Vocabulary Activities Using Tier Two Words

Tier One Words: Basic words (clock, baby, happy) – rarely require instruction in school

Tier Two Words: Frequently occurring words for mature language users (coincidence, absurd, fortunate) –

***Instruction in these words can add productively to a student’s language ability.***

Tier Three Words: Low frequency, often content specific (isotope, peninsula, photosynthesis)

Have You Ever…? This activity helps students associate newly learned words with contexts and activities from their own experiences. For example, students are asked, “Describe a time when you might...” or “Tell about someone you know who is...” or “Describe a time when you felt...”

Applause, Applause! For this activity, students clap to signal their approval in being described by target words, for example: frank, impish, vain, stern. A follow-up discussion should address, “why?” they clapped or didn’t clap.

Idea Completions – Instead of the traditional “write a sentence using a new word,” provide students with sentence stems that require them to integrate a word’s meaning into a context in order to explain a situation. For example: The audience asked the virtuoso to play another piece of music because... The skiing teacher said Maria was a novice on the ski slopes because...

Word Association – Students are asked to connect their new vocabulary with another more familiar word, phrase or concept. Avoid using synonyms and instead focus on associative words. For example:

Which word goes with crook? (accomplice)
Which word goes with piano? (virtuoso)

Questions, Reasons, Example
This activity requires students to support their thinking and encourages discussion around new vocabulary.
For example: What is something you could do to impress your teacher (mother, friend)? Why?
What are some things that should be done cautiously? Why?
Which one of these things might be extraordinary? Why or why not?
-A shirt that was comfortable, or a shirt that washed itself?
-A flower that kept blooming all year, or a flower that bloomed for 3 days?
-A person who has a library card, or a person who has read all the books in the library?
Making Choices
Students show their understanding of vocabulary by saying the word when it applies, or remaining silent when it doesn’t.
For example: “Say radiant if any of these things would make someone look radiant.”
- Winning a million dollars.
- Earning a gold medal.
- Walking to the post office.
- Cleaning your room.
- Having a picture you painted hung in the school library.

Vocabulary Assessment: (If a sentence makes sense, students write, “Yes” (or circle a happy face). If not, they write, “No” (or circle the sad face). Teacher provides statements orally containing target words.
For example: People might be reluctant to hug a shark

Ideas from Bringing Words to Life (Beck, McKeown, Kucan)
Vocabulary Activities Using Tier Two Words

Tier One Words: Basic words (el reloj, el bebé, feliz) – rarely require instruction in school
Tier Two Words: Frequently occurring words for mature language users (la coincidencia, absurdo, afortunado) –

***Instruction in these words can add productively to a student’s language ability.***

Tier Three Words: Low frequency, often content specific (el isótopo, la península, la fotosíntesis)

Have You Ever…? This activity helps students associate newly learned words with contexts and activities from their own experiences. For example, students are asked, “Describe una instancia cuando podrías…” or “Cuéntanos de alguien que conoces que es…” or “Describe una vez que te hayas sentido…”

Applause, Applause! For this activity, students clap to signal their approval in being described by target words, for example: franco, pícaro, vanidoso, severo. A follow-up discussion should address, “por qué?” aplaudieron o no aplaudieron.

Idea Completions – Instead of the traditional “write a sentence using a new word,” provide students with sentence stems that require them to integrate a word’s meaning into a context in order to explain a situation. For example: El público le pidió al virtuoso que tocara otra pieza de música porque... El instructor de esquí dijo que María era una novata en las pistas de esquí porque...

Word Association – Students are asked to connect their new vocabulary with another more familiar word, phrase or concept. Avoid using synonyms and instead focus on associative words. For example:

¿Qué palabra va con maleante? (el cómplice)
¿Qué palabra va con piano? (el virtuoso)

Questions, Reasons, Example
This activity requires students to support their thinking and encourages discussion around new vocabulary. For example:

¿Qué podrías hacer para impresionar a tu maestro (madre, amigo)? ¿Por qué?
¿Qué son algunas cosas que se deben hacer cautelosamente?
¿Cuál de estas cosas puede ser extraordinaria? ¿Por qué o por qué no?
-Una camisa que era cómoda, o una camisa que se lavó sola?
-Una flor que florece todo el año, o una flor que florece por tres días?
-Una persona que tiene una tarjeta de biblioteca, o una persona que ha leído todos los libros en la biblioteca?

Making Choices
Students show their understanding of vocabulary by saying the word when it applies, or remaining silent when it doesn’t.

For example: Say radiante if any of these things would make someone look radiante.
-Winning a million dollars (Ganar un millón de dólares).
-Earning a gold medal (Ganar una medalla de oro).
-Walking to the post office (Caminar al correo).
-Cleaning your room (Limpiar tu cuarto).
-Having a picture you painted hung in the school library (Que se exhiba una pintura tuya en la biblioteca de tu escuela).

Vocabulary Assessment: (If a sentence makes sense, students write, “Yes” (or circle a happy face). If not, they write, “No” (or circle the sad face). Teacher provides statements orally containing target words. For example: La gente puede estar renuente a abrazar un tiburón.

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