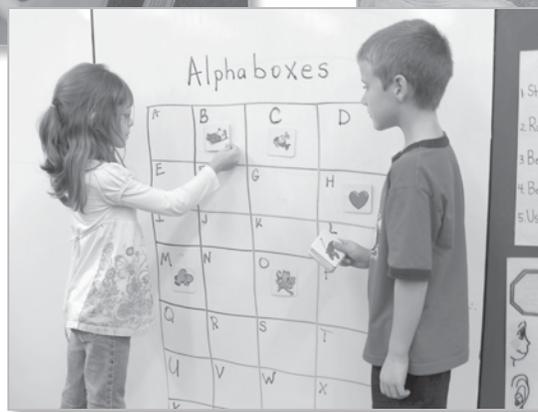# Vocabulary

Word Awareness with **Word Jars** technique

Associating with **Reflection Connection** technique

Categorizing with **Alphaboxes** technique

The NRP report states, "reading vocabulary is crucial to the comprehension process of a skilled reader" (NICHD, 2000, p. 4-3). Research shows that the size of a reader's vocabulary influences both comprehension and fluency (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002, 2008; Blachowicz & Fisher, 2000, 2006; Flood, Jensen, Lapp, & Squire, 1991; Robb, 1997). Students need many opportunities for developing a rich vocabulary through listening, speaking, reading, and writing in an integrated manner. Vocabulary instruction should be an integral component in a daily literacy block. Integrating vocabulary instruction provides students with numerous opportunities to manipulate and learn new vocabulary words. Incorporating vocabulary instruction throughout the content areas will encourage students to make connections to new and already known information, discuss meanings of new words, and demonstrate and appropriately apply the new words, providing multiple re-exposures to the words. Encouraging students to think strategically when learning new words is essential.

Vocabulary knowledge is cumulative and takes multiple exposures in a variety of meaningful contexts for words to be applicable and committed to long-term memory (Akhavan, 2007; Marzano et al., 2001; Misulis, 1999; Stahl & Nagy, 2006).

This chapter offers vocabulary strategies and techniques that enhance students' understanding of new words and concepts. These strategies include giving both definitional and contextual information about new words, performing cognitive operations when introducing words, and talking about new words constantly (McEwan, 2002). If students do not understand the meaning of the words they read, the reading process merely becomes meaningless decoding (Pinnell & Fountas, 1998). These strategies will help provide students with powerful, in-depth learning as they strive to become successful readers.

The strategies and techniques detailed in this chapter are as follows:

- Associating: Move to the Meaning, Compare 'n Share, Reflection Connection, and Semantic Feature Analysis
- Contextualizing: Cloze Passages With Semantic Gradients, Contextual Redefinition, What Do You Mean?, Collaborate and Elaborate, and Context Complex Clues
- Categorizing: Interactive Word Walls, Picture and Word Sorts, Alphaboxes, and List/ Group/Label
- Visual Imaging: Charades, Museum Walk, Four Corners, and Eye Spy With My Eye
- Analyzing: Playing With Plurals, Vocabulary Tree Notebook, Flip-a-Chip, and Root Words
- Word Awareness: Word Jars, Journal Circles, Knowledge Rating, and Quick Writes
- Wide Reading: Read-Alouds, Author Study, Book Talks, and Genre Study
- Referencing: Resource Buddies, Glossary Use, and Thesaurus Use

Table 20 matches the instructional techniques discussed in this chapter to the appropriate developmental levels from Chapter 1 (emergent, early, transitional, and fluent). To be effective, the strategies and techniques presented in this chapter should allow ample time for teacher modeling and student application, long before independent application is expected. Teachers should select and model reading aloud of appropriate literature to apply the techniques in a meaningful manner, which supports authentic learning for strategic reading. By using this process, students are able to see first the whole text (i.e., appropriate literature), then see the parts systematically (i.e., strategies and techniques), and finally, apply the parts back to the whole (i.e., become metacognitively aware of strategies while reading appropriate literature). Using quality text and promoting language development throughout the techniques will help to enhance students' development of the strategies. In addition, teachers can use the motivation and engagement feature within many techniques as an additional means (i.e., multiple intelligence, standard) of motivating the whole child and creating 21st-century learners (refer to Chapter 1 for a description of the whole child and

TABLE 20. Vocabulary Techniques

	Emergent	Early	Transitional	Fluent
Before Reading	Move to the Meaning (A) Interactive Word Walls (Ca) Picture and Word Sorts† (Ca) Alphaboxes*† (Ca) Charades (V) Read-Alouds (WR)	May include all Emergent techniques Semantic Feature Analysis* (A) Interactive Word Walls (Ca) Picture and Word Sorts† (Ca) List/Group/Label (Ca) Read-Alouds* (WR)	May include all Emergent and Early techniques Compare 'n Share (A) Contextual Redefinition† (Co) What Do You Mean? (Co) Interactive Word Walls (Ca) Picture and Word Sorts† (Ca) List/Group/Label* (Ca) Four Corners* (V) Eye Spy With My Eye (V) Knowledge Rating (WA) Read-Alouds* (WR) Author Study (WR)	May include all Emergent, Early, and Transitional techniques Compare 'n Share* (A) Reflection Connection*† (A) Context Complex Clues† (Co) Interactive Word Walls (Ca) Picture and Word Sorts† (Ca) Read-Alouds* (WR) Genre Study (WR)
During Reading	Playing With Plurals (An) Read-Alouds (WR)	Cloze Passages With Semantic Gradients (Co)	Author Study (WR)	Genre Study (WR)
After Reading	Collaborate and Elaborate* (Co) Museum Walk (V) Word Jars (WA) Journal Circles* (WA) Read-Alouds (WR) Resource Buddies (R)	Collaborate and Elaborate* (Co) Alphaboxes† (Ca) Museum Walk* (V) Four Corners (V) Vocabulary Tree Notebook (A) Word Jars (WA) Journal Circles (WA) Glossary Use (R)	Reflection Connection (A) Semantic Feature Analysis (A) Collaborate and Elaborate* (Co) Contextual Redefinition† (Co) Flip-a-Chip (An) Word Jars (WA) Quick Writes (WA) Author Study (WR) Book Talks (WR) Thesaurus Use (R)	Move to the Meaning* (A) Collaborate and Elaborate (Co) Flip-a-Chip* (An) Root Words (An) Word Jars (WA)

*Adaptation portion of the technique.
†Technique is illustrated on Creating Strategic Readers DVD series.
Note. The developmental levels are shown across the top of the table horizontally. Down the left side of the matrix are the suggested times when these techniques are most effective—before, during, and after reading. This matrix is a guide and is by no means an exhaustive list.
(A) Associating; (Co) Contextualizing; (Ca) Categorizing; (V) Visual imaging; (An) Analyzing; (WA) Word awareness, (WR) Wide reading; (R) Referencing

Figure 1, page 8, for an illustration). This allows for differentiation within the technique as needed to educate the whole child.

Vocabulary Strategy: Associating

The ability to associate words is an important strategy. Proficient readers develop flexibility in using and manipulating words as they apply various techniques to acquire word

associations. Understanding how words connect enables the proficient reader to analyze and synthesize information, determining the ways in which words relate to one another. To associate words, a reader processes in "linguistic form that includes print and meaning and nonlinguistic form that includes visual and sensory images" (Bromley, 2007 p. 531).

Word associating allows readers to use alternative words to construct meaning from the text. To link prior experiences with new information, one may construct many kinds of word relationships. When readers use analogies, they draw inferences, and an opportunity for critical thinking occurs. This process of attaching a new concept to an existing one allows the reader to connect and bring meaning to the text.

Appropriate texts that best support the application of the word associating strategy have keywords that provide reinforcement of meaning.

Associating Text and Resource Examples:

Flocabulary (featuring Hip-Hop in the Classroom): www.Flocabualry.com

Harrison, B., & Rappaport, A. (2006). *Flocabulary: The Hip-Hop Approach to SAT-Level Vocabulary Building*. Kennebunkport, ME: Cider Mill Press.

Henkes, K. (1993). *Owen*. New York: Greenwillow.

Tocci, S. (2006). *Mercury*. New York: Scholastic.

Teacher Talk: Statements, Questions, and Prompts for Associating

Following is a list of suggested teacher talk that encourages readers to think strategically as they employ word-associating skills. Try using some of these statements, questions, and prompts with your students as you work through the techniques in the following section.

- What made you think of that association?
- What features do these words have in common?
- What connects all these examples together?
- Explain how you would connect these two words together.
- Why did you connect these two words?
- What does the similarity tell you about these features?
- How are these words similar and different?
- What connections do these words have?
- What are examples/nonexamples of the word (i.e., synonyms and antonyms)?

As you implement the various techniques that support associating, use the following behaviors as a guide as you assess students. Do students exhibit these behaviors never, rarely, often, always?

☐ Making connections among words

☐ Determining how words relate

☐ Generating analogies to extend content knowledge

Techniques for Associating

Move to the Meaning

Purpose: To use music to connect words with their meaning

Level: Emergent (Adaptation for Fluent)

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: verbal/linguistic, musical/rhythmic

Materials: Text, items related to content, music instruments, hip-hop music (see, for example, www.flocabulary.com)

Procedure:

1. Pass out musical instruments and have the students create movement and music to associate to selected words (i.e., emotion words such as *excited* and *scared* or weather words such as *thunder* and *rain*).

2. Ask students to share their musical creation of their word and to describe why they chose the instrument, tune, and rhythm for their word.

Adaptation for Fluent Readers: Use a hip-hop song such as "The Chipmunk Rap" below found on the Flocabulary website (www.flocabulary.com) and other hip-hop songs to help students make connections to words from well-known children's literature (as indicated by the words in caps and boldface below). Create your own hip-hop or rap songs using selected vocabulary words.

First I saw this **ENORMOUS** tree.

Incredible! The biggest tree I ever did see,

And what did I see, in this huge oak tree?

A chipmunk on a branch, winking at me.

The wind was blowing and his tale **QUIVERED**.

It shook back and forth while he ate his dinner.

The chipmunk uncurled his tale, **UNFURLED** it.

I wanted to get closer, but I was nervous,

So I stayed at a **DISTANCE**, not too close.

I didn't move toward him, I didn't **APPROACH**.

Compare 'n Share

Purpose: To make connections among words

Level: Transitional (Adaptation for Fluent)

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, interpersonal

Materials: Text, plain note cards, colored note cards; For Adaptation: Apples to Apples Jr. game

Procedure:

1. Distribute a note card to each student with a vocabulary word written on it (e.g., *affordable*). Encourage students to record on their note cards several synonyms under the word (e.g., cheap, low price, economical). These cards are then referred to as the word cards. Collect these cards from the students.

2. Give each student a blank, colored note card and read the words on the word cards. Have students record one example of something that fits the description given by each word card. Repeat this process for all of the word cards. Collect all these example cards.

3. Divide the students into groups to play the game. Pass out a stack of the word cards and example cards to each group. Each student selects 5 example cards and then takes a turn revealing the word card. The students who did not reveal the word card try to find an example card in their hand that best fits the revealed word card.

Adaptation for Fluent Readers: Have games such as Apples to Apples Jr. available at a vocabulary station so students can play in teams. Students can expand their vocabulary and thinking skills with board games such as this one; the second edition contains over 576 cards, so students may make thousands of new vocabulary comparisons.

Reflection Connection

This technique is highlighted on the Creating Strategic Readers DVD/VHS series.

Purpose: To connect words that relate to one another and determine relationships among the words

Level: Transitional (Adaptation for Fluent)

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal

Materials: Text, note cards; For Adaptation: Reflection Connection reproducible (see CD), Puzzle Pieces reproducible

Procedure:

1. Prior to reading a selection, choose and record 10 words or phrases from the selection. The first 5 words or phrases should be from the selected text; the other 5 should be from the text also, but they should relate in some way to the first 5 words (e.g., sleep/night, dirty/torn).

2. Create two sets of word or phrase cards, one set for the first 5 words or phrases, and one set for the second

3. Divide students into two groups and give each student a word or phrase card from the set (if you have more than 10 students, let the students work in pairs or small groups).

4. Have students read their word cards and work together to determine which words or phrases connect and, if so, how the words connect. Suggested teacher talk could be, "What connects all these examples together?"

5. Ask the two main teams to record their predictions to share with the class later. Figure 7 shows an example of the process using the book *Owen* by Kevin Henkes.

6. After reading the text, have teams return to their notes to confirm or modify their connections according to how each word was used in the context of the text. Suggested teacher talk might be, "How would you connect these two words together?"

Adaptation for Fluent Readers: Students use 4 chosen words to complete the following sentence and then an additional phrase to complete the explanation: _____ is to

FIGURE 7. Sample Reflection Connection

Ex. Using *Owen* (Henkes, 1993)

sleep	night
inside	outside
dirty	torn
sniffed	smelled
dug	sandbox
blanket	hankerchief

Reflection Connection Chart

sleep	+	night	=	time and event
inside	+	outside	=	opposite
dirty	+	torn	=	descriptive
sniffed	+	smelled	=	character does this with his nose
dug	+	sandbox	=	action and place
blanket	+	hankerchief	=	whole-to-part

_____ as _____ is to _____ because _____. Students determine how the words connect and record their results on the Reflection Connection reproducible. Laminate the Puzzle Pieces reproducible and have students record the words used to fill in the blanks above on their pieces and share in small groups. The dialogue within the group should focus on how the words connect and relate to one another. After a brief discussion, the students should revisit the text to examine the connected words in context.

Note: Adapted from Blachowicz & Fisher (2000), Vacca & Vacca (1996)

Semantic Feature Analysis

This technique is highlighted on the Creating Strategic Readers DVD/VHS series.

Purpose: To explore how sets of key vocabulary words relate to one another and extend content knowledge

Level: Transitional

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, interpersonal

Materials: Semantic Feature Analysis matrix (see CD 🔘), text; Optional: Journals or chart; For Adaptation: Computer and online lessons such as Word Storms from www. readwritethink.org

Procedure:

1. On the left column of the Semantic Feature Analysis matrix, write 5 to 10 key vocabulary words or phrases that relate to a chosen topic. The general topics or key concepts you choose to work with from the reading may start out concrete (e.g., sea animals, baseball) and gradually become more abstract (e.g., environmental issues, government).

2. Give each student a copy of your matrix with the vocabulary words written in. Have students discuss the properties, features, or characteristics of the topic and list them horizontally across the top row of the matrix. Suggested teacher talk could be, "What features do these words have in common?"

3. Before you read the text, have students collaborate with partners, work in small groups, or work independently to record on the matrix their predictions about the relationships. For each vocabulary word down the left side of the matrix, have students work their way across the matrix horizontally and ask themselves whether the vocabulary word possesses each of the features or properties written across the top. Ask them to write a plus (+) or minus (-) symbol in each box to indicate the presence or absence of a particular feature. During this process, students may add across the top of the matrix any additional features they discover that assist in the understanding of the concept.

4. Encourage students to explain their findings and to identify terms or features that they still are questioning.

5. After reading the text selection, have students modify any portion of their matrix as needed to reflect what they have learned from the reading. Students may also record a summary of their findings in vocabulary journals, use them to create a "group findings" chart, or discuss them with partners. Suggested teacher talk might be, "How are these words alike or different?"

Note: Adapted from Baldwin, Ford, & Readence (1981); Johnson & Pearson (1984); Pittelmann, Heimlich, Berglund, & French (1991)

Vocabulary Strategy: Contextualizing

One of the most effective strategies to increase vocabulary comprehension is to use the context that surrounds an unknown word to discover its meaning. This discovery process transpires through clues contained in the context. The reader can use context in several ways to help convey meaning. For example, sometimes the meaning of a word is explained within the same sentence. At times, synonyms of the unknown word can clarify words within the sentence. A contrast clue may identify meaning. Sometimes, the reader may need to make an inference or continue reading to figure out the relationship between the unknown word and the clues around the unknown word. Strategy instruction is necessary to support the reader in explicitly using context within the text to comprehend meaning.

Students need to "realize that it is okay to take a stab at unfamiliar words and figure out an approximate meaning from the context" (Calkins, 2001, p. 168). After students identify the unknown word, they may predict its possible meaning from the context. The context enables students to make an inquisitive stance toward word meaning and to monitor and verify predictions (Greenwood & Flanigan, 2007; Nelson, 2008; Tierney & Readence, 2005). Using a variety of contextual analysis techniques allows the student to be active, rather than passive, in the discovery of new words.

Appropriate text that best supports the application of the contextualizing strategy has strong word choice within the text to support the derived meaning.

Contextualizing Text Examples:

Bunting, E. (1991). *Fly Away Home*. New York: Clarion.

Polacco, P. (1988). *The Keeping Quilt*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Westerskov, K. (2004). *Penguins*. Carlsbad, CA: Dominie Press.

Teacher Talk: Statements, Questions, and Prompts for Contextualizing

Following is a list of suggested teacher talk that encourages readers to think strategically as they employ contextualizing skills. Try using some of these statements, questions, and prompts with your students as you work through the techniques in the following section.

- Try the new meaning in place of the word in the sentence. Does it make sense?
- What do you know about the word _____ from this sentence?
- Describe how you used the word in context (definition, cause and effect, opposite).
- Explain how the context helps you understand the meaning of the word?
- What clues are in the sentence that helped you figure out the word?
- What word do you think best completes the sentence? Why?
- What words within the sentence help support the meaning of _____?
- What is the word being used to signal that an opposite, contrasting thought is occurring?
- What do these two words have in common?
- When you come to a word you don't know, how do you use context clues to determine the meaning of the unknown word?

As you implement the various techniques that support this strategy, use the following behaviors as a guide as you assess students' ability to contextualize. Do students exhibit these behaviors never, rarely, often, always?

☐ Predicting and verifying omitted words using surrounding context

☐ Cross checking using cueing systems

☐ Using background knowledge to examine and verify word meaning

Techniques for Contextualizing

Cloze Passages With Semantic Gradients

Purpose: To predict an omitted word using surrounding context and to cross-check with several cueing systems

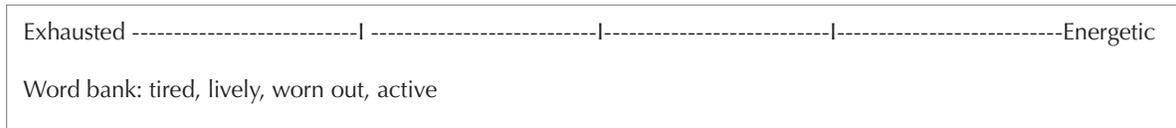**Level:** Early

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, interpersonal, intrapersonal

Materials: Text; overhead projector and transparency, board, or chart; correction tape or a large sticky note; learning logs

Procedure:

1. Select a short passage from a text, and display it on an overhead projector, the board, or a chart. Choose several words to omit and place correction tape or a large sticky note over the words.

FIGURE 8. Sample Semantic Gradient

Exhausted --------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------Energetic

Word bank: tired, lively, worn out, active

2. Guide students in figuring out the missing words by using the "sense" of the surrounding words or other sentences. Suggested teacher talk could be, "What word do you think best completes the sentence? Why?"

3. Have students generate ideas for words that would best complete each of the sentences.

4. Record these ideas either on the sticky note covering each missing word or on chart paper.

5. When students are finished generating their replacement words, slowly peel back the sticky note from the first word to show the word's onset. Allow students to change their predictions if the words they predicted had a different beginning sound. Then, peel back the sticky note completely, exposing the correct word. This technique provides an opportunity for students to cross-check with several cueing systems: semantic (Does the word chosen to complete the sentence make sense with the rest of the sentence?), syntactic (Does the word chosen sound right for the English language?), and visual (Does the word chosen look right once the sticky note has been removed?).

6. Using the list of words students generated to complete the passage, have students determine where the words could be placed on a continuum.

Motivation/Engagement: Place the sticky note over the word but leave the onset visible. Students record in their learning logs their process in figuring out the unknown word. Have students discuss with a partner what strategies they used to try to figure out the meaning of the unknown word. Students may also create their own semantic gradient either by using a partially completed gradient with the words to choose from and place on the gradient or by generating words from the two extreme ends of the continuum (see Figure 8).

Note: Adapted from Blachowitz & Fisher (2006), Greenwood & Flanigan (2007), Strickland et al. (2002)

Contextual Redefinition

This technique is highlighted on the Creating Strategic Readers DVD/VHS series.

Purpose: To use background knowledge to examine the meanings of words and to verify the correct meaning of a word through the context or a dictionary

Level: Transitional

ELL Technique: No

Vocabulary: Contextualizing

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic

Materials: Text; overhead projector and transparency, board, or chart; dictionary

Procedure:

1. Select unfamiliar words from a text and present the words in isolation on an overhead transparency, the board, or a chart. Choose words that are unfamiliar to students but are necessary for their understanding of the text.

2. With partners, have students predict what they think is the meaning of each of the new words. This step allows students to tap into any background knowledge they have, bringing what they know to the meaning of the words.

3. Read aloud from the text or write and present each word in its appropriate context and develop new sentences that provide contexts for each word. Suggested teacher talk could be, "How does the context help you understand the meaning of the words?"

4. Allow students a chance to change or confirm their predictions, and discuss how hearing or seeing the context helped them understand the meanings of the words.

5. Have students verify the word meanings by using resources such as a dictionary.

6. Have students discuss how the two steps of contextual redefinition (i.e., seeing the words in isolation and seeing them placed in context) were different. Suggested teacher talk might be, "What words within the sentence help support the meaning of (word)?"

Note: Adapted from Readence et al. (2007), Tierney & Readence (2005)

What Do You Mean?

Vocabulary: Contextualizing

Purpose: To demonstrate how students use words in different contexts that change the meaning of the word

Level: Transitional

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal

Materials: What Do You Mean? reproducible (see CD ⊙), text, chart, notebooks

Procedure:

1. Select words with multiple meanings or use the What Do You Mean? reproducible to demonstrate how words can be used in different contexts that change the meaning of the word.

2. Show students a word and ask them to tell a partner what they think the word means.

3. Read the word in a sentence from the selected text and have students discuss with their partners whether their predicted meaning for the word was correct. Suggested teacher talk

could be, "Show the context that surrounded the unknown word that helped to reveal its meaning."

4. Give each pair of students one word to use in two different sentences. Have one partner create a sentence using the word as one part of speech (e.g., a noun) while the other partner uses the word as a different part of speech (e.g., a verb) in a different sentence.

5. Have the partners explain their thinking (i.e., sentences) to the class, demonstrating the multiple meanings of the word.

6. List the demonstrated words on a chart and have students write these words in their notebooks to start a word collection journal. Suggested teacher talk might be, "Try to think of how you can use this word as a noun or as a verb (or other parts of speech, as applicable)."

Motivation/Engagement: Have the students create a cartoon character to share their interpretation of the word. Invite them to use a speech balloon to write the two different ways they used the multiple meaning word. The students can illustrate the scene around the character to correspond with the appropriate meaning of the word.

Collaborate and Elaborate

Purpose: To explore, discuss, and formulate a definition that the students perceive from clues within the sentence or related sentences and integrate newly formed words into a working vocabulary

Vocabulary: Contextualizing

Level: Fluent (Adaptation for Emergent–Transitional)

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, interpersonal,

Materials: Texts, vocabulary notebook; For Adaptation: Bingo file folders for groups, bingo word cards, bingo colored cards

Procedure:

1. Invite students to write unknown words or phrases they encounter in a vocabulary notebook.

2. Arrange students in groups to explore, discuss, and formulate a definition of the words or phrases that they perceive from clues within the sentence or related sentences.

3. Teams select a recorder to capture their examples and non-examples of the word from personal experiences and background knowledge, which helps to illustrate what the word is or is not, depending on the related words in context. Suggested teacher talk could be, "What clues are within the sentence that helped you figure out the word?"

4. The group agrees upon a definition that best describes the meaning of the word or phrases according to the related words and compares it with resources (i.e., dictionary, teacher, glossary).

5. Students continue to add new vocabulary words as they encounter them in their reading. Suggested teacher talk could be, "How have you used your new word in your written or oral presentation?"

Adaptation for Emergent–Transitional Readers: Have students create a visual representation of the word. Play the word game bingo. Students select words from their team list and create group bingo boards and their bingo color word cards. Draw a word card and use the cloze procedure by reading a sentence omitting the selected word. Students listen and match the word from their bingo cards that they think best completes the sentence. Draw a bingo color card and have the student that represents that color from each group determine if they have a place on their team bingo board. Return each color card word to be drawn again until a group completes their board. (This cooperative bingo idea was adapted from second-grade teacher Stephanie Dix.)

Context Complex Clues

This technique is highlighted on the Creating Strategic Readers DVD/VHS series.

Purpose: To use context clues to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word

Level: Fluent

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, interpersonal

Materials: Context Complex Clues reproducible (see CD), text, notebooks

Procedure:

1. Select a word from a text that may cause the students difficulty in understanding the meaning of the sentence or text passage.

2. Demonstrate a variety of ways students may use the context to figure out the meaning of the unfamiliar word. Copy and distribute the Context Complex Clues reproducible to show students some methods for using context.

3. Read a sentence that uses the word in a different context but that keeps the same meaning for the word (e.g., definition or description clues, linked synonym clues, compare and contrast clues, inferring clues). Chart these words as "clue glue" words for each category of contextual clues. See Figure 9 for a sample of clue glue words. Suggested teacher talk could be, "What clue glue words within the sentence help support the meaning of _____?"

FIGURE 9. Sample Clue Glue Words for Context Complex Clues

Definition	Synonym/compare	Antonym/contrast	Cause and effect
means	like	differ	because
is	as if	not	due to
describes	same as	different	if…then
states	and	unlike	consequently

4. Have students write their predictions in their notebooks (you can ask them to start vocabulary logs for this activity) and discuss what clues in the sentence helped to convey the meaning of the word. Suggested teacher talk might be, "Describe how you used the word in context."

Motivation/Engagement: In small groups, have students select words that challenged them in their independent reading time. Use the chart with the group to try to figure out the meaning of the unknown words.

Vocabulary Strategy: Categorizing

Categorizing is a strategy that actively engages students and encourages them to organize new concepts and experiences in relation to prior knowledge about the concept. This strategy enlists the use of graphic organizers as visual representations of relationships. Graphic organizers such as concept maps, webs, and Venn diagrams make thinking visible to students (Fogarty, 1997). As Stull and Mayer (2007) note, "The limits of the learner's cognitive capacity should be addressed in the design of graphic organizers" (p. 818). Students can also gain cognitive knowledge by properly designing their own graphic organizers as they process the text. Categorizing features of vocabulary words enables students to use higher order thinking and promotes cognitive word awareness in a visible manner. To categorize successfully, students need to be able to internalize the patterns under study and begin to make connections (Miller & Eilam, 2008; Strickland et al., 2002). Categorizing vocabulary words gives students an opportunity to develop an understanding of the essential attributes, qualities, and characteristics of a word's meaning.

Appropriate text that best supports the application of the categorizing strategy has a variety of words in the text suitable for sorting according to features and noticeable patterns.

Categorizing Text Examples:

Cherry, L. (1990). *The Great Kapot Tree: A Tale of the Amazon Rain Forest*. San Diego, CA: Gulliver Green/Harcourt.

Henkes, K. (1988). *Chester's Way*. New York: Greenwillow.

Suen, A. (2005). *Finding a Way: Six Historic U.S. Routes*. Parsippany, NJ: Celebration Press, Pearson Learning Group.

Teacher Talk: Statements, Questions, and Prompts for Categorizing

Following is a list of suggested teacher talk that encourages readers to think strategically as they categorize. Try using some of these statements, questions, and prompts with your students as you work through the techniques in the following section.

- How do you know that word belongs with this group?
- Tell some things that come to your mind when you think of the word _____?
- Describe what you know about this word?
- What features do these words have in common?
- What connects all these examples together?
- Check to make sure all the examples given have a commonality.
- What does the similarity tell you about these features?
- Check with a partner to see if you both agree with the categories.
- Explain how using a word map helps you.
- Describe how you categorized your words.
- How do the words you are studying relate to the story?

As you implement the various techniques that support this strategy, use the following behaviors as a guide as you assess students' ability to categorize. Do students exhibit these behaviors never, rarely, often, always?

□ Describing the attributes, qualities, and characteristics of a word's meaning

□ Choosing and sorting words by specific features

□ Connecting ideas to form the meaning of words

Techniques for Categorizing

Interactive Word Walls

Vocabulary: Categorizing

Purpose: To actively find, write, chant, and discuss features of words posted on a word wall

Level: Emergent–Fluent

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal

Materials: Texts, collection of words, colored tag board, trifold display board, vocabulary notebooks, word jars

Procedure:

1. Select and add approximately five words to a systematically organized collection of words displayed for all to view and use as a resource and tool for studying words.

2. Integrate daily how to actively find, write, discuss, and chant these words. Use the word wall as an active process throughout the daily schedule. Suggested teacher talk could be, "How do you know that word belongs with this group?"

3. Write words on a strip of colored tag board and place them on the wall according to the categories (e.g., alphabet, by first and last names, theme words, rime wall, homophone word wall). Work the words with a variety of activities (i.e., clapping words, rhyming words, reviewing endings, making sentences, playing bingo, word sorting, and doing a cheer).

4. Engage the students in conversations noticing the features of how the words sound, look, what they mean, and how the words chosen connect to other words they know. Suggested teacher talk might be, "How can you use the word wall to help you daily?"

Motivation/Engagement: Create a portable wall by using tri-fold display boards for ease in moving around the room. These walls are great for content related words (e.g., math center with math concepts and symbols; science exploration area with words related to theme). The students can also record these words in a vocabulary notebook. It can have a section for their individual sorted words or a file folder sectioned according to how the student categorized the words for future referencing. Students can place words in their word jars (see Word Jars technique in this chapter).

Picture and Word Sorts

This technique is highlighted on the Creating Strategic Readers DVD/VHS series.

Purpose: To determine and sort words by specific features

Level: Emergent–Fluent

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist/environmentalist

Materials: Pictures or words from texts, note cards, highlighter, plants, camera

Procedure:

1. Choose 15 to 20 words from a selected text; they should be words that students can identify or read, but not necessarily spell. (For truly emergent readers or poorer readers, you can have students do this activity with pictures.) Write the words on note cards.

2. Have students work in pairs or small groups to discuss the features of each word. Have students put the words into different categories by their similarities or differences. Categories may include colors, action words, or simple nouns. You may determine the categories in advance (a closed sort) or the students may discuss the common features of the words and then determine for themselves how to categorize them (an open sort). Suggested teacher talk might be, "Check with a partner to see if you both agree with the categories."

3. After students place the words within appropriate categories, have a class discussion to allow students to justify their sorting criteria. Suggested teacher talk could be, "What features do these words have in common?"

4. Provide an opportunity for students to edit their sorts if they so desire after the discussion.

5. Review the text and highlight the words the students used in the sorting activity.

Motivation/Engagement: Bring in a variety of plants and have students sort them by features and discuss their placements. Create a "human" class graph by passing out the picture or word cards and having the students walk around finding their like partners. Take a picture of the class graph and place the picture at the "Vocab Lab" (a vocabulary station where students study words). Have the students examine the words and the categories in the class photo and discuss their overall findings.

Note: Adapted from Henderson (1990); Henderson, Bear, & Templeton (1992); Zutell (1998)

Alphaboxes

This technique is highlighted on the Creating Strategic Readers DVD/VHS series.

Purpose: To notice beginning sounds of words in context and to sort words by beginning letter

Level: Early (Adaptation for Emergent)

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal

Materials: Alphaboxes reproducible (see CD), text, highlighter; For Adpatation: Picture cards or objects

Procedure:

1. After reading a text selection, have students work in pairs or small groups to discuss and think of words that reflect important points from the text. Suggested teacher talk could be, "How do the words you selected relate to the story?"

2. Ask students to explain how their chosen words relate to the text. Copy and distribute the Alphaboxes reproducible. With the whole group or in pairs, have students decide which words to write in which boxes, according to the words' beginning letters. Suggested teacher talk could be, "Why did you place this word in this box?"

3. Return to the text and highlight the words the students selected for their alphaboxes.

Motivation/Engagement: Have students create sentences using the words in the boxes.

Adaptation for Emergent Readers: Pass out picture cards or objects that relate to a text you are reading (picture cards can be generated by using free images from websites such as clipart.com if needed). As you read the text, pause on selected words and have students listen to the word and then decide if the picture card or object they have begins with the sound or letter. The selected student places the picture on a large Alphabox class chart or places the object on an alphabet rug. Place the chart with pictures and the text at the literacy center for students to utilize as they reread and write about the text.

Note: Adapted from Hoyt (2008)

List/Group/Label

Purpose: To organize and connect word attributes, images, and descriptions of words

Level: Early (Adaptation for Transitional)

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, interpersonal, intrapersonal

Materials: Text; chart paper, overhead, or board; highlighter; For Adaptation: List/Group/Label reproducible (see CD 💿)

Procedure:

1. Determine a content-related topic or concept based on what the class is studying and reading.

2. As a class, in small groups, with partners, or individually, have students brainstorm words that relate to the chosen topic or concept.

3. Record these words on chart paper, an overhead projector, or the board in a list form or around an oval containing the central concept.

4. Have students decide how these brainstormed lists can be classified according to their shared relationships and share their reasoning with the whole group. Suggested teacher talk could be, "Describe how you categorized your words." Encourage students to group categories within three types of associations: class (i.e., What is it?—the broad category of things the concept fits into), properties (i.e., What is it like?—the attributes that define the concept), and examples (e.g., What is like it?—illustrations of the concept).

5. Return to the text and highlight the words students are categorizing.

6. Have students create a label or title that best describes each newly formed category.

Adaptation for Transitional Readers: Have students use the List/Group/Label reproducible or other graphic organizers as a visual representation of and a way to form a definition of the

studied word. Suggested teacher talk could be, "How does the format help you to connect and generate meaning of the focused words?"

Note: Adapted from Johnson & Pearson (1984), Olson & Gee (1991), Schwartz (1988), Schwartz & Raphael (1985), Stahl & Nagy (2006)

Vocabulary Strategy: Visual Imaging

Visualizing vocabulary words enables students who are stronger in spatial rather than in verbal intelligence to find or draw pictures that illustrate the definitions of words (Silver, Strong, & Perini, 2001). Visual imaging is also referred to as mind, mental, or concept imagery. A student creates an image that represents the definition of the word and calls up this image whenever encountering the word. "The strategy of visualization provides opportunities for students to use their imaginations to facilitate both vocabulary development and comprehension across the curriculum" (Tate, 2003, p. 101). This strategy assists readers in assessing understanding of vocabulary knowledge, learning word meaning, making predictions and inferences, and concept acquisition.

When students use visual imaging, they think of a word that looks like, or even sounds like, the word they are learning. The more vivid the imagery, the more likely students will be able to connect and mentally recall the vocabulary word to its meaning. Different types of art activate different parts of the brain (Jensen, 2000, 2005), and this sensory connection is the bond for visual learners. Linking verbal and visual images increases students' ability to store and retrieve information (Ogle, 2000). "Transforming ideas from reading into artwork, poetry, etc., is an evaluative, interpretive act that reveals the students' level of understanding" (Collins, 1993, p. 3).

Appropriate text that best supports the application of the visualizing strategy has a variety of words in the text suitable for creating vivid mental images. Also, note that graphic genre is a cross between a novel and comics and is a valid reading tool in a world dominated by DVD games and high tech movies.

Visual Imaging Text Examples:

Kesselman, W. (1993). *Emma*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell.

Sava, S.C. (2006). *Dreamland Chronicles: Book One*. Blue Dream Studios. Available: www.thedreamlandchronicles.com

White, E.B. (1974). *Charlotte's Web*. New York: HarperTrophy.

Teacher Talk: Statements, Questions, and Prompts for Visual Imaging

Following is a list of suggested teacher talk that encourages readers to think strategically as they employ visual imaging skills. Try using some of these statements, questions, and prompts with your students as you work through the techniques in the following section.

- How does your illustration help you remember the new word?

- What do you see when you think of the word _____?

- Do the illustrations match what you imagined in your mind when you heard the story?

- What is the word _____ like? How does the example remind you of the word?

- What part of the pantomime helped you to know the word?

- Try to look at all the clay forms and create a definition of the word _____.

- Why did you choose that movement to represent the word _____?

- Which word goes with _____? Why does that word go with _____?

- Try to visualize the meaning of the word. Describe what you see.

- Try to visualize what the word looks like by using the picture.

As you implement the various techniques that support visual imaging, use the following behaviors as a guide as you assess students. Do students exhibit these behaviors never, rarely, often, always?

☐ Imprinting visual meanings by creating a mental image of a word

☐ Illustrating a word's meaning

☐ Giving examples and nonexamples of what the word is like or not like

☐ Questioning and hypothesizing for meaning of the image (purpose and context)

Techniques for Visual Imaging

Charades

Purpose: To make a mental image of a word to aid in recalling the word

Level: Emergent

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal

Materials: Text, note cards, symbolic objects

Procedure:

1. Write some chosen vocabulary words or phrases from the text on note cards and have students take turns selecting a word card and acting out (i.e., role-playing or pantomiming) the meaning of the word on the card while holding or moving related or symbolic objects. Suggested teacher talk could be, "What part of the pantomime helped you to know the word?"

Vocabulary: Visual Imaging

2. Have students give suggestions for what the word might be until the correct word is identified.

3. Return to the text, and highlight the words students acted out within the text.

Motivation/Engagement: Have teams of students use several of the vocabulary words to create a skit to perform for the entire class. Teams can use pantomime and some verbal interaction while dramatizing the text. Teams also can select a few word cards and take a few minutes to improvise a situation demonstrating each word. This interaction with drama and words helps to develop vocabulary words through dialogue. Suggested teacher talk might be, "Why did you choose that movement to represent the word _____?"

Museum Walk

Purpose: To imprint visual meaning by creating a representation of a word

Level: Emergent (Adaptation for Early)

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, bodily/ kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal

Materials: Text, ball of clay, highlighter, drawing notebook; For Adaption: Note card

Procedure:

1. Give each student a ball of clay and introduce a new vocabulary word.

2. Have students form a visual image of what the word means to them out of the clay.

3. Display the images around the room, and have the students do a word "museum walk" to view the visual forms of the word. Suggested teacher talk could be, "Try to look at all the clay forms and create a definition of the word _____."

4. Ask students to explain how their forms relate to the meaning of the word. Suggested teacher talk might be, "Why did you choose the way you did to represent the word _____?"

5. Revisit the text and have students highlight the words they formed.

Adaptation for Early Readers: Assign different words to students working in groups. Have each team create and share a visual image of their word from a large ball of clay. Display the creations around the room, and have the students go on the word "museum walk" as suggested above. Have students carry a drawing notebook with them and draw pictures of the images connected to each word. Students can also provide explanations of their clay by folding a note card to make a table tent. On one side have the students write the name of their creation. On the other side, the students write how they would categorize the image. Students also can use a computer graphics program to create picture cards for their words.

The cards would have the word printed at the top and a graphic, chosen by the students, under the word. The graphic should be a pictorial representation of the meaning of the word and the object that matches their clay form.

Four Corners

Purpose: To visualize the meaning of a word in multiple ways

Level: Early (Adaptation for Transitional)

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal

Materials: Text, unlined paper, pencils or markers, highlighter; Optional: Pictures from magazines, glue, scissors; For Adaptation: Four Corners reproducible (see CD)

Procedure:

1. Have students draw lines on a blank sheet of paper to divide the paper into fourths.

2. Have students write a key vocabulary word in the center of their paper.

3. Have students draw or paste a magazine picture that represents the opposite meaning of the word in the top left corner. Have students mark a big black X over the visual image.

4. Have students draw or paste a picture from a magazine that demonstrates an example of the word in the top right corner. Suggested teacher talk could be, "What is the word _____ like? How does it remind you of that word?"

5. Have students illustrate a personal connection they can make to the word in the bottom left corner of the paper. Suggested teacher talk could be, "Which word goes with _____? Why does that word go with _____?"

6. Have students draw—using the letters in the word—a picture that illustrates the meaning of the word in the bottom right corner.

7. Return to the text and highlight the words the students studied.

Adaptation for Transitional Readers: Place groups in teams and give each team a corner to complete. Have the teams decide on a leader to share their findings while all the students are using their vocabulary notebook or the Four Corners graphic organizer to record the presentations.

Eye Spy With My Eye

Purpose: To enter imaginatively into the picture, to question and hypothesize for meaning of the image, its purpose and its context

Level: Transitional

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, interpersonal, intrapersonal

Materials: Texts, magazine pictures, illustrations, photographs, story boards

Procedure:

1. Select a text with graphics and copy or show only the picture. Ask the students to look at the picture and describe what they see. Suggested teacher talk might be, "Spy with your eye who is in the picture? "What do you think they are thinking or saying?"

2. Read a part of the text that correlates with the picture and have the students try to make predictions as to what they think happened before the scene depicted in the picture.

3. Ask students to try to solve the scene by inferring what they think will be the rest of the story based on the graphic they spied.

Motivation/Engagement: Have students create several images about a personal experience. The students select one of the images from the story line to share with a partner to practice looking at the image to create meaning. Partners ask each other questions and make predictions and inferences about the images. Next, have the partners orally share their personal experience using the images. Finally, each student converts the images into a storyboard for a comic to share.

Note: Adapted from Williams (2008)

Vocabulary Strategy: Analyzing

Students use the analyzing strategy to examine the structure of words they are studying. Analyzing the structure, or word parts, is a way to determine the meaning of a word. There are three main word parts: prefixes, suffixes, and roots. Studying the morphemes of words (i.e., the smallest meaningful unit in language) allows students to acquire information about the meaning, phonological representation, and parts of speech of new words from their prefixes, roots, and suffixes (Nagy, Diakidoy, & Anderson, 1991). These word parts help to contribute to the meaning of the word. "Morphological awareness should play a more prominent role in decoding morphologically complex words because it helps beginning readers parse strings of letters at the right syllable boundary (e.g., mis-handle vs. mi-shandle)" (Kuo & Anderson, 2006, p. 172).

According to Nilsen and Nilsen (2003), spending class time on frequently used morphemes is a good teaching practice because it helps students establish structural connections among words. "Students need to learn to use word parts strategically, cautiously, and thoughtfully" (Stahl & Nagy, 2006, p. 159). Implementing techniques that support the connections between the structural analysis concepts and the basic definition will help

students in understanding the word. Appropriate text that best supports the application of the analyzing strategy has a variety of words suitable for a specific structural concept.

Analyzing Text Examples:

Arnold, T. (1997). *Parts*. New York: Penguin.

Banks, K. (2006). *Max's Words*. New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux.

Numeroff, L. (2002). *If You Take a Mouse to School*. New York: Laura Geringer.

Teacher Talk: Statements, Questions, and Prompts for Analyzing

Following is a list of suggested teacher talk that encourages readers to think strategically as they employ analyzing skills. Try using some of these statements, questions, and prompts with your students as you work through the techniques in the following section.

- Look for any parts of a word that help you make sense of it.
- Try to cover up part of the word (e.g., the prefix). What word do you have left?
- Try to take the word apart.
- What words around it tell you something about the word?
- What does the prefix _____ do when added to the start of the word _____?
- What words go together with this word?
- What is the root word of _____?
- Which word has a prefix? Suffix?
- What is the meaning of the prefix or suffix?
- If you know what the root word for _____ means, what do you think _____ means?
- How does knowing the prefix, suffix, or root word of a word help you?
- How are all these words alike?

As you implement the various techniques that support this strategy, use the following behaviors as a guide as you assess students' ability to analyze. Do students exhibit these behaviors never, rarely, often, always?

☐ Locating morphemes in a word and examining their meaning

☐ Demonstrating how prefixes affect words and their meaning

☐ Deciphering how words derive meaning from root words

Playing With Plurals

Purpose: To analyze the structure of a word to determine if it is singular or plural

Level: Emergent

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, naturalist/environmentalist

Materials: Text, cookies or chips, cookie tray, various items for demonstrating the (more than) plural concept; Optional: Small shoebox or paper and glue

Procedure:

1. Display a tray of cookies and have the students describe what you have in your hand. Their response may be, "cookies."

2. Go around the room and ask the students if they would like a cookie or cookies. You can also use chips and ask if they want a chip or chips. Suggested teacher talk might be, "I will listen to the end of your word to determine what to give you." Discuss with students how listening to the ending of their word would help me determine the amount to give.

3. Hold up items and have the students decide if the corresponding word is singular or plural (e.g., a ball or balls). Write and display the words of the items and highlight the letter *s* at the end of each of the words to denote when there are more than one. You can have two trays, one with singular items and one with plural. Have students compare and contrast the trays.

4. During a read-aloud have the students listen for plural words. Have them share their discoveries with a partner.

Motivation/Engagement: Go on a "plural walk" outside. Have the students collect items (e.g., leaves, rocks, flowers) and also notice items (e.g., birds, clouds) that are plural. Place collected items on display and create a label with the letter *s* highlighted. Students may put their collections in a small shoebox or glue on paper as their plural collection.

Vocabulary Tree Notebook

Purpose: To identify morphemes within a word

Level: Early

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial

Materials: Vocabulary Tree reproducible (see CD 💿), text, three-ring binders or clasp folders

Procedure:

1. Using the Vocabulary Tree reproducible, create a notebook with several vocabulary tree pages for each student. Distribute the notebooks to the students.

2. Have students designate one page in their notebooks for each morpheme (root, stem, or affix) they study. Whenever students encounter a word with that part (e.g., *-ing*), have them write it on the appropriate tree and note where the word was encountered. Suggested teacher talk could be, "Try to take the word apart."

3. Have students share their vocabulary trees with a partner and discuss why the words on a particular tree are related. Suggested teacher talk could be, "How are all these words alike?"

4. Return to the text, and have students locate the words they studied.

Note: Adapted from Hill (1998)

Flip-a-Chip

Purpose: To mix and match four meaningful word parts to make four words

Level: Transitional (Adaptation for Fluent)

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, interpersonal

Materials: Texts, white chips, word journals

Procedure:

1. Record chosen words on four white round chips. Each set of chips has two prefixes and two meaningful chunks of chosen words.

2. Give each student a prefix chip and chunk of chosen word chip. Suggested teacher talk could be, "What does the prefix ____ do when added to the start of the word _____?"

3. Students flip the chips to form a word. Continue this process forming all four words.

4. Have the partners record their results in word journals. Rotate giving all the partners time to work with each set of chips. Suggested teacher talk might be, "How are all these words alike?"

5. Have the students demonstrate where their flip-a-chip word is in the text.

Adaptation for Fluent Readers: Have partners write a paragraph with blanks. These blanks represent where the newly formed words on the chips would best complete the sentences. The students place the newly formed paragraph in the bag with the chips. Other students can then have a try at completing the paragraph using the chips. Have students use word sorting techniques (see the categorizing strategy, this chapter, for more ideas) to examine the concepts of prefixes and suffixes. Students also can use word walls, journals, and word matching activities to reinforce the analysis of prefixes and suffixes. (See Tables 21 and 22 for lists of commonly used prefixes and suffixes.)

Note: Adapted from Bear et al. (2008), Mountain (2002)

TABLE 21. Commonly Used Prefixes

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
auto-	self	automatic, autograph, automobile
bi-	two	biweekly, bicycle, bilingual
de-	reverse action, remove, away	deflate, detach, deodorize
dis-	apart, negative, away	dislike, disagree, disappear
in-	not, free from, out	inactive, invisible
mis-	wrong	misspell, miscount, misfortune
pre-	before	preview, prepay, prepare
re-	back, again	redo, recall, repaint
tri-	three	triangle, tricycle, trilogy
un-	not	undo, untold, unhappy

TABLE 22. Commonly Used Suffixes

Suffix	Meaning	Examples
-tion	being, act, process (forms noun)	mention, vacation, location
-er	person connected with (forms noun)	runner, teacher, speaker
-less	without (forms adjective)	speechless, breathless, thoughtless
-ing	verb form (forms present participle)	running, singing, swimming
-ness	state of, condition of (forms noun)	likeness, forgiveness, happiness
-s, -es	plural	boys, girls, boxes
-ly	characteristic of (forms adverb)	lovely, happily
-est	comparative (forms adjective)	happiest, funniest, craziest
-ful	full of (forms adjective)	playful, helpful, grateful
-ed	verb form (forms past tense)	played, relaxed, rehearsed

Root Words

Vocabulary: Analyzing

Purpose: To understand that a word derives meaning from the root word, also known as the base or stem

Level: Fluent

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic

Materials: Text, dictionaries, journals, highlighter

Procedure:

1. Have students research the meanings of root words found in the vocabulary for the text or topic they are studying. Tell students that analyzing this foundational part of a word helps

them to determine a word's origin and history, which will make the word more memorable. Suggested teacher talk could be, "How does knowing the root word help you?"

2. Have students generate a set of new words by adding affixes (prefixes and suffixes) to the root words. Have them write these new words in a journal. Suggested teacher talk might be, "What is the root word of _____?"

3. Ask the students to use a dictionary to look up the definition for each of the root words from the set of words they generated.

4. Lead students in a discussion on how these words all relate and can be categorized.

5. Have students return to the text and highlight the words they studied.

Vocabulary Strategy: Word Awareness

Students gain a sense of ownership of a word when they can transfer a new vocabulary word to their writing and speaking in a meaningful way (Routman, 2000). Word awareness, also known as word consciousness, is a strategy that brings one's thinking about the usage of a word to an application level and personalizes word learning. Effective readers acquire up to seven new vocabulary words each day. To enhance vocabulary, students need to have a desire to know words and gain "enjoyment and satisfaction from using them well and from hearing them used well by others" (Graves, 2000, p. 127).

When students know a word, they are able to use that word in speech and writing and to understand the word in text when it appears. Word-conscious students know and use many words, and they are aware of the subtleties of word meaning and the power words can have (Graves, Juel, & Graves, 1998; Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008). Applying word awareness strategies is a natural, motivating way to support students while they are building their vocabulary and increasing their comprehension.

Appropriate text that best supports the application of the word awareness strategy has a variety of words for students to use in their everyday conversations.

Word Awareness Text Examples:

Degross, M. (1994). *Donavan's Word Jar*. New York: HarperCollins.

O'Connor, J. (2009). *Fancy Nancy: The Dazzling Book Report*. New York: HarperCollins.

Parish, H. (1995). *Good Driving, Amelia Bedelia*. New York: Greenwillow.

Teacher Talk: Statements, Questions, and Prompts for Word Awareness

Following is a list of suggested teacher talk that encourages readers to think strategically as they employ word awareness skills. Try using some of these statements, questions, and prompts with your students as you work through the techniques in the following section.

- What do you know about the word _____?
- How can you find out more about a chosen word?
- How often did you use your chosen word in your journal writing?
- Try to use a new word when you are sharing today.
- Try to rate the word according to how much you know about the word.
- How did being aware of one word today help you to learn about that word?
- Do you feel confident to use the word _____ in a conversation or in your writing? Why? Why not?
- How did your word choice affect the other students' understanding of your journal entry?

As you implement the various techniques that support word awareness, use the following behaviors as a guide as you assess students. Do students exhibit these behaviors never, rarely, often, always?

☐ Gaining ownership of words by applying new words in everyday conversations

☐ Transferring a new vocabulary word to their writings

☐ Indicating levels of knowledge of words

Techniques for Word Awareness

Word Jars

Purpose: To examine words in their environment and use new words in everyday language

Level: Emergent–Fluent

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematic, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal

Materials: Word Jar template (see CD ⊙), *Donavan's Word Jar* (Degross, 1994); Optional: paper strips, plastic jars, sticky labels, vocabulary log

Procedure:

1. Prepare word jars using the Word Jar template or give each student a plastic jar.

2. Read *Donavan's Word Jar* to the students and discuss how Donavan shares his encounters with a variety of people and their reactions to his word jar.

3. Invite the students to create their own word jar and have them search for words to add to the jar each day.

Motivation/Engagement: Have students select a word from their word jar that they would like to use throughout the week in their conversations. Have students keep a daily vocabulary log and during independent writing time write how they used their vocabulary word in context for that day. Encourage students to have at least five entries per word before adding a new vocabulary word. Students can write their word on a sticky label and wear it on their clothes. Each time that a student uses his or her chosen word in conversation, the listener should add a tally mark to the sticky label. Read a text, and have students highlight the words they chose to study. Students can periodically use their word jar to categorize their words and add them to their vocabulary notebooks or a word wall. Have students share their words from their jars with teams and have a word-card trading day.

Note: Adapted from Barger (2006)

Journal Circles

Purpose: To express an awareness of words in writing

Level: Early (Adaptation for Emergent)

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, interpersonal

Materials: Text, journals

Procedure:

1. Establish a daily journal writing time and have students make an effort to use vocabulary words they are currently studying when they write in their journals.

2. When writing time is complete, ask students to join journal circles in which small groups of mixed or similar ability take turns sharing their daily entries and noting the word choices they used in their writing. Journal circle time gives students a chance to "try out" sharing how they used words in context. Suggested teacher talk could be, "Try to use a new word when you are sharing today."

3. After hearing each student orally read his or her journal entry, have the other team members make comments, ask questions, or compliment the reader regarding his or her word choices and overall journal entry. Suggested teacher talk might be, "How did your word choice affect the other students' understanding of your journal entry?"

4. Read a text, and have students point out what words they heard in the text that they have used in their journal entries.

Adaptation for Emergent Readers: Read aloud stories and record on a vocabulary chart words from the text that are important or interesting for students to know. Have students sign their names on the vocabulary chart next to the vocabulary word identified for them to use. Place a tally mark beside the student's name each time he or she uses the assigned word in a meaningful way orally or in their journals.

Knowledge Rating

Purpose: To identify the level of knowledge of a word

Level: Transitional

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal

Materials: Knowledge Rating reproducible (see CD), text, notebooks

Procedure:

1. Present students with a list of vocabulary words related to the topic you are studying.

2. Have students analyze their familiarity with the chosen words, and ask them to place a check mark beside their level of word knowledge on a matrix. Suggested teacher talk might be, "Try to rate the word according to how much you know about it."

3. Ask students to discuss with partners what they know about the list of words and select words to focus on during the upcoming reading of the text.

4. Copy the Knowledge Rating reproducible and distribute to each student. Before reading, have the students use the rating matrix to record the selected words and to rate them according to their level of knowledge of each word. Suggested teacher talk could be, "What do you know about the word _____?"

5. After reading, have students reflect on their rating matrix and determine whether their knowledge of certain words changed.

6. Have students place an *X* in the appropriate column of the matrix to represent any changes. Ask students to keep their rating charts in a personal vocabulary log and review them periodically, making adjustments on words that are becoming more familiar to them.

7. Reread the text, and have students listen for the new words they are studying and think about how they are used in context.

Note: Adapted from Blachowicz (1986)

Quick Writes

Purpose: To utilize background knowledge to formulate meanings of words

Level: Transitional

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal

Materials: Text, vocabulary journals

Procedure:

1. Present one new vocabulary word to students prior to reading a text selection.

2. After presenting the vocabulary word, have students write about the word for a few minutes in a vocabulary journal. This writing may include a definition of the word, a synonym or antonym for the word, or a response to a question you present using the word or about the word. Suggested teacher talk might be, "What do you know about the word _____?"

3. Have students share in groups their Quick Write responses and discuss similarities and differences among the responses.

4. Read the text and emphasize the vocabulary word within the context of the selection.

5. Ask students to revisit their written responses and make any adjustments necessary to correspond with the way the word is used in the context of the text.

6. Have groups discuss their ideas about the word, helping students to put new concepts in their own words. Suggested teacher talk might be, "How did being aware of the word today help you learn about that word?"

Note: Adapted from Tate (2003)

Vocabulary Strategy: Wide Reading

Wide reading is a strategy that fosters vocabulary development through a variety of opportunities for students to read. Students need at least 20 minutes of daily reading to help increase their vocabulary list by 1,000 words per year (Nagy, Anderson, & Herman, 1987). This daily exposure is a natural way to increase vocabulary. "Children learn new words by reading extensively on their own. The more children read on their own, the more words they encounter and the more word meaning they learn" (Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2001, p. 35).

Encountering words in reading passages or speaking them in context multiple times is one of the best ways to commit words to long-term memory. Students will benefit from techniques geared toward rehearsing and talking about some of the words and concepts in a book (Calkins, 2001). "Encountering words repeatedly in text builds a fabric of meaning that makes it easier to learn new words" (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996, p. 166).

Appropriate literature that best supports the application of the wide reading strategy appeals to the students' reading levels and interests and fits into a range of genres.

Wide Reading Text Examples:

Biel, T. (2003). *Zoobooks: Tigers*. Poway, CA: Wildlife Education.

DiCamillo, K. (2000). *Because of Winn-Dixie*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

Layne, S. (2006). *Mergers*. Gretna, LA: Pelican.

Teacher Talk: Statements, Questions, and Prompts for Wide Reading

Following is a list of suggested teacher talk that encourages readers to think strategically as they employ wide reading skills. Try using some of these statements, questions, and prompts with your students as you work through the techniques in the following section.

- What are some of the interesting vocabulary words the author uses?
- Why are these words interesting to you?
- How have you used some words from your vocabulary club in your everyday conversation?
- What pattern do you notice the author using for his or her word choice?
- Tell me about some interesting words you are encountering while you are reading.
- How did you select your words for your book talk?
- What kind of words did you notice are common in this specific genre?
- In what genre would you most likely find these words?
- Tell me about some interesting words you heard while listening to the read-aloud.

As you implement the various techniques that support wide reading, use the following behaviors as a guide as you assess students: As you implement the various techniques that support wide reading, use the following behaviors as a guide as you assess students. Do students exhibit these behaviors never, rarely, often, always?

☐ Listening and absorbing vocabulary from hearing and reading text

☐ Imitating author's words in conversation

☐ Identifying characteristics of words among genres

Techniques for Wide Reading

Read-Alouds

Vocabulary: Wide Reading

Purpose: To listen to and absorb the vocabulary from a chosen text

Level: Emergent (Adaptation for Early–Fluent)

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, interpersonal

Materials: Text, chart; For Adaptation: Note cards

Procedure:

1. Read aloud a story to the class. Have students listen during the read-aloud and try to absorb the vocabulary from the chosen text. Suggested teacher talk might be, "Tell me about some interesting words you heard while listening to the read-aloud."

2. Instruct students to discuss with a partner interesting words they heard during the read-aloud. Suggested teacher talk could be, "Why are these words interesting to you?"

3. Set the text that you read in an area in the classroom where students can reread it or otherwise revisit the text on their own.

4. Keep a class chart of all the titles read aloud each month. Have students discuss and record their reflections on the texts on this chart and periodically compare previously noted connections with new connections (e.g., text-to-text connections, text-to-self connections).

Adaptation for Early–Fluent Readers: Write selected words from the story on note cards, and pass them out to the students before the read-aloud. As the students are listening to the story, have them hold up their word cards when they hear the words in the story. After the read-aloud, have the students share how each word was used in the story.

Author Study

Purpose: To imitate authors' words in conversation

Level: Transitional

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, intrapersonal

Materials: Multiple texts by the same author, sticky tabs, chart paper, materials for students to create their own written versions

Procedure:

1. Have students read several books by a particular author. During this author study, have students look for keywords the author uses frequently in his or her writing.

2. List the author's name at the top of a sheet of chart paper and have students list the words from step 1 in addition to other interesting words the author uses. Suggested teacher talk might be, "What pattern do you notice the author using for his or her word choice?"

3. Encourage students to imitate the author by using the author's words in their everyday conversations. Suggested teacher talk could be, "What are some of the vocabulary words the author uses that are interesting to you?"

4. Create an area in the classroom to display the books and other information about the author you are studying (e.g., an Awesome Author center). Display the author's books with sticky tabs on the pages with the studied words. Encourage students to revisit the author's books.

Motivation/Engagement: Have students imitate the featured author by creating their own versions of the stories at the writing center.

Book Talks

Purpose: To identify vocabulary words that support the meaning of a book

Level: Transitional

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, interpersonal

Materials: Text, student vocabulary logs, materials for students to create a poster display

Procedure:

1. Encourage students to read a variety of books. Tell students that they will be giving book talks using the vocabulary from each story to introduce classmates to a particular book. Suggested teacher talk could be, "Tell me about some interesting words you are encountering while you are reading."

2. As they are reading, have students keep vocabulary logs in which they write interesting vocabulary words that help them relate to the meaning of the book.

3. Ask students to share these words when giving their classmates an orientation of the book. Suggested teacher talk might be, "How did you select your words for your book talk?"

Motivation/Engagement: Have students create a poster that illustrates their book talk and display these at the classroom library area with the books to entice others to read it.

Genre Study

Purpose: To identify similarities and differences among vocabulary words within genres

Level: Fluent

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, interpersonal

Materials: Texts in a variety of genres, chart, materials for creative writing, highlighters

Procedure:

1. Expose students to several different genres of reading material.

2. During this genre study, keep a chart of specific vocabulary words that correlate with each particular genre (see Table 23 for examples). Suggested teacher talk might be, "What kinds of words did you notice that are common in the specific genre?"

TABLE 23. Vocabulary Words for Genre Study

Genre	Description	Vocabulary Words and Phrases
Fantasy	Fiction that contains elements that are not real such as magical powers and animals that talk	Wizard, magical, hero, powers, imagine
Mystery	Story that contains suspense; mysterious	Secret, classified, investigation, discover, clue, evidence, witness, suspense
Folk tale	Story passed on from one generation to another by word of mouth	Once upon a time, This is the story of, Long ago, There once was
Fable	A fictitious story meant to teach a lesson; characters are usually animals	Responsibility, moral, courage, freedom, noble, kindness
Science fiction	Content not pattern, what if, infinite possibilities, imagination	Aliens, encounter, outer space, scientific, time travel, consequences

3. Have students frequently discuss the similarities and differences among the vocabulary words within the various genres. Suggested teacher talk could be, "In what genre would you most likely find these words?"

Motivation/Engagement: Using the genre chart, have students select a genre and create a writing piece using at least 10 words that indicate strongly their genre choice. Have partners read the writings and decide the chosen genre and highlight the words that correlate with the genre.

Vocabulary Strategy: Referencing

Referencing is a strategy that allows readers to use resources to bring meaning to an unknown word. Students simply select a resource to search for the meaning of the word. However, teachers and students can overrely on this traditional strategy. "Definitions alone can lead to only a relatively superficial level of word knowledge. By itself, looking up words in a dictionary or memorizing definitions does not reliably improve reading comprehension" (Nagy, 2003, p. 5). Instruction for students should focus on how these resources can aid in learning meanings of words in the appropriate context. The quality of the definition also is an important factor in being able to use the dictionary as an aid to understanding text (McKeown, 1993; Nist & Olejnik, 1995). Teachers need to work with students in selecting the definition that best supports the meaning of the chosen word. "To make deriving the meaning from the dictionary definitions most effective, it needs to be modeled for students and practiced in a scaffold way" (Beck et al., 2008, p. 47). Several techniques are possible, including using a book's glossary, a dictionary, a thesaurus, or a resource buddy.

Appropriate text that best supports the application of the referencing strategy has a variety of words in the text suitable for sorting according to features and definitions.

Referencing Text and Resource Examples:

Freeman, M. (2002). *Go Facts: Insects*. Littleton, MA: Newbridge/Sundance.

Priddy, R. (2001). *My Big Book of Everything*. New York: Dorling Kindersley.

Wikipedia (online dictionary): www.wikipedia.com

Wordsmith.org (provides opportunities to work with words, word play, language, and literature): www.wordsmith.org

Teacher Talk: Statements, Questions, and Prompts for Referencing

Following is a list of suggested teacher talk that encourages readers to think strategically as they employ referencing skills. Try using some of these statements, questions, and prompts with your students as you work through the techniques in the following section.

- How did the dictionary help you to figure out the word?
- Try to select words to examine and record that are interesting to you.
- What feature helps you to know if a word will be in the glossary?
- Which word means _____? How did you find the meaning for the word?
- How do you use the glossary to help you understand the meaning of a word?
- How do you use a thesaurus, glossary, or dictionary?
- Try to tell your buddy what you think the word means. Discuss it together.
- How did your buddy help you understand the unknown word?

As you implement the various techniques that support referencing, use the following behaviors as a guide as you assess students. Do students exhibit these behaviors never, rarely, often, always?

☐ Analyzing unknown words for meaning

☐ Using glossaries, dictionaries, and thesauruses to determine meaning of words

☐ Selecting meaning of a word that best supports the use of the word in context

Techniques for Referencing

Resource Buddies

Vocabulary: Referencing

Purpose: To work with a partner to analyze unknown words for meaning

Level: Emergent

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, interpersonal

Materials: Text, journals, note cards, writing supplies for creating class dictionary

Procedure:

1. Assign each of your students an older student from a different classroom to be their resource buddy.

2. Throughout the week, have students keep track of words from their reading for which they need assistance to understand the meaning. Have students write these unknown words in their word journals. Suggested teacher talk might be, "Try to tell your buddy what you think the word means. Discuss it together."

3. Once each week, have students get together with their resource buddies to analyze the unknown words.

4. Have students write in their journals any information the buddy shares about the words. Suggested teacher talk might be, "How did your buddy help you understand the unknown word?"

Motivation/Engagement: Create vocabulary word cards (using a large font) and definition cards (on a word processor in landscape mode). Laminate, cut apart, and pass out one card, either the word or a definition, to each student. On a predetermined signal, have students walk around the room trying to find the match between students. When a match is found, students line up and share their word's meaning with the group. Partners can create a definition page for a class dictionary for a content area study. (This idea was contributed by third-grade teacher Sherry Perny.)

Glossary Use

Purpose: To utilize a glossary to help identify the definitions of keywords

Level: Early

ELL Technique: No

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, interpersonal

Materials: Texts with glossaries, supplies such as markers and crayons for creating illustrated glossary

Procedure:

1. Work with students to select several words from an informational text and look up their definitions in the book's glossary. Make students aware that nonfiction books often have glossaries of the terms used throughout the text, and that words that appear in the glossary are often boldfaced or italicized in the running text.

2. Have students look for a word in the glossary. Suggested teacher talk could be, "How do you use the glossary to help you understand the meaning of a word?"

3. After reading the definition from the glossary, ask students to retell the definition to a partner and point out where that chosen word is in the text. Suggested teacher talk might be, "What feature helps you to know if a word will be in the glossary?"

Motivation/Engagement: Have students create an illustrated glossary.

Thesaurus Use

Purpose: To use the thesaurus to help determine the meaning of a word

Level: Transitional

ELL Technique: Yes

Multiple Intelligences: Visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, interpersonal

Materials: Text, thesaurus, dictionary, sticky notes

Procedure:

1. Select several words to examine with the students using a thesaurus. Show the students how to use a thesaurus to look up multiple words to represent the word chosen and how, from these choices, one is able to get a better understanding of what the word could mean.

2. With partners, have the students choose a known or unknown word from a text and put a sticky note over the word.

3. Have the students predict other words they could substitute for that word that would still make sense in the passage.

4. Ask students to look up the word in a thesaurus and compare the word they chose to the ones that are under that entry in the thesaurus. Suggested teacher talk might be, "How do you use a thesaurus?" Students can put a check mark by the words that are both on their sticky note and in the thesaurus. They also can add words to their sticky note if desired.

5. As a class, discuss how students can see several words listed together in the thesaurus that all have similar usages in a sentence and can use that list to infer what they think the meaning of a particular word is.

6. Have students compare and contrast the thesaurus to a dictionary. Students can work with partners to examine and identify the various parts of a dictionary (e.g., guide words, parts of speech, definitions, etymologies).

Motivation/Engagement: Have students use an online thesaurus (www.merriam-webster.com) to highlight a chosen word and then search for some word choices that correspond with the original word. Suggested teacher talk could be, "What feature of the online program helps you understand the word better? How does it help you?"

Vocabulary Wrap-Up

Vocabulary is a key component of effective reading instruction. Both fluency and comprehension are affected by vocabulary knowledge (Flood et al., 1991; Robb, 1997). Vocabulary "is the glue that holds stories, ideas, and content together and that facilitates making comprehension accessible for children" (Rupley, Logan, & Nichols, 1999, p. 5). The NRP report findings indicate that vocabulary seems to occupy an important middle ground in learning to read. Oral vocabulary is a key to learning to make the transition from oral to written forms, whereas reading vocabulary is crucial to the comprehension processes of a skilled reader (NICHD, 2000, p. 4-15).

The strategies, techniques, and teacher talk presented in this chapter support teachers in maximizing their readers' potential in becoming strategic readers. When teachers brush this stroke (techniques and teacher talk in vocabulary) across their canvases, they are adding another dimension to their masterpieces—strategic readers.