Using Mnemonics to Teach Science Vocabulary

**Objective:** To use mnemonics to learn definitions of science terms

**Setting and Materials:**

**Settings:** resource room

**Materials:** 8 ½ X 11 in. cards with keyword, vocabulary word, definition, and interactive illustration of keyword and term (see example below)
- teacher script
- daily quizzes with 12 targeted terms
- weekly tests with 48 words
- 5 x 8 in. cards with vocabulary word on one side and keyword on other side
- 3 x 5 in. index cards to make personal set of vocabulary words
- poster of IT FITS strategy steps (see example below)

**Content Taught**

Vocabulary terms related to science using keywords, definitions, and interactive illustrations

![Example Card](image)

**Figure 2.** Imposed keyword mnemonic card. (Source: King-Sears’ dissertation research.)
Teaching Procedures

Often derived from a task analysis or other detailed description of the intervention

1. Present vocabulary term and keyword to students using 5 x 8 in. card that has the term on one side and keyword on the other.
2. Next, use the 8 ½ x 11 in. card containing the term, term’s definition, keyword, and interactive illustration to demonstrate the way to remember the term’s definition.
3. Say, “The next word we are going to study is ______. What is the next word? The keyword for ______ is ________. What is the keyword for ______? ______ means ________. What does ______ mean? The way we remember that ______ means ______ is to think about this picture of ______ doing _____ with _______. What is _____ doing with _____? And what does _____ mean? How do you remember that _____ means ______?"
4. Introduce, demonstrate, and display the IT FITS strategy poster.
5. Place the cards on the chalkboard for the duration of the lesson so students can refer to them when completing the FITS part of the strategy.
6. Encourage students to find a keyword that “fit” the vocabulary term and then have them think of an interactive illustration to “fit” they keyword and term’s definition.
7. Circulate around the room to assist and prompt students to use this strategy to make up their own keywords and imagine interactive illustrations.
8. Have students make personal sets of the terms and keywords on 3 x 5 in. cards.

Evaluation

Record the number of correct keywords and definitions for each student.
Lesson Plan Based on:


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