

EXAMPLE/NONEXAMPLE

Present items that ask students to distinguish between an example of a word and a non-example of a word. Both the example and the non-example should be designed to present situations that have similar features and therefore require student thinking that zeros in on the meaning of the target word. Students should always be prepared to justify their answer.

Variation 1:

- Target Word: **Proclaim**

A woman refuses to talk to reporters about the election.

A woman tells reporters which candidate won the election

- Which would **plod**:
 - Frankenstein in a castle or a ghost in a castle
 - A huge dinosaur or a mountain lion
 - A heavy man or a skinny man
- Which is more **versatile**: a heavy fur coat or a coat with a zip-in lining? Why?

Variation 2:

- If I say something that sounds **precarious**, say “precarious.” If not, don’t say anything.
 - Waling over a rickety bridge that spans a deep canyon
 - Exploring a new tall school building
 - Standing on a tall ladder on one foot

Variation 3:

If any of the things I say are examples of places where it might be **frigid**, say “Brrr.” If not, don’t say anything.

- Antarctica
- Florida
- Canada in January
- Mexico

Variation 4:

- If you didn’t buy a pair of shoes until you wore out the ones you had, would that be **frugal** or **versatile**? Why?
- Which would be something to **resist**:

- Laughing at someone's joke or laughing at someone's mistake? Why?

Variation 5:

- If you had a very special photograph of a friend who had moved away, would you refer to it as a **memento** or a **talisman**? Why?
- If you had a special keychain, a kind of lucky charm, would you refer to it as a **memento** or a **talisman**? Why?

WORD ASSOCIATIONS

Variation 1:

- Target Words: **accomplice**, **virtuoso**, **philanthropist**, and **novice**
 - Which word goes with crook?
 - Which word goes with “gift to build a new hospital”?
 - Which word goes with piano?
 - Which word goes with kindergartner?
- Target words: **tedious**, **extravagant**, and **pretentious**
 - I spent all my allowance for 6 months on the video.
 - I can’t face another minute of this!
 - You’re so lucky that I am part of your team.

Variation 2: Students complete the chart. This, as is the case for most of Beck’s examples, should be a teacher led activity.

Word	Associations	Reasons/explanations
Eloquent	President Kennedy	Kennedy was an excellent speaker. People still talk about his speeches.
Pervasive	Computer viruses	Viruses seem to be all over the place and you always have to be on the watch for them.
Fidelity	Having the same best friend all your life	You are always faithful to that person.

Variation 3: Idea Substitution – students hear a sentence that has something to do with one of their words, and then indicate which word. They then revise the sentence in a way that includes the word.

- I didn’t want to answer his questions so I pretended I didn’t hear him. Which new word goes with that sentence? (**evade**) Student: I didn’t want to answer his questions so I **evaded** him.

GENERATING SITUATIONS, CONTEXTS, AND EXAMPLES

In this set of activities students are not provided with choices. Rather, students are asked to generate appropriate contexts or situations for statements or questions about their words.

Variation 1: In this example, the situation remains constant but students are asked to apply different target words.

- What would make a teacher say this to her class?
 - What an *industrious* class you are!
 - What a *clever* class you are!
 - What a *splendid* class you are!
 - What a *versatile* class you are!
 -
- What would an *immense* plate of spaghetti look like?
- Why might you feel *miserable* after eating all the spaghetti?
- What would it look like to eat spaghetti in a *leisurely* way?

Variation 2: The questions below require developing situations across various contexts.

- Why might you go on a *crusade*?
- Where might you go to see *artifacts*?
- Why is wearing clothes from a thrift store a *frugal* thing to do?
- Why might you *examine* and apple you found on the street?

Variation 3: Here students need to develop comments that people might make that are associated with target words.

- What might an audience say about a *splendid* musician?
- What might a generous person say to a *miser*?
- What might someone who is *exuberant* say about your new bike?
- What might someone who is *frugal* say when looking at the price tag on a coat?

Variation 4: This could be done in a collaborative group. For example, each group could respond to the different positions of the following:

- How might acook....a musician....a basketball player....a teacher show they are:

- *Versatile*
- *Industrious*
- *Clever*
- *Expert*

Variation 5: Students develop descriptions of the target words in various situations:

- Three things that would be *altruistic*
- Three people that might be *gregarious*
- Three things a *misanthrope* might do

WORD RELATIONSHIPS

Having students think about and respond to how two words might be related helps students develop rich word knowledge. There are many activities/situations to encourage students to interact with novel concepts for the words. Here are just a few suggestions.

Variation 1: Ask students to describe how two vocabulary words might be connected or related.

- *Compassionate/advocate*—A *compassionate* lawyer might act as an *advocate* for someone who is in need and otherwise could not afford a lawyer.

Variation 2: Phrase a question around two words and ask students to respond and then explain their answers.

- What might a *meticulous* person be *vulnerable* to?

Variation 3: Analogies can be developed leaving one part blank. Eventually, students can construct their own.

- *Nonchalant/sarcastic*—If you are acting *nonchalantly*, you are trying hard not to be noticed; if you are being *sarcastic*, you are trying hard not to be ...

Variation 4: Word sort—this is effective once a number of words have been introduced. Create any categories.

Capitalism	Socialism
Competition Profit Free enterprise	Regulation collectivism

Variation 4: Continuums—students place phrases/words on a word line that represents a continuum and explain their placement.

- How surprised would you be if ...
 1. You saw your friend *vault* over the moon?
 2. Your teacher *commended* you for doing good work?
 3. A dog started *bantering* with you?
 4. The mayor *urged* everyone to leave town?

5. A coach *berated* his football team for not making a touchdown?
6. A rabbit *trudged* through a garden?

Least surprised _____ Most surprised

Variation 5: Applause/Applause—students are asked to respond to indicate how much they would like:

- Having your room described as *eerie*
- Having a *stern* teacher
- Being described as a *diligent* student

WRITING

Variation 1: Provide students with sentence stems. The key is to include the *because* which requires the students to explain “why?”

- The student opened her math test with a *perplexed* expression because ...
- My father’s library is *prodigious* because...

Variation 2: Students can be asked to extend their writing as well.

- Think of someone you could describe as one of the following: *precocious*, *meticulous*, or *tenacious*. Tell what that person is like.

Variation 3: Prompt students to use several of their vocabulary words in a writing assignment. You can leave it open ended or provide the premise for them. Some premises are:

- Finding a puppy with a bag of money tied around its neck at your door.
- Arriving at a new city and people think you are a celebrity.

RETURNING TO THE STORY CONTEXT

Having students return to the original context in which they met the vocabulary word is a powerful way to reinforce the connection understanding vocabulary and understanding story ideas. The following question comes from *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963* (Curtis, 1995).

- In his epilogue, Christopher Paul Curtis wrote: “In the Northern, Eastern, and Western states, African Americans often faced *discrimination*, but it was not as extreme and *pervasive* as in the South” (207). What did he mean?
 - Find examples of *discrimination* mentioned in the novel.

PUZZLES

Students always seem to enjoy puzzles that lead them through clues to an answer. When students are comfortable with this format they can create the series of clues.

- Target word: *relinquish*
 - It is hard for dogs to do this with a delicious bone.
 - This word means to “give something up.”
 - This word has nine letters and starts with an r _____