

Vocabulary Strategies

Appendix D

GRADE

2

Vocabulary development is integrated within each learning experience, introducing or reinforcing understanding of specific words and concepts within the context of the learning experiences and the cluster.

A variety of vocabulary strategies may be used to assist students in activating, acquiring, and applying the appropriate vocabulary. Strategies may be modified to suit different grades.

Activate

Using a word processor, students type new vocabulary into a word bank. Students may change the colour and/or font of the words they recognize and explain the meaning to a peer, or highlight related words and explain their relationship to a peer.

Grades 1–4

Students come to class dressed in a costume that represents a new vocabulary word or dramatizes the meaning of new vocabulary. Students guess the meaning of the word/concept that is illustrated.

Grades K–4

Acquire

Using a word processor, students type new vocabulary into a word bank. Individually or in collaborative groups, students create a picture dictionary, inserting digital images or clip art representing the new vocabulary. Alternately, they create a talking dictionary, recording and inserting sound clips explaining the word, or using it correctly in a sentence.

TIP: A volunteer may help students record and insert sound clips with the appropriate pictures.

Grades 1–4

Enter vocabulary words in an electronic spelling program so that students may complete pre-programmed spelling activities.

Grades 1–4

Using graphics software, students create mini-posters that include the vocabulary word, an illustration, and/or a definition. Print and display mini-posters, or set as desktop wallpaper.

Grades 1–4

Students use sandpaper letters and crayons to do word rubbings for new vocabulary. Alternatively, students cover pre-printed word cards with string, beads, or sparkles. Students recite the words aloud while tracing the outline of the word.

Grades K–2

Students physically create new vocabulary words in various media (e.g., with modelling clay or magnetic letters, in sand or with paint).

TIP: Create your own “Etch-a-Sketch®.” Mix tempera paint, cornstarch, and water to a fairly thick consistency, and place the mixture in self-sealing plastic bags. Students use their fingers to trace words in the plastic.

Grades K–2

Students create songs or classroom chants to illustrate the meaning of new vocabulary words.

Grades K–2

Students use “Pocket Definitions” to reinforce new vocabulary. Students write new vocabulary on slips of paper and put them in their pockets. Several times throughout the day, call out “Pocket Definitions!” Students take the slips of paper out of their pockets and practise the words and definitions.

Grades 2–4

Use self-stick notes to label items displayed in an artifact centre (e.g., globe, map...). Students find other items in the classroom that match the new vocabulary and label those items.

Grades K–2

Students create desktop vocabulary placemats. Students illustrate their placemats with new vocabulary, definitions, and pictures representing the new vocabulary. Students may refer to their placemats throughout the cluster.

Grades 1–4

Students match new vocabulary to magazine pictures or clip art illustrating the new word.

Grades K–4

Vocabulary

Students practise new vocabulary using flash cards.

TIP: Have students create a personal set of flash cards.

Grades 2–4

Using print and electronic resources, students research new vocabulary, recording definitions, explanations, and images that illustrate or clarify the meaning of the word.

Grades 2–4

Using a word processor, students create a clip-art collage of images representing new vocabulary. Students record a sound clip of the vocabulary word and insert it next to the related image. Peers predict the vocabulary word each image represents, and check their answer by playing the sound clip.

Grades 2–4

Apply

Using a word processor, students play “Vocabulary Bingo.” Students enter new vocabulary to fill the bingo squares. The teacher provides a definition, explanation, synonym, antonym, or cloze sentence for vocabulary words. Students match words on their bingo card to the given clue, highlighting the word or changing the font or colour. The first student to fill in the card or a designated row or column calls “Bingo!”

TIP: In classrooms with one computer, students may create individual bingo cards and print them.

Grades 2–4

Using word-processing or graphics software, students create word graphics that represent the meaning of new vocabulary words. Students share word graphics in an electronic gallery walk.

Grades 2–4

Collaborative groups of students create “The Answer is...” puzzles using new vocabulary and quiz peers (e.g., “The answer is ‘north, south, east, and west.’ What is the question? The question is ‘What are the four cardinal directions?’”).

Grades 2–4

Students play new vocabulary “Password.” Four students are divided into two teams of two. One student on each team is given a “secret” vocabulary word on a slip of paper. Taking turns, the first team member provides a one-word clue to her or his partner, who attempts to guess the “secret” word. The second team member provides an additional clue to his or her partner. Students continue until the vocabulary word is guessed.

Grades 2–4

Students compose poems (e.g., Cinquain, Haiku...) to illustrate the meaning of new vocabulary.

Grades 2–4

Students play “Vocabulary Beach Ball.” Label a beach ball with vocabulary words. Students sit in a circle and toss the beach ball to a peer. The student who catches the ball reads the word closest to his or her right thumb, defines the word, and/or uses it in a sentence. The student tosses the ball to another peer.

TIP: Students may ask peers for help/clues if they cannot remember the word.

Grades 2–4

Students play “I Spy,” providing clues to match something in the classroom that represents new vocabulary (e.g., I spy something round; I spy something with tiny bit of blue on it; I spy something that spins. Answer: the globe). Peers guess the vocabulary word.

Grades K–4

Reinforce understanding of new vocabulary with exit or permission slips (e.g., students must respond with the correct vocabulary word when given a definition in order to leave for recess).

TIP: Show students a picture illustrating the vocabulary word or provide the word and have students respond with its meaning.

Grades K–4

Vocabulary

Students play “Spelling in Motion” to practise new vocabulary. Taking turns, one student calls out a new vocabulary word, then spells the word out loud, repeats the word, and finally states an action word. Peers perform the action, spelling the word out loud (e.g., One student says “Citizen, c-i-t-i-z-e-n, Citizen, jumping jacks.” Peers do jumping jacks as they spell the word, performing one jumping jack for each letter.)

Grades K–4

Using “Hot Potatoes,” students demonstrate understanding of new vocabulary by completing a teacher-created activity (e.g., cloze passage, crossword puzzle, multiple choice, or matching quiz), using new vocabulary in context.

Grades 1–4

Using animation software or animation features of presentation software, students create an animation illustrating the meaning of cluster vocabulary.

Grades 2–4

Using presentation software, students create an interactive four-slide riddle for new vocabulary words. Students create three clues for each new vocabulary word, entering one clue for each of the first three slides. The fourth slide contains the vocabulary word that answers the riddle. Students share their riddles with peers who use the clues to guess the vocabulary word.

Grades 1–4

