

Lesson Skill: Predicting the meaning of unfamiliar words in a text

Strand Reading--vocabulary

SOL 6.4
7.4
8.4

Materials

- Copies of a text selection containing some unfamiliar words
- Copies of the attached New Word Brainstorm worksheet
- Sticky notes
- Dictionaries

Lesson

1. Ask students what good readers do when they come to a word that they do not know. Brainstorm a list of options with students—things to do when encountering an unknown word. Be sure they mention highlighting or underlining the word, trying to figure it out by looking for context clues, and looking it up in the dictionary.
2. Distribute sticky notes and copies of a text selection that is somewhat challenging in that it contains some unknown words. Give students the following instructions:
 - While you are reading, put a sticky note next to any word that you do not know or understand.
 - Write on the note a predicted definition of the word based on clues you find somewhere in the text.
3. After students have finished, have them look the words up in a dictionary.
4. Have students complete the New Word Brainstorm worksheet, using their new understanding of the words.
5. Have students re-read the text.
6. Lead a discussion, asking the following questions:
 - Was reading the text a second time easier? Why, or why not?
 - In order to be a better reader, what should you do when you come to a word you don't understand?
 - How will doing this help you become a better reader?

New Word Brainstorm

Use the boxes below to build your knowledge of words that you did not know.

Word:	
Dictionary definition of the word:	Sentence using the word:
Forms of the word:	Way the word connects to my life:

Word:	
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