Introduction

This strategy was developed in response to recent changes in the core curriculum requirements for New York State students. Specifically, there is a need to encourage writing and reading as a learning strategy in all content areas. The "C-D Match" strategy gives students an opportunity to demonstrate prior knowledge, confirm understanding, and immediately identify any misconceptions.

Step 1: Identifying the Strategy

The "C-D Match" strategy focuses on a group of pre-determined vocabulary words from a content-specific document. The students are given the list of vocabulary words they are expected to master. The following paragraph will serve as an example:

Next winter there will be no truck. And there will be no truck, not because the transients will have disappeared from Miami; if anything, there will be more blistered Fords with North Dakota licenses and more heel worn shoes with Boston trade mark rubbed out next winter than there were last.
A thinksheet acts as a guide that gives the student freedom to demonstrate prior knowledge of the meaning of the word from the context of the sentence, or connotation; hence the “C” stands for connotation. The word transients may be connoted as a homeless person. Next, the students confirm their meaning by looking up the vocabulary word in the dictionary; this is denotation or “D”. If the meanings match, they proceed to the next word. Blistered would then be connoted and the connotation confirmed in the dictionary. If the connotation and denotation do not match, then they change the connotation to match the denotation and go to the next word.

Step 2: Modeling the Strategy

The teacher identifies a non-fiction excerpt to be read in class. A group of predetermined, subject appropriate vocabulary words from the passage are identified. Students silently read the passage and search for and highlight the vocabulary words. Students then use a think sheet to record the sentence in which each vocabulary word is used. Then, the connotation of the meaning of each word is placed on the think sheet. The student then refers to a dictionary or a subject-related glossary of terms to find the definition of the vocabulary word. The student then checks and confirms the meaning of each word.

If the connotation and denotation do not match, then the student changes his/her connotation to demonstrate understanding of the meaning of the word. Each student then silently re-reads the excerpt to deepen understanding of the content.

Step 3: Scaffolding the Strategy

After using the thinksheets for several documents, the students will be able to question words they are unfamiliar with and take the time to look them up in a dictionary.

Step 4: Providing Additional Practice

Students should use the thinksheets as a manipulative until they are in the habit of checking themselves for understanding.
Conclusion

Students will develop a sense of empowerment by working at their own pace to complete the assigned vocabulary. The “C-D Match” creates a game and inspires competition, thus a motivator in completing and performing well. This strategy is useful in all curricular areas once the student understands the importance of content vocabulary.

Suggestions for Adapting the Strategy in other Grades or Content Areas

The “C-D Match” strategy is useful across curriculum by selecting a content-specific document and employing the thinksheet.

Thinksheets

Copy is attached.
Checkpoint

No

C-D Match?

Yes

Go to the next word

sentence

of word from

Change meaning

- Connotation

Word

Copy the

Problem-Solving Strategies for the New York State Learning Standards

Checkpoint

the dictionary

Record the

- Denotation

Explain the

meaning from

sentence

with the

Word.

No

Yes

- Connotation