

Implementation Guide

Strategy 10: Developing Vocabulary Knowledge

Overview

All readers encounter words they do not know. Strong readers have strategies for figuring out what to do with them; they use any or all of the following strategies when they encounter an unknown word:

- Skip it and read on
- Re-read
- Think about what they are reading
- Sound it out to see if it is a word they know
- Look at the headings and subheadings of the text
- Guess at what type of word would go there, such as a noun or an adjective
- Associate the parts of the word (prefixes, root words, suffixes) with words they know

Contextual Redefinition is a strategy that helps students acquire the ability to use context and structural analysis to figure out the meanings of unknown words. One important element in this strategy is the teacher modeling or thinking out loud about how to figure out the meaning of the word. This can be done by sharing the associations that come to mind when using structural analysis.

Structural or morphemic analysis simply means using the prefixes, root words, and suffixes to associate with other meaningful word parts. Putting context together with structural analysis is a very powerful strategy for figuring out the meanings of unknown words.

The Strategy in Action

Students should complete the following steps to practice the strategy. Be sure to pass out copies of the Activity Guide before students begin their work.

Step 1: Identify Unfamiliar Words. Before students begin reading, select the word or words that will be unfamiliar to them. The words that work best are the words that contain meaningful morphemes for analysis. Prefixes such as “auto,” or “tri” and root words such as “bio” or “graph” and so forth are familiar enough to students for them to make associations to new words. For this activity, have students focus on *naturalization*, *immigration*, and *deport*.

Step 2: Guess Word Meanings. Present the words in isolation and ask students to make guesses about the meaning of the words. The only clue they have available to them at this point is their associations with the prefixes, root words, and suffixes. Remember that some of these guesses will be wrong or even funny. But, it is the process of using structural analysis that is important, not proving someone’s guess right or wrong.

Step 3: Refine Guesses. Present increasingly rich context clues and have students refine their guesses about what the words mean as each

sentence is presented. These clues can be presented through sentences with increasingly rich context. End with the sentence in question 2 of the Activity Guide.

Step 4: Verify Meanings. Direct students to look the words up in the dictionary or glossary to verify their meanings and have students complete the chart under question 3 with their definitions.

Step 5: Read the Text. Have students read the passage on becoming a citizen of the United States.

Step 6: Confirm the Meaning of the Word with the Context Given in the Text. By this time, students should have seen this word in context a number of times and be able to confirm the correct meaning of the word as used in the text.

Discussion

Once students have finished the activity, you may want to have a brief discussion with them about the assignment. Encourage students to probe what clues (either context or structural analysis) they used to figure out the meanings of words.

Answers to the Student Activity Guide

Part A:

1. Answers will vary, but students may guess at the meanings of the words in the following way:

naturalization: means something like natural or relating to the earth

immigration: bring something in such as import; move around because of migrate

deport: decaffeinate means to take the caffeine out of coffee; port means a city that a ship comes in—perhaps means to take something out of a port city.

2. Given this sentence, students may revise their meanings in the following way:

naturalization: a process that immigrants can begin

immigration: people coming to a country

deport: taking people from somewhere.

3. Answers will vary but should reflect dictionary or glossary definitions.

Part B:

Answers will vary but students should be able to explain clearly what each word means based on the context of the passage and on the dictionary or glossary terms they found.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

Activity Guide

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Part A: Answer the following questions BEFORE you read the text.

1. Look at the words listed below. Based on their structure (the prefixes, root words, or suffixes), guess what the words might mean.

naturalization: _____

immigration: _____

deport: _____

2. Below is a sentence that contains all three of the unknown words. Given this context, guess again what each of these words might mean or refine your prediction of the meaning of the word. Some of the words will be in a different form such as immigration and immigrants.

Only legal immigrants can begin the process of naturalization; others may be deported.

naturalization: _____

immigration: _____

deport: _____

3. Now look the words up in the dictionary or glossary and write their definitions below. Then, decide whether you predicted the correct meaning of the word or whether the definition needs revision by writing **yes** or **no** in the last column.

Word	Predicted meaning	Dictionary or Glossary meaning	Does your predicted meaning need revision?
naturalization			
immigration			
deport			

Part B: Read the text on becoming a citizen and note the context of the words *naturalization*, *immigration*, and *deport*. Once you have finished, complete the activity that follows.

Becoming a Citizen

The Constitution protects the rights of all U.S. citizens. People can become U.S. citizens in many ways. Anyone born in the United States or a territory it controls is a citizen. People born in Puerto Rico, for example, are citizens because the island is a commonwealth that remains a U.S. territory.

People born in a foreign country can become U.S. citizens if one of their parents is a citizen. People born in a foreign country whose parents are not U.S. citizens can become citizens only if they move to the United States and undergo a long process in gaining citizenship called **naturalization**. The U.S. immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) oversees the process.

Foreign-born people who permanently move to a new country are called immigrants. In the United States, legal immigrants have many of the same rights and responsibilities as citizens. They cannot vote or hold public office, however. In some states they cannot hold some government jobs either. The U.S. government also has the right to **deport**, or send back to the country of origin, any immigrant who breaks the law or who is in the country illegally.

Only legal immigrants can begin the process of naturalization. All legal immigrants have to be able to support themselves financially or have someone sponsor them and assume that financial responsibility. After living in the United States for five years, legal immigrants over the age of 18 may petition for naturalization. At that point the INS sets a hearing to test the immigrants' qualifications. The immigrants must prove that they are law-abiding and that they support the U.S. Constitution. They must also take a series of tests to prove that they can read, write, and speak English, and that they have a basic understanding of U.S. history and government.

After the immigrants pass this hearing, the INS conducts a background check on them to make sure they have not hidden any information about themselves. Finally, they go before a naturalization court, where they take an oath of allegiance to the United States and then receive their certificate of naturalization. At that point all young children of the newly naturalized citizens also become citizens.

Do your definitions require revision? If so, adjust the meanings of any word that needs revision below.

naturalization: _____

immigration: _____

deport: _____