	--	--	+	+	--	--	+
Duckbills	--	--	+	+	--	+	--
Prosauropods	+	--	--	--	+	+	--
Alosaurus	--	+	--	+	--	+	--

Semantic Gradient Scales - (Blachowicz & Fisher, 1996) - This scale helps students to see how new words fit into a patterns *of* known words. Procedure: (a) establish a semantic gradient scale (see example), (b) have the students develop words that fit between the two poles (e.g. developing words between courageous and cowardly might coordinate with a literature lesson while a freedom list might fit with a social studies unit).

THE SEMANTIC GRADIENT SCALE

Hottest	**Courageous**	**Free To Do As You Please**
scorching		
sultry		
steamy		
tropical		
balmy		
sunny		
cool		
nippy		
raw		
freezing		
frigid		
glacial		
Coldest	**Cowardly**	**Totally Controlled**

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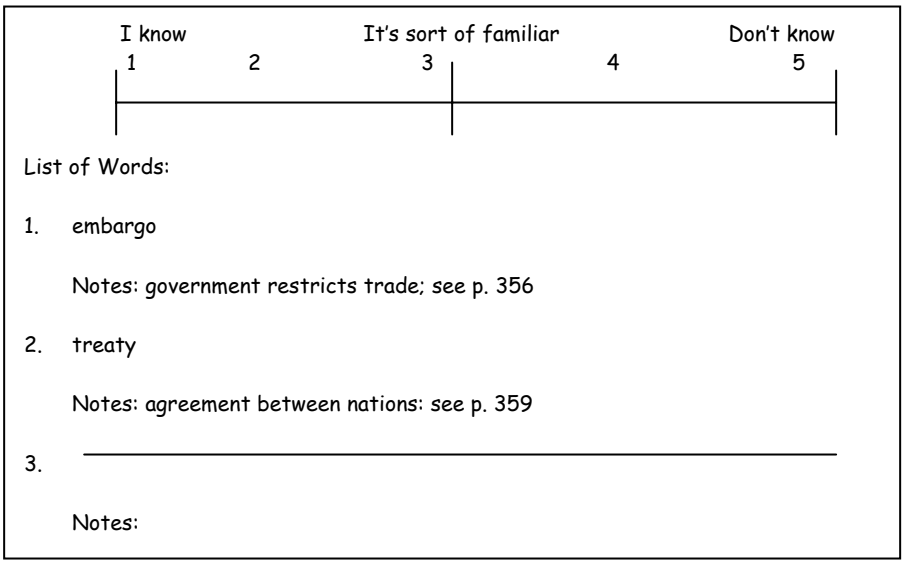
10 Most Important Words - (Stephens & Brown, 2000) - This is designed to help students become aware of the value of key concepts in developing content knowledge. It can be used as a 'pre' or 'post' unit activity. Procedure: (a) the teacher introduces a topic by helping students think about what they already know, (b) students are then asked to predict in pairs what they think the ten most important words of the unit will be, (c) then pairs share their lists with another pair - and they agree to a final list of ten, (d) the lists are continually referred to, revised and at the end of the unit the class reflects on which ten were the most important after all.

Visual Structures - (Barton, 2001) - This strategy is intended to replace the common one of selecting in advance words from students' reading in order to preview them with the class (one that Barton suggests doesn't work in spite of good intentions). He suggests making a clear connection between words and important concepts from the texts through the use of visual structures that show the relationships explicitly. Examples include word webs or semantic mapping, word weave or matrixes, or vocabulary thermometers. Once the visual structure is created, decide when to introduce it (i.e. before-during-after reading) and where to display it (i.e. so that it can be revisited during the unit). Later, have students re-categorize words into a new structure, to retell the story using the structure for help, create a role play using the vocabulary, as an organizer for responding in writing, or as a performance assessment where students have to recreate the structure from memory.

Vocab Alert! - (Stephens & Brown, 2000) – The design of the Vocab Alert! Helps make students aware of important terms prior to reading or a lecture. It serves as a form of self-assessment as well as an assessment tool for teachers. Procedure: (a) the teacher selects the most important words (between 5 and 10) from the text, (b) using the continuum below, students self assess their familiarity with each term, (c) then the teacher introduces the significance of the terms to the topic, (d) as the students read/hear the text, they record information, and (e) afterwards the teacher engages the class in discussion to further clarify and develop understanding of the terms.



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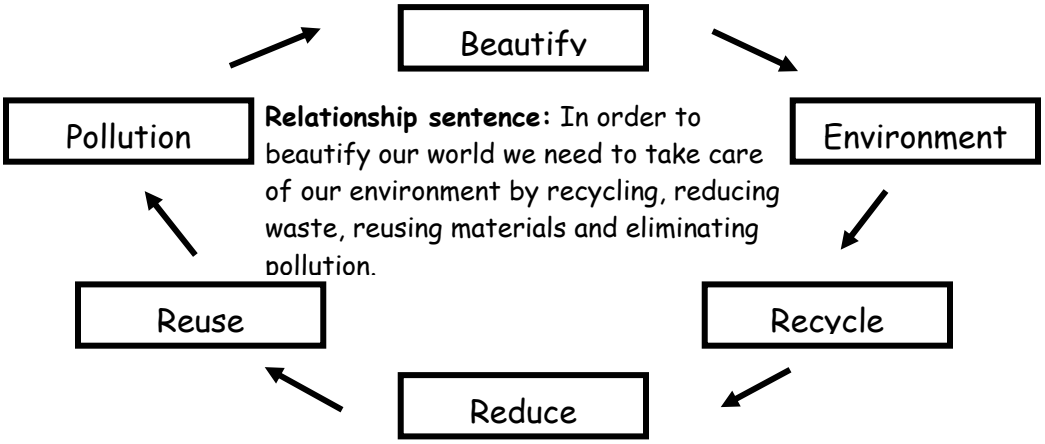
Vocab-marks - (Stephens & Brown, 2000) -A Vocab-mark is a bookmark made from laminated paper with spaces for students to list unfamiliar words as they encounter them in their reading. Procedure: (a) the teacher models finding unfamiliar words while reading and how to record them on a Vocab-mark and (b) students make their own and begin to list new words, the page number, and a brief definition (either through a dictionary or a friend). Some teachers structure the use of Vocab-marks by specifying what students must look for (e.g. three technical terms, two unfamiliar terms, etc).

Vocabulary Cards - (Kagan, 1990) - These cards are designed to generate higher level thinking among students in cooperative learning groups. Procedure: (a) the teacher provides a group of four with the vocabulary words from the unit, (b) after the question is read students pair up in the group of four to discuss the answer, and (c) then the pairs share their responses with one another; or (a) the teacher provides pairs with the vocabulary words, (b) student 1 asks the question, (b) both students write their answers down and then share, and (c) student 2 asks the next question (and so on). Cards are available from www.kaganonline.com.

Vocabulary Concept Chain - (Billmeyer, 2003) - Students study the vocabulary relating to the concept being studied. In pairs, they try to determine how the vocabulary words are related in order to organize the words into a concept chain (e.g. a circular set of words). After all of the vocabulary words are placed in the appropriate order, students write a relationship sentence which summarizes how the chain of words expresses the meaning of the concept. See example.

Vocabulary Concept Chain Example



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Vocabulary Connections - (Brisk & Harrington, 2000) - Choose a reading selection. Choose words crucial to understanding the selection - preferably in limited semantic fields. Have students look up the words in a dictionary - in class or as homework. Have students discuss their definitions with one another in class (i.e. give examples in their own lives of the selected words and their meanings). Have students read the selection. Have students retell or write a summary of the selection - using the new vocabulary.

Vocabulary Elaboration – (Brown, Phillips, and Stephens, 1993 in Billmeyer, 2003) – The strategy has students record a new word, the date it was encountered, and the context in which the word was found. Students propose a definition and check it against a dictionary or glossary and then they provide examples and non-examples based on their experiences. Students also record characteristics or elements which are situational to help them understand different meanings of the same words. Students work in groups to complete a graphic organizer. These are shared with other groups. See example on next page.

Vocabulary Graphics - (Stejnost & Thiese, 2001) - Procedure: (a) give students 5 x 7 index cards, (b) instruct students to find the meaning of a given word and write it in the center of the card, (b) tell them to record the following information in each of the card's four corners: a sentence using the word, a synonym, an antonym, an illustration, and (d) hook the cards together for unit vocabulary file. See the example below.

SENTENCE:
When I think of a NUCLEUS, I think of a sunny-side up egg!

SYNONYM:
core

WORD: Nucleus
DEFINITION: A nucleus is the center

ILLUSTRATION:

ANTONYM:
edge

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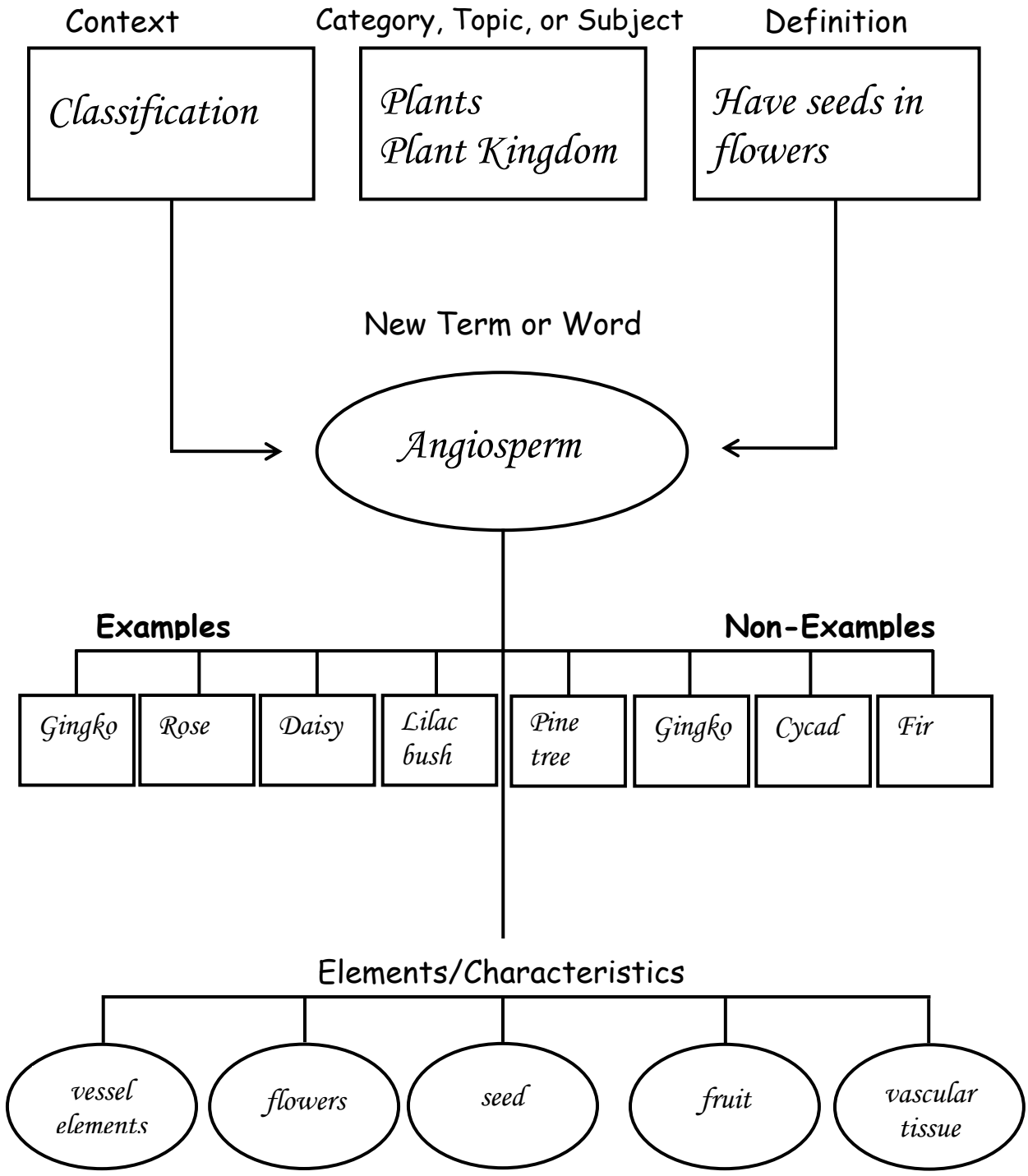
Vocabulary Elaboration Strategy Example



Brown, Phillips, and Stephens, 1993

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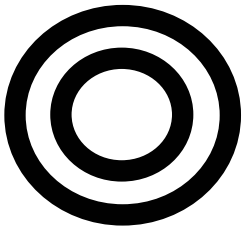
Vocabulary Notebook or Journal - (Billmeyer, 2004) - After reading or discussing, students keep track of their vocabulary development in a notebook or journal by recording how a word is used in different contexts, sketching what it means, and providing meaningful examples which link to their lives. Notebooks and journals can be shared with peers. See example.

Vocabulary Notebook Example

1. **word:** *concentric* page: 5
2. **context:** *"There were more than a dozen vessels of various kinds, formed roughly into concentric circles."*
3. **definition:** *having a common center*
4. **antonyms:** *imbalanced*
5. **predicted definition:** *round*
6. **association or symbol:**



Vocabulary Writing in Math – (Billmeyer, 2004) – Learning math is often equated to learning a new language due to the vocabulary-dense texts and conceptual context within which vocabulary is presented. One way to help students assimilate mathematical language is to have them create their own vocabulary journal as follows:

WORD	PICTURE	DEFINITION
yard	ft ft ft	A standard unit of measure made up of three feet. It is smaller than a meter.

Vocabulary Story Map - (Blachowicz & Fisher, 1996) Integrating new vocabulary with students' schema or prior experiences makes them more accessible. Procedure: for an upcoming story, map out the story line choosing vocabulary words that are critical to the story elements (see example). The possible big ideas section may not be in the story but are needed for effective discussion and the vocabulary should be used multiple times in discussing, explaining, summarizing, and responding to the story. See example below.

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"THE NECKLACE" (Vocabulary Story Map)

Characters

Mathilde, who believes there is nothing more humiliating than to look poor among women who are rich.
M. Loisel, who gives his wife 400 francs for a ball gown.
She suffered ceaselessly from the ugliness of her curtains.

Setting

The vestibule of the palace
The ministerial ball
A tented garret

Problem

Mathilde loses a borrowed diamond necklace and is sick with chagrin and anguish.
M. Loisel borrows money and accepts ruinous obligations.
They are impoverished by the debt.

Resolution

M. and Me. Pay the accumulations of debt and interest for years. After the debt is paid, Mathilde sees the friend from whom she borrowed the necklace and finds out it was only paste.

Possible Big Ideas

Putting on airs, humiliation, egotism, arrogance, conceit, vanity, disdain, haughtiness, destitute, indigent, irony, false pride, image, deprivation, poverty, calamity, compromised, luxuries

Word Boxes/Journals & Logs - (Fogarty, 2001) - These are based on the same principles but are for different age groups. For younger students, shoeboxes are used for individual word boxes. Students gather new words each day using 8 inch *x* 3 inch colored construction strips to record them. Students play the game "Go Fish" mixing their word cards with partners. When students know their words, they keep them (unknown words are discarded). Word strips are then used to create a story - some- of which are illustrated, bound and read to others. Over the months students will see their own progress. Vocabulary journals and logs serve the same purpose for older students as they use their growing list of words to better understand content specific material.

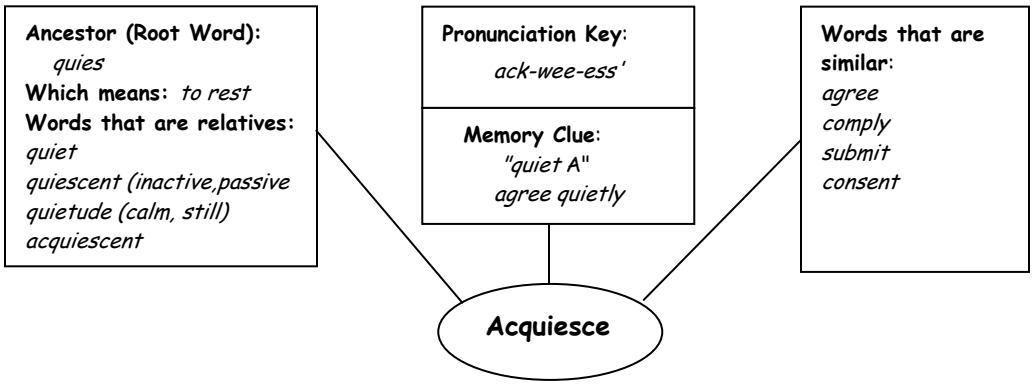
Word Chains - (Stephens & Brown, 2000) - A word chain provides students with a structure to explore relationships among words, understand how they can be used, and remember their meanings. Procedure: (a) the teacher selects 5 to 7 new vocabulary words that are related to the same concept and models how to develop a word chain based on the connections, (b) the students - in pairs - are given a group of words, (c) the students develop a word chain and then share it with another pair (or the rest of the class), and (d) finally each student writes a short paragraph using the new words in a way that demonstrates their connection.

Word Cards Strategy - (Brisk & Harrington. 2000) - Procedure: Prepare strips of strong cardboard. Each day have each student give a word; write it on the card. Give the cards to the students to read alone or to trace the letters. Keep a file box in which to place the cards (first write the names

of the children on the cards). Every day have the children find their own words, sit with a classmate, and read their words to each other. If they can't remember their words, sit and help them. Once students have 20 to 30 cards, use these follow-up activities:

. Taking a few and checking to see if they remember them
. Choosing one to elicit discussion of a topic by a group or the whole class
. Having the students write their word and draw a picture
. Having students put together a dictionary or create a game with the words

Word Family Tree - (Buehl, 2001) - This strategy involves students in connecting a key term to its origins, to related words or words that serve a similar function, and to situations in which one might expect the word to be used. Procedure: (a) select a group of target words for students to investigate (i.e. pivotal words in a story, a unit of study, or general-high utility vocabulary) and (b) have students work with partners or in cooperative groups to complete the organizer using appropriate resources. See example.



Definition: *to go along reluctantly, to give in maybe even if you really don't want to*

A sentence where you found this word:
Eventually the Native Americans acquiesced to the treaty, even though they felt betrayed by the government.

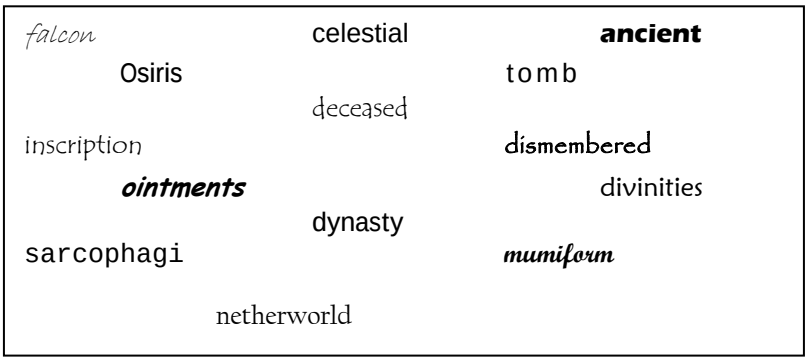
Who would say it? Pick three kinds of people who might say this word and write a sentence showing how they might use it:

Politician	*Judge*	*Business Person*
After a few changes to the bill, the senator acquiesced to vote for it.	*The judge told the jury that every member had to acquiesce to reach the verdict.*	*I will acquiesce to buy your computers if you guarantee that they will work for my company.*

Word of the Week - (Stephens & Brown, 2000) - This process of making new words their own helps students to construct an ever-widening vocabulary. Procedure: (a) students identify a new word that they are interested in adding to their vocabularies, (b) they list the word, the part of speech, the

definitions, and a sentence, (c) students use 'their word' in class all week, and students share their words with partners, then small groups, then the class.

Word Splash - (Burns, 1999) - Word splash sounds very simple but an amazing amount of connected information is shared in a relatively short amount of time. The strategy may not produce precision with vocabulary but when the words are encountered in the text, they will not be complete strangers. Procedure: (a) a variety of words that are integral to the unit are spread across a transparency, (b) the teacher elicits from the student what is already known about the terms - including their use in sentences, and (c) the teacher checks off the words as they a re used, (d) The next step is to predict the story based on the word splash. Seethe example below.



Word Walls - (Pinnell & Fountas, 1998) - Procedure: (a) be selective and *stingy* about what words go up there, limiting the words to those really common words that students need a lot in writing, (b) add words gradually - about five a week, (c) make them accessible where everyone can see them, write them in big letters, and use a variety of colors, (d) practice the words by chanting and writing them in different ways (i.e. magnetic letters, sand, portable word walls), (e) do a variety of review activities, (e) make sure that word-wall words are spelled correctly in any writing the students do. See examples in their books!

Zip Cloze - (Burns, 1999) - Procedure: Put a reading passage on an overhead and block out words with masking tape. Choosing selected vocabulary words seems more useful than deleting every seventh word (the usual doze). Students use all the strategies they know to guess the missing words. When the tape is guessed, the tape is *zipped* off and students can compare their choice with the author's.