Building Vocabulary Webs

Subject Areas: All subjects

Grade Level: 6 – 12 (ages 11-18)

Time: At least one 45-minute class period; time outside of class as necessary

Lesson Objective:
Students will be better able to comprehend and recall vocabulary words in a content area.

Common Core State Standards:
1. Reading Standards for Grades 6-12 in English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects
   Standard 4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
2. Writing Standards for Grades 6-12 in English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects
   Standard 6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Overview:
Establishing links between concepts and creating visual representations of knowledge leads to deeper cognitive processing and greater retention of information. Use the Vocabulary Web template (Webspiration Classroom™ Starter>Starter Docs>Thinking & Planning>Vocabulary Web) with your students to help them study any set of conceptually related vocabulary. The template leads students to explore the conceptual links between the words and to create visual cues.
Preparation:
- This lesson requires Internet access and the Webspiration Classroom software application published by Inspiration® Software, Inc. It can be accessed by visiting <http://www.webspirationclassroom.com>.

Lesson:
1. Explain that with Webspiration Classroom, students can use a diagram to help them learn a new or difficult set of related vocabulary words. Open the Vocabulary Web template (Webspiration Classroom Starter>Examples>Thinking & Planning>Vocabulary Web) and show students how they can add words to the diagram and entering the definition or explanation for each in a Note.

2. Explain that by adding Symbols and arranging and connecting the words in a meaningful pattern or by clustering certain words together, students will create the visual links which enhance learning and memory. Whenever possible, students can use the Symbol libraries to replace the symbol for each word or concept with an image that provides a visual cue.

3. Open the Vocabulary Web Example (Webspiration Classroom Starter>Examples>English Language Arts>Vocabulary Web Example) so students have an idea of a finished diagram. Point out the use of symbols and the enhanced arrows in the web which add visual meaning and make information easier to remember.
4. Once you have given students a list of conceptually linked vocabulary, they can complete their own diagrams. Be sure that students know how to use the **Hyperlink** tool for any useful websites. Students can switch to **Outline View** to add details.

5. Students can obtain feedback about their diagrams from the teacher or other students at any point in the process. This can be done by using the collaboration tools. Documents can be shared with others using the **Collaborate Tab**. The **Comment Tab** can be used to provide comments, or the **Chat Tab** can be used, if it is turned on at your school, to discuss the sentences in real time.

6. Students can print out their diagrams and outlines for home study and/or submit their completed diagrams and outlines for evaluation.

**Adaptations / Extensions:**

- This lesson can be used in any content area that requires students to learn vocabulary words which are conceptually related. The lesson can also be adapted to help students learn a set of root words. Students can enter sample words containing the root words, as well as definitions into **Notes**.

- If all students have created templates on the same set of words, lead a discussion about the different visual representations of how the concepts are related. This allows for varying perspectives to be shared and for clarification of any misunderstood concepts.

- Students can create diagrams on different sets of words, then “publish” their work by making a brief oral presentation to the class.