



Word Detectives: Building Academic Vocabulary

GRADE 5

TIME

45 minutes

AGENDA

- **Take a Poll** (10 Min)
- **Introducing the Strategy** (5 Min)
- **Looking for Clues** (10 Min)
- **Word Dig** (10 Min)
- **Word Swap** (10 Min)

MATERIALS

- **Resource 1:** Take a Poll
- **Resource 2:** Looking for Clues
- **Resource 3:** Word Dig
- **Resource 4:** Word Swap
- **Dictionary** (optional)

LESSON STANDARD(S)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.4

Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.

STUDENT OBJECTIVE(S)

I can use clues to determine the meaning of new words.

Model **TAKE A POLL** (10 min)

EXTEND Have students partner up to share their sentences (e.g., *When I come to an unfamiliar word in a text, I usually ignore it and keep reading.*) and an explanation (e.g., *I do this because I like to read without interruption.*).

- **Introduce** the topic. **Say:** *To grow as readers, we need to read often and read a variety of texts. This means we will likely encounter new vocabulary words that we do not know. So what do we do when this happens?*
- **Display and instruct** students to turn to **Resource 1: Take a Poll**. Explain that you will conduct a poll to see how students currently respond when they encounter unfamiliar words.
- **Read aloud** the sentence frame (*When I come to an unfamiliar word in a text, I usually...*) and each answer choice. Ask students to place an “x” next to the phrase that best describes what they do when they encounter new vocabulary in a text.
- **Graph** the class results together. Ask students to raise hands to indicate which response they chose. Model how to use the data to create a bar graph. **Say:** *Let’s create a bar graph to see which response was most common. Please raise your hand if you placed an “x” next to “ignore it and keep reading.” I count 3 hands, so in the first column of our graph, I will color in three boxes.*
- **Invite** students to share their reasons and/or elaborate on responses. Discuss the benefits and drawbacks of each approach. **Say:** *For those who usually ignore new vocabulary terms and keep on reading—what are the advantages to this approach? (Reading is uninterrupted; the reader does not lose his/her train of thought) What might be some drawbacks to this approach? (The reader does not understand what s/he read.)*

INTRODUCING THE STRATEGY (5 min)

- **Introduce** the strategy. Then have students partner to discuss the purpose. **Say:** *Today, we will learn a strategy to help us understand new words we encounter in text. Often, with a little detective work, we can come up with a pretty accurate definition without reaching for a dictionary or asking someone for help. We will learn how to be word detectives, digging for context clues in the text to unlock the mystery of word meaning. Before we do, let's discuss the purpose: why is it important for readers to pause at an unfamiliar word and think about its meaning? Turn to your elbow partner to share.*
- **Monitor** partner interactions. Preselect two students with strong responses to share with the class. Then call on a few volunteers. Sum up the responses (e.g., *it helps us build understanding, clarify meaning, improve comprehension, expand vocabulary, grow as readers*).
- **Display** the following steps and explain each:
- **STEP 1 Look for clues.** **Say:** *When we come across an unfamiliar word, we can look at the context—or surrounding words and phrases—to find clues that will help us unlock its meaning. There are four types of clues we will explore today: 1) Word Family, 2) Explanations or Restatements, 3) Synonyms, and 4) Antonyms.*
- **STEP 2 Determine the meaning.** **Say:** *Once we have searched the context for clues, we can start to piece together the meaning of the word.*
- **STEP 3 Confirm the meaning.** **Say:** *Finally, we put our new understanding of the word to the test. This might mean rereading the section of text with our new understanding of the word to see if it makes sense or checking a dictionary to confirm the definition.*

SUPPORT Allow students 1 minute to think and brainstorm ideas before sharing with a partner. Provide an academic sentence frame and model response to structure student interactions (e.g., *It is important to pause at an unfamiliar word because doing so helps us add new words to our vocabulary.*)

SUPPORT Display each of the four context clue types along with a short description.

LOOKING FOR CLUES (10 min)

Guided Practice

- **Display and instruct** students to turn to **Resource 2: Looking for Clues.** **Say:** *Let's practice looking for context clues in the passage, Earthquake Aftermath.*
- **Point** to the bold words in the text. Explain that these are the target vocabulary words.
- **Point** to the CLUE SEARCH feature at the bottom of the page. Read aloud the directions for annotating the text.
- **Read aloud** the passage as students follow along. **Say:** *Let's first read through the passage. Then we will examine the passage more closely to identify clues that will help us unlock the meaning of the bold words.*

SUPPORT Have students place a finger on each feature as you describe it.

- **Model** how to look for clues for the first word, *earthquake*. **Say:** *First, I will look at the word itself for any clues. I recognize the word “earth.” That word is used often to refer to the ground or the dirt. It’s also used to describe the planet on which we live. I also have heard of “quake.” I think it means to shake or shiver. I will underline “earth” and underline “quake” as Word Family clues.*
- **Reread** the first three sentences. Continue to think aloud to identify clues and annotate text. **Say:** *The description from Joan Davis offers a good explanation of what an earthquake is like. This is a great clue! I will double underline it. I don’t see any synonyms, or words that seem to mean the same thing. I also don’t spot any antonyms, or words that mean the opposite.*
- **Model** how to derive meaning from clues. **Say:** *Based on my knowledge of the word and the description from Joan Davis, I can conclude that an earthquake is an event where the ground shakes a lot.*
- **Guide** students to search for clues and annotate the text for the remaining vocabulary words (e.g., for *magnitude*, double underline “quite strong”; for *devastated*, place a box around “unharmed”; for *repair*, circle “fix”).

Independent Practice **WORD DIG** (10 min)

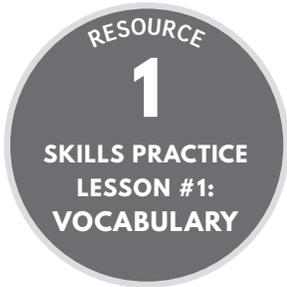
- **Display and instruct students** to turn to **Resource 3: Word Dig**. **Say:** *Now that we have marked up the text, we will gather our clues and determine and confirm the word meaning.*
- **Model** how to complete the resource for the word *earthquake*. Write *earthquake* in the center box. Then record Word Family Clues (e.g., “earth” = ground, “quake” = shake) and Explanation Clues (e.g., rumble, ground moved).
- **Work** together with students to derive meaning from clues. **Say:** *Based on these clues, how might we define earthquake? (An earthquake is an event where the ground shakes violently.)*
- **Confirm** meaning by looking up the definition in a dictionary or by returning to the text.
- **Number** students off 1 to 3. Assign remaining vocabulary words accordingly (e.g., number 1s do *magnitude*, number 2s do *devastated*, number 3s do *repair*). Have students work independently or in pairs to complete the **Word Dig** for their assigned word.
- **Call** on number 1s to read aloud their definitions of the word *magnitude*. Have them explain how they confirmed the meaning of the word. Then have number 2s share definitions for *devastated*; number 3s, for *repair*.

EXTEND Distribute 3 copies of Resource 3: Word Dig to each student. Have each student complete the resource to define all three remaining vocabulary terms.

- **Display** and **instruct students** to turn to **Resource 4: Word Swap**.
- **Explain** the activity and review the example. **Say:** *Now let's put our detective work to the test! In the first column, there are sentences. Notice the underlined words are the new vocabulary terms we have been investigating. In the second column, we will rewrite the sentence, swapping out the new vocabulary term for a synonym. Let's take a look at the example provided.*
- **Check for understanding**, then have students complete the resource independently. Circulate the room to review student responses. Offer clarification and support as needed. **Say:** *Before we begin, whisper the directions to your neighbor to make sure you both understand what to do. Give me a thumbs up if you and your neighbor both understood the task. Give me a thumbs down if you think you need to review the directions one more time.*
- **Have** students star one sentence to share. Start at one end of the room and give each student an opportunity to read aloud the starred sentence.

SUPPORT Work with students to generate a word bank of synonyms for each vocabulary word.

SUPPORT Have students share in pairs or small groups. Monitor discussions and record a few strong student examples. Read aloud these recorded examples to the class.



TAKE A POLL

Word Detectives: Building Academic Vocabulary

When I come to an unfamiliar word in a text, I usually...

- ignore it and keep reading.
- stop and look up the word in a dictionary.
- stop and ask someone to tell me what it means.
- write down the new word and look up the definition later.
- try to guess what it means.

Our Class Results

# of students	10					
	9					
	8					
	7					
	6					
	5					
	4					
	3					
	2					
	1					
		Ignore it and keep reading	Stop and look up the word in a dictionary	Stop and ask someone to tell me what it means	Write down the new word and look up the definition later	Try to guess what it means

LOOKING FOR CLUES

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Earthquake Aftermath

The city experienced a major **earthquake** last night. Joan Davis described her experience: “I heard a rumble and felt the ground moving beneath my feet. My house started to shake and things flew off the walls.” At 7.3 **magnitude**, this earthquake was quite strong.

Though people were unharmed, the earthquake **devastated** the city center, leveling some buildings to the ground and leaving others with cracked walls and broken windows. Mayor Thompson believes it will take a lot of time and money to **repair** all of the damage, stating, “It will take a lot of work to fix things, but we will do what we need to do.”

CLUE SEARCH

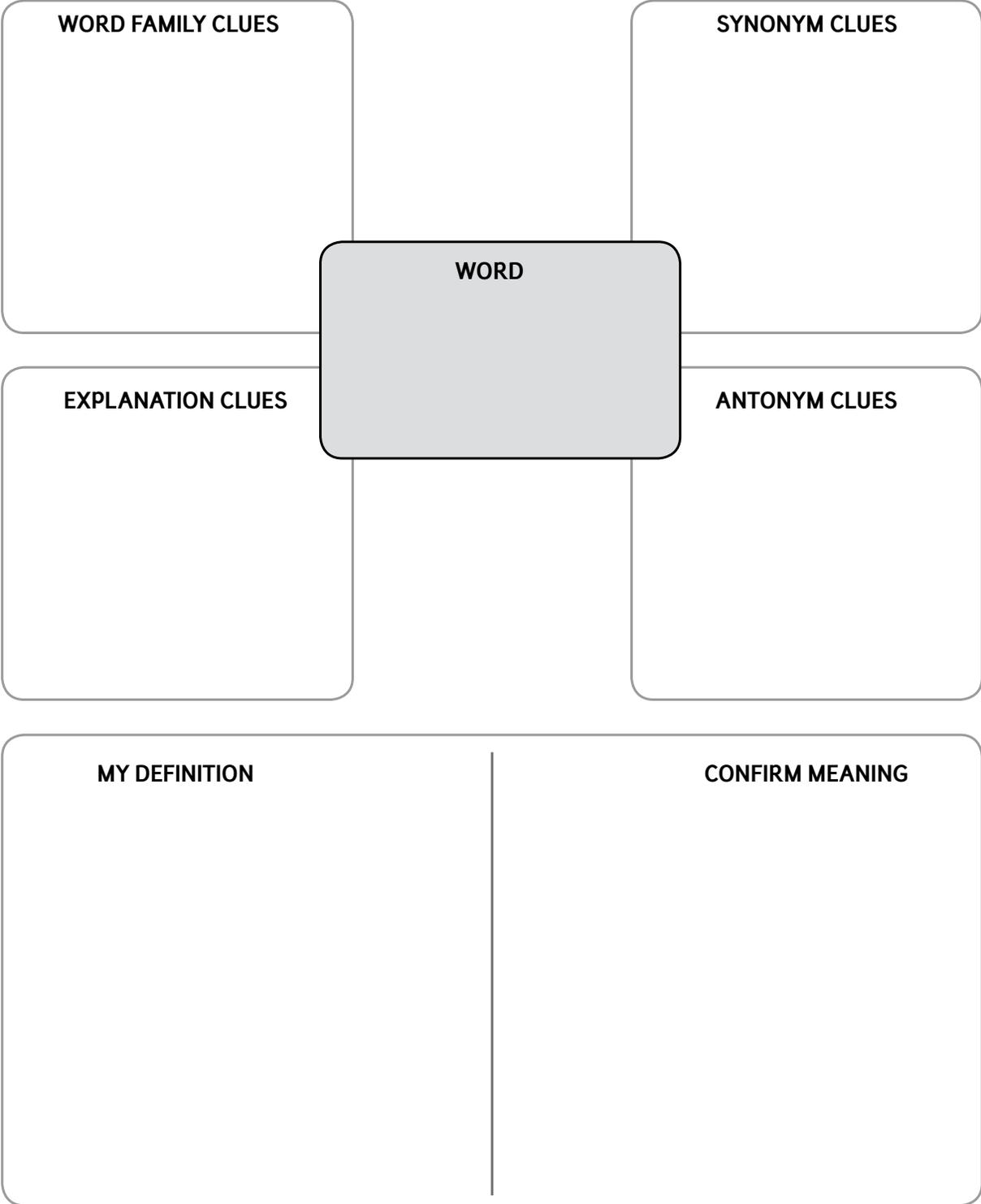


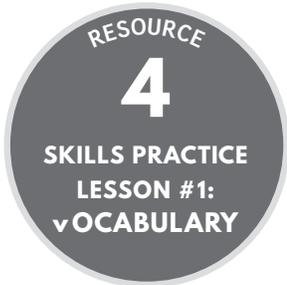
- Underline the WORD FAMILY clues
- Double underline EXPLANATION or RESTATEMENT clues
- Circle SYNONYM clues
- Put a box around ANTONYM clues

RESOURCE
3
SKILLS PRACTICE
LESSON #1:
vOCABULARY

WORD DIG

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WORD SWAP

Word Detectives: Building Academic vocabulary

ACADEMIC SENTENCE	RESTATE IT!
<p>The <u>earthquake</u> had a major impact on the community.</p>	<p>The <i>trembler</i> had a major impact on the community.</p>
<p>A quake of this <u>magnitude</u> can cause significant damage.</p>	
<p>The city's buildings were <u>devastated</u>.</p>	
<p>Construction workers have already started to <u>repair</u> the damage.</p>	