

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 the words *preindustrial*, *balance of trade*, and *cottage industry*.

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 A New Economy.

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 make guesses about the meanings of words in a similar way to the ones below:

preindustrial: pre means before; industrial means making things

balance of trade: the right amount of trade goods

cottage industry: a business making and selling cottages

2. Given the sentence, students may revise their guesses like this:

preindustrial: before there was industry

balance of trade: a balanced economy

cottage industry: making cottages and homes

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.

preindustrial: _____

balance of trade: _____

cottage industry: _____

2. Below is a sentence that contains all of these unknown words. Given this context, guess again what each of these words might mean or refine your prediction of the meaning of each word.

Cottage industry was often a key part of preindustrial countries' balance of trade.

preindustrial: _____

balance of trade: _____

cottage industry: _____

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?
preindustrial			
balance of trade			
cottage industry			

Part B: Read the text on A New Economy and note the context of the words *preindustrial*, *balance of trade*, and *cottage industry*. Once you have finished, complete the activity that follows.

A New Economy

To stay rich during this **preindustrial** era, or time before industry was common, European countries tried to export more goods than they imported. The relationship of goods imported to goods exported is known as a country's **balance of trade**. The colonies played a key role in this balance of trade. Believing that colonies existed to help the ruling country, Europeans didn't let colonies trades with other countries. They didn't want their colonies money going to other nations.

European countries used their colonies to acquire raw materials such as wood, furs, cotton, and dyes. This way they didn't have to buy raw materials from competing countries. In addition, they didn't allow their colonies to manufacture goods. That way they could take raw materials from their colonies and sell manufactured goods back to them. Manufactured goods were more valuable than raw materials were, so the colonies were good for the European countries' balance of trade.

Trade also created markets for manufactured goods. As a result, manufacturing in Europe—especially cottage industries—increased. **Cottage industry** was a system in which family members worked in their homes to make part of a product. A businessperson gave each family the materials it needed. Then the businessperson made money by selling the final product.

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

preindustrial: _____

balance of trade: _____

cottage industry: _____