

Vocabulary Strategies Toolbox

Graphic organizers help students to visualize the relationships between words and their possible meanings. Teachers can use these graphic organizers and games with explicit vocabulary instruction. These tools may also be used as assessments for learning because they give teachers a quick look at students' vocabulary knowledge. A variety of samples have been hyperlinked or provided in the appendix from various online resources.

Knowledge Rating Scale:

This graphic organizer can be used as an assessment *for* learning. The teacher determines the vocabulary words related to the topic being introduced and has students place them in the chart. Students are then asked to rate their knowledge of the meaning of the word. The Adapted Knowledge Rating Scale features a column where students can write the meaning of the word after they encounter it and learn it. The definition should be written in the student's own language. The Scale was adapted from the work of Blachowicz & Fisher. *See Appendix

Frayer Model:

This graphic organizer was designed by Dorothy Frayer and her colleagues at the University of Wisconsin to provide for a thorough understanding of new words. Students are asked to provide a Definition of the word, Facts or Characteristics of the word, Examples, and Nonexamples. This graphic organizer will lead students to a deeper understanding of a word and its relationship to their own lives.

Websites on Frayer Model:

Frayer Model Map - PDF

<http://www.phs.d211.org/science/filipekcj/Bio138/frayer%20cards%20template.pdf>

Frayer Model Process

<http://www.justreadnow.com/strategies/frayer.htm>

Frayer Models in Math - PDF

<http://oame.on.ca/main/files/thinklil/FrayerModel.pdf>

Frayer Model with Content Area Examples

<http://www.tantasqua.org/superintendent/Profdevelopment/etfrayermodel.html>

Word Detective:

This is for a word. It can be used as a classroom assessment for learning because a teacher can immediately tell if a student can understand and create a definition based on how a word is used in a sentence. *See Appendix

Vocabulary Cluster:

A Vocabulary Cluster Graphic Organizer is a valuable tool for delivering whole group instruction on unusual or hard-to-learn vocabulary words. The teacher determines the word that will be placed in the diamond. She/he then asks the students to volunteer synonyms (rectangles) and antonyms (ovals) for the word. The power of using this graphic organizer is in the repetition of the word and its synonyms and antonyms each time a new word is added to the cluster. Finally, the students will identify a person, thing or animal that the word best fits.

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Making Meaning: Strategy #3

This is a great anticipatory activity to introduce students to context clues. Identify 4-5 vocabulary words from the text that students will need to understand in order to comprehend the text. In order to activate prior knowledge, students will brainstorm what they already know about the vocabulary term. Do a think-pair-share if you perceive that they will have difficulty with the new terms. During the reading, use the think aloud strategy to model how context clues provide context and give meaning to the vocabulary words. *See appendix

Alphaboxes:

A graphic organizer that can not only activate students' prior knowledge about a topic, but can be used to collect vocabulary during a unit of study. It is like the student's own personal word wall. If this graphic organizer is given to students at the beginning of a unit, they can fill in all of the vocabulary they know about that topic. The teacher can quickly assess student knowledge. As the unit progresses, students add to the AlphaBoxes as new words are introduced. AlphaBoxes also can be used to stimulate writing about the topic. Students will be able to refer back to this graphic organizer to get the appropriate words as they explain their learning.

Pair-Square with AlphaBoxes:

This activity will help students increase their word knowledge either before they begin a unit of study or at the end as they review what they have learned.

First, students will individually list all of the words that they know about a topic on their AlphaBoxes graphic organizer. The teacher may use this as a classroom assessment for learning by simply noting the amount and kinds of words students are recording on their sheets.

Pair – Students will work with a partner to compare their lists and add any words that they did not have on their own.

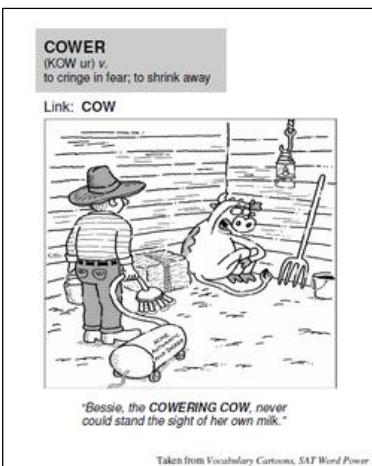
Square – Two pairs of students get together and compare the words they have recorded on their AlphaBoxes graphic organizer. They will add to their own personal sheet as they share the words and discuss why they should be included in the chart.

This activity will help students learn vocabulary through repetition and discussion. Students should be encouraged to check their spelling of the words during the Pair section of the activity. That way they will have accurate information to share during the Square.

Vocab-O-Gram:

A Vocab-O-Gram is a classification chart that shows the categories of story structure, including: setting, characters, problems/goals, actions, and resolution. Students organize key vocabulary or phrases from a selected text into the Vocab-O-Gram's categories.

Cartoon Vocabulary: Strategy #6



This strategy, taken from a SAT Prep resource, is an excellent way to help students to visualize new words. It includes the following elements:

- vocabulary term
- phonetic spelling
- brief description
- linking word
- cartoon
- sentence that uses the vocabulary term

Jigsaw this activity at the beginning of a unit so that each student group is responsible for one word. Throughout the unit, refer to the vocabulary cartoons as the terms come up in the lessons. Groups must present their work on the spot.

Partner Cartoon Vocabulary:

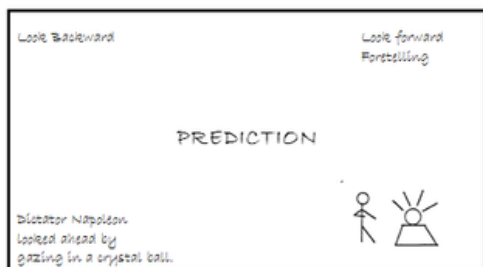
1. Discuss the word in context with the entire class
2. Students make four squares out of their paper
3. Write the definition of the word in a square and draw a picture that represents the meaning of the word.
4. Pair and share with another student. Each student says the definition of the word in their own words and explains to their partner why they drew the picture to represent the word.
5. Repeat the process with other words.

Linear Arrays:

Linear arrays are a strategy to extend vocabulary by asking students to extend their understanding of words. Using opposites on each end, students add words that are in between.



Vocabulary Frames:



Turn the traditional vocabulary review index card into a higher order thinking strategy for learning new words. In this activity, students will create vocabulary frames using concept terms. They will develop a definition based on their own understanding (right corner), as well as the opposite (left corner). Finally, they will write a quirky sentence to remind them of the word's meaning (lower left corner) and a quick sketch (lower right corner).

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Walking Flash Cards:

Add some excitement to vocabulary development by employing an action-packed relay game. Before class, write vocabulary words and definitions each on a separate index card. Tape all of the word cards on the wall on one side of your classroom and all of the definition cards on the opposite wall. Once students arrive in class, divide them into two teams. Have each team form a single file line in the center of the room. Then, allow one team member from each team to race to the word wall and remove a word from the wall, then the move to the definition wall and remove the corresponding definition from that wall. Once the student thinks that they have found a match, they can bring the cards to you and you can confirm match. Once a student has successfully found a match, they move to the end of the line and another student from their team takes a turn. Continue until all of the words have been matched up. Whichever team has the most matches at the end of the game wins.

Erasing Relay:

Test students' abilities to paraphrase definitions through this fast-paced game. Start by dividing the class into two teams. Have the teams form two single file lines in front of the chalkboard, one line on the left side of the board, and one line on the right side of the board. Select an even number of vocabulary words and write half on one side of the board and half on the other. Flip a coin to see which team will go first. When it is the team's turn to play, have the member that is at the front of the line go up to the board and read the word aloud, then provide you with definition of the term in their own words. If they are successful, they can erase the word. If they are unsuccessful, the word remains on their list to be attempted by the next student. Once the student has made an attempt, he moves to the end of the line. Alternate between the two teams until all of the words have been erased. The team that clears their board first is the winner.

Graffiti Vocabulary:



When the vocabulary words are associated with subject specific concepts, have the student create work posters. Provide recognition for good work by transforming the student work into the class word wall.

Graffiti Criteria:

1. Vocabulary word is drawn using bubble letters
2. Description of term using own words
3. At least 3 images representing the term
4. All white space must be colored in

Own the Word Graphic Organizer: Students paraphrase the word definition, indicate what part of speech the word fits; list synonyms and antonym; create an illustration/visual to represent the word; and uses the word in a sentence. (Can substitute their own sentence for a sentence from a text) *See Appendix

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P.O.S.E.:

In this activity, students come up with four clues that relate to their words. The clues may be from one of four categories: People, Objects, Settings, or Events. For instance, for the word discern, students used people clues—search and rescue workers, gasoline repairman, detectives, and scientists.




1. Students read their clues one at a time.
2. Students on another team try to guess the word.

The clue-giving team earns points if their clues enable the other team to guess the word. The word-guessing team earns points based on how quickly they can guess the word:

- 4 points if they can guess with only one clue
- 1 point if they can guess after all four clues

K.I.M. Strategy:

This is a basic version of vocabulary frames where students identify the key term, information about it, and a memory cue based on their own understanding of the vocabulary term. Write the term or key idea (K) in the left column, the information (I) that goes along with it in the center column, and draw a picture of the idea, a memory cue, (M) in the right column. The key idea may be a new vocabulary word, or a new concept. The information may be a definition or it may be a more technical explanation of the concept. The memory cue is a way for students to fully integrate the meaning of the key idea into their memories. By making a simple sketch that explains the key idea, students synthesize and interpret the new information, making it their own. Then, students can reference their drawings to easily remember new key ideas.

K - Key idea	I - Information	M - Memory Clue
1. <i>drought</i>	Little or no rain over a period of time	
2. <i>coup</i>	Takeover of government by military	
3. <i>sovereignty</i>	Political independence	

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Vocabulary Notebooks/Journals:

Individual vocabulary notebooks invite students to strengthen their word knowledge and internalize meaning for use throughout their lives. Robert J. Marzano, in his book *Building Academic Vocabulary: Teacher's Manual*, suggests using tabs in the booklets to note different subjects or topics. Having a dictionary definition is insufficient according to Marzano. He explains that dictionary definitions are not written in conversational language. As a result, students are unable to internalize meaning.

Dictionary definitions may be more helpful after a basic understanding of the word's meaning is established. Marzano recommends that words be defined using "student friendly" language. He suggests including a nonlinguistic representation of the word or its meaning whenever possible.

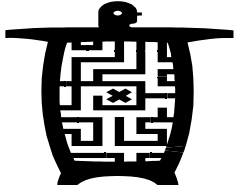
Steps:

1. Direct students to identify unknown words, confusing words, or interesting words while they read and discuss a unit or topic. As students identify words, they write them in their vocabulary notebook.
2. Require students to list the exact sentence in which the word appears in the text.
3. After students have written the text definition, ask them to create definitions using their own words (not a dictionary definition).

Adaptations:

- Consider assigning students to include a list of antonyms or synonyms.
- Assign students to include a picture, drawing, or symbol, if appropriate.
- *Words in the News*: Assign students to make a list of vocabulary words from a newspaper, magazine, or other current event resource. Then students choose one or more of the words that are of interest to them to include in their journal and why they chose it.
- Refer to *On Target: Strategies to Guide Student Learning*, During Reading: Concept Definition Map, Pages 14-15.
- *Word Dictionary*: To help students develop a deeper understanding of a topic or unit, assign them to make a list of words that may relate to the broad topic or unit. The students place the words in alphabetical order and then define the words. A picture or guide words may also be included.

Vocabulary Notebooks

Word & Page Number: <i>Labyrinth pg. 11</i>		Resource: <i>Name of Text</i>
Sentence in which the word was used in the text: <i>Behind the castle was a labyrinth of hedges in which to hide from suspicious eyes.</i>		
Student Friendly Definition: <i>A maze – like a group of bushes that are grouped in a maze design</i>		
Antonyms	Synonyms <i>maze</i>	Picture/drawing/symbol 

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Vocabulary War:

- 1) Teacher has a list of the key vocabulary words posted in the room (word wall).
- 2) Teacher explains the instructions and rules.
 - a) Each student is required to make 2-3 paper airplanes, and then write the definition of their vocabulary word on each airplane.
 - b) The class will be divided into 2-4 groups.
- 3) The aim of the game is to knock out members from other groups by flying their airplane over to that group. The students that receives the airplane, reads the definition out loud, then answers it. If the student doesn't answer it correctly, then the person that flew the plan needs to give the correct answer. The student that is knocked out has one last chance to fly one of his/her airplanes to another group.
- 4) If a student flies their airplane and it comes back to the original group, this is called friendly-fire. Someone, at the teacher's choosing, has to answer that question. If their answer is incorrect, then they are knocked out.
- 5) Teacher is ultimate decision-maker. Students cannot argue with the teacher, or they will lose a chance to go.

This is a fun, silly activity, but highly effective in engaging even the hardest to reach students in thinking about vocabulary.

Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart:

This strategy encourages students to be aware of key words they will be learning during a unit. It allows them to assess what words they know already, somewhat know, and don't know at all by providing a definition and example

Verbal and Visual Word Association (VVWA): (Eeds & Cockrum, 1985)

Helps students gain new vocabulary through visual and personal associations with the word. Research shows that this graphic organizer is especially effective with low-achieving and second language learners in content area classes. It is especially useful in mathematics classes to help students understand the key words and concepts. This graphic organizer can be used as a classroom assessment for learning because a teacher can quickly determine students' depth of understanding by just looking at their chart.

Online Resources:

- West Virginia Department of Education <https://wvde.state.wv.us/>
- 15 Vocabulary Strategies in 15 Minutes (<http://learningtasks.weebly.com/vocabulary-strategies.html>)
- Learning Tasks www.learningtasks.weebly.com
- Pre Reading Strategies <http://prereading.weebly.com/vocabulary-strategies.html>
- Vocabulary Games <https://www.vocabulary.co.il/>

Appendix

1. Alphaboxes
2. Graffiti Vocabulary
3. Guess the Meaning
4. K.I.M. Vocabulary Strategy
5. Knowledge Rating Scale
6. Making Meaning
7. Own the Word
8. Verbal and Visual Word Association (VVWA)
9. Verbal and Visual Word Association – Science Example
10. Vocab-O-Gram
11. Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart
12. Word Detective

Alphaboxes

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P
Q	R	S	T
U	V	W	X, Y, Z

Hoyt, Linda. *Revisit, Reflect, Retell*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1999.

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Graffiti Vocabulary

Name: _____ Class: _____

GRADING CRITERIA	FULL CREDIT - 10 points	HALF CREDIT - 5 points
Social Studies Content Score: _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word is appropriately defined • At least 2 facts/features that show understanding • Historical relevance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition is incomplete • Lacks facts/features that show understanding
Artistic Representation Score: _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word is drawn artistically • The entire page has visual interest • Additional information is illustrated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little artistic representation of the word • No additional information was illustrated
Literacy Skill Score: _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poster contains no grammatical errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammatical errors

Total =

Graffiti Vocabulary

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Total =

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Guess the Meaning

Word	My Guess	Context Meaning	Dictionary's Meaning

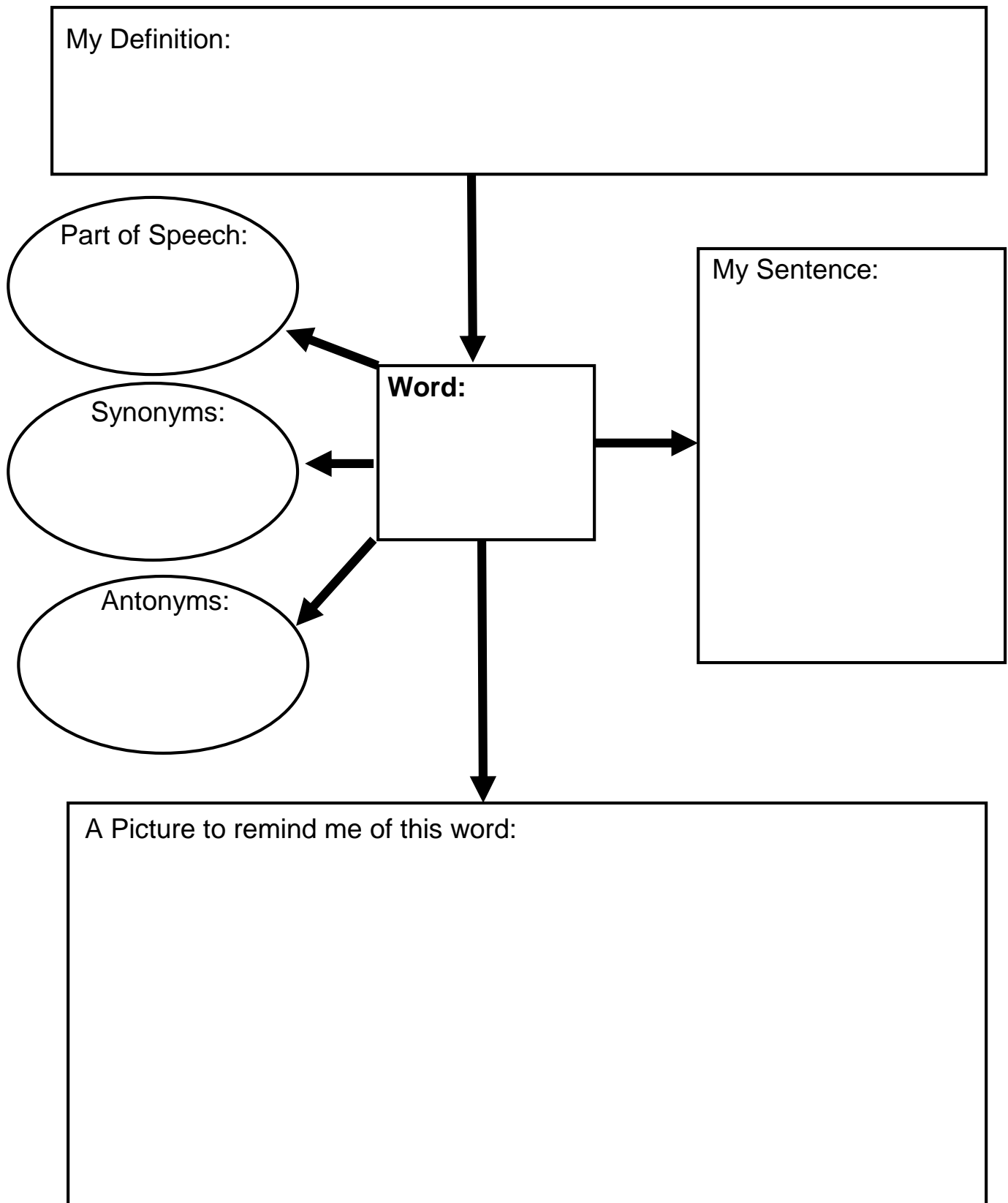
NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Making Meaning

DIRECTIONS: Write the vocabulary terms in the 'new words' column. Next, brainstorm what you already know about the word in the 'before reading' column. Finally, after you have read the text, complete the 'after reading' column with new information you obtained from the reading.

NEW WORDS	BEFORE READING	AFTER READING

Own the Word



The diagram is a flowchart centered on a box labeled "Word:". Five arrows radiate from this central box to five other components: "My Definition:" (top), "Part of Speech:" (top-left oval), "Synonyms:" (middle-left oval), "Antonyms:" (bottom-left oval), and "A Picture to remind me of this word:" (bottom). A sixth arrow points from the "Word:" box to a "My Sentence:" box on the right.

My Definition:

Part of Speech:

Synonyms:

Antonyms:

Word:


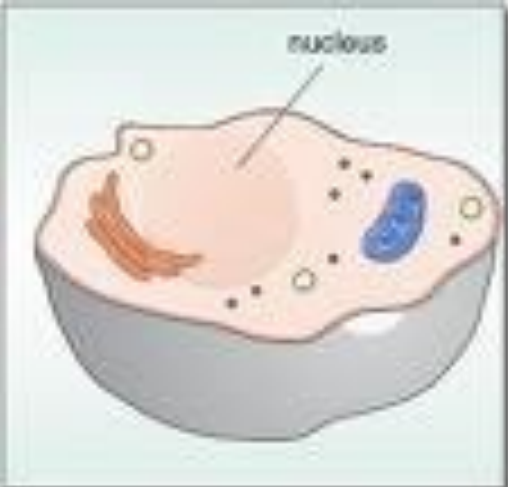
My Sentence:

A Picture to remind me of this word:

Verbal and Visual Word Association (VVWA)

<p>Word</p>	<p>Visual Representation</p>
<p>Definition</p>	<p>Personal Association or Characteristic</p>

Verbal and Visual Word Association (VVWA)

<p>Word</p> 	<p>Visual Representation</p> 
<p>Definition</p> <p>It is a very tiny structure that makes up all plants and animals.</p>	<p>Personal Association or Characteristic</p> <p>It reminds me of the rooms in a house. They have different uses, but together they make a home.</p>

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Vocab-O-Gram

Use Vocabulary to make predictions about...	
The Setting	What will the setting be like?
The Characters	What will the characters be like?
The Problem or Goal	What might the problem or goal in this story be?
The Actions	What might happen in this story?
The Resolution	How might this story end?
Questions	What Questions do I have about this story?
Strange or Unfamiliar Words	

Vocabulary Strategies Toolbox

Word Detective

Detective's Name:

Sentence where I found the word:

Context Clue:

WORD:

Part of Speech:

Context Clue:

My Own Sentence:

My Own Definition:

A picture that will remind me of what this word means to me:

