Handouts

UNIT 2, MODULE 2:
Pronouncing and Defining Words

TEKS Connections

Students will be held accountable for the formal definitions of content-specific words. However, teachers have to scaffold the process of getting there.

English Language Arts

Grades 6–8:

(2) Reading/Vocabulary Development. Students understand new vocabulary and use it when reading and writing. Students are expected to:

(E) use a dictionary, a glossary, or a thesaurus (printed or electronic) to determine the meanings, syllabication, pronunciations, alternate word choices, and parts of speech of words.

Please note that slides 8 and 19 in this module refer to using the dictionary to confirm and extend students' growing understanding of the word.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency (TEA), 2008a.

Although word identification and fluency are not explicitly stated in the standards for other subject areas, the skills do affect students' performance in all content areas.

Social Studies

Grades 6–7:

(22) Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:

(A) use social studies terminology correctly;

In the social studies TEKS, vocabulary is addressed as "terminology."

Grade 8:

(30) Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:

(A) use social studies terminology correctly;

In the social studies TEKS, vocabulary is addressed as "terminology."

SOURCE: TEA, 2010.

Science

Grade 6 example:

(5) Matter and energy. The student knows the differences between elements and compounds. The student is expected to:

(A) know that an element is a pure substance represented by chemical symbols.

Vocabulary is embedded in the Science TEKS, as students must know the words for concepts, processes, and scientific equipment. The example above includes these vocabulary terms: "element," "pure," "substance," and "chemical symbols."

Grade 7 example:

(5) Matter and energy. The student knows that interactions occur between matter and energy. The student is expected to:

(A) recognize that radiant energy from the Sun is transformed into chemical energy through the process of photosynthesis.

Vocabulary is embedded in the Science TEKS, as students must know the words for concepts, processes, and scientific equipment. The example above includes these vocabulary terms: "radiant energy," "photosynthesis," and "chemical energy."

Grade 8 example:

(5) Matter and energy. The student knows that matter is composed of atoms and has chemical and physical properties. The student is expected to:

(A) describe atoms, including the masses, electrical charges, and locations, of protons and neutrons in the nucleus and electrons in the electron cloud.

Vocabulary is embedded in the Science TEKS, as students must know the words for concepts, processes, and scientific equipment. The example above includes these vocabulary terms: "electrical charge," "proton," "neutron," "nucleus," "electron," and "electron cloud."

SOURCE: TEA, 2009.

Mathematics

Grade 6:

(12) Underlying processes and mathematical tools. The student communicates about Grade 6 mathematics through informal and mathematical language, representations, and models. The student is expected to:

(A) communicate mathematical ideas using language, efficient tools, appropriate units, and graphical, numerical, physical, or algebraic mathematical models.

Grade 7:

(14) Underlying processes and mathematical tools. The student communicates about Grade 6 mathematics through informal and mathematical language, representations, and models. The student is expected to:

(A) communicate mathematical ideas using language, efficient tools, appropriate units, and graphical, numerical, physical, or algebraic mathematical models.

Grade 8:

(15) Underlying processes and mathematical tools. The student communicates about Grade 6 mathematics through informal and mathematical language, representations, and models. The student is expected to:

(A) communicate mathematical ideas using language, efficient tools, appropriate units, and graphical, numerical, physical, or algebraic mathematical models.

SOURCE: TEA, 2006.

English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) Connections

The student is expected to:

1(A) use prior knowledge and experiences to understand meanings in English.

1(E) internalize new basic and academic vocabulary by using and reusing it in meaningful ways in speaking and writing activities that build concept and language attainment.

3(D) speak using grade-level content area vocabulary in context to internalize new English words and build academic language proficiency.

4(D) use prereading supports such as graphic organizers, illustrations, and pretaught topic-related vocabulary and other prereading activities to enhance comprehension of written text.

SOURCE: TEA, 2007.

College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) Connections

II. Reading

B(1) Identify new words and concepts acquired through study of their relationships to other words and concepts.

SOURCE: TEA, 2008b.

"Physical Location of North America"

Why did it take European explorers so many years to find North America? Because the continent is surrounded by water! The Arctic, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans lie to the north, east, and west of North America. The Gulf of Mexico lies to the south. From any direction, North America was difficult to reach. The physical isolation not only kept early settlers away, but also allowed unique species of plants and animals to develop. The Indian Paintbrush, sequoia trees, fragrant sumac, wild yam, and saguaro cactus are all native to North America. Native animals include the buffalo, opossum, wild turkey, bald eagle, manatee, and alligator. The location of North America kept some species of plants and animals from spreading to other continents. The water and distance have been both a barrier and a form of protection for inhabitants of North America. As recently as World War I and World War II, other nations had a difficult time attacking North America across the vast oceans.

Pronouncing and Defining Words Routine

- Write the words on the board with the syllables identified.
- Say the word with students:
  - Speak slowly, enunciating each syllable.
  - Stress each accented syllable.
- Repeat two or three times at a normal rate of speech.
- Tell students the simplified explanation or have them read the explanation with you.
- Repeat the word and its definition.

Scaffolding Pronunciation

- Always pronounce content-specific words when introducing vocabulary.
- Frequently remind students to use the routine.
- Be respectful of English language learners and speakers of nonstandard dialects.

Scaffolding the Definition of Words

- Always provide a student-friendly definition (include illustrations or diagrams where appropriate) for any new academic or content-specific word.
- Check students' understanding of the word:
  - Options include asking partners to use the word in a sentence or to give examples of the word.
  - Support students who struggle, and reword the student-friendly definition if necessary.
- Gradually increase the precision and technicality of the definition. Start with a student-friendly definition, and then scaffold toward an understanding of the formal definition as it would be used in the discipline. For example:
  - *Hypothesis*: something you think is true, but you are not sure (student-friendly)
  - *Hypothesis*: an unproven answer to a question (slightly more technical)
  - *Hypothesis*: an untested theory about something unknown (more formal)
- Point out cognates and false cognates:
  - www.colorincolorado.org/cognates.pdf
  - www.latinamericalinks.com/spanish_cognates.htm
  - http://textproject.org/resources/spanish-english-cognates
  - www.miguelmllop.com/glos/index.php
- For assistance when planning and composing the simplified explanations of words, refer to the following Web sites:
  - www.oup.com/elt/catalogue/teachersites/oald7/?cc=global
  - http://dictionary.cambridge.org/results.asp?dict=A
  - www.mathwords.com

Reflection Log

Think about how you might use the information presented in this module to plan instruction and support students' academic literacy needs. What seemed particularly useful to you? What ideas were new or interesting? What confirmed or challenged your previous beliefs? What questions do you still have?

Use the lines below to record your thoughts.

References

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Module 2: Pronouncing and Defining Words

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