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Secondary Social Studies Newsletter

Vocabulary Instruction

To read with minimal disturbance from unknown vocabulary, language users need a vocabulary of 15,000 to 20,000 words and people with large vocabularies tend to be intrigued with words. We want vocabulary instruction to be of the sort that might instigate student's interest and awareness of words.

Vocabulary words fall into tiers although the tiers of words is not a precise one and the lines between tiers are not clear-cut.

The first tier consists of the most basic words such as warm, dog, tired, etc. The second tier contains words that are of high utility for mature language users and are found across a variety of domains such as contradict, circumstance, auspicious, etc.

The third tier are words that have a frequency of use that is quite low and often limited to specific topics and domains such as filibuster, pantheon, epidermis, etc.

Students are less likely to learn tier two words independently however a rich knowledge of second tier words can have a powerful impact on verbal functioning.

Introducing words through only dictionary definition are not as effective as developing effective meaning explanation in language that is readily accessible to students. These explanations can be composed by students through crowdsourcing similar to the idea of Wikipedia.

Word Associations

After presenting explanations for words, ask students to associate one of their new words with a previously known word. The associations are not synonyms but relationships. Students must explain their reasoning behind the connection they made.

Have You Ever

Help students associate newly learned words with contexts and activities from their own experience so they understand that the new words have a place in their vocabularies. In this activity, students are asked to "Describe a time when you might **urge** someone, **commend** someone, **banter** with someone."

Which Would...?

Form questions around target words by asking students which they would prefer between alternatives such as, which would you rather **anticipate** - your birthday or a dentist appointment or which would be easier to **confine** - butterflies or cats?

From Isabel Beck, Margaret McKeown and Linda Kucan, "Bringing Words to Life"

Literacy Activity

Structure Strips

Structure strips are like bookmark strips of paper which are stuck in the margin of a page in a student's notebook. The strips are divided up into areas – with each area representing a paragraph within the piece of writing or essay. Each area contains information and guidance on what to include in that particular paragraph and the size of the area roughly represents how much the students need to write in that section. So, for example, the introduction section would be typically smaller than a section in which supporting evidence is provided. With the structure strip stuck down in the margin, students write the essay using it as a guide on what to write and how to write it.

Download an [example structure strip for causation](#). You can also download an [editable version of the causation structure strip](#).

From Caroline Spalding, @MrsSpalding

Paper Topic
Causation
Explain why there was (opposition/rapid change/little change) between (2 periods)
Paragraph 1
• First cause/reason introduced with reference to the question <input type="checkbox"/>
• Specific evidence to support that reason <input type="checkbox"/>
Paragraph 2
• Second cause/reason introduced with reference to the question <input type="checkbox"/>
• Specific evidence to support that reason <input type="checkbox"/>
Paragraph 3
• Third cause/reason introduced with reference to the question <input type="checkbox"/>
• Specific evidence to support that reason <input type="checkbox"/>
Remember
1. You need at least 3 reasons
2. Each reason should be focused on the question
3. Specific evidence
Helpful Language
This therefore led to; As well as; As a result; Due to; Because of; This meant

Essential Questions

Ancient Civilizations

- How does geography influence religious and political differences?
- What leads societies to collapse?
- Are modern civilizations more 'civilized' than ancient ones?

Trade and Exploration

- What happens when cultures collide?
- How does the exchange of ideas and goods improve lives?
- What are unintended consequences of commerce?
- How does commerce affect relationships between the conquered and the conquerors?

Imperialism

- Where does the power to rule come from?
- How does the need for resource affect growth and conflict?
- Why do people try to control others?

Federalism and Jeffersonian Era

- Can people be trusted to govern themselves?
- How do we relate to others?

Westward Expansion

- Why do people migrate, explore and colonize?
- What is worth fighting for?
- In what ways do economic factors drive political and military decisions?
- Is history the story told by the 'winners'?

Byzantine / Islamic Empires

- How can belief systems organize society?
- How do people organize themselves to create stability?
- What happens to belief systems during instability?

Labor Unions and Credit

- Why do people work? Should everyone be expected to work?
- How effective are labor unions in improving the lives of American workers?
- Whose responsibility is it to fight for those who are being exploited by someone or something more powerful?
- What basic rights should all workers expect?

Resources

Content Information

[British Museum - Ancient Egypt](#)

Basic information on various facets of life in Ancient Egypt including Gods and Goddesses, Mummification, Geography, Trade, etc.

[British Museum - Ancient India](#)

Basic information on various facets of life in Ancient India including Early Hinduism, Indus Valley, Geography, etc.

Videos

[The Federalist Papers Explained Playlist](#)

Videos by Keith Hughes, AKA Hip Hughes, explaining the content and impact of the Federalist papers. Great to provide students who need review or more information to fully grasp the topic.

Lessons

[Labor Matters](#)

A lesson from Teaching Tolerance that draws on your students' prior knowledge to help them understand the importance of the labor movement.

[Labor Unions and Working Conditions: United We Stand](#)

Work with primary source documents from American Memory to study the working conditions of U.S. laborers at the turn of the century. Answer the question, "Was there a need for organized labor unions?"

Interactive Maps

[True Size of](#)

Choose a country or state and drag that shape to other locations on the world map. This gives perspective on the size of various locations in the world.

[Invasion of America](#)

This map shows how the land holdings of Native Americans drastically shrunk and the impact of Westward Expansion on Native Americans

[ORBIS](#)

The Stanford Geospatial Network Model of the Roman World calculates routes and transport costs between locations in the Roman Empire.

[Mapping History](#)

Interactive representations of historical problems, events, dynamics and developments. Includes American History, European History, Latin American History and African History.

Historical Thinking Skills

Introducing Historical Thinking Skills

“Students see history as an area of study that is debated rather than one that resembles a catechism.”

Rather than history being a subject in which those who are successful are those who have an ability to recall facts, it should be seen as a subject in which students ask questions and use information to generate ideas about how those questions could be answered.

Making time for the development of historical thinking skills can be a challenge as it is easy to rely on “memory-centered” methodologies” because there is the pressure of covering material as it will be assessed by an external examination, there are the concerns about classroom management and the “apprenticeship of observation” phenomenon.”

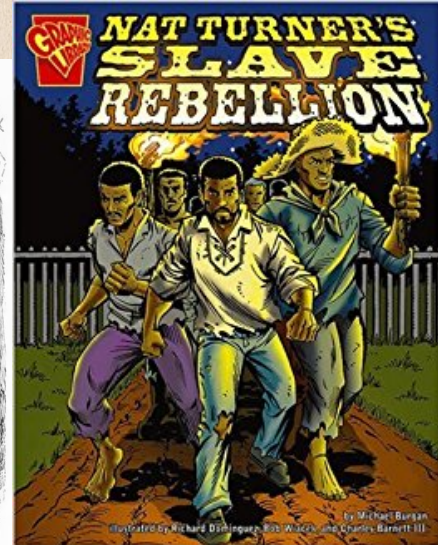
Compare Visual Sources

1. Provide students with a series of images of an event or a historical figure.

These images should depict the figure or event in different ways, such as the images of Nat Turner depict him as heroic and villainous.

2. Once students realize it is the same person or event ask them to consider why they would get such different perspectives. Class discussion should center on the intentions and motivations of the artists creating the images.

3. Students develop a narrative for a historical marker that would appear at the site of the event or historical figures home. This requires students to assess their own thinking and evaluate how the images with which they are presented influenced their interpretation of the past.



Revealing Author's Background

1. Students examine several primary source document selections about the same event or historical figure and determine the main point being made by the document as well as the key phrases used to make that point.

2. Reveal one by one the background information on the source's authorship and ask students how this new information affects their thinking.

From Bruce Lesh, "Why Won't You Just Tell Us the Answer?"

Professional Development

[Remembering Vietnam Webinar Series](#)

Join the National Archives and Presidential Libraries for a free, two-part webinar series examining U.S. involvement in Vietnam through the lens of government policy. Each webinar will connect educators with primary documents and online resources for teaching the Vietnam War in the classroom.

Part 1: Wednesday, November 1, 2017, 7-8 p.m. ET

Part 2: Wednesday, November 8, 2017, 7-8 p.m. ET

[Social Media in Social Studies: Engaging Students in their Medium](#)

Video from the Library of Congress examining the ways in which social media combined with primary sources can support learning outcomes

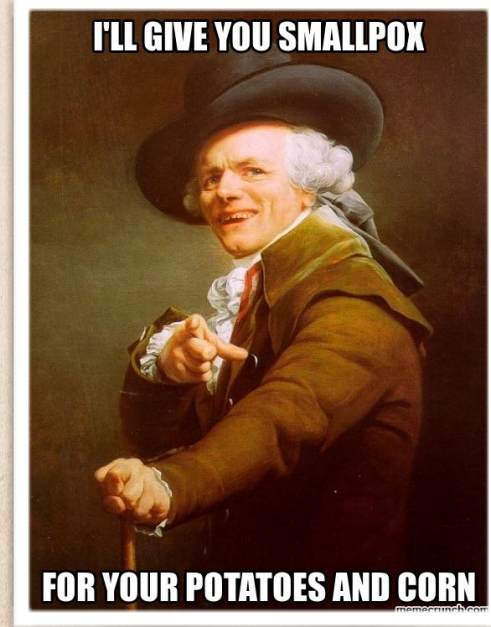
Integrating Technology

A good meme is the 21st century version of a newspaper political cartoon. This combination of visuals and text needed to create a good meme can be used in a variety of ways.

- Students can create a meme on migration or democracy or the Treaty of Paris and post their completed meme on a shared classroom document or Canvas discussion.
- Students can use memes to highlight basic personality traits and characteristics of specific people. Consider having them create these memes from different perspectives.

What would a meme look like of FDR if created by a 1930s Democrat? Republican? Unemployed person? Displaced Okie? How about the different social classes of feudal Japan and medieval Europe? Or Tories and patriots in 1776?

- Students can analyze historical and current political cartoons and then create a meme version that says the same thing as the cartoons. Discuss the impact of cartoons and how they're typically used versus how memes are spread and used. What are the similarities and differences? Advantages and disadvantages to those creating the cartoon and meme?
- Students can create memes based on historical events. They research an event, select a photo or painting, and add text.
- Students can exchange memes and interpret and explain each other's memes.
- Students can create a meme as an exit card activity in order to distill ideas and concepts down to the basics.
- Memes also work great as a discussion starter or as an intro to a specific lesson.



From Glenn Wiebe, History Tech

Tools for Making History Memes

Finding Images

[Getty Open Content Images](#)

[Wikimedia Commons](#)

[Flickr Commons](#)

[Internet Archive Book Images on Flickr](#)

Editing Images and Adding Text

[Google Drawings](#)

[Pages / Keynote](#)

