
Wondering About Words Inquiry

Team Tool 5.8 from *Leading for Literacy*

Purpose

As experienced readers, teachers automatically incorporate a number of strategies for approaching unfamiliar vocabulary. This inquiry reminds them of what they do, and what their students might learn to do.

Procedure

1. With an unfamiliar text that includes a range of unfamiliar vocabulary, team members Talk to the Vocabulary, using the questions below to guide their responses.
 - What words are new or partially known to you? What did you do to make meaning of them?
 - Which words do you recognize as having multiple meanings? How did you figure out the “right” meaning?
 - Which words have familiar parts but the meaning is unknown to you or appears to be inconsistent with your knowledge of the parts?
 - Which words do you think you understand the gist of even if you don’t know their actual definitions?
 - Are there unfamiliar phrases or expressions that contain individual words that are familiar to you? What did you do to make meaning of them?
 - Are there words that might have Greek or Latin roots or Spanish language cognates?
2. As a group, team members share the words they attacked and how they made sense of them, learning from one another’s strategies.