



Contextual Redefinition: A vocabulary activity to facilitate context recognition and establish a purpose for reading

Often the purpose of vocabulary study is to remove barriers to comprehension of text, as well as model for students how to use context clues to determine unknown word meanings. Prior to reading or learning a new concept, it is important to pre-teach unfamiliar terms to enable students to construct meaning during reading and/or instruction. **Contextual Redefinition** is a strategy that introduces new vocabulary in rich contexts that help to define words and facilitate memory by giving the words meaningful associations. When paired with discussions of text structure and context clues, it can help move your students to higher levels of reading comprehension. **Contextual Redefinition** is designed to facilitate **word recognition** and should be clearly focused on immediate, short-term learning needs.

Select Unfamiliar Words—Select no more than 10 words from the text or from the lesson to be introduced.

Write a Sentence—Create context rich sentences using the word. Categories of context clues can be experience, compare and contrast, description, synonyms, etc. If your text uses the words in well-written, context rich sentences, you may want to use words directly from the reading.

Present the Word in Isolation—Using the overhead or board, write the word and have the students generate meaning as they refer to the context sentences; they can do this in small groups or individually. Once the student definitions are written, have the class share and come to an agreement on the meaning. Finally, have the students use the **Think-Aloud** strategy to describe how they came up with their definitions (modeling the thinking process).