Vocabulary Games to Increase Knowledge of Content and Academic words

**What Doesn’t Belong?** Gist: Students look at a list of terms or phrases and pick out the one that doesn’t belong.

Procedure: Students select which words do not belong with other words . Can be tailored to students who have very little knowledge of the content terms and phrases to students who have a firm grasp on their vocabulary.

**Read Aloud-framework:** Gist: Teacher pre-selects words from a read Aloud book; words are central to the plot.

Procedure: Teacher follows a framework of introducing the words through repeated readings and discussions on meanings. **See handout.**

**Antonym/synonym match** Gist: A way to pair students as well as validate why their words go together

Procedure: Teacher prepares words with similar meanings( synonyms) or those with opposite meanings ( antonyms). Students are asked to match up with their word partner, validating why their words are synonyms or antonyms.

**BUZZ the content words** Gist:A whole class game for confirming the meanings of content words.

Procedure: Class is divided into 2 teams. A student from each team comes to the front, the container of words between them. A timer with a buzzer is set by the teacher. The team A leader begins by pulling a word out of a container and tries to define/explain the word to his group without saying it. The group guesses the content word, then pushes the container toward Team leader B, who then pulls a word from the container and explains the word to his group. They continue back and forth in this way until the buzzer sounds. Whichever team is not still explaining their word at the time, wins a point and the game begins again with new leaders.

**Vocabulary Bingo** Gist: To practice word meanings

Procedure: Teacher creates a quick bingo game board of 9 squares-one for each student. A list of content terms is posted. Students fill in any box with any term from a long list. Playing bingo, the teacher calls out a definition and the student marks his square that has the matching term. Twist- The teacher can prepare a bingo card with the definitions on it and students mark the term that the teacher calls out.

**Vocabulary Journals** Gist: A book or scribbler that the student uses to record new vocabulary and their meanings.

Procedure: Students use as a tool for recording words with multiple meanings, including brief definitions, and where the word was found.

**Vocabulary Cards** Gist: To learn and collect new words/terms.

Procedure: Students create these cards which contain the word bolded along with a short definition, the word in a sentence, a picture and the opposite term.

**Frayer Models** Gist: A well known model for word learning that is based on research. Can be used for any content term. Students can peer teach these and test each other.

Procedure: Teacher creates a base model or students create into their word journals. The word goes in the central spot and the remaining 4 quadrants contain a **student** definition, An example of the term, a non-example, a visual ( picture) or contains facts/ characteristics.

**Word Sorts** Gist: Students sort pre-selected words into closed or open categories.

Procedure : Teacher provides a list of terms/phrases that a student or group might sort. They must justify their sort to one another or the teacher upon completion. Teacher may provide the categories to sort into ( closed) or the student may sort at their discretion( open) though answers should be discussed and justified.

**Concept-Definition Map** Gist:A method for student’s learning terms deeply.

Procedure: Teacher selects a term that the students create on a map. This can be done in a word journal Students must answer 3 questions-What is it? ( a definition)What is it like? ( 3 factors) What are some examples?( 3 )

**Word webs** Gist: a graphic organizer, created to gather and connect facts, ideas, concepts, or words.

Procedure: Students create a web of ideas that spring from a content term. They have pre-selected categories or create as they go. Works well in groups , partners or individually.

**20 Questions** Gist: A method for confirming understanding of content terms using questions.

Procedure: Teacher creates a list of content terms and displays them. She secretly selects a word. Students must take turns asking her yes/no questions ( up to 20) until they guess which term she has selected.

**Teacher/Student Root Feud** Gist: A game played by the class using word roots OR vocabulary words. It can be adapted to suit any subject and audience.

Procedure: A teacher or some students prepares a list of root families and a definition for each. Taking turns, the teams guesses the correct word that contains the root after listening to the definition. Ex. The question that the teacher asks about the root “geo” is “ This is the study of earth’s landforms”

(geography) questions surrounding words from the same root continue or change the root every 4 questions. The same procedure works for using vocabulary terms from a content area. Ex. For ELA, the question might be, “ What term is a comparison using *like* or *as?* (simile)