Word Works™
Cracking Vocabulary's CODE

TEACHER PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

WORKSHEETS • TEMPLATES • EXAMPLES

The Thoughtful Classroom™
MAKING STUDENTS AS IMPORTANT AS STANDARDS

The Hidden Skills of Academic Literacy | Research-Based Strategies | Diversity That Works | Classroom Curriculum Design | Instructional Learning Teams

Dear Thoughtful Educator:

Sometimes the simplest innovations produce the greatest results. Designed by a collaborative of teachers, administrators, and trainers, the all-new **Thoughtful Classroom Portfolio Series** makes the important work of bringing high-impact, research-based instructional strategies into your classroom or school easier than ever before.

Each Thoughtful Classroom Portfolio (and its accompanying booklet of worksheets, templates, and examples) serves as a Planning and Implementation Guide focused on a specific method, strategy, or perspective for improving teacher instruction and student learning. There are four types of Thoughtful Classroom Portfolios:

- **Research-Based Strategies** – Designed specifically to support the important research of Robert Marzano (author of *Classroom Instruction That Works*), Harvey Silver, and Richard Strong, these portfolios help educators study and implement the most up-to-date and effective strategies for improving instruction.

- **The Hidden Skills of Academic Literacy** – Focusing on key skills that significantly affect student performance on state tests and standards, each of these portfolios shows teachers how to approach a different skill in the classroom. Among the skills covered (or soon to be covered) are Thoughtful Vocabulary Learning, Notetaking and Notemaking, and Developing Thoughtful Explanations.

- **Diversity Guides** – These portfolios help teachers develop powerful new strategies for assessing and responding to student differences.

- **Leadership Guides** – These portfolios describe strategies for academic leaders and mentors to enhance professional learning opportunities in their schools.

At Silver Strong and Associates/Thoughtful Education Press we believe that successful schools are built on a culture of support that encourages teachers to apply new ideas and strategies in their classrooms. We are confident these portfolios will play a significant role in fostering such a culture and that they will help you improve the quality of teaching and learning in your classroom and throughout your school.

Please write us (at suggestions@ThoughtfulEd.com) after you have used this Thoughtful Classroom Portfolio. We would love to hear your ideas and suggestions as we develop new titles and revise current ones.

For a complete list of available Thoughtful Classroom Portfolios, please visit our website at www.ThoughtfulEd.com. Check back often–we are constantly adding new portfolios to this series.

Sincerely,

The Thoughtful Classroom Team

USING YOUR PORTFOLIO

This Thoughtful Classroom Portfolio was designed to be used as part of a Thoughtful Classroom Learning Club, a collaborative support structure developed by Silver Strong & Associates. Through Learning Clubs, teams of teachers and administrators work together to plan, implement, and evaluate lessons and units to make a difference in student learning.

Our research has consistently shown the value of Learning Clubs in helping teachers not only learn but also apply what they learn in the classroom. However, we realize that not every user of this portfolio is part of a Learning Club. So, here are some simple guidelines for using your portfolio with a Learning Club or solo:

WITH A LEARNING CLUB

1. About a week before your Learning Club meeting, read through the portfolio carefully and come to the meeting with 2 or 3 ideas about how to use the skill or strategy to enhance student learning.

2. At the Learning Club meeting, work with other Learning Club members to develop plans you can use as individuals or as a team.

3. Use the enclosed templates to flesh out your plans and to reflect on what happens when your plans and those of your partners are put into operation. We believe that reflecting on your own and your colleagues' experience can be a powerful tool for effective professional learning.

4. After you and the other Learning Club members have developed and implemented a number of plans using the portfolio, conduct a student work meeting. At the meeting, you and your colleagues will use the *Examining Student Work* component of the portfolio to study the actual effects your plans had on student learning and thinking.

INDIVIDUALLY

1. Review the portfolio carefully. Familiarize yourself with the various panels of the portfolio and the supplemental pages and planning forms.

2. If at all possible, invite a colleague into your learning, planning, and implementation processes. It will always be easier to master a new strategy or technique if you can discuss and test your ideas with another teacher.

3. Use the enclosed templates to flesh out your plans and to reflect on what happened when you put those plans into operation. We believe that self-reflection is a powerful (and often undervalued) tool for effective professional learning.

4. Use the *Examining Student Work* component to study the actual effects your plans had on student learning and thinking.

5. Why aren't you part of a Learning Club? Pull a few teachers together and start one. Get some pizza and let the conversation begin.

To find out more about how to create and conduct a Thoughtful Classroom Learning Club in your school, please visit our website at www.ThoughtfulEd.com

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The Thoughtful Classroom, The Thoughtful Classroom Learning Club, and The Thoughtful Classroom Portfolio Series are trademarks of Silver Strong & Associates, LLC and Thoughtful Education Press, LLC.

The research is clear: If we want students to master vocabulary, they will need to be exposed to the new terms multiple times and in a variety of ways. While the four phases of C.O.D.E. naturally lead students to CONNECT, ORGANIZE, DEEP PROCESS and EXERCISE new terms, the question of what strategies to use in the classroom remains. Below is a matrix of vocabulary tools and strategies organized according to the four phases of C.O.D.E. As you plan your unit, refer to this matrix to help select appropriate strategies for each phase and to ensure deep learning.

C	O	D	E
☐ **Word Walls** A collection of words organized into categories and posted on the wall for students to use in their reading and writing.	☐ **Prioritizing Vocabulary** Teacher or students determine which words are essential, important, and good to know.	☐ **Visualizing Vocabulary** Creating visual images, sketches, or icons with brief explanations to demonstrate understanding.	☐ **Vocabulary Games** Using Bingo, Jeopardy, Word Baseball, etc. to review vocabulary in a competitive and fun manner.
☐ **Power Decoding** Teaching students attack skills for new words: prefixes, suffixes, roots, context clues, substitutions.	☐ **Key Vocabulary Organizer** A concept definition map that establishes the larger categories that key concepts fit into, critical attributes, examples, and related concepts.	☐ **Multi-sensory Processing** A technique that encourages students to explore important words using words, feelings, sensory information, and visualization.	☐ **Write to Learn** Students are asked to use a specific number of new words in their writing assignments.
☐ **Word Spiders** Teacher introduces eight words that are associated with a mystery, one word for each leg of the spider organizer. Students try to guess the mystery word.	☐ **Categorizing** Teacher or students place a list of words into specific categories.	☐ **Storytelling** Students analyze a selection of stories, then use basic story elements to define important concepts.	☐ **Team Games Tournament** Students are divided up into heterogeneous study groups to review words, then compete in homogenous groups to earn points for their team.
☐ **Associations** Students generate words, pictures, feelings, physical reactions to words. There is no right or wrong, just what comes to mind.	☐ **Concept Maps** A technique used to create visual representations of hierarchical relationships between a central concept, supporting ideas, and important details	☐ **Metaphors** Students learn words deeply by exploring their relationships to other words/concepts (e.g., How is democracy like baseball?).	☐ **Vocabulary Carousel** Teacher sets up 5 or 6 stations. Students work in small groups at all stations. Stations include a variety of vocabulary activities.
☐ **See It, Say It, Show It, Store It** Students look at the word, pronounce it slowly, record its meaning, draw a picture with a brief explanation, and store the word in their Vocabulary Journals.	☐ **Fist List** Teacher provides a category in the "palm" of a hand organizer; students generate 5 words that fit the category, one for each finger of the hand organizer.	☐ **Defining Characteristics** Students build multi-layered definitions by focusing on essential characteristics: What is it? What is it used for? Why is it valued? What kind is it? Where does it come from? What does it look, feel, sound, smell like? etc.	☐ **Effective Practice** Teacher instructs students in the principles of effective practice, including how to mass and distribute review sessions, use words often, and make stronger connections.

C	O	D	E
☐ Glossary Students keep a glossary of new words by defining terms in their own words and including icons or pictures.	**☐ Word Banks** Students examine a list of words and place them into the appropriate slots in a visual organizer.	**☐ Etymologies** Students investigate word histories, analyzing how original meaning is intact and how it has changed.	**☐ Three's a Crowd** Students decide which word of three doesn't belong and explain why.
☐ Concept Attainment The teacher presents yes and no examples of a concept in order to help students determine its critical attributes. Students use the critical attributes to distinguish among examples and generate their own examples. Excellent for rich concepts with clear attributes, like "tragic hero."	**☐ Group and Label** Students examine a list of vocabulary words and place them into groups based on common characteristics. For each group that students create, they devise a label that describes what all the grouped words have in common.	**☐ Cinquains** A five-line poem used to define a term: • **noun:** coal • **two adjectives:** black and shiny • **three action verbs:** smolder, burn, pollute • **four-word sentence or phrase:** a source of energy • **ending word:** limited	**☐ Peer Practice** A reciprocal learning strategy in which students work as peer partners. One student serves as a coach, the other as a player. While the player works to define key terms from the unit, the coach provides assistance, feedback, and praise. Students then reverse roles.
☐ Exploring Multiple Meanings Students explore and use words that have the same sound but different meanings (homophones).	**☐ A Three-Way Tie** Students select three words from a unit's vocabulary and arrange them in a triangle. They then connect the words with lines and explain the relationship between each word by writing along the lines.	**☐ Compare and Contrast** Students set two rich concepts against one another and describe each separately. They then use their descriptions to draw out the deep similarities and differences between the two concepts. Finally, students must decide if the two concepts are more similar or more different, and explain why.	**☐ Boggle** After independent review, students retrieve all the vocabulary they can. Students join a group of 3-5 students, compare lists, and add any words or meanings they missed. Students then leave their team to "Boggle" with other students, gaining points for terms and meanings that appear on their list but not on their competitors' lists.
☐ Word Catcher Students are asked to "catch" a new word each day.	**☐ A Diagram to Die For** Students are asked to create a diagram that shows the relationship among the words on a Word Wall.	**☐ Crazy Connections** The student picks a word out of one hat, then a household, classroom, or odd object out of another. The student's job is to generate as many similarities as possible.	**☐ Para-Writing** Students write a paragraph or short piece using between five and fifteen vocabulary words. Each word must be embedded meaningfully into the text, or it doesn't count.

☐ Vocabulary Notebook

A notebook in which students collect important words while reading. In their notebooks, students record their initial "educated" definitions. They then look up the word and select the dictionary definition that best fits the word as it is used in the text. Students compare their initial definitions with the actual definition, and describe briefly what differences they note between them. Finally, students create a visual icon to help them process and remember the word's meaning. The notebook also serves as a great tool for review.

Please note: This strategy includes all four phases of CODE.

1 IDENTIFY THE ESSENTIAL VOCABULARY YOUR STUDENTS NEED TO LEARN DEEPLY

2 DECIDE ON A STRATEGY TO HELP YOUR STUDENTS ARRIVE AT A PRELIMINARY UNDERSTANDING OF THOSE WORDS (**CONNECT**)

3 ESTABLISH A METHOD TO HELP YOUR STUDENTS **ORGANIZE** THE NEW WORDS

4 ACTIVATE DEEP PROCESSING OF THE WORDS

5 SEARCH FOR OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO EXERCISE, REVISE, AND PRACTICE THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEW WORDS

WORD WORKS
SAMPLE UNITS

Every teacher is a teacher of vocabulary. One of the powerful effects of using Word Works is that it helps students in all content areas remember, understand, and use the most important terms in the units they study.

For additional unit samples and an in-depth look at **thoughtful vocabulary learning,** see *Word Works,* published by Thoughtful Education Press, www.ThoughtfulEd.com.

English – *To Kill A Mockingbird • High School*

1. Identify the essential vocabulary

Mark Veon reads *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee with his ninth grade students early in the fall. Mark considers character names and place names important examples of vocabulary his students need to remember and understand. He also wants his students to acquire the new and powerful words Lee uses to make her novel vivid and precise. Mark decides to put a strong emphasis on words related to the novel's themes, as well as words related to the kind of writing students will create for a thesis essay. Here is a portion of Mark's vocabulary list:

> **Thematic Vocabulary**
> prejudice, persuasion,
> courage, character

> **Thesis Writing Vocabulary**
> theme, thesis, evidence,
> symbol, character, motivation

2. Decide how to help students **connect** to the new words

Mr. Veon wants to focus on the word *persuasion.* He introduces the word *persuade* and its synonym *convince.* Then he immediately asks his students if they have ever persuaded their parents to change their minds, and asks them to make a list of the techniques they used. Later, he has students read the back cover of the novel and use their persuasion techniques to try to convince their partners that they would enjoy reading *To Kill a Mockingbird.*

3. Establish a method to help students **organize** new words

Mr. Veon shows his students how to build Word Webs of related terms. For instance, one student's Word Web for *persuade* includes *argue, reason, influence,* and *explain,* as well as *force* and *compel*.

4. Activate **deep processing** of key words

Mr. Veon uses comparison and discussion to help students develop a richer sense of the words' meanings: Students compare symbols and signs, discuss the differences between Jeb, Atticus', and Mrs. Debose' visions of courage.

5. Search for opportunities for students to **exercise** and revise their understandings of new words

As students read the novel, they collect examples of the novel's themes, and use their examples to write and revise their definitions in a glossary of themes in the back of their notebook.

Mathematics – Linear Equations • *High School*

1. Identify the essential vocabulary

Jody Hoch examines her state standards to determine the essential vocabulary for her unit on linear equations and selects the following terms:

> axis, coordinate pair, coordinate plane, Cartesian, graph, horizontal, intercept, linear, parallel, perpendicular, slope, variable, vertical

2. Decide how to help students connect to the new words
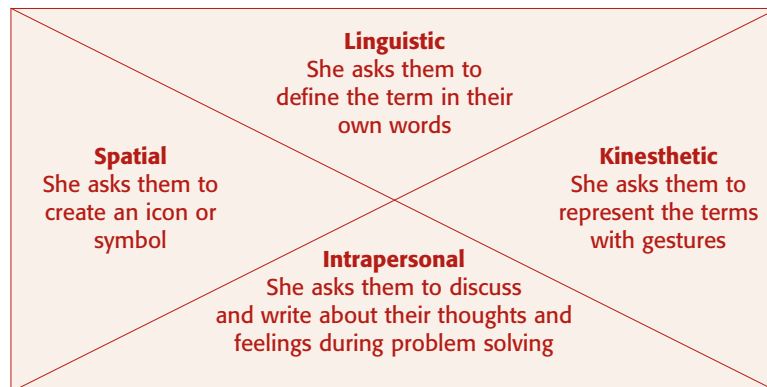
Though some of the vocabulary is familiar to Jody's students, the context in which the words appear is quite different, so she begins the unit with an Interactive Lecture on the role of these key terms in solving linear equations. During the lecture, Jody stops frequently to permit students to find or create their own illustrations for each term.

3. Establish a method to help students organize new words

In addition to the visual organizer she uses in her lecture, Jody also helps her students see word relationships by asking them to use a clustering strategy to make and label groups of different kinds of graphs and their equations.

4. Activate deep processing of key words

Jody chooses four of Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences to help her students process the key terms:

Linguistic
She asks them to define the term in their own words

Spatial
She asks them to create an icon or symbol

Kinesthetic
She asks them to represent the terms with gestures

Intrapersonal
She asks them to discuss and write about their thoughts and feelings during problem solving

5. Search for opportunities for students to exercise and revise their understandings of new words

Jody uses speed quizzes and rapid-fire games such as *Jeopardy* and *Baseball Vocabulary.*

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Science – The Water Cycle • *Fourth Grade*

1. Identify the essential vocabulary

Joyce Jackson's unit on water examines the following three questions:

a) Why is water important to us?

b) How does water behave? (the water cycle)

c) How can we conserve water?

Since an in-depth understanding of the water cycle is central to her unit, Joyce has selected the following words and phrases for her vocabulary study:

evaporation	**pollution**	**ground water**
condensation	**filtration**	**water vapor**
precipitation	**water cycle**	**responsibility**
transportation	**water table**	**consequences**

2. Decide how to help students **connect** to the new words

Joyce creates an illustrated Word Wall showing the key words and their place in the water cycle.

3. Establish a method to help students **organize** new words

Though the Word Wall provides a clear organization, Joyce reinforces this by periodically scrambling the terms and asking students to put them back in order.

4. Activate **deep processing** of key words

Joyce designs two ways to make the terms vivid to her students: First, she asks her students to create and explain metaphors for the key concepts, such as: "How is a water table like a farm?" Then she asks them to write brief poems illustrating two elements in the water cycle.

5. Search for opportunities for students to **exercise** and revise their understandings of new words

Near the end of the unit, Joyce creates a carousel of learning stations. Some of the stations include word searches, others ask students to create a water table comic strip.

Social Studies — Ancient Egypt • *Fifth Grade*

1. Identify the essential vocabulary

Pat Schwartz begins her fifth grade unit on Ancient Egypt with a Word Wall that is organized by the essential questions she hopes her unit will answer:

Why is Egypt considered the First Great Civilization?

What was so great about ancient Egypt?

papyrus

hieroglyphics

scribe

What did Egyptians believe?

Sphinx

Osiris

mummification

How was Egypt governed?

pharaoh

priests

Hatshepsut

Akhenaten

How did the Nile create Egyptian culture?

irrigation

desert

delta

2. Establish a method to help students **organize** new words

Pat begins her unit by placing her students into cooperative groups and providing each team with a manila envelope containing 20 pictures related to Egyptian civilization. Students study the pictures, looking for patterns and generating predictions relevant to Pat's five questions. Pat then helps the students create a little glossary where each of the 20 most important words in the unit is defined and connected to one of the pictures.

3. Help your students **organize** new words

Pat's Word Wall acts as a diagram or graphic organizer to help students see the relationship between words, but periodically she uses both Clustering and Webbing to help students find new relationships.

4. Activate **deep processing** of key words

To help her students make their understanding of important words memorable, Pat uses discussion and comparison. For instance, students compare and contrast two of Egypt's most important pharaohs. They rank the gifts of Egyptian civilization in order of importance and then discuss.

5. Search for opportunities for students to **exercise** and revise their understandings of new words

Near the end of the unit, students create a hieroglyphic for the twenty key words in the unit and then use those hieroglyphics to write meaningful sentences about the nature of Egyptian civilization.

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STRATEGIC PRACTICE
WORD WORKS – NOTE SHEET

Now that you have designed a Word Works unit and used it in your classroom, examine and evaluate the unit's effectiveness by responding to the following questions. Try this exercise with a partner, in a learning club, or by yourself.

Selecting Vocabulary

How did you select your essential vocabulary?

Looking back: Did your chosen words cover the territory? Were there too many words so that your students were overwhelmed? Were there too few, or were some important words left out?

_____

_____

Connecting Vocabulary

How did you present the words to help your students connect to them?

_____

What role did your students play in making connections?

_____

_____

Organizing Vocabulary

How did you help students organize the words you selected?

_____

_____

What kinds of relationships did your students see?

_____

_____

Deep Processing

What activities did you develop to help deepen your students' understanding?

_____

_____

How did your students respond to these activities?

_____

_____

Exercise/Evaluate

How often did you have your students exercise or rehearse their knowledge of the words?

_____

How would you describe your students' progress?

_____

_____

What word or words caused them the most difficulty?

_____

Now that you have designed and experienced a Word Works unit, ask yourself:

If What? So What?

WHAT HAPPENED?

What did you observe? What feelings or thoughts do you have about your unit?

SO WHAT?

What did you learn from this experience?

What are the implications of this way of thinking about vocabulary for your classroom?

NOW WHAT?

Where else might you use **Word Works** in your teaching? Where do you go from here?

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EXAMINING STUDENT WORK

WORD WORKS – NOTE SHEET

Examining student work gives us insight into what our students know and understand.

Select some samples of vocabulary work your students performed during your unit. You might want to collect a number of samples from students who usually perform very well, students whose work tends to fall in the middle range, and students who struggle. As you look through the work with your colleagues, ask yourself the following questions:

Content:

What does the work suggest about which words my students understand well and which ones might be more problematic?

Process:

What does this work suggest about how my students think about vocabulary?

What examples of very good thinking do I see?

When students are not thinking as well as I wish, what seems to be the problem?

Product:

What do I think about the overall quality of the product my students have created?

How well are they communicating their ideas?

What signs are there that show they are reaching for excellence?

Next Steps:

Taking your thoughts about your students' work into account:

Content – What have I learned about teaching and learning vocabulary that I can apply to my next unit?

Process – What have I learned about my students' thinking that I might want to consider in designing my future units?

Product – What have I learned about my students' ability to communicate and their motivation to perform to the best of their ability?

NOTES

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