

Six Steps of Direct Vocabulary Instruction

Step 1: Provide a description, explanation, or example of the term

- Find out what students already know first!
- Clarify any misconceptions
- Do not rely on dictionary definition
- Explain using everyday language
 - Show a picture
 - Make a connection
 - Role Play
 - Give examples



Step 2: Ask students to restate the description, explanation, or example in their own words

- Don't let them copy what you have said!
- Does not have to be comprehensive—should reflect an initial understanding
- Allow students to share their explanations



Step 3: Ask students to construct a picture, symbol, or graphic representing the term or phrase

- Increases retention by 34%
- Teach the difference between drawing and sketching to prevent overdrawing
- If students claim they can't draw:
 - Model with student examples or your own
 - Allow them to work together (at first)
- Clip Art can be useful



Step 4: Engage students in activities that help them interact with the word and deepen their knowledge

- Discuss historical or social context
- Highlight word parts
- Identify antonyms and synonyms
- List related words
- Discuss misconceptions or common confusions
- Translate the word into other languages



Step 5: Periodically ask students to discuss the terms with one another

- Think—Pair—Share
- Describe their pictures
- Compare their descriptions
- Identify disagreements or confusion
- Update drawings/descriptions with new knowledge



Step 6: Involve students periodically in games that allow them to play with the terms

MULTIPLE EXPOSURE!!!

- Word Wall Flip
- Jeopardy
- I Have, Who Has (Looping)
- Charades/Pictionary

