

# Vocabulary Strategies

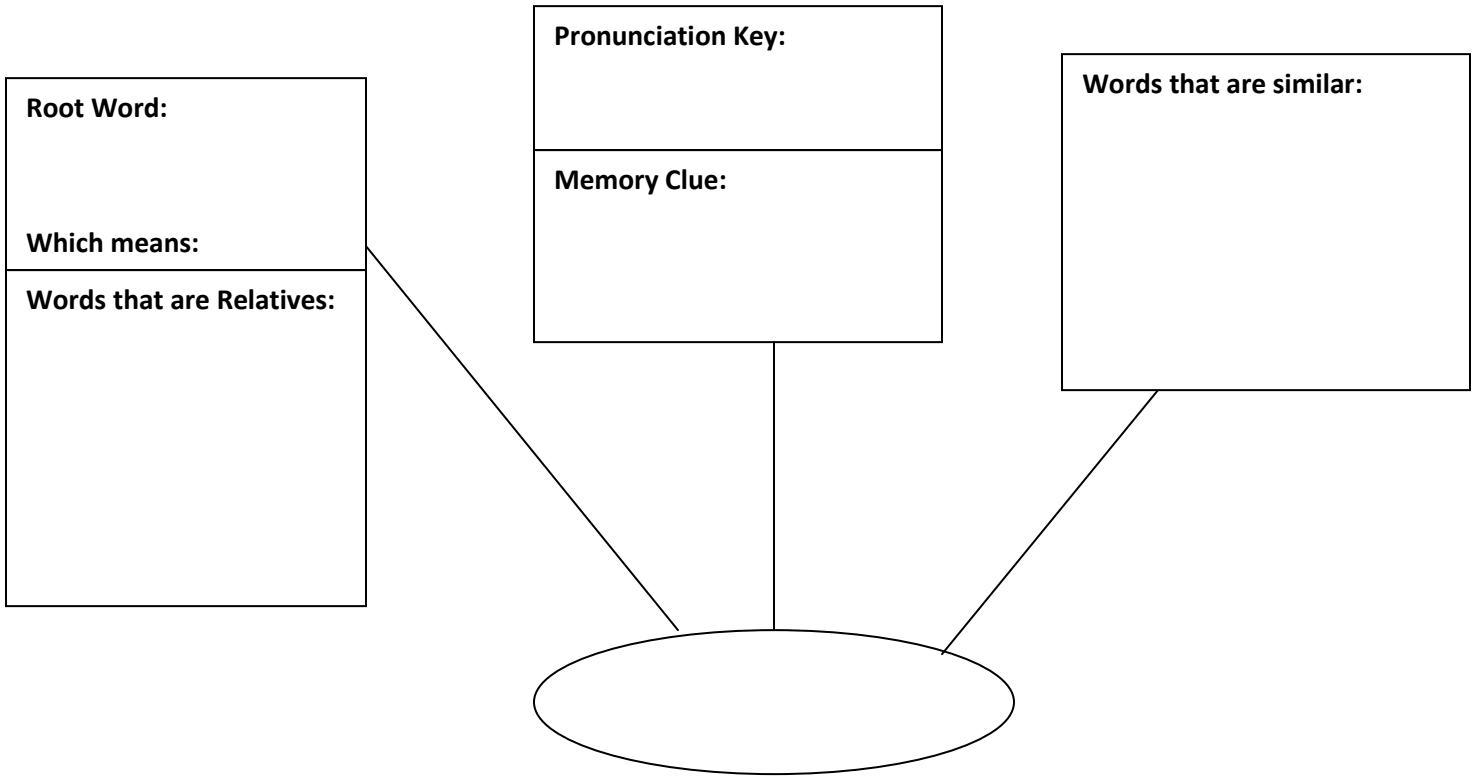
## Word Family Trees

### What is it?

The Word Family Tree is a strategy that involves students in connecting a key term to its origins, to related words that share a common root, to words that serve a similar function, and to situations in which one might expect the word to be used. Students often view vocabulary learning in a very narrow sense. They look up a new word in a dictionary, perhaps obtaining only a foggy notion of its meaning or grasping quickly at a possible synonym, resulting in a short term learning, forgetting the word soon after, and never incorporating it into their speaking vocabulary. The Word Family Trees strategy allows students to develop a thorough understanding of important vocabulary, and students are more likely to remember new words and feel confident in using them when they write or talk.

### How to use it:

1. Introduce the Word Family Trees graphic organizer as means of vocabulary study. As an analogy, refer to a genealogical family tree to prepare students for this activity. Family trees list an individual's ancestors, direct descendants, and other relatives, such as cousins, aunts, and uncles, while the Word Family Tree lists the "relatives" of a word.
2. Begin with activities that pique students' interests in word origins. Key terms from a unit of study or other frequently occurring words are excellent candidates.
3. Introduce students to the word you have chosen. Show how the word is linked to a meaningful root to help them gain insight into likely contexts where the word might appear.
4. Select a group of target words for students to investigate, which could be pivotal words in a short story, key terms in a unit of study, or general high-utility vocabulary words. Have students work in partners or cooperative groups to complete Word Family Trees for target words, using appropriate resources, such as text books, a thesaurus, dictionary, or other vocabulary-rich sources. Allow time for students to brainstorm who might be heard using these words and mnemonic clues to help them remember the meaning of the word.
5. Integrate consideration of word origin as a regular routine in classroom learning. Encourage students to raise their own questions about possible words backgrounds, and to consult sources other than abridged dictionaries to enrich their vocabulary understanding.



**Definition:**

**A sentence where you found this word:**

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

# Word Splash

A word splash is a collection of key terms or concepts taken from a text (or video) that the students are about to read.

- ❖ The students' task is to make predictions about how the terms relate to the main idea of the text.
  - ❖ Display the terms randomly and at angles of a visual interest (e.g., on an overhead transparency or chart paper).
  - ❖ Students brainstorm and generate *complete sentences* which predict *relationships* between each term and the broader topic.
  - ❖ Read the article and revise predictions.
  - ❖ Have students quiz each other on the important connections.
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## List-Group-Label

List-Group-Label (Taba, 1967) is a vocabulary strategy where students are asked to generate a list of words, group them according to their similarities, then label the group. This would be a great companion activity for AlphaBoxes.

For example, if the teacher asked students to brainstorm a list of words they associate with *danger*, students might list words like *run, enemy, shout, gun, snake, alarm, scream, spider, warn, scare, poison, cry, siren, stranger, escape, fire, bear, and shelter*. Students would group the words according to the categories they identify. Students might group the words *run, shout, scream, warn, cry, and escape* as things they would do if faced with danger. They might group the words *enemy, gun, snake, spider, poison, stranger, fire, and bear* as things that could cause danger. If words do not fit in a specific category students can either create a miscellaneous category or brainstorm new words to add to the list.

This exercise allows students to practice and develop their vocabularies without being concerned with looking up definitions. The act of categorizing supplies a structure for students to begin learning meanings of unfamiliar words or deepening their understandings of words with which they were already familiar.

## **Personalized Dictionary or Notebook**

1. Require students to purchase a notebook or have a section in a binder for vocabulary only.
2. As students read, ask them to write down any words with which they are unfamiliar. You may suggest to them that they write these words on post-it notes while reading and transfer them to their vocabulary notebook later. Also, you may want students to write the page number on which they found the word.
3. Students then transfer their self-selected vocabulary into their dictionary/notebook. Ask students to write the context in which the word occurred as well.
4. Some suggestions for the vocabulary entries include: Write the part of speech, note the word origin, define the word in one's own language, write synonyms and antonyms, use the word in an original sentence, and draw a picture that represents the word's meaning.
5. Personalized dictionaries should be a combination of teacher-selected as well as student-selected vocabulary.





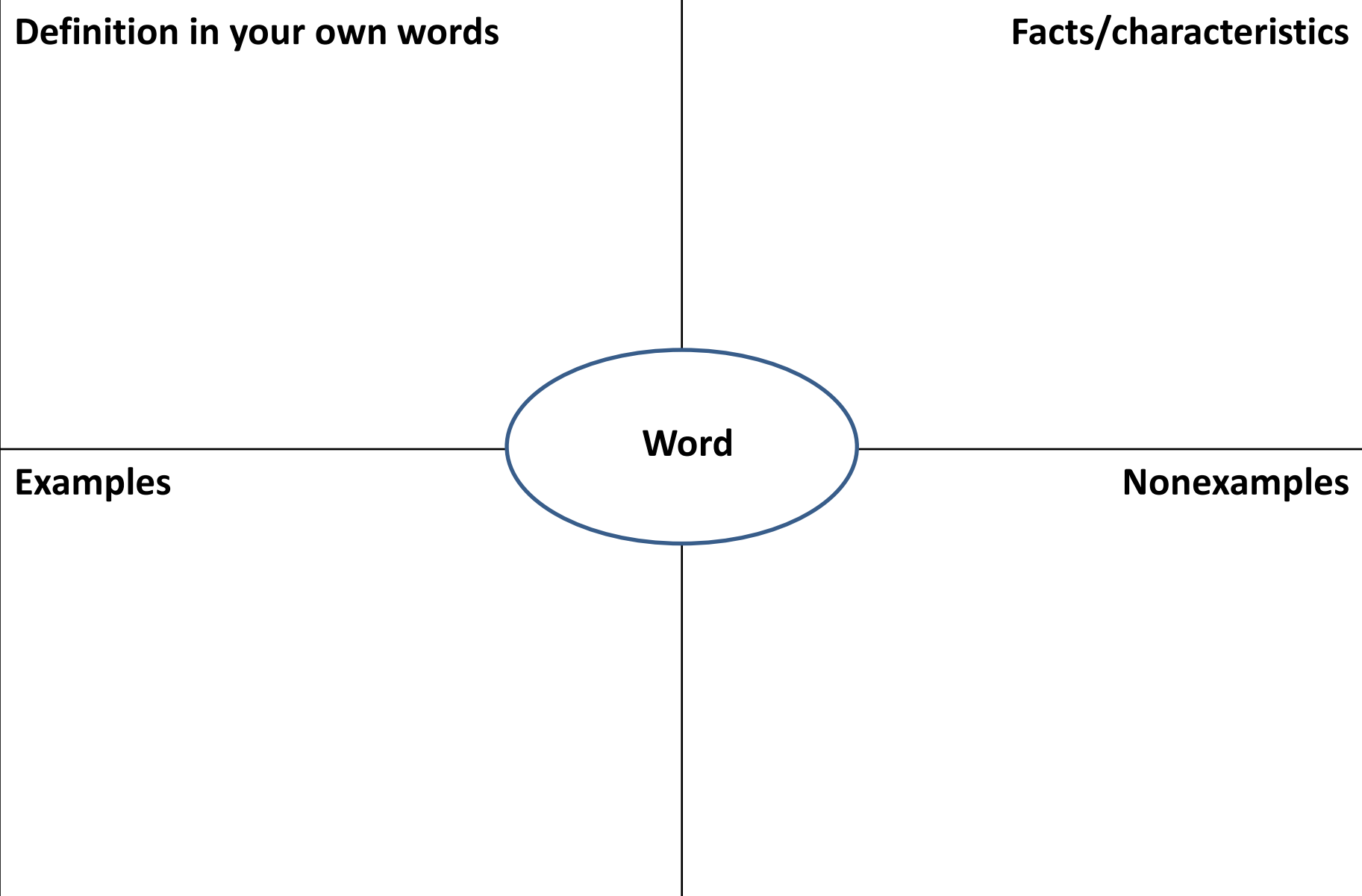
# Knowledge Rating Scale

Word	Know it well	Have seen or heard it	No Clue
rhombus			x
triangle	x		
pentagon		x	
quadrilateral		x	
trapezoid			x
square	x		

# Frayer Model

<b>Definition in your own words</b>	<b>Facts/characteristics</b>
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Nonexamples</b>

**Word**





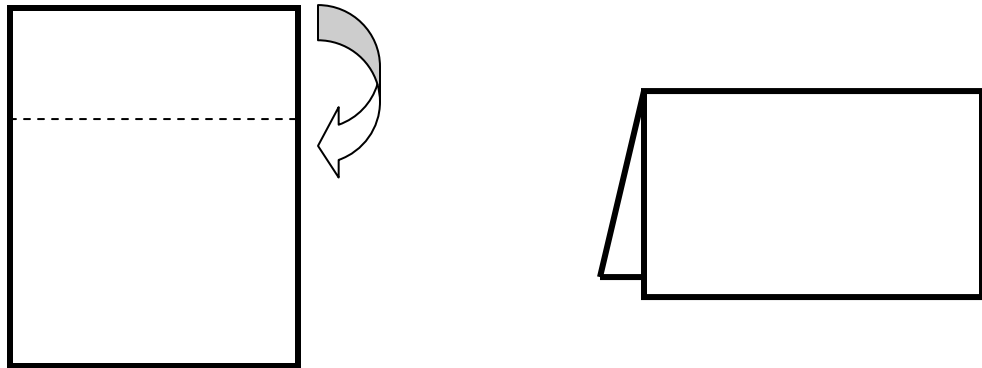
# Frayer Model

Definition in your own words	Facts/characteristics
<p>A quadrilateral is a shape with 4 sides.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4 sides</li><li>• may or may not be of equal length</li><li>• sides may or may not be parallel</li></ul>
Examples	Nonexamples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• square</li><li>• rectangle</li><li>• trapezoid</li><li>• rhombus</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• circle</li><li>• triangle</li><li>• pentagon</li><li>• dodecahedron</li></ul>

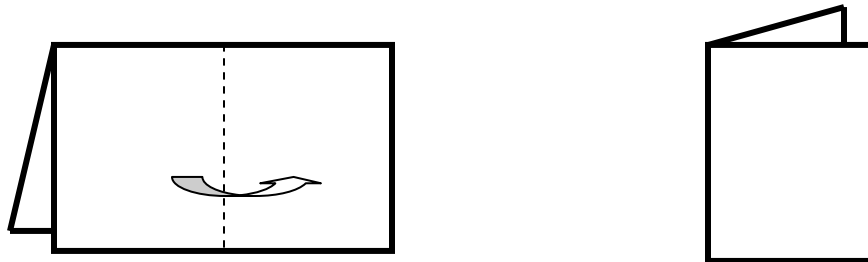
Quadrilateral

## Folded Frayer Model Directions

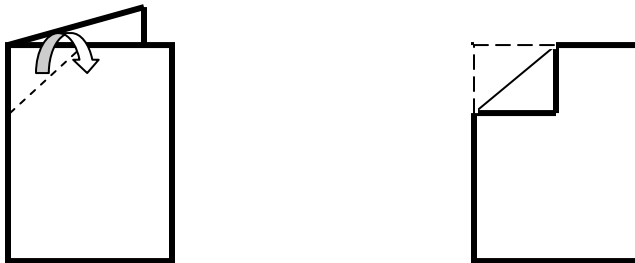
Hold a sheet of 8 ½ x 11 inch paper like a portrait. Then fold the sheet in half horizontally.



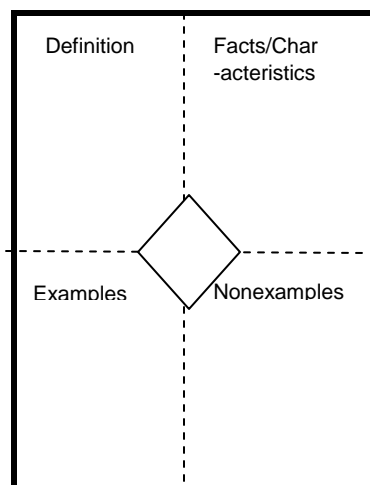
Now fold the paper in half vertically to create 4 sections if you open it up.



On the corner where the folds meet, fold a right triangle with the bottom edge of the triangle parallel to the bottom edge of the paper.



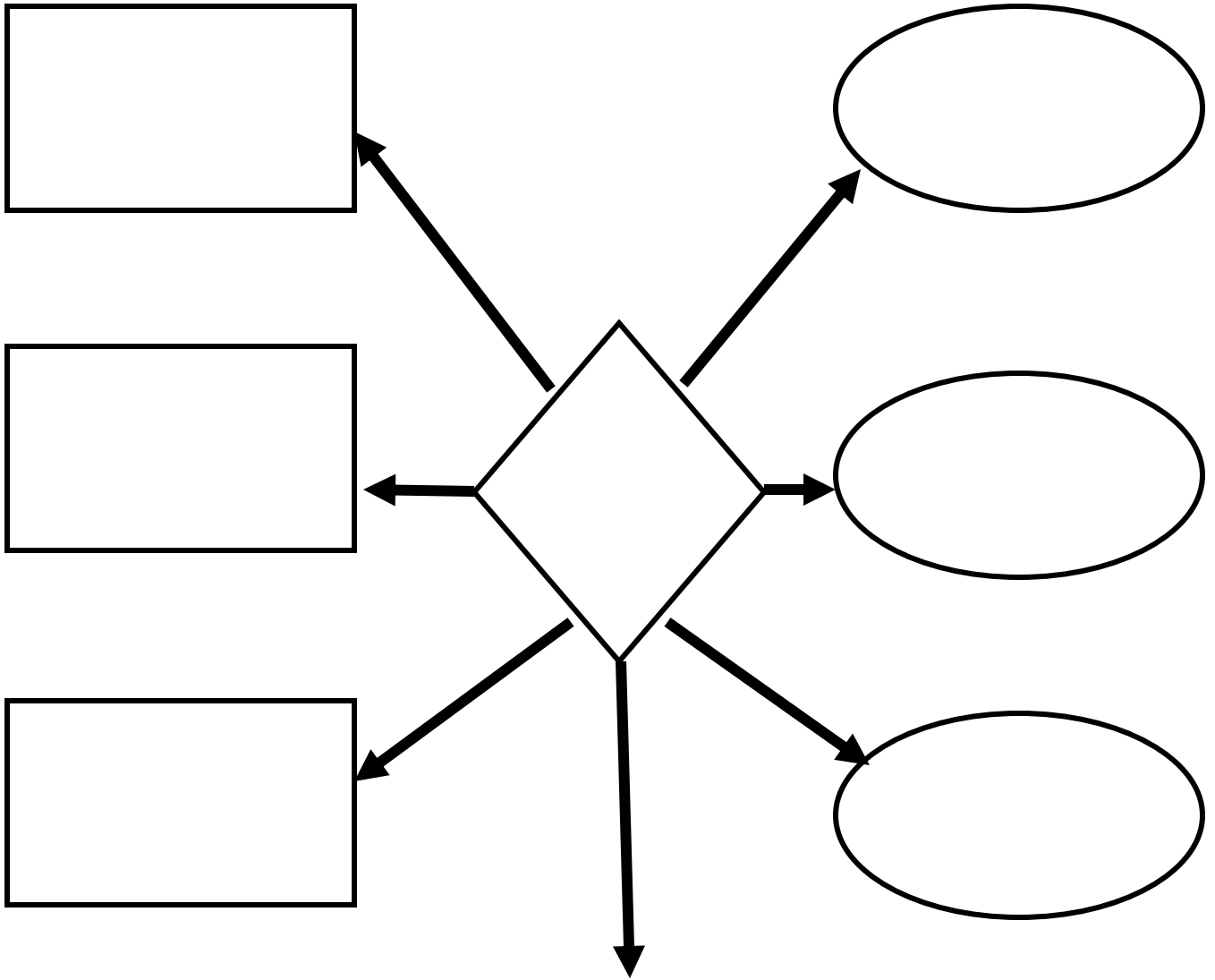
Now open the paper flat, put the word in the center diamond, and label the four sections like they are on a regular Frayer Model.



## Vocab-O-Gram

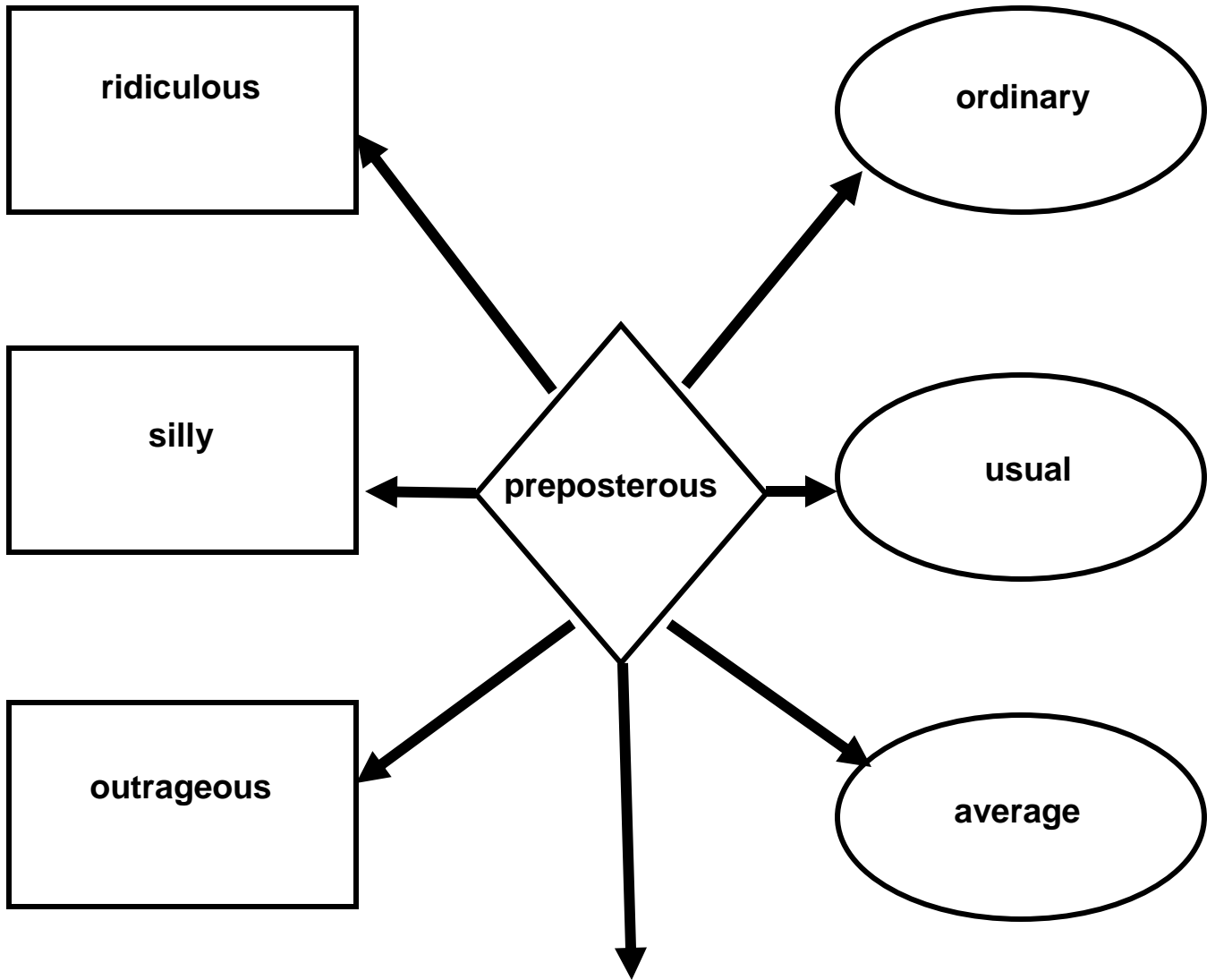
Use Vocabulary to make predictions about...	
The Setting	What will the setting be like?
The Characters	What will the characters be like?
The Problem or Goal	What might the problem or goal in this story be?
The Actions	What might happen in this story?
The Resolution	How might this story end?
Questions	What Questions do I have about this story?
Strange or Unfamiliar Words	

# Vocabulary Cluster



Person	Thing	Animal

# Vocabulary Cluster



Person	Thing	Animal
<b>clown</b>	<b>eggbeater</b>	<b>platypus</b>

## Verbal and Visual Word Association (VVWA)

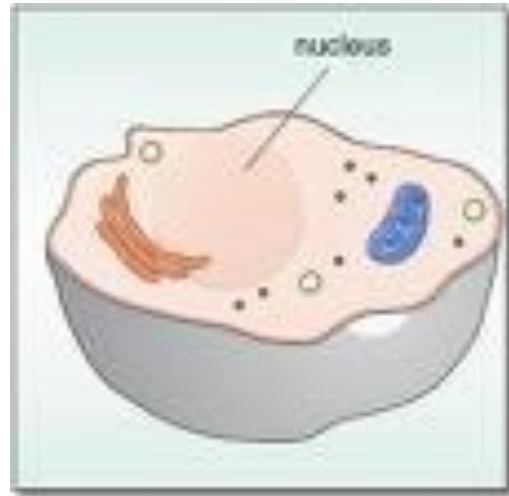
<p><b>Word</b></p>	<p><b>Visual Representation</b></p>
<p><b>Definition</b></p>	<p><b>Personal Association or Characteristic</b></p>

## Verbal and Visual Word Association (VVWA)

Word

cell

Visual Representation




Definition

It is a very tiny structure that makes up all plants and animals.

Personal Association or Characteristic

It reminds me of the rooms in a house. They have different uses, but together they make a home.

# Verbal and Visual Word Association (VVWA)

WORD	VISUAL REPRESENTATION
swastika	
<p data-bbox="337 957 578 993">DEFINITION</p> <p data-bbox="131 1031 597 1184">* Literal definition = GOOD LUCK</p> <p data-bbox="131 1192 748 1665">* Symbolic definitions WWII Nazi symbol equated with ... evil, terror, violence against minority groups</p>	<p data-bbox="797 957 1284 1035">PERSONAL ASSOCIATION OR CHARACTERISTIC</p> <p data-bbox="776 1171 1276 1419">Adolf Hitler and the Gestapo</p>



# Own the Word

My Definition:

Part of Speech:

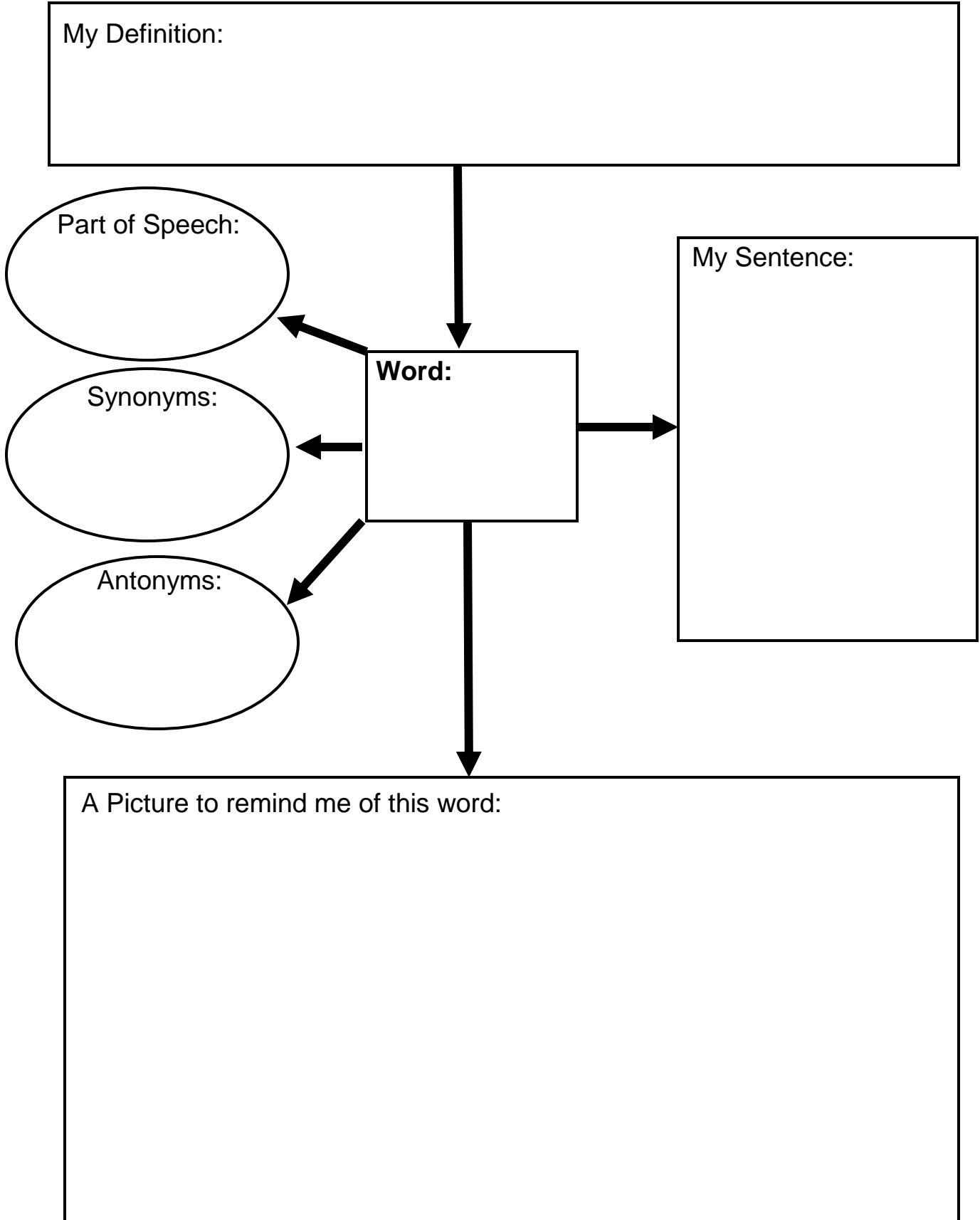
Synonyms:

Antonyms:

Word:

My Sentence:

A Picture to remind me of this word:



# PAVE Map

Sentence from the text:

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Word

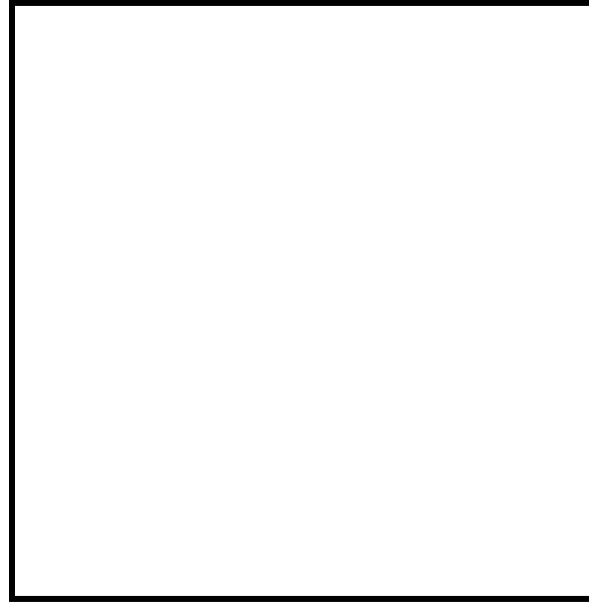
Predicted Definition:

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Association or Symbol

One Good Sentence of My Own:

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Verified Dictionary Definition:

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Another Good Sentence of My Own:

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## Student VOC Strategy

Vocabulary Word: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Write the sentence where the word is found in the text.
2. Based on the sentence, what do you think the word means?
3. Consult an “expert” for the actual definition (friend, text, dictionary).  
Expert:  
Expert’s Definition:
4. Write the word in a sentence of your own.
5. Choose one of the following ways to help you remember the word’s meaning: draw a picture; create a movement; connect the word to a story, song, or news report you’ve heard. Write down how you are going to remember this word.
6. Explain why you chose this method to remember the word.

# AlphaBoxes

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P
Q	R	S	T
U	V	W X	Y Z

# Pair-Square with AlphaBoxes

This activity will help students increase their word knowledge either before they begin a unit of study or at the end as they review what they have learned.

First, students will individually list all of the words that they know about a topic on their AlphaBoxes graphic organizer. The teacher may use this as a classroom assessment for learning by simply noting the amount and kinds of words students are recording on their sheets.

Pair – Students will work with a partner to compare their lists and add any words that they did not have on their own.

Square – Two pairs of students get together and compare the words they have recorded on their AlphaBoxes graphic organizer. They will add to their own personal sheet as they share the words and discuss why they should be included in the chart.

This activity will help students learn vocabulary through repetition and discussion. Students should be encouraged to check their spelling of the words during the Pair section of the activity. That way they will have accurate information to share during the Square.



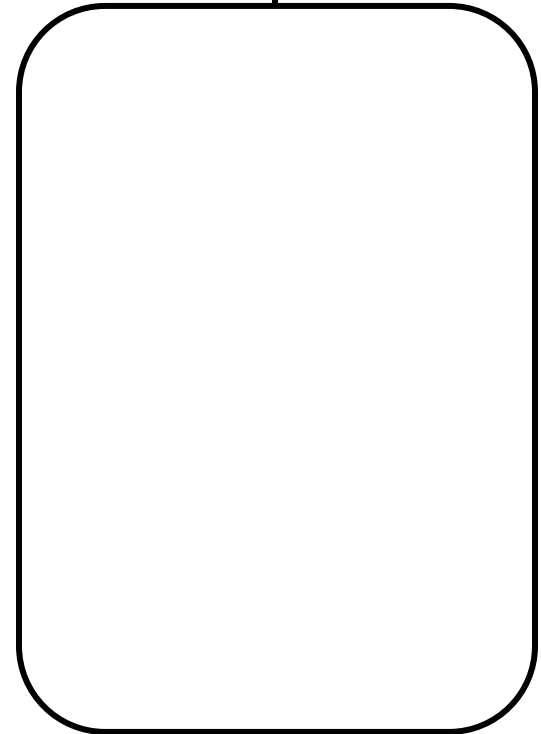
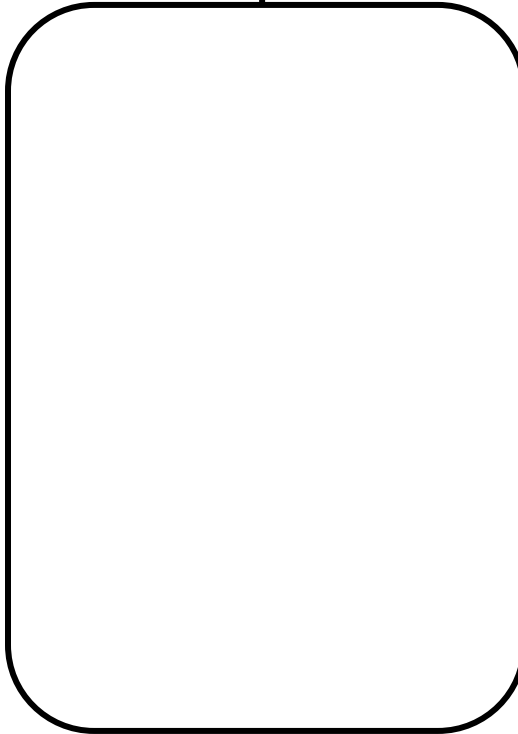
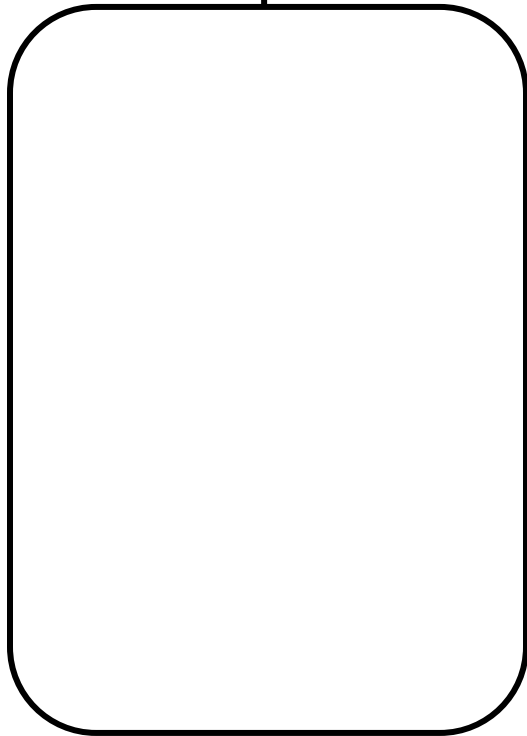
# Concept Map

Word

Synonyms

Things that are like  
this

Antonyms



# Language Collection Sheet

As you read on your own, fill in this chart with words that fit each category.

<b>Words that make me smile or laugh</b>	<b>Sounds, sights, or smells that bring tears to my eyes</b>	<b>Words or phrases that paint a picture</b>
<b>Words that make noise</b>	<b>Forbidden words</b>	<b>Action words</b>

## Word Play

Fun is always a motivator for students. Teachers can involve students in active word learning through word play. These types of activities interest even the most unmotivated student and appeal to the kinesthetic learner in the classroom. Teachers can conduct a classroom assessment for learning by simply observing the students as they involved in the activity.

### Websites on Word Play:

Online Vocabulary Games

[http://www.vocabulary.co.il/index\\_main.php](http://www.vocabulary.co.il/index_main.php)

Vocabulary Games

[http://eslbears.homestead.com/Contact\\_Info.html](http://eslbears.homestead.com/Contact_Info.html)

PowerPoint Games for Vocabulary Building

<http://jc-schools.net/tutorials/vocab/ppt-vocab.html>

Word Game Boards

<http://jc-schools.net/tutorials/vocab/wordgames-vocab.html>

Online PSAT and SAT Vocabulary Flashcards and Matching Games

<http://www.superkids.com/aweb/tools/sat/>

Hangman for Content Vocabulary

<http://www.superkids.com/aweb/tools/words/hangman/>

Mumbo Jumbo: Online Word Play

<http://www.superkids.com/aweb/tools/logic/texttwist/>

A Wealth of Vocabulary Games

<http://www.pekin.net/pekin108/contribute/ataylor/Vocabulary.htm>

## Hink Pinks

Hink Pinks can be used to reinforce word learning in an entertaining manner. The teacher says, "Hink Pink" to signal students that the words he/she is looking for have one syllable each and that they rhyme. For example, for a Hink Pink, a teacher might give out the definition, "an overweight feline." The students would answer with "fat cat." To increase the difficulty of this activity, ask for a Hinky Pinky (2 syllable words) or a Hinkity Pinkity (3 syllable words). Have students come up with their own definitions with which to play the game. This stretches their vocabulary and increases their interest in words.

Read more about Hink Pinks and find examples at:

[http://www.uen.org/utahlink/activities/view\\_activity.cgi?activity\\_id=5912](http://www.uen.org/utahlink/activities/view_activity.cgi?activity_id=5912)



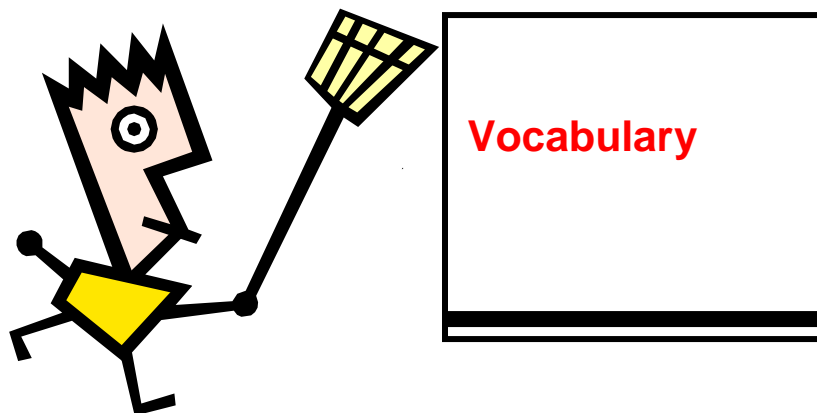
# SWAT!

## Fun with Vocabulary

This vocabulary review activity requires two fly swatters and a strong, flat surface on which to display the words. The teacher will write or post the words on the board, and divide the class into two teams. The students number off and the #1 student from each team comes to the board, picks up a fly swatter and stands with his/her back to the words.

The teacher reads a definition, says, “Go!” and the students turn and quickly try to SWAT the correct word. If both students choose the same word, the fly swatter that is on the bottom gets the point.

The kinesthetic learners in the classroom will love this activity. It encourages students to pay close attention to the words and the definitions because they may be read over again during the game.



## **Riddles, Jokes and Puns**

Humor can be used in the classroom to increase vocabulary and increase students' interest in words. Riddles, jokes and puns can improve student sound recognition and critical thinking. In addition, they will bring laughter to any classroom.

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### **Websites for Riddles, Jokes and Puns:**

#### **Riddles for Kids**

<http://www.azkidsnet.com/riddles.htm>

#### **Jokes and Riddles for Kids**

<http://www.squiglyplayhouse.com/JokesAndRiddles/index.html>

#### **More Riddles for Kids**

<http://www.bestfamilyadvice.com/riddles.html>

#### **Puns for Middle School Teachers**

[http://www.vrml.k12.la.us/8th/homework/read/puns/pun\\_main.htm](http://www.vrml.k12.la.us/8th/homework/read/puns/pun_main.htm)

#### **Simplified Technology: Web Sites for Jokes and Riddles**

<http://www.lburkhart.com/jokes.htm>

# Taboo Vocabulary Development

This classroom activity is similar to the Hasbro Taboo game; see Wikipedia description of the [Taboo game](#). The game requires students to put ideas in their own words. They must also be able to think about vocabulary words in ways that were not provided by the definitions, lab experiences, worksheets, or teacher descriptions.

## Materials:

- Index cards
- Colored pencils (recommended but not required)
- Stop watch, watch with a second hand, or other timing device

## Creating the cards:

This classroom variation begins by having the students create the cards that will be used during the game. One card may be created by each student as part of a daily vocabulary development activity. Student information can be written on the back of the index card. The collection of cards may be used with this game as a review of the information once enough cards have been added to the collection.

Each student is given an index card and is instructed to print one of the vocabulary words (the target word) on the top line of the card. On the lines below, the student is to list five words they might use to describe that vocabulary word. See the examples below:

<b>photosynthesis</b>	<b>Noble gas</b>
plants	helium
sunlight	inert
process	group
producers	family
energy	periodic table

<b>first class levers</b>	<b>precipitation</b>
mechanical advantage	rain
fulcrum	snow
effort arm	condensation
resistance arm	evaporation

force	weather

back of the card example	Justin Case 5 <sup>th</sup> period Physical Science
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The teacher should assign a different vocabulary word to each student (if there are enough vocabulary words to make this possible) or assign each word to only two or three students. This will allow all the vocabulary words to be used and reviewed. Other words, that were used in the previous content (chapters) which relate to or are used to explain ideas in the current program of study, may also be used. The words that are written on the cards are called "taboo" (forbidden) words because they may not be spoken by the "givers" as they give clues during the game.

Notice that the top words in the examples are a different color than the lists of words below it. This might help students focus on the target word while they think about what to say to get their team mates to guess that word. It will also make it easier for you to explain the rules of the game.

### The game:

Randomly select or assign teams; there are numerous ways to do this. You may put several students on a team so the number of teams in the class is more manageable.

- Have one participant from each team come to the front of the room; these students will be the "givers". Other students will be the guessers and should be organized and sitting with their team members.
- Arrange the givers in order so a card may be passed quickly to the giver of the next team if the target word is not guessed. Also, allow the givers to look at the card over the shoulders of the other givers while clues are given.
- The words that are written on the cards are called "taboo" (forbidden) words, because they may not be spoken by the givers as they try to get their teammates to guess the top word (target word) on the card.
- Give one of the cards to the giver from team 1 and start the timer. A reasonable amount of time should be allowed for the giver to get their team to guess the word. The recommended allotted time will vary depending on the grade and level of the students in the class.
- Only the students who are on the team of the giver who is giving the clues may attempt to guess the word at that time. If a student from another team correctly guesses the target word when it is not their turn, they do not receive a point. If the word is overheard by another team, that other team may guess that word and win the point.
- If a member of team 1 correctly guesses the word, their team is awarded a point. If team 1 members do not guess the word in the allotted time, the card is passed on to the giver of team 2 and time is allotted for that team. The giver of team 2 provides clues for their team so they may guess the top word on the card. If they do not, the card is passed to the giver of team 3, and so on. If the target word is not guessed by any of the teams, no points are awarded, the givers return to their groups, and a new group of givers comes to the front of the

room. A different card is selected, and the process continues. (Do not allot too much time for the teams before passing the card to the giver of the next team, it will cause the game to go too slowly and students will become disinterested.)

- When a team receives a point, scores may be recorded on the board in the front of the class or the team may keep the card for the word they guess correctly. Simply count the cards at the end of the game; the team with the most cards wins.
- While the students at the front of the class are waiting their turn to be a giver, they are to watch and listen to make certain that the other givers do not say a taboo word while giving clues. Should the giver say one of the taboo words and it is pointed out by the other givers, then their team will lose a point. If this happens before the team has earned a point, then their team will receive a negative point.
- When a team correctly guesses the target word, a new group of givers (one from each team) comes to the front of the room and the previous group of givers returns to their team to become guessers.
- The team, whose member correctly guessed that last word, is given the next card to begin the process the next time.
  - If this proves to be a problem because the same team continues to guess correctly and other teams do not get a turn, the rules of the game can be changed. Simply change givers after every correct answer is given and allow the next sequential team to begin that round with the next card. This will insure that all students (teams) get a turn.

**More about what cannot be said or done while giving clues:** (See [Wikipedia Taboo \(game\) reference.](#))

- The giver might have to get his or her team to say "baseball" without saying "sport," "game," "pastime," "hitter," "pitcher," nor "baseball." The giver may NOT say a part of a "taboo" word; for example, using "base" in "baseball" is taboo.
- The giver may only use speech to prompt his or her teammates; gestures, sounds (e.g. barking), or drawings are not allowed (though modifications may be made for deaf or mute players). The giver's hints may not rhyme with a taboo word, or be an abbreviation of a taboo word.
- While the giver is prompting the teammates (without hand motions), they may yell out as many guesses as possible, rational or not, with no penalties.

# Tribond Vocabulary Development

This classroom activity is similar to the Mattel Taboo game; see other links for the [Tribond game](#). The game requires students to determine the common bond from a list of three items. The words on the list and common bond that students are to determine would be related to a topic that is in the content being taught at the time. Students must be able to think about vocabulary words in ways that were not provided by the definitions, lab experiences, worksheets, or teacher descriptions.

## Materials:

- Index cards
- Colored pencils (recommended but not required)
- Stop watch, watch with a second hand, or other timing device

## Creating the cards:

This classroom variation begins by having the students create the cards that will be used during the game. One card may be created by each student as part of a daily vocabulary development activity. Student information can be written on the back of the index card. The collection of cards may be used with this game as a review of the information once enough cards have been added to the collection.

The teacher should assign a different vocabulary word to each student (if there are enough vocabulary words to make this possible) or assign each vocabulary word to only two or three students. This will allow all the vocabulary words to be used and reviewed. Other words, that were used in the previous content (chapters) which relate to or are used to explain ideas in the current program of study, may also be used. Students are to consider how the vocabulary word they have been assigned relates to other words, phrases or ideas. The words that are assigned to the students may be used as the **target word** (the common bond) or as one of the examples /descriptors of the target word (words that are related or share the common bond; they may simply be a list of examples). Students are to indicate the vocabulary word they are assigned by placing a check mark after that word on the card they create.

Each student is given an index card and is instructed to print the target word on the bottom line of the card. On the first three lines of the card, the student is to list three words that share that common bond. See the examples below:

the Earth	Mercury
a magnet ✓	Venus
flags	Earth
<b>things with poles</b>	<b>terrestrial planets ✓</b>
potassium	wheelbarrow
sodium	bottle opener
lithium	wrench

<b>Alkali metals</b> √	<b>second class levers</b> √
<b>back of the card example</b>	Sally Mander 5 <sup>th</sup> period Biology

More cards- The teacher may also create cards and add them to the collection. This will ensure that the concepts and connections that should to be covered during the review game will be covered in the review game.

**Rules of the game:**

Randomly select or assign teams; there are numerous ways to do this. You may put several students on a team so the number of teams in the class is more manageable. Assign each team a number; team 1, team 2, team 3, etc.

- Students should be organized and sitting with their team members.
- The teacher reads from the list of descriptors on a card. A reasonable amount time is allotted for teams to discuss and determine the bond between the words that were given. The recommended allotted time would vary depending on the grade and level of the students in the class.
- After the allotted time has passed, team 1 gets to guess the target word first; if their answer is correct, they earn a point. Points may be recorded on the board in the front of the class or the team may keep the card for the word they guess correctly. Simply count the cards at the end of the game; the team with the most cards wins.
- If team 1 does not guess the target word, team 2 gets to guess the target word. If they are not correct, team 3 get to guess, and so on...
- If the target word is not guessed, the card is returned to the deck, and new card is selected and read by the teacher.
- The team, whose member correctly guessed that last word, gets to attempt guess the target word first when the game continues with a new card.
  - If this proves to be a problem because the same team continues to guess correctly and other teams do not get a turn, the rules of the game can be changed. Simply start with the next team (numerical order). After every correct answer is given and allow the next sequential team to begin that round with the new card. This will insure that all students (teams) get a turn.

**Variations:**

- Sometimes there is a little time left at the end of the class period, not enough time to start something new, but enough time to be used effectively. The teacher may use the Tribond cards at that time and students do not have to be separated into teams for this quick variation of the activity. The teacher simply reads from the cards and students call out (or are called upon to attempt) a guess.
- A teacher in a middle school or high school setting may teach the same class several times a day. Cards may be compiled from all those classes and students, teams, or classes from different periods may compete against each other and scores may be posted throughout the day.

Retrieved from <http://wvde.state.wv.us/strategybank/WordPlay.html>