

Keyword Visuals

Wisconsin State Standards Strand

Language:

- Vocabulary Acquisition and use

Grade Level
6-12

Purpose

Use with students to support acquisition of new vocabulary words: explicitly teach the meaning of new words through keyword visuals

When to Use

Before Reading
During Reading
After Reading

Grouping

Whole class
Small group
Partners
Individual

ABOUT THE STRATEGY

KEYWORD VISUALS use mnemonics to emphasize the meaning of unknown words. They involve linking a keyword with visual imagery. In this strategy, students pair a keyword that sounds similar to the unknown vocabulary word with a visual that provides a definition of the vocabulary word interacting with a visual of the keyword. This keyword paired with the visual helps link the phonetic aspects of the vocabulary word to visual imagery and makes it easier to understand and remember new vocabulary words. Research indicates that this strategy is most effective when the teacher creates the keyword mnemonic as opposed to students.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

- Select the vocabulary words to teach
- Select a keyword that sounds similar to some part of the vocabulary word. The keyword should be familiar, concrete, and easily pictured.
- Select a visual that illustrates the meaning of the vocabulary word.
- Pair the visual with a visual of the keyword.
- Use these keyword visuals to directly teach new vocabulary words.
- Provide students with multiple exposures to the keyword visuals and vocabulary words through engaging activities.

MEASURING PROGRESS

- Teacher observation
- Student journaling
- Curriculum based measurement on vocabulary words

RESEARCH

Conduis, M. M., Marshall, K. J., & Miller, S. R. (1986). Effects of the keyword mnemonic strategy on vocabulary acquisition and maintenance by learning disabled children. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 19*, 609-613.

Mastropieri, M. A., Scruggs, T. E., Levin, J. R., Gaffney, J., & McLoone, B. (1985). Mnemonic vocabulary instruction for learning disabled students. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 8*, 57-63.

Veit, D. T., Scruggs, T. E., & Mastropieri, M. A. (1986). Extended mnemonic instruction with learning disabilities students. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 78*, 300-308.

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