

Teaching Vocabulary Expediently: Three Keys to Improving Vocabulary Instruction, Thomas B. Smith
One tool that Smith uses to incorporate vocabulary instruction into literature study is the graphic organizer, "Understanding Characters through Character Traits." In "Action Is Character: Exploring Character Traits with Adjectives," students "become" one of the major characters in a book and describe themselves and other characters, using Internet reference tools to compile lists of accurate, powerful adjectives. In class discussion, students support their lists with details from the novel.
http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=175

A Differentiated Vocabulary Unit for John Knowles's *A Separate Peace*, Shannon E. Coulter and Susan L. Groenke
With their knowledge of English language learners, Coulter and Groenke recommend a strategic method of teaching vocabulary. "Supporting Vocabulary Development with EASE" does just that. The lesson presents two approaches and extension activities to directly teach two academic words, three concept words, and five robust vocabulary words. The four-step routine modeled in this lesson will help teachers and students EASE into meaningful vocabulary instruction throughout the year.
http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=993

A Context-Based Strategy for Teaching Vocabulary, Deanna L. Nelson
Nelson's students quickly learn that even when using a dictionary, it is difficult to determine the correct definition if the word is used out of context. "More Than One Way to Create Vivid Verbs" also demonstrates for students the importance of context. Students use ordinary verbs specific to a particular occupation to create descriptive lines with vivid verbs used in a different context. Refinement of this writing strategy can occur as students rotate through computer stations, revising and suggesting improvements or adding lines to the descriptive passages begun by other students.
http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=1008

Teaching Challenged Spellers in High School English Classrooms, Rebecca Bowers Sipe
Sipe shares many strategies for working with spelling in the classroom. Teachers who want to deal with spelling during drafting while preserving fluency will find further ideas in "Shared Spelling Strategies." Using this lesson plan, students work to increase their spelling accuracy and their retention by "constructing" spelling using sound, sight recall, and analyzing strategies, among others, instead of memorizing lists of words.
http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=48

Finding the Joy of Language in Authentic Wordplay, Sandra Whitaker
Whitaker invited students to add graffiti to the word wall in her class. "Graffiti Wall: Discussing and Responding to Literature Using Graphics" expands this idea. Working individually and in groups, students construct a graphic of their section of the novel on newsprint or butcher paper with crayons or markers. They use an online tool as well as symbols, drawings, shapes, colors, words, and quotations. Groups present their graphics to the class, explaining why they chose the elements they used. Finished graphics can be displayed on a class bulletin board, on walls, or on a Web page.
http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=208

Register and Charge: Using Synonym Maps to Explore Connotation, Darren Crovitz and Jessica A. Miller
When working with their students on synonyms and synonym maps, Crovitz and Miller discuss the role of denotation and connotation. In "She Did What? Revising for Connotation," students examine the simple sentence "She walked into the room." Students act out ways that "she" might enter the room, revising the sentence to increase the specificity of "walked" and explore connotation. Students follow this demonstration by selecting words with powerful connotations for their writing.
http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=80

Vocabulary in Action: Strategies for Turning Students into Wordsmiths, Amy R. Hardwick-Ivey
Hardwick-Ivey introduces many creative ways to teach vocabulary in the classroom; one suggestion is to use formula poems to help understand vocabulary terms. The ReadWriteThink site has several poetry tools that could be used with vocabulary instruction, including Acrostic Poems (<http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/acrostic/>), Diamante Poems (<http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/diamante/>), and Riddle Poems (<http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/riddle/>). Using diamante poems with vocabulary instruction is further explored in "Exploring the Power of Martin Luther King Jr.'s Words through Diamante Poetry," in which students pay close attention to King's use of literary devices, such as symbol and repetition, and analyze King's definitions of freedom, justice, discrimination, and dreams as demonstrated by the examples and details in his "I Have a Dream" speech.
http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=258

Responsible Vocabulary Word Selection: Turning the Tide of 50-Cent Terms, Larry Bates

Bates presents three tiers for vocabulary selection and demonstrates how vocabulary can be literature-based.

"Focusing Reader Response through Vocabulary Analysis" invites students to compile a list of words associated with a novel they have recently read, ranging from details about the plot to feelings about a character. Small groups of students then arrange the collected words into at least four categories, which they present and explain to the class.

The discussion ranges from vocabulary and comprehension to literary analysis and reader response.

http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=837

Video Games to Reading: Reaching Out to Reluctant Readers, Kristie Jolley

Jolley recommends using topics that students are already interested in to engage them in reading texts and suggests video games. Another way to engage reluctant readers is through pop culture. In "Decoding *The Matrix*: Exploring Dystopian Characteristics through Film," students watch *The Matrix*—a fast-paced action movie with plenty of dazzling special effects. At its core, however, is a dystopian work with many of the same characteristics found in dystopian novels such as *Fahrenheit 451*, *1984*, and *Brave New World*. In this lesson, students are introduced to the definition and characteristics of a dystopian work by watching video clips from *The Matrix* and other dystopian films. This lesson models the move from familiar text to less familiar text—students begin with an exploration of a popular film that many will already be familiar with and then are ready to extend the analytical skills and new ideas to less familiar novels or other texts.

http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=926

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