



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

Newsletter

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Dear Houghton Mifflin Reading Teacher,

Welcome to the **sixth issue** of the Houghton Mifflin California Newsletter!


In this issue, we will spotlight vocabulary and universal access in the content area! You will find valuable resources, and instructional support for Houghton Mifflin History-Social Science which will enhance your content-area instruction, as well as your student's comprehension of informational text.

Visit the Houghton Mifflin California Website!

Visit www.eduplace.com, click on state resources, then click on California.

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 **Find** valuable resources for yourself, your students, and your parent community in ALL Houghton Mifflin curricular areas



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AUTHOR'S CORNER

The Power of Words by John J. Pikulski



Dr. John J. Pikulski

It seems almost impossible to overstate the power of words: they have literally changed, and will continue to change, the course of world history. Perhaps the greatest tools we can give students for success, not only in their education, but more generally in life, is a large, rich vocabulary and the strategies and skills to use those words. Our ability to function in today's complex social and economic worlds is hugely affected by our language skills and word knowledge.

There is an indisputable symbiotic relationship between achievement in reading and in content-area studies; such as history-social science. A large vocabulary is both predictive and reflective of high levels of reading achievement. Students who do not read well will have difficulty assessing content information from written texts; the major source of content-information. They will also perform poorly on content area tests. There is no question that people who have large speaking vocabularies generally have large listening, reading, and writing vocabularies.

There is a growing body of evidence that if we are to meet the goals of improving

reading achievement in the United States, we must link and coordinate the teaching of content vocabulary and reading. One of the most recent international studies of reading achievement showed that there is a huge discrepancy between the ability of the United States students to read narrative as compared to informative text. While our students ranked 4th best in their ability to read stories, they ranked 13th in ability to read content materials. No other nation that participated in this study showed such a wide disparity between these two scores.

In addition to assessments, one reason teachers are concerned about teaching vocabulary is to facilitate the comprehension of a text a student will be assigned to read for class. If students don't know the meaning of many of the words that they encounter in a text, their comprehension of that text is likely to be compromised. When the purpose of vocabulary instruction is to facilitate comprehension of a selection, it seems obvious that this instruction should take place as an introduction; before the reading of the text. However, some authors of informational text make it a point to use

artificially enhanced contexts to facilitate word learning. If new words are defined appropriately in the selection, they may not need to be discussed beforehand. Nonetheless, it is important to keep in mind the research, which finds that in naturally occurring contexts it is more difficult to use contexts for word meanings in informational texts; as compared to narrative ones. Thus new words that are critical to an understanding of a major topic or theme should be introduced and discussed prior to reading because the exploration of these prerequisite terms and concepts will establish a strong foundation for subsequent learning.

Not only for reading achievement, but also for general social and economic success. It seems hard to overstate the importance of vocabulary. Teachers need to strategically model and directly teach the steps to acquiring new vocabulary. Laying a foundation for continued growth in vocabulary is perhaps the greatest tool we can provide for our students.

TEACHER'S TIPS Ideas for how to Teach Vocabulary Strategies

TEACHER TIP #1

SEMANTIC CONTEXT CLUES FOR READING CONTENT-AREA TEXT

Direct Definition

Explain that direct definition or explanations, are the most obvious type of context clue. Words such as **is** or **means** signal that a definition of an unfamiliar term will follow.

Restatements

Explain that restatements use different words to say the same thing. Restatements are often signaled by **or**, **that is**, and **in other words**, and are usually set off by commas.

Comparisons or Contrasts

Explain that comparisons or contrasts show similarities and differences between an

unfamiliar word and a familiar word or concept. Comparisons or contrasts of an unfamiliar term are often signaled by words and phrases, such as **like**, **just as**, **similar**, and **on the other hand**.

Apply to Text

Ask students to look through their social studies or science textbooks for examples of semantic context clues and share them with the class.

TEACHER TIP #2:

SHORT LIVELY ACTIVITIES THAT REQUIRE STUDENTS TO PROCESS MEANING

Applause, Applause!

Use vocabulary from text or Word Work, ask students to clap to indicate how much they would like to be described by the target words (not at all, a little bit, a lot)...

and as always, why they feel that way.

Idea Completions

Tired of the same old "write a sentence using the new word", which can result in meaningless use...(e.g. "I saw a virtuoso.")? Try sentence stems, which require students to integrate a word's meaning into context in order to explain a situation.

For example:

The audience asked the virtuoso to play another piece of music because...

This activity can be simplified by asking questions such as the following about newly introduced words:

When might you...?

How might you...?

Why might you...?

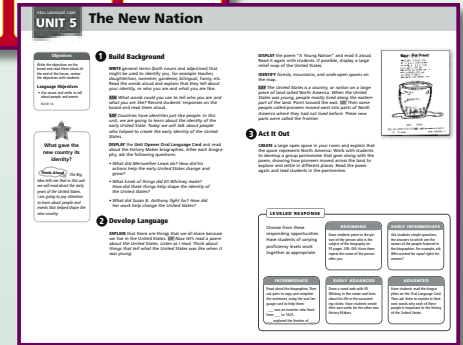
COMPONENT SPOTLIGHT

Houghton Mifflin California History-Social Science Oral Language Cards



Oral Language Cards provide research based instructional support for all learners using full-color images to develop students' background knowledge and enhance opportunities for discussion. No Teacher's Edition required - the back of each card provides support for instruction of key vocabulary, academic language and lesson content.

- Multi-levelled response feature gives each student an opportunity to respond to the lesson according to his or her proficiency level. Kinesthetic, oral and written exercises are designed to assess students' comprehension



- Objectives are clearly worded in student-friendly language so that teachers may share objectives with students before and after lessons
- The **Think Aloud** feature models appropriate strategies and problem solving approaches to understanding the unit's **Big Idea**
- An **Act It Out** activity allows students of all proficiency levels to work together and learn from one another in a variety of directed and interactive ways
- A visual of the language development backline, features unit-related vocabulary and concepts

UNIVERSAL ACCESS:

History-Social Science: Access for English Learners Guide

This complete resource will ensure content success for your English Language Learners, and all struggling readers. The Access for English Learners Guide provides greater access to key concepts and vocabulary in **Houghton Mifflin History-Social Science** through support and scaffolding for the:

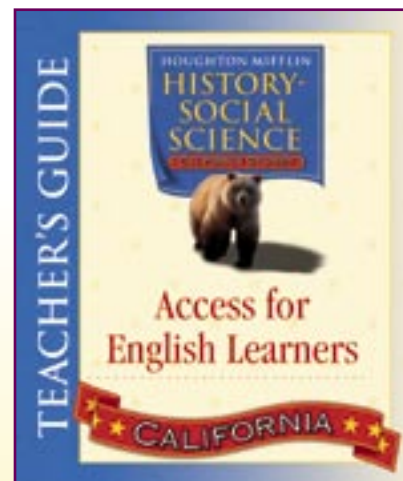
- Unit Opener
- Vocabulary Preview
- Almanac
- Core Lesson
- Skillbuilder
- Independent Leveled Books

Content Objectives AND Language Objectives are clearly worded in student-friendly language so that teachers may share them with students before and after lessons

Leveled Activities related to the Core Lesson provide support for students at all five proficiency levels

Leveled Response Writing Rubrics assess student writing for the leveled independent books at all five proficiency levels

Be sure to check out other items that support fluency and vocabulary instruction at www.eduplace.com.



TEACHERS ASK...

How does Houghton Mifflin support the learning of new words in context within a content area of instruction?

Students must encounter words in context more than once in order to learn them. The idea that wide reading is the primary vehicle for vocabulary development relies on the assumption that students learn all words they encounter. Many factors affect the chances that a student will learn new words while reading. High ability students have up to a 19% chance of learning a new word, whereas low ability students have only about 8% chance. In addition, the nature of the text greatly influences the chances that students will learn new words. Low-density text, defined as one new word per 150 words, provides a 30% chance that students will learn new words in context. High-density text, defined as one new word in 10, provides only a 7% chance. *Houghton Mifflin History Social Science* includes **Independent Leveled Books** at three levels of text density, which incorporate the content specific vocabulary. Content vocabulary is also incorporated into the use of the **Oral Language Cards** as well as the **Student eBook** and **on-line activities**.

What is the impact of direct instruction on acquiring new vocabulary in the content area?

Instruction in new words enhances learning them in context. When students have instruction on words, their ability to comprehend them increases by a factor of about one-third. Research indicates that student growth will increase by as much as 33 percentile

points when vocabulary instruction focuses on specific words deemed important to what the students are learning; foundation words. Teaching students strategies to attack unfamiliar words, such as looking at word parts (i.e. prefixes, suffixes, and roots), and to think about similar words or prior experiences allows students to increase their retention of new content words. Providing a visual for students to use as an anchor for retention also enhances student ownership of new vocabulary. *Houghton Mifflin California History Social Science* brings with it the support of direct instruction for vocabulary strategies; in addition to a visual match for content vocabulary, in the **Vocabulary Preview** at the beginning of each unit. There are also black-line masters for student-use vocabulary cards at each grade level, and visual connections are provided through the **Oral Language** and **Field Trip Cards**.

NEW FROM HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

Building Vocabulary and Reach All Learners with

Houghton Mifflin Leveled Readers for History-Social Science!

The latest addition to the Leveled Reading library features content specific nonfiction leveled readers at four levels: below, on, above, and language support. Teacher's Guides at each level provide differentiated lesson plans for every title. **Social Studies Leveled Readers** build students' content vocabulary by pre-teaching key vocabulary words, teaching vocabulary strategies, and providing practice with the **Key Vocabulary Master**.



A lesson plan for each title includes three instructional options:

• OPTION 1: INDEPENDENT READING

Briefly preview vocabulary. Build background as needed with the special **Background for the Teacher** section. Have students read the book and answer responding questions.

• OPTION 2: SUPPORTED STUDENT READING

Introduce the book. Build background as needed using **Background for the Teacher**. Students read the book, discuss it, and answer the responding questions. Practice vocabulary with the **Key Vocabulary** master. Reinforce with **Activity Cards** for Book Share discussion and projects.

• OPTION 3: TEACHER SUPPORTED READING

Introduce the book. Build background as needed. Students read the book. Lead a discussion on the book, suggestions in the lesson. Students may complete the **Key Vocabulary** and answer responding questions. Teach/review **Comprehension Skill** if needed.

Additional support for English learners at all proficiency levels may be found in the:

- ✓ Language Support Lesson Plans
- ✓ Alternate Responding Questions for English Language Learners
- ✓ Choices for Reading