SECTION IV

Essential Strategies for Teaching Vocabulary

A Brief Overview of Vocabulary Development

The term *vocabulary* has a range of meanings. For example, some teachers use the term to mean *sight-word vocabularies,* referring to students' immediate recognition of words in print; other teachers refer to words students understand as their *meaning vocabularies*. Still other teachers use the term to mean *listening vocabularies,* or students' understanding of words that they hear in the spoken language. Content teachers use the term *academic vocabulary* to refer to content-specific words. Within this section, we use the term *vocabulary* to refer to students' understanding of oral and print words. Vocabularies include conceptual knowledge of words that goes well beyond a simple dictionary definition. Students' vocabulary knowledge is a building process that occurs over time as they make connections to other words, learn examples and nonexamples of the word and related words, and use the word accurately within the context of the sentence (Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005).

Why is vocabulary development such an important aspect of a student's academic life? Think about the relationship of vocabulary to overall literacy development. A number of studies have shown that vocabulary size in young children is a strong predictor for success in later grades: The larger the children's vocabularies in the primary grades, the greater their academic achievement in the upper grades. The National Reading Panel (NRP; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000) analyzed scientific studies that led them to conclude that readers' vocabulary is strongly related to their understanding of text. The NRP explained that when students are taught key words before reading text, they have greater comprehension than students who do not receive such instruction. Clearly, the preponderance of such evidence led the NRP to emphasize vocabulary instruction as an essential element of the literacy program.

Reflecting on the nature of children's learning of words confirms the strong relationship between vocabulary and comprehension and calls attention to the prominent place that vocabulary instruction should hold in the literacy program. Research related to vocabulary instruction and word knowledge shows that there is a robust correlation between knowing words and comprehending text (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2008). Many educators feel that a strong vocabulary program just makes sense. Consider that words are labels for their meanings and when we know a word, we know what it represents. Some words are more complex than others, having multiple meanings, while others are conceptually rich and networked to countless other words. There are those words that may have different syntactic uses depending on their context within a sentence. For example, the word *run* can be used as a noun or a verb. Thus, learning a new word takes place over time. As students hear and read the word in many different contexts, their understanding and use of the word will develop and increase. Thus, the students within our classroom may have an understanding of a word, but the degree to which they know a word may differ. The Partnership for Reading (2003) has used the following three levels to describe students' knowledge for word meanings:

- *Unknown:* The word is completely unfamiliar and its meaning is unknown.

- *Acquainted:* The word is somewhat familiar; the student has some idea of its basic meaning.

- *Established:* The word is very familiar; the student can immediately recognize its meaning and use the word correctly. (p. 43)

GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY

Learning words does not occur in a vacuum; that is, children do not acquire meanings of words in isolation. All learning—both personal and academic—occurs within the sociocultural environment of the home, community, and classroom. "Literacy is a social practice, so students learn academic vocabulary through social interactions as members of the learning community" (Scott, Nagy, & Flinspach, 2008, p. 197). Therefore, effective teachers of language and literacy provide practices that stimulate rich uses of language, designing their instructional programs within a social context that promotes literacy learning.

Teachers know that students who are learning to read and write and those who are reading to learn—that is, learning in content areas—will benefit from a sound instructional vocabulary program. This is especially true for classrooms where children have small vocabularies and are English language learners. Knowledge of words is acquired incidentally, where vocabulary is developed through immersion in language activities. Words are also learned through direct instruction, where students learn words through a structured approach. Thus, vocabulary programs should be designed to support children's word learning through a combination of approaches to teaching, direct instruction, and incidental word learning. Michael Graves (2006) offers a framework for successful vocabulary programs that supports effective teaching and students' development of word knowledge. The foundation of his instructional program includes a four-part approach to developing robust vocabularies: (1) Provide rich and varied language experiences, (2) teach individual words, (3) teach word-learning strategies, and (4) foster word consciousness (pp. 4–8).

Providing rich and varied language experiences: Incidental word learning takes place when teachers offer and encourage students to participate in a variety of rich language experiences that occur throughout the day and across the curriculum. Examples of such experiences that promote rich and powerful vocabularies at all grade levels include

(1) interactive read-alouds of outstanding children's literature, (2) dialogic-based instructional activities, (3) independent reading, (4) interactive writing, and (5) creating a print-rich environment where the "walls are dripping with words."

Teaching individual words: Although many words may be learned incidentally and vocabularies do become stronger when they are supported with a language-rich environment, children benefit from systematic and direct instruction of words. The research is clear with respect to effective teaching of words (Graves, 2006). Vocabulary instruction should (1) provide students with information that contains the context as well as the meaning of the word, (2) design instruction that engages students and allows sufficient time for word learning, (3) make sure students have multiple exposures to the words with review and practice, and (4) create a dialogue around the words.

Teaching word-learning strategies: An important aspect of developing students' robust vocabularies is teaching them tools to unlock the meaning of unknown words. The most effective tools use the context of the surrounding words or sentences to infer the meaning of a word, using meaningful word parts to make sense out of the unknown word and using the dictionary effectively to help define an unknown word.

Building word consciousness in readers and writers: An important aspect of a strong vocabulary program is to engage students in learning new words. As teachers, we need to develop word consciousness within our students and maintain their interest in words. Graves and Watts-Taffe (2008) suggest that teachers "(1) create a word-rich environment, (2) recognize and promote adept diction, (3) promote word play, (4) foster word consciousness through writing, (5) involve students in original investigations, and (6) teach students about words" (p. 186).

A STRATEGY FOR ASSESSING VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Assessing student learning is a critical component of effective teaching and achievement. Therefore, part of the teacher's literacy instructional plan needs to include the assessment of students' vocabulary development. We aligned our progress monitoring of vocabulary with the following instructional goals: (1) to enhance vocabulary development and use, (2) to develop word-learning strategies, and (3) to build word consciousness. One approach in assessing students' vocabulary development is through the use of the rubric in Figure IV.1. The rubric contains six criteria related to the goals of the vocabulary instructional program. By monitoring students' progress, teachers may use the results to modify their instruction to meet the needs of individual students, those of the class, and the instructional program.

Figure IV.1 Rubric for Assessing Vocabulary Development			
Criterion	**Level #3 Advanced (3 Points)**	**Level #2 Developing (2 Points)**	**Level #1 Striving (1 Point)**
Word identification	The student is proficient in saying, reading, or writing the word.	The student has some difficulty saying, reading, or writing the word.	The student has a lot of difficulty saying, reading, or writing the word.

(Continued)

(Continued)

Word meaning	The student knows the comprehensive meaning of the word and can discuss multiple meanings of the word.	The student knows a partial meaning of the word but has difficulty discussing a full meaning of the word.	The student does not know the meaning of the word and cannot discuss it.
Reading the word	The student offers a rich explanation of the contextual meaning of the word.	The student offers a partial explanation of the contextual meaning of the word.	The student is not able to explain the contextual meaning of the word.
Writing the word	The student uses the word with a high degree of accuracy within the context of writing.	The student uses the word with some degree of accuracy within the context of writing.	The student does not attempt to use the word within the context of writing.
Word-learning strategies	The student uses a range of word-learning strategies, along with varied resources, to learn new words.	The student uses few word-learning strategies and resources to learn new words.	The student does not use word-learning strategies and resources to learn new words.
Word consciousness	The student demonstrates an awareness and interest in learning and using new words.	The student demonstrates a minimal awareness and interest in learning and using new words.	The student does not demonstrate an awareness and interest in learning and using new words.
Overall level of vocabulary development	**Advanced level 18–13 points**	**Developing level 12–7 points**	**Striving level 6–0 points**

A Guide for Using Response to Intervention for Vocabulary

Word knowledge is more than just reading a word! As we have discussed in this section, knowing words is multidimensional and the process occurs over time. Therefore, effective instruction and assessment in vocabulary will take into account the students' development in reading words correctly, knowing the meaning of a word within several different contexts, using words in reading as well as writing, using word-learning strategies, and being word conscious. The rubric in Figure IV.1 provides a multidimensional approach to assess word learning that teachers may use to monitor students' vocabulary development in reading and writing. As teachers apply the rubric for evaluating students' performances, they will see patterns emerge in each of these areas that need improvement and may use the results for selecting a Response to Intervention strategy. For example, one teacher of students with special needs analyzed the assessment results and found that four students were not "word conscious." The students had little or no awareness of new and exciting words, and their lack of a positive disposition for words hindered their vocabulary development. The teacher used these results for selecting a Response to Intervention strategy. She chose and implemented the Vocabulary Self-Collection strategy and found there was an overall difference in her students' stance toward learning new words.

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

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Strategy 16

Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy

Speaking Briefly: An Overview of the Literacy Strategy

The *Vocabulary Self-Collection* strategy (VSS) is an interactive-learning instructional strategy that promotes word consciousness, as students are actively engaged in identifying important words from their reading to share with members of their class. The strategy was first introduced by Haggard (1982, 1986) and since then has been adapted for various grade levels and instructional contexts. Students select words from their readings that are new and interesting, use the context and other resources to determine the meaning of the words, and nominate the words to be learned by others in the group or class. Teachers using the VSS (1) model the process of collecting words, (2) provide guided practice within reading groups and other instructional contexts, and (3) offer consistent encouragement to students to use VSS during independent reading. The major benefits of using VSS are that students engage in their own learning, discover how to recognize unfamiliar or interesting words from their readings, develop their vocabularies, and become word conscious.

A review of the research on vocabulary instruction conducted by Harmon and Hedrick (2005) led them to claim that struggling readers learn vocabulary when teachers "encourage independent learning by allowing students to self-select terms to be studied" (p. 275). They pointed to VSS as an approach to encourage students to select and study words that they feel are important to learn. Research conducted by Calderon et al. (2005) with English language learners demonstrated that, in addition to teaching vocabulary before reading, their discourse around the text after reading leads to students' vocabulary development.

IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

Using Vocabulary Self-Collection

When to use the strategy: VSS should be introduced before reading and used by students during and after reading. VSS has been used with intermediate, middle, and secondary students within cooperative group settings, but the strategy may be modified for students in the primary grades as the teacher directs and guides them through the process. Primary-grade students would benefit from the use of VSS after group read-alouds, when they return to the book to select new and interesting words.

Strategy modifications for grade levels: VSS works well with intermediate and middle school students. However, the strategy may be modified for use with primary-grade students. Teachers in the primary grades would simply add more modeling techniques and think-alouds and incorporate scaffolding to help students select new and unfamiliar words. In other words, VSS can be effective for young children if the teacher (1) uses it as a whole-group activity, (2) directs the group in selecting the new and interesting words from a group reading such as a read-aloud, and (3) guides the students in a discussion around the meanings of the words. After the new and interesting words have been selected and discussed, they may be posted on a wall chart for students' use.

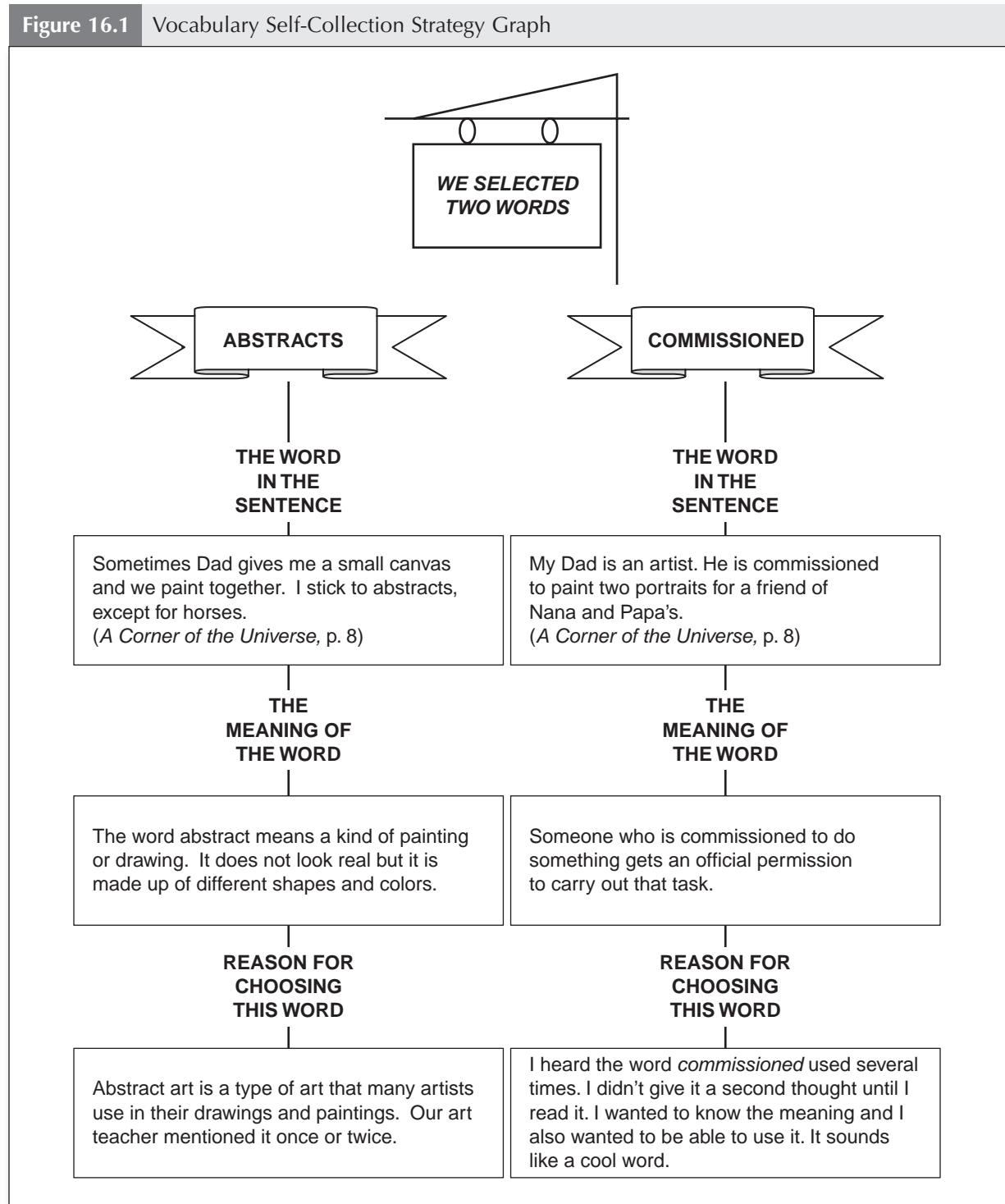### Implementing the Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy: Step by Step

1. **Teachers introduce the purpose of VSS to students.** They tell students that they will be expected to find new and interesting words from their readings that they will learn through a group nomination process.

2. **Teachers model how to select and nominate important words from the readings.** Teachers show why the word they selected is important by providing a strong rationale. For example, they may show students that without knowing the word, they may not understand the sentence or surrounding sentences. They may also nominate the selected word because it is interesting and would be useful in their own writing.

3. **Teachers demonstrate how to use context and other resources to learn the meaning of the word.** For example, they may use the context or they may refer to the glossary, dictionary, diagrams, or illustrations to unlock the meaning of the word.

4. **Teachers write the word, the context in which it was used, its meaning, and the reason for selecting the word on chart paper.** Using a chart similar to the one shown in Figure 16.1, teachers write the word, the sentence or phrase in which the word was used, the meaning, and the reason for selecting the word.

5. **Teachers engage students in the process of vocabulary self-selection.** Students work in small groups of three to five, and they read a short passage from the book with the teacher. They are guided by the teacher to identify a word they wish to select. The teacher demonstrates how to use context and other resources to figure out the meaning of the word. Together, the students and the teacher engage in a discussion on developing a reason for nominating their word, and each small group moves to nominate one word for learning. Students use their own charts to write the word, the sentence from the text in which the word was found, the meaning, and the reason for selecting the word.

6. **After students are familiar with the strategy, teachers provide guided practice to support the use of VSS during reading.** Teachers organize students in small groups for reading. They introduce the book and provide a brief overview of the strategy. To help them recall the steps in the process for nominating one or two words to learn, students are given the following questions, which may appear as a reminder on a classroom wall chart:

   • What is the word that I believe is important to learn?

   • Why would I select it as an interesting or important word to learn?

   • How was the word used? Write the sentence in which the word was used.

   • What is the meaning of the word? Can I get the meaning of the word from the context, dictionary, glossary, or some diagram in the book?

7. **Students in small groups discuss the words they wish to nominate.** Within their small groups, they talk about each word and why they think the class should learn the word. Through consensus, they nominate two words.

8. **Students write the two words on a chart similar to the one shown in Figure 16.1.** Each group presents its two words to the class. On a class chart, one member of the group writes the word, the sentence in which the word was used, its meaning, and the reason for selecting the word.

APPLYING THE VOCABULARY SELF-COLLECTION STRATEGY: EIGHTH-GRADE LESSON ON ANN MARTIN

Within the eighth-grade literature classroom, students are beginning an author study of Ann Martin. Students in each of the four literature circles have chosen the book they will read after the teacher conducts a book talk on four of Martin's works. Prior to their reading, the teacher reminds students to select two words from the first chapter for nomination and then reviews the procedure for using VSS. The students in each literature group read the same book and, during reading, note interesting words that they wish to nominate; they record them on their graphic organizer and continue reading. After reading the first chapter, students discuss the story in their small groups and offer responses and reflections. They end their book discussions with their vocabulary study. Students share the words they have selected and their meanings with their group and conduct the nomination process by presenting a reason why they selected them. The group reaches consensus and presents them to the class. The teacher writes each of the

nominated words on the class chart along with their meanings, the sentences in which they appeared, and the reason for selecting the words. Figure 16.1 provides the nomination chart from one literature group that was reading *A Corner of the Universe* by Ann M. Martin (2002).

Figure 16.1 Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy Graph

WE SELECTED TWO WORDS

ABSTRACTS

COMMISSIONED

THE WORD IN THE SENTENCE

THE WORD IN THE SENTENCE

Sometimes Dad gives me a small canvas and we paint together. I stick to abstracts, except for horses.
(*A Corner of the Universe,* p. 8)

My Dad is an artist. He is commissioned to paint two portraits for a friend of Nana and Papa's.
(*A Corner of the Universe,* p. 8)

THE MEANING OF THE WORD

THE MEANING OF THE WORD

The word abstract means a kind of painting or drawing. It does not look real but it is made up of different shapes and colors.

Someone who is commissioned to do something gets an official permission to carry out that task.

REASON FOR CHOOSING THIS WORD

REASON FOR CHOOSING THIS WORD

Abstract art is a type of art that many artists use in their drawings and paintings. Our art teacher mentioned it once or twice.

I heard the word *commissioned* used several times. I didn't give it a second thought until I read it. I wanted to know the meaning and I also wanted to be able to use it. It sounds like a cool word.

IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts

10. Students whose first language is not English make use of their first language to develop competency in the English language arts and to develop understanding of content across the curriculum.

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Teachers may highlight and use the resources that all students bring to the classroom. A significant contribution that English language learners may make to the class is sharing their language with other students. When a word is nominated as an interesting and new word to learn and use, the word may be translated in the home language of students who are learning English. English-only students will benefit from learning words from world languages, and English language learners will benefit from making connections to their home language for a greater understanding of the new words.

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Students with special needs experiencing problems in reading will also have difficulty identifying words they wish to learn. Once they are able to identify new and interesting words, students with special needs will most likely be unable to use context to determine the meaning of the word. Research has shown that the interaction with others regarding word learning will offer them the support they need (Ruddell & Shearer, 2002). Therefore, teachers should carefully select students to work together using a mixed-grouping format and emphasize that it is important to discuss how and why words are selected. This will benefit students who do not know how to identify words for learning. Offer time and guidance to students with special needs by providing mini-lessons on word identification skills, how to use context to guess at the meaning of the word, and how to use other resources within the text such as pictures, graphics, glossaries, and diagrams.

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Strategy
17
Word Mapping

The purpose of the *Word Mapping* strategy is to promote the students' deeper understanding of words through depicting varying relationships between and among words. Word maps are visual displays of word meanings organized to depict relationships with other words. Research reveals that to develop students' vocabularies, teachers need to promote in-depth word knowledge (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002). The Word Mapping strategy, or semantic mapping, is one of the most powerful approaches to teaching vocabulary because it engages students in thinking about word relationships (Graves, 2008). The strategy promotes students' active exploration of word relationships, thereby leading to a deeper understanding of word meanings by developing their conceptual knowledge related to words. The effectiveness of Word Mapping is supported by research. For example, a study comparing mapping word relationships and a contextual approach to learning words indicated that semantic mapping produced greater gains in word learning (Margosein, Pascarella, & Pflaum, 1982). Students learn about words through mapping because it helps them examine the characteristics of the word concepts, categorize words, and see relationships among words that are similar as well as those that may be different. Such activities that are part of the Word Mapping strategy are cognitive strategies that lead to a deeper understanding of words and the concepts that they represent.

The Word Mapping strategy is referred to by different names, such as semantic mapping, concept mapping, and word clusters. The strategy may be adapted to the nature of vocabulary instruction, the learning outcomes, and students' grade levels. For example, for learning some words, it may be more appropriate to have students explore the synonyms, antonyms, and origin of the words; whereas for other words, it may be more helpful to find examples and nonexamples of the words. Sinatra, Stahl-Gemake, and Berg (1984) used word maps successfully for vocabulary instruction with students in the elementary grades who were disabled readers. Further, Reutzel and Cooter (2008) suggest the use of word maps with English language learners for vocabulary instruction because it offers a way for them to demonstrate and connect their prior knowledge to new concepts and, at the same time, serves as a useful tool to categorize information.

IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and nonprint texts.

12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

USING WORD MAPPING

When to use the strategy: The strategy is most effective when used before, during, and after reading. Most teachers use the Word Mapping strategy to introduce new vocabulary before reading. As a follow-up to reading and discussion of the text, they encourage students to develop their word maps by using the new information they acquired through reading. Students may also use word maps during reading, as they add new ideas and words to further build word knowledge and extend understanding of word relationships.

Strategy modifications for grade levels: Word maps may be used at any grade level from kindergarten through the eighth grade and beyond. Teachers of the primary grades adjust the word maps to students' literacy development by exploring fewer word relationships at a time. For the intermediate and middle grades, word maps become more complex as students search for varied word relationships and rich word meanings. As older and more proficient readers learn the process of mapping words, they will use them independently and more creatively.

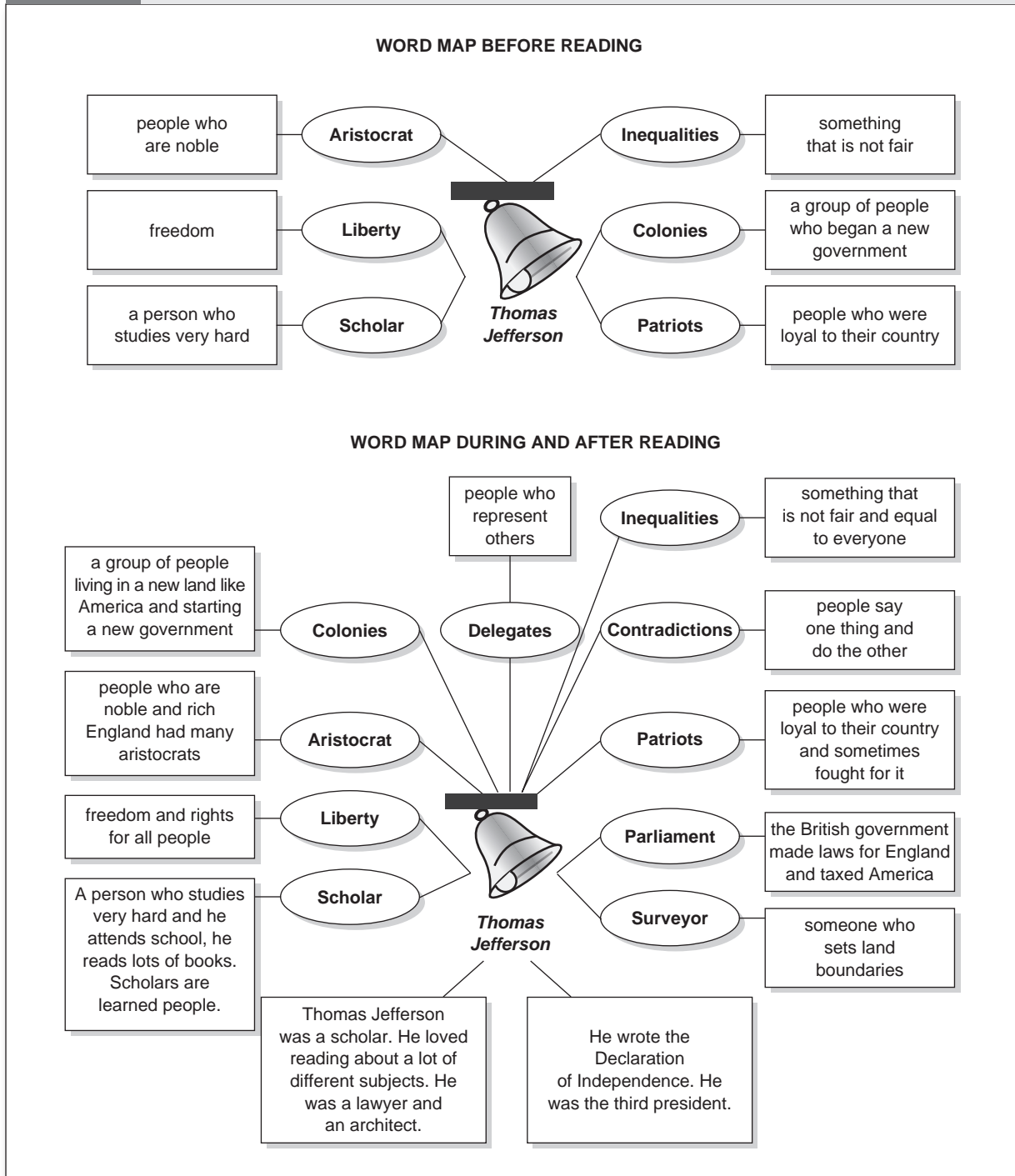## IMPLEMENTING THE WORD MAPPING STRATEGY: STEP BY STEP

1. **Select words for vocabulary instruction.** Prepare for vocabulary instruction by carefully selecting the words to be taught. Choose words by considering the readings and the words that are key to understanding the text.

2. **Project a blank word map on the screen.** Model how to construct a word map and demonstrate to students how to use the word map for building and exploring word relationships.

3. **Write the key words on the word map.** In each blank, write and say the key word that will be taught.

4. **Use a think-aloud to model how to explore relationships between words.** Use the think-aloud strategy to (a) demonstrate how to explore word relationships; (b) think about the meaning of the key word or related words; (c) model how to further the meaning of the word by examples and nonexamples, or synonyms and antonyms, of the word; (d) find the definition of the word in a glossary or dictionary and find its use in context or a discussion with another student about the word's meaning; and (e) draw a picture of the word to illustrate its meaning in context.

5. **Record ideas that have been used to explore the word meanings and relationships.** During the think-aloud, record information about the word in the appropriate space on the word map.

6. **Students are directed to use the word maps during and after reading to add information about the key words.** Students use the word maps for recording new information while they are reading. After reading, they may further develop their word meanings by looking for dictionary definitions, drawing pictures of words, and adding new words from their readings.

7. **Students share their maps with others.** Have students share their maps with the class. During this sharing period, students use the information on their word maps to develop and expand the class map. Students write new information on the group map and are encouraged to revise their own word maps to incorporate these new ideas.

Applying the Word Mapping Strategy: Fifth-Grade Lesson on the Founding Fathers

Within the fifth grade, the teacher has used an integrated language arts and social studies unit to help students learn about the American colonies and their conflict with Great Britain. One of the aspects of the unit was to study the contributions of our Founding Fathers. The teacher created a text set that included the following literature: *Thomas Jefferson: A Picture Book Biography* by J. C. Giblin (1994), *Thomas Jefferson* by C. Harness (2004), *The Revolutionary John Adams* by C. Harness (2003), *A Picture Book of Dolley and James Madison* by D. A. Adler and M. S. Adler (2009), and *Farmer George Plants a Nation* by Peggy Thomas (2008). Students were divided into four literature circles, and members in each group were reading the same book. To introduce the key vocabulary for understanding each book, the teacher created four word maps, one for each book. Using the Word Mapping strategy, the teacher taught the key words to each literature circle through the use of direct instruction and guided discussion. Students were then directed to (1) use their word maps during and after reading by elaborating or building on word meanings from their readings and discussions within the literature circles and (2) find new words and meanings to add to their word maps, along with pictures and diagrams that illustrate the words' meanings. Figure 17.1 depicts the word map that was used by the teacher before reading and the word map that students created during and after reading. Students then shared their word maps with members of their literature groups and later with the class during discussions of their readings.

Figure 17.1   Word Maps for Vocabulary in *Thomas Jefferson* by Cheryl Harness

WORD MAP BEFORE READING

| people who are noble — **Aristocrat** | **Inequalities** — something that is not fair |

Thomas Jefferson (bell)

- people who are noble — **Aristocrat**
- freedom — **Liberty**
- a person who studies very hard — **Scholar**
- **Inequalities** — something that is not fair
- **Colonies** — a group of people who began a new government
- **Patriots** — people who were loyal to their country

WORD MAP DURING AND AFTER READING

- people who represent others — **Delegates**
- a group of people living in a new land like America and starting a new government — **Colonies**
- people who are noble and rich England had many aristocrats — **Aristocrat**
- freedom and rights for all people — **Liberty**
- A person who studies very hard and he attends school, he reads lots of books. Scholars are learned people. — **Scholar**

Thomas Jefferson (bell)

- **Inequalities** — something that is not fair and equal to everyone
- **Contradictions** — people say one thing and do the other
- **Patriots** — people who were loyal to their country and sometimes fought for it
- **Parliament** — the British government made laws for England and taxed America
- **Surveyor** — someone who sets land boundaries

Thomas Jefferson was a scholar. He loved reading about a lot of different subjects. He was a lawyer and an architect.

He wrote the Declaration of Independence. He was the third president.

> ### IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts
>
> 10. Students whose first language is not English make use of their first language to develop competency in the English language arts and to develop understanding of content across the curriculum.

Differentiating Instruction for English Language Learners

Using the Word Mapping strategy is an excellent approach for teaching vocabulary to English language learners. The word map offers a visual that depicts relationships among words. To optimize the English language learner's potential for word learning, write each key word in English as well as his/her home language and add pictures and diagrams to illustrate the meanings of the words.

Differentiating Instruction for Students With Special Needs

Mapping words and showing relationships are excellent approaches that teachers may use to develop meaning vocabularies for students with special needs. Teachers need to offer greater support to students who are striving to become proficient readers. During reading, teachers should provide individualized help to disabled readers by helping them see word relationships, expanding on the meanings of words, and helping them use references such as glossaries and dictionaries to develop the meanings of the words. Encourage students to use their own maps as a resource and to consult them for reviewing vocabulary and using the words in their writing.

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Strategy
18 Graphic Morphemic Analysis

SPEAKING BRIEFLY: AN OVERVIEW OF THE LITERACY STRATEGY

The *Graphic Morphemic Analysis* strategy is an approach to word learning that will help readers unlock the meaning of new and challenging words by analyzing the meaningful parts within a word. A morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning within a word. Most of us know morphemes as root words and affixes or prefixes and suffixes. When teachers employ morphemic analysis, they help students see more than just the parts of words. Rather, they lead students to examine the word for its meaningful parts, which will lead them to discover the word's meaning. The Graphic Morphemic Analysis strategy employs a systematic approach to deconstructing a word into its meaningful parts (morphemes) to figure out what the word means through the use of a graphic. Similar to morpheme triangles (Winters, 2009) and morpheme circles (Harmon, Wood, & Hedrick, 2006), the Graphic Morphemic Analysis strategy helps students use a visual analysis of the word to deconstruct it and construct meaning from word relationships and contextual meanings. Utilizing graphics as part of the strategy provides readers with a visual adjunct that helps them see the meaningful parts within the word in isolation for a systematic analysis.

Why is morphemic analysis important to vocabulary development? There are a number of studies that show the relationship between vocabulary and comprehension. Additional research by Kieffer and Lesaux (2007) demonstrates the relationship of comprehension and morphemic analysis by elementary students as well as English language learners in a large urban school district. As students move through the grades, they are expected to read more complex texts that have an increasing number of derivational words (Nagy & Anderson, 1984). Thus, it makes instructional sense to provide students with a cognitive strategy to learn new words from complex texts.

What are some guidelines for using effective morphology instruction with students? Kieffer and Lesaux (2007) draw from research to present the following four principles for effective instruction in morphemic analysis: (1) Teach morphology in the context of rich, explicit vocabulary instruction; (2) teach students to use morphology as a cognitive strategy with explicit steps; (3) teach underlying morphological knowledge in two ways—both explicitly and in context; and (4) for students with developed knowledge of Spanish, teach morphology in relation to cognates (pp. 139–142). Many words from the content areas have cognates, or words derived from languages other than English. "Since a substantial percentage of these cognates are more common in Spanish conversation

than in English, attention to this group of words in instruction could build on a potential fund of knowledge held by Spanish-speaking students" (Hiebert & Lubliner, 2008, p. 108). Therefore, English language learners will benefit when morphology instruction is linked to their language.

IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and nonprint texts.

Source: International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of English (1996).

USING GRAPHIC MORPHEMIC ANALYSIS

When to use the strategy: Teachers need to provide students with direct instruction of morphemic analysis that is part of a total vocabulary program. The Graphic Morphemic Analysis strategy may be employed before and after reading as part of the vocabulary instructional program. To prepare students for reading the selected text, the teacher may focus on one or two vocabulary words to demonstrate how their meanings are related to the morphemes within the word. After reading, the students have a better understanding of the context in which the words are used; therefore, the teacher directs them to use the Graphic Morphemic Analysis strategy to determine word meanings utilizing each word's context and morphemes.

Strategy modifications for grade levels: What is the appropriate grade to introduce morphemic analysis? Researchers found that fourth- and fifth-grade students learn and use morphemic analysis for increasing word learning (Baumann et al., 2002; Kieffer & Lesaux, 2007). This does not mean that it should not be introduced and taught at the primary grade levels. Because the analysis of words is a developmental process, Moats (2000) suggests that teaching first-graders about roots and affixes increases their proficiency in word recognition. It also helps heighten their awareness of word parts and facilitates their ability to examine words for their meaningful parts. Morphemic analysis presented to primary-grade students should focus on the root words and their meanings (Biemiller, 2004). As students learn to see the meaningful parts of the word, the teacher may introduce prefixes and suffixes.
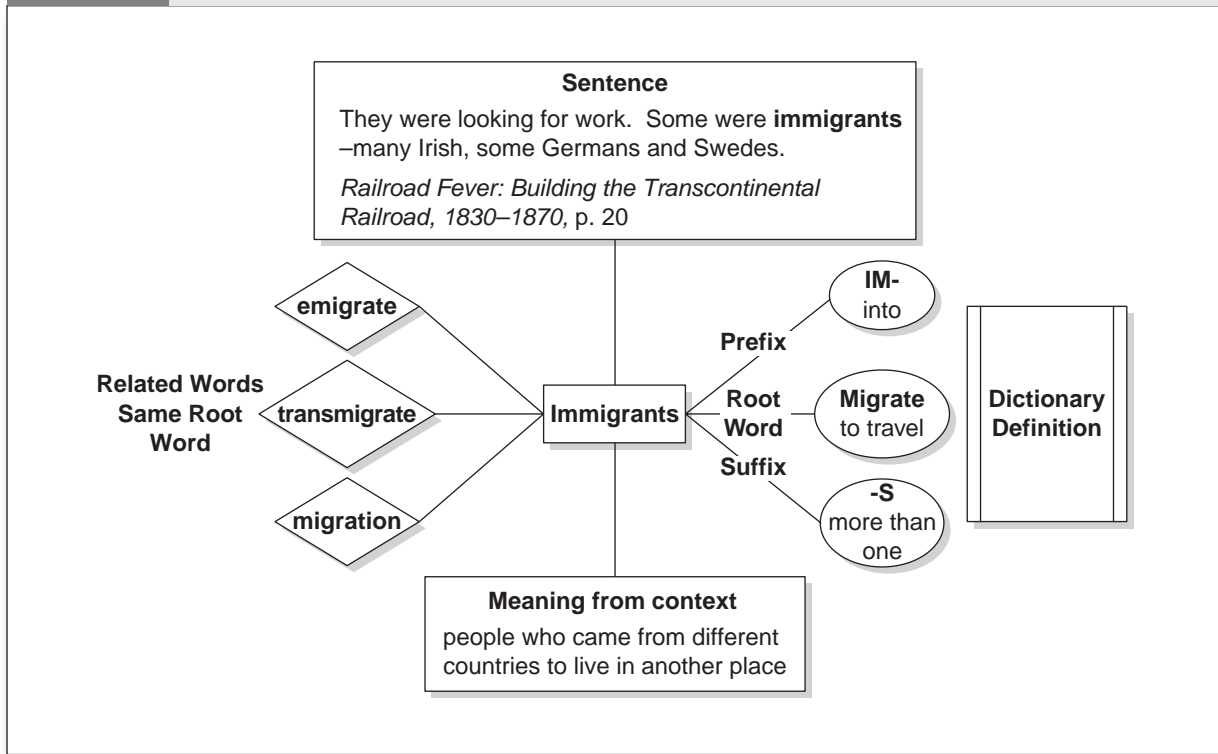
IMPLEMENTING THE GRAPHIC MORPHEMIC ANALYSIS STRATEGY: STEP BY STEP

1. **Select a word from the assigned readings for teaching the strategy.** Words that are selected should be within students' experiential backgrounds and have rich contextual meanings.

2. **Engage students in a discussion on the purpose of the strategy.** Lead the discussion on the importance of examining parts of words to determine their meanings. Tell students they will learn the procedure for learning to figure out the meanings of unknown words.

3. **Use a think-aloud to demonstrate how to divide a word into its parts.** Using the selected word, model how to detach the prefix from the root word. Then show students how to take the suffix off the root word.

4. **Demonstrate how to examine each word part for its meaning.** Using a think-aloud, begin with the root word and say the meaning aloud; continue with the prefix, thinking aloud how it will change the meaning when added to the root word, and do the same with the suffix.

5. **Guide students through the process of using the graphic organizer to analyze a word and determine its meaning.** Project the graphic organizer shown in Figure 18.1 on the SMART Board or a transparency. On the graphic organizer, say and write the word in the appropriate box. Ask students to detach the prefix from the root word, as well as the suffix from the root word, writing them in the labeled boxes. Ask students for the meanings of each word part and lead a discussion on how the prefix and suffix change the meaning of the root word.

6. **In the appropriate box, write the sentence that contains the target word.** Use a guided discussion with students on what the context of the sentence tells them about the meaning of the word, along with what the meaning of the root word and the affixes tells them.

7. **Show students how to figure out the meaning of the word.** Lead a discussion on how the meaning of the word is dependent on the context of the sentence and conduct an analysis of the word parts. Decide on the meaning of the word and write it in the appropriate box on the graphic organizer.

8. **Check the meaning of the word with the dictionary definition.** Write the dictionary definition in the appropriate box on the graphic organizer and demonstrate how to use it to check on the meaning from the context of the sentence.

Applying the Graphic Morphemic Analysis Strategy: Fourth-Grade Lesson on the Transcontinental Railroad

Students in the fourth grade were learning about how the Transcontinental Railroad helped build America. The teacher engaged the class through a read-aloud of *Railroad Fever: Building the Transcontinental Railroad, 1830–1870* by Monica Halpern (2003). This book provides a historically accurate depiction of the building of the railroad by immigrants and slaves as well as its effects on a growing country. After a discussion of each major part of the book, the teacher engaged students in the study of the important words that were needed to understand the major concepts and ideas within the selected passage. After discussing Chapter 3, "The Workers," the teacher focused on where the workers came from and used the Graphic Morphemic Analysis strategy to teach the word *immigrants*. Using the graphic shown in Figure 18.1, the teacher taught students how to analyze the word to look for its meaningful parts.

Figure 18.1   Graphic Morphemic Analysis of the Word *immigrants*

Sentence

They were looking for work. Some were **immigrants** –many Irish, some Germans and Swedes.

Railroad Fever: Building the Transcontinental Railroad, 1830–1870, p. 20

emigrate

Related Words Same Root Word

transmigrate

migration

Immigrants

Prefix

IM- into

Root Word

Migrate to travel

Suffix

-S more than one

Dictionary Definition

Meaning from context

people who came from different countries to live in another place

IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts

10. Students whose first language is not English make use of their first language to develop competency in the English language arts and to develop understanding of content across the curriculum.

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners (ELLs) benefit from the study of morphemic analysis. ELLs oftentimes do not hear the suffix that appears at the end of the word. Further, many of the suffixes change the word's tense or change it from a singular to a plural noun. Although this subtle change is not obvious for most English-only students, it is important that ELLs receive additional attention in learning words that contain suffixes such as *-s, -ing, -ed,* and *-ly.*

Another way to modify instruction for ELLs is to use words with cognates (a word part originating from a language other than English) that relate to their first language. Hiebert and Lubliner (2008) argue that a high number of words in content-area curriculum have Spanish cognates, many of which are part of everyday discourse in their native

language. However, because ELLs cannot make the connection between the new vocabulary word and the cognate, teachers need to assist them in creating this relationship.

Differentiating Instruction for Students With Special Needs

Prior to showing students how to look for root words and affixes within words, modify the lesson on morphemic analysis by teaching them first to build new words by adding prefixes and suffixes to root words. Have students record each new word within their Vocabulary Journals, writing the word, each of its parts, and its meaning. After students have learned a number of words, have them look for and highlight the root word and affixes.

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Interactive Word Wall

Strategy
19

The *Interactive Word Wall* strategy promotes a vocabulary-rich classroom environment where walls are alive with words. The key to implementing the word wall strategy is *interactivity*. The classroom walls are adorned with new and interesting words that the students learn through interacting with their texts, the teacher, and one another. They are encouraged to use the words posted on the word wall for their own reading and writing. To promote interaction and dialogue around the words, it is important to keep the words relevant; that is, "the posted words should be the focal point for thinking about and noticing how they are used" (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2008, p. 52). Researchers stressed the importance of students' active engagement in using word walls (Harmon, Wood, Hedrick, Vintinner, & Willeford, 2009). Their study with seventh-grade students demonstrates that older as well as younger children need a print-rich environment that engages them in their own word learning and vocabulary development.

Word walls have been used by teachers for different types of word-study activities (Wagstaff, 1999). These include helping young children learn high-frequency words (Cunningham, 2005) as well as developing academic vocabulary or specialized words in content-area classrooms with older students. Many teachers use the word wall during reading time to help students expand their vocabulary. The following are tips for supporting an interactive word wall:

- Incorporate the Interactive Word Wall strategy as part of the word study instructional routine.

- Select the display wall carefully, making sure that it is at eye level and large enough to post the words.

- Decide on how you wish to display the words, such as alphabetically or organized by themes or content areas.

- Write the words legibly on oak tag or paper, demonstrating appropriate handwriting.

IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

Using the Interactive Word Wall

When to use the strategy: The Interactive Word Wall strategy may be used before, during, or after reading. The teacher may use the word wall to introduce new vocabulary prior to reading. During reading, students are encouraged to find words that are unfamiliar and that should be placed on the word wall to learn. After reading, the class may return to the word wall to expand on the meaning of the words that are posted or to add new words to the wall. The word wall may also be used outside reading as a review or practice, such as when the teacher asks the students to "read the wall." Word walls are resources for students and should be used when they are looking for new and interesting words to use in their writing.

Strategy modifications for grade levels: Word walls may be used at any grade level with very little modification. The purpose of the word wall dictates its use. For example, word walls for children in kindergarten and first grade reflect their learning needs, including sight words and high-frequency words. As primary-grade students learn strategies for decoding words, they may have a word wall designed around word families. Within intermediate and middle school classrooms, one might see word walls filled with vocabulary across the curriculum or words selected from a unit of study.

Implementing the Interactive Word Wall Strategy: Step by Step

1. **Establish a purpose for using the word wall.** Word walls may be used to help students learn high-frequency words, or they may be used to develop vocabulary around a theme. For example, themes for word walls may include the tropical rain forest, going green, or staying healthy. Some teachers may use word walls for literature units or author studies. Once the purpose has been established, share it with the students.

2. **Select the words that are targeted for instruction.** Select a few words for teaching and post them on the wall in advance or write them as they are presented for discussion. Words on the wall need to be spelled correctly and written legibly, as students will be encouraged to use the word wall as a resource for their reading and writing.

3. **Before reading, teach the words.** Engage students in a lively discussion of the words. Teachers may decide to write a brief meaning of the word.

4. **After reading, students may post words to the word wall.** Because word walls are effective when they are interactive, teachers guide discussion of the readings to include new and interesting words that students discovered in their readings. These words, along with their meanings, may be posted on the word wall.

5. **Initiate activity around the word wall.** For the word wall to be effective, members of the learning community must use them. The teacher plays an important role in initiating activity that leads to interactive word walls. For example, using word walls as references in finding interesting words for writing and playing word games will encourage students to make the word walls their own.

APPLYING THE INTERACTIVE WORD WALL STRATEGY: SECOND-GRADE LESSON

The second-grade teacher conducted a dialogic read-aloud of the picture storybook titled *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Rappaport, 2001). After the teacher introduced the book, she read the biography aloud without stopping. When she completed the read-aloud, the teacher conducted a text talk by showing the pictures, talking about the text, and encouraging children to respond. Later that day and several days after, the teacher returned to the book and revisited it with a discussion around selected key words, asking the children to "talk about what you think the word(s) are saying" while showing them the pictures. As the children responded, the teacher posted the word on the word wall and further developed its meaning, as shown on the word wall in Figure 19.1. After rereading the book, the teacher placed it on the open-faced book rack and invited the children to read it independently. They frequently referred to the word wall while reading and to use the newly learned words in their writing.

Figure 19.1	Word Wall for *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*				
Aa	**Bb**	**Cc**	**Dd**	**Ee**	**Ff**
Alabama	Bible blistering bombed	courage convinced continued citizens	decided dream		
Gg	**Hh**	**Ii**	**Jj**	**Kk**	**Ll**
governors garbage collectors	hymns	Indian nation	judges jailed		

(Continued)

Mm	Nn	Oo	Pp	Qq	Rr
mayors movement murdered Martin minister Montgomery	Nobel Peace Prize		preach police chief protest		remembered Rosa Parks
Ss	**Tt**	**Uu**	**Vv**	**Ww**	**Xx**
Segregation South Southerners Southern cities separate	towns threatened	United States	voted	Washington	
Yy	**Zz**				

IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts

10. Students whose first language is not English make use of their first language to develop competency in the English language arts and to develop understanding of content across the curriculum.

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Supporting English language learners during vocabulary instruction may be accomplished in a number of ways. Key words that are targeted for learning should be related to the experiences of all students, especially those who are linguistically diverse. When posting the key word on the word wall, write the word in the student's first language, asking him/her to pronounce the word and explain it to the class.

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Students with special needs benefit from practice and repeated exposure to new vocabulary words. Have students create personal word walls that are portable. Students design their own interactive word walls from a blank file folder. Using the four sides of the folder, they draw 26 boxes, one for each letter of the alphabet. They post words

from their classroom word wall on their portable word wall as well as new words they learn from their own readings. Students may be encouraged to post additional words from their readings. Words will be available to them on demand, at home and in school.

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Strategy
20 Vocabulary Journals

Speaking Briefly: An Overview of the Literacy Strategy

Vocabulary Journals are valuable in helping students explore the meanings of words that they encounter while reading. These journals are a specific type of learning log where students record "their ideas and information from content areas in a notebook and responses" (Popp, 1997, p. 1) about new words that they have learned from reading literature or textbooks. Journals are not notebooks used to record notes. Rather, Vocabulary Journals are used by students to respond and transact with words, concepts, and ideas through the use of their own language. Students select words from their readings that are difficult, novel, or used in different contexts. They use their journals to explore the words' meanings, make connections between the new words and their own experiences and ideas they already know, and produce rich definitions.

The primary purpose for using Vocabulary Journals is to encourage students to become word conscious by collecting new and interesting words and learning their meanings through engaged explorations. Vocabulary Journals may be used as part of guided reading lessons, during independent reading, and during their readings across the content areas. Teachers may use Vocabulary Journals effectively with students at all grade levels by adjusting their instructional procedures. For example, Bone (2000) used Vocabulary Journals with eighth-grade students in her literature class. She encouraged students to explore the meanings of words by using different graphic organizers in their journals. Students used graphics for making connections between word meanings, for building knowledge with concept ladders, and for working through the meanings of words with a K-W-L chart.

IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

Using Vocabulary Journals

When to use the strategy: Vocabulary Journals may be used before, during, or after reading depending on how the teacher will use the journals. For example, oftentimes the teacher will use direct instruction for teaching the key words before reading the text. Students will then record the words and their initial ideas in their journals, but they will return to the words during and after reading to personalize the meanings of the words. During independent reading, students will use their journals during and after reading.

Strategy modifications for grade levels: The Vocabulary Journal strategy may be used at all grade levels. For the primary grades, teachers will need to monitor students' use of the journals to a greater extent. Additionally, it may take time for first- and second-graders to identify words for their journals; therefore, teachers should suggest words for their journals and then encourage them to add a word or two.

Implementing the Vocabulary Journal Strategy: Step by Step

1. **Introduce Vocabulary Journals to students.** Talk about the purpose of the journal and how to identify words from their readings to explore a word's meaning and use.

2. **Demonstrate how to select words from a reading.** Conduct a read-aloud to show the students which words might be selected for their Vocabulary Journals.

3. **Use a think-aloud to model how to construct meanings from words.** Engage in a think-aloud on how to interact with text to construct and build word meaning. Demonstrate to students how to
   a. consult other resources such as glossaries and dictionaries to show meanings of words or search illustrations, diagrams, and subtitles;
   b. use the context of the sentence or sentences around the word to explore the meaning of the word;
   c. show word relationships such as synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, etc.; and
   d. explore meaning through making connections to the word, such as what they know that is similar to the meaning of the word or other readings in which the word might have been used.

4. **Record ideas that have been used to explore the meaning of the word.** Display different techniques that were used to represent word meanings and relationships. For example, discuss the use of word or concept maps and other graphic organizers to show word and concept relationships and the use of pictures to depict meanings.

5. **Encourage students' systematic use and sharing of Vocabulary Journals.** Develop students' interest in words by encouraging their use of Vocabulary Journals and providing a range of contexts where students use their journals. They may be used most effectively in literature circles, guided reading, independent reading, shared reading, read-alouds, and reading across the curriculum. Teachers encourage the students' use of journals during discussions where they may share their words, ideas, and questions.

6. **Encourage students to use their Vocabulary Journals as a resource.** Provide authentic ways to help students use their Vocabulary Journals as a tool for learning. Since journals are a storehouse for new and interesting words and their meanings, spellings of words, concepts, and ideas, students should be encouraged to use their Vocabulary Journals during writing.

Applying the Vocabulary Journal Strategy: Third-Grade Lesson on Extreme Weather Conditions

Students in the third grade were studying a science unit on extreme weather conditions, including hurricanes, tornadoes, rainstorms, and severe drought. The teacher introduced the topic of tornadoes and provided instruction on the following key words: *tornadoes, cumulonimbus clouds, thunderhead, condensation, downdraft,* and *updraft.* After a brief discussion and a short video of a tornado, students engaged in reading from books on the topic. The teacher directed students to use their Vocabulary Journals to expand the meanings of the key words and to note any important words that relate to the word *tornado* by providing them with the following explicit instructions:

- Show the difference between an updraft and a downdraft using pictures.
- Using a map of the United States, show where most tornadoes hit.
- Compare a hurricane and a tornado.
- Use a word cluster diagram to show words that are related to a tornado.

After their readings, the students shared their Vocabulary Journals with their learning partners to discuss the interesting words and their meanings that they gleaned from their readings. Figure 20.1 shows a sample page from a student's Vocabulary Journal, written after reading *Tornadoes!* by Gail Gibbons (2009).

Source: International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of English (1996).
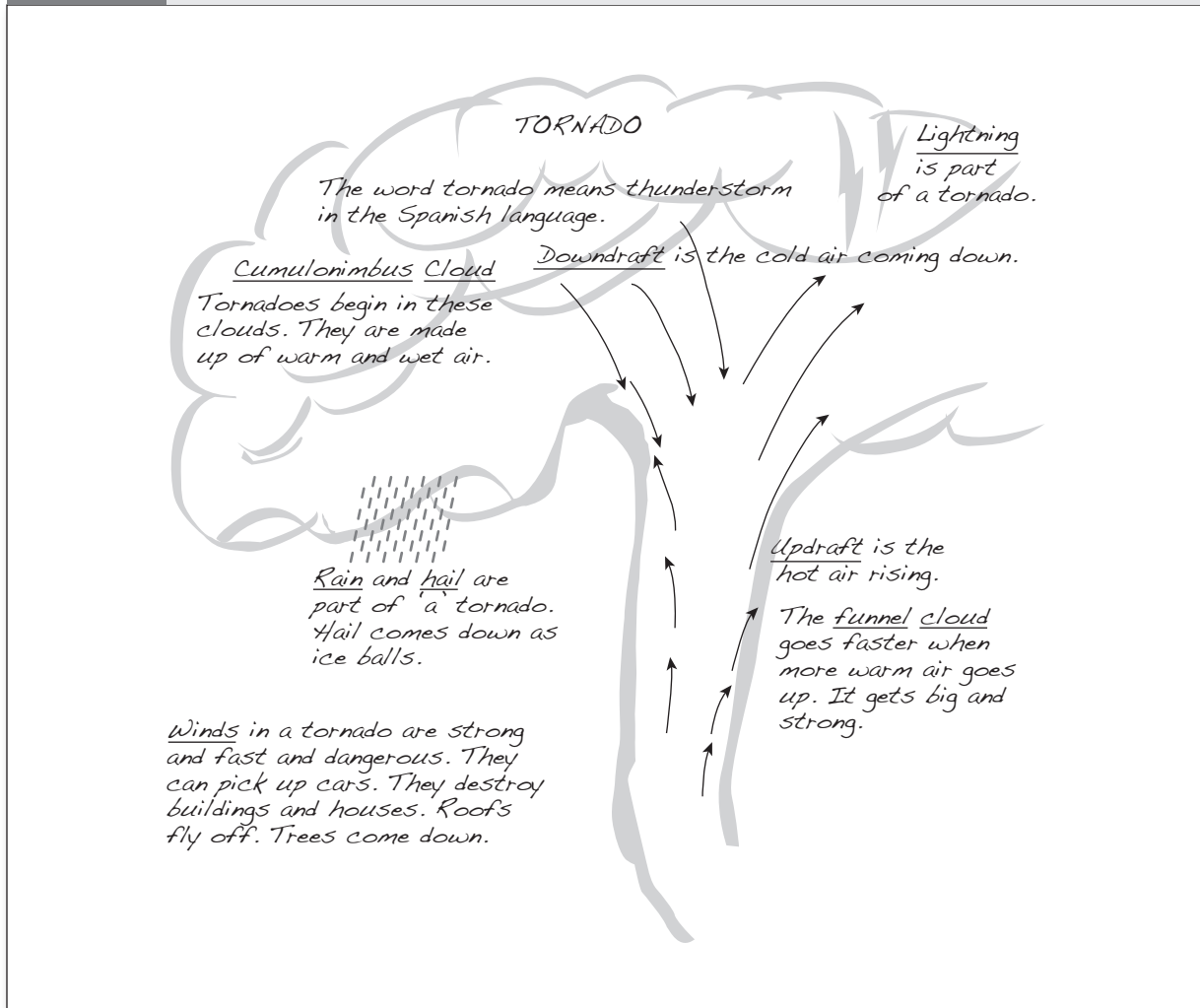
IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts

10. Students whose first language is not English make use of their first language to develop competency in the English language arts and to develop understanding of content across the curriculum.

Differentiating Instruction for English Language Learners

English language learners (ELLs) face a range of challenges related to vocabulary development. Michael Graves (2006) has identified "building a basic vocabulary of the most frequent English words" (p. 86) as one of the most critical skills for ELLs. Thus, Vocabulary Journals should be used for collecting, learning, and using high-frequency and everyday English words. Teachers should serve as guides in directing the students to identify and study these words, as well as encouraging students to use their Vocabulary Journals as resources. ELLs will also benefit from collecting words that have cognates in their home language. For both types of words—high-frequency words and new or interesting words—that students are learning, provide individual assistance by doing the following: (1) Pronounce the new word clearly and then have the student say the word, (2) ask the student to say the word in his/her home language and in English, and (3) encourage students to use the words in their speaking and writing.

| **Figure 20.1** | Student's Entry in Vocabulary Journal for *Tornadoes!* by Gail Gibbons |

TORNADO

The word tornado means thunderstorm in the Spanish language.

<u>Cumulonimbus</u> <u>Cloud</u>
Tornadoes begin in these clouds. They are made up of warm and wet air.

<u>Downdraft</u> is the cold air coming down.

<u>Lightning</u> is part of a tornado.

<u>Rain</u> and <u>hail</u> are part of a tornado. Hail comes down as ice balls.

<u>Updraft</u> is the hot air rising.

The <u>funnel</u> <u>cloud</u> goes faster when more warm air goes up. It gets big and strong.

<u>Winds</u> in a tornado are strong and fast and dangerous. They can pick up cars. They destroy buildings and houses. Roofs fly off. Trees come down.

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

There are differences among students with special needs, especially related to their literacy development. Many students who are disabled readers need assistance in organizational skills as well as in completing tasks. These students will benefit from using the journal to collect words. Demonstrations of how to organize a journal will be helpful. Other students' Vocabulary Journals may be a source for students with special needs and those who are reluctant to use journals. Teachers need to remind students to follow through in using their journals. These reminders may be in the form of journal checks and offering assistance to students in identifying words and finding their meanings from various sources.

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