

## Word Knowledge: Semantic Mapping

### College- and Career-Ready Standards Addressed: RL.6.4, RI.6.4, R.10

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.
- Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

**Objective: Students will learn to use semantic maps to help them understand and organize words in text.**

#### Materials

- One short text at appropriate instructional level.
- Whiteboard, overhead, or some type of visual projector for the class to view during instruction.
- Pencil.
- Paper or notebook.
- Semantic Mapping Sheet (see below).

#### Suggested Schedule and Group Size

**Schedule:** Daily, no more than five minutes to 10 minutes per session.

**Recommended group size:** Small group, although exact group size will vary depending upon grade level.

**Note:** The following script is intended as a model.

#### Activity

##### Intervention Principle

Use precise, simple language to set the purpose for the lesson.

##### Sample Script and Procedures

**When we read, we see words we do not know, and we must use strategies to help us learn the meanings of new words. Good readers use semantic maps to help them connect new words with words they already know. Today, we are going to focus on creating and using semantic maps to help us organize information from text.**

Adapted with permission from the Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk. Denton, C. A., Bryan, D., Wexler, J., Reed, D., & Vaughn, S. (2007). *Effective instruction for middle school students with reading difficulties: The reading teacher's sourcebook* (pp. 144–154). Austin, TX: Meadows Center. Retrieved from [http://www.meadowscenter.org/files/resources/RTS\\_Complete.pdf](http://www.meadowscenter.org/files/resources/RTS_Complete.pdf)

<p>Activate prior knowledge to provide a context for new information.</p> <p>Use study aides such as graphic organizers to teach students to implement a new strategy. Break the strategy into steps and explicitly teach each step.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for students to practice components of the strategy and receive feedback.</p>	<p><b>During today’s lesson, we will learn how to use a semantic map to help us organize information from text. A semantic map is a visual illustration of key words in a text and of how they relate to other words in that text.</b></p> <p><b>We will practice using a semantic map when we read today. Using a semantic map is a useful strategy because it helps us remember words and their meanings by grouping words together. When we learn new words, we connect the meanings of the new words to the meanings of previously learned words. Making connections among words helps us learn the meaning of new words.</b></p> <p><b>What is a semantic map?</b> <i>(A visual illustration or a graphic organizer to help make connections among words.)</i></p> <p><b>That’s right. Today we will learn how to create and use a semantic map to help us organize key words and information from text.</b></p> <p><i>Introduce the Semantic Mapping Sheet and review the organization of the web.</i></p> <p><b>The <i>Semantic Mapping Sheet</i> is a graphic organizer that will help you organize information. It includes a partially completed web graphic organizer on the topic of the sea. It is common to use a web graphic organizer to help readers organize a text that provides information on a topic. In the center of the web is the main topic of the text. <i>(Point to “sea” in the middle of the map.)</i></b></p> <p><b>Later in class, you will create a semantic map about a new topic that is in your text for today’s reading. Our sample map is about the sea. The outside circles <i>(point)</i> of the web are categories of information about the sea. The categories are key titles that help the reader organize information about the text. The words in the outside circles <i>(point)</i> are descriptor words of the categories. A line connects the outside circles to the main circle to show that there is a relationship between the main topic and the categories.</b></p> <p><b>For example, “Features” is the outside circle on the left. This is where you will write features that describe the sea. The descriptor words can go inside or outside of the circle depending on how much room you have on your semantic map.</b></p> <p><b>What descriptor word is in the Features category?</b> <i>(Water.)</i> <b>Yes, water is a feature of the sea. There are other features of the sea that we can list here as well.</b></p> <p><i>Assign partners.</i></p> <p><b>Work with a partner and brainstorm other descriptor words to add.</b></p> <p><i>Allow the students adequate time to enter descriptor words. While students read, monitor their brainstorming discussions. Provide students with corrective feedback if they do not categorize a descriptor word correctly. If some students finish while others are still writing, prompt them to brainstorm additional descriptor words.</i></p>
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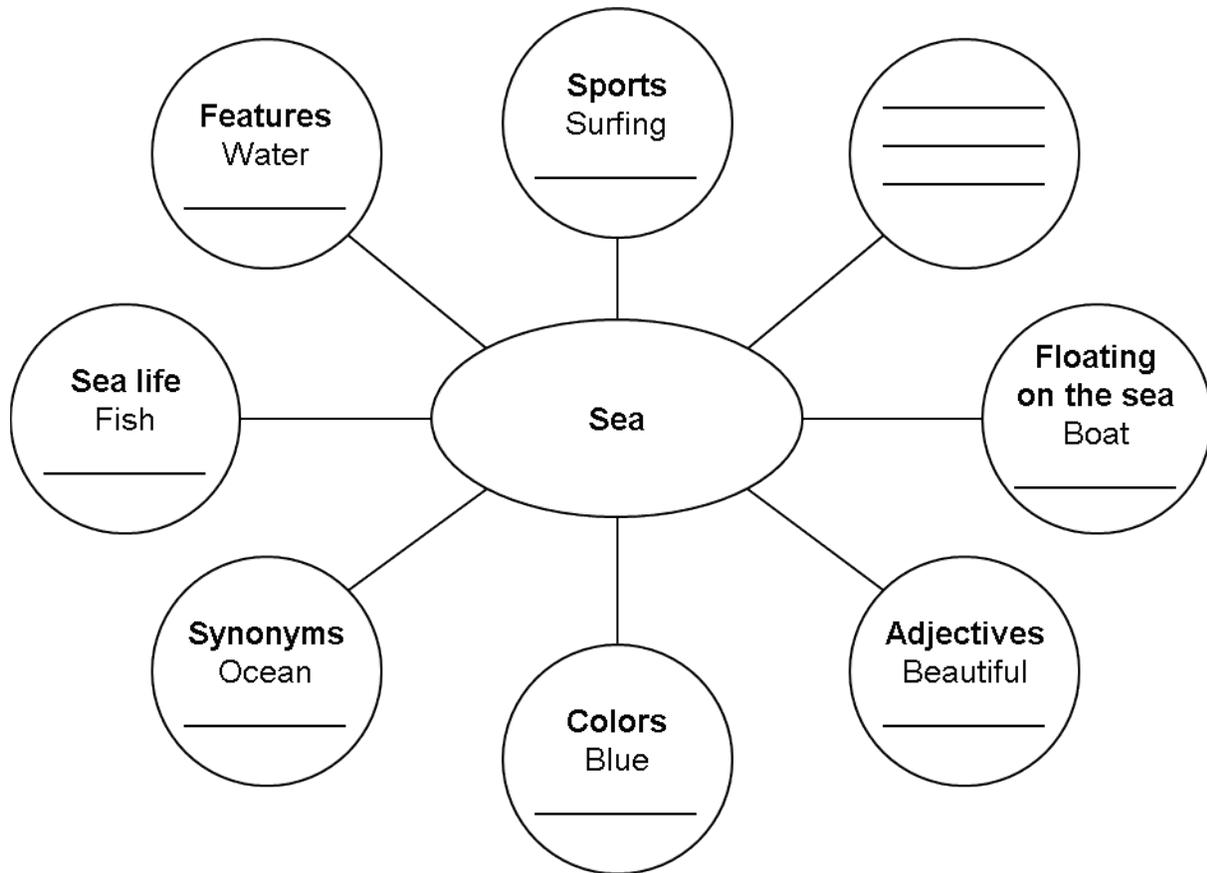
<p>Think aloud to model how to implement components of the strategy.</p>	<p><i>After partners are finished, allow pairs to share which descriptor words they wrote in which categories and why. If students incorrectly categorize a descriptor word, explain why that descriptor word fits better in another category.</i></p> <p><b>There are other categories not represented on this web. Let’s think of a category that we can add to the blank outside circle that is not already included in our semantic map. One possible category that we could add is “Fear.” This category would be about things in the sea that might cause fear. An example of a descriptor word could be “shark,” because I would probably be scared if I saw a shark while swimming in the sea.</b></p> <p><b>Can you think of another descriptor word for the category “Fear”?</b> <i>(Pause for student responses.) Nice job. Now work with your partner to complete the rest of the outside circles.</i></p> <p><i>Provide time for the students to complete the outside circles and share their responses. Ask students to explain their thinking.</i></p> <p><i>Distribute the text you have selected. It should be no more than one or two pages in length.</i></p> <p><b>I will begin by reading the title of our text. Check to make sure that your partner is in the correct spot to follow along. Then we’ll read the first paragraph together. Let’s begin.</b></p> <p><i>After reading, have students brainstorm words related to the topic of the text.</i></p> <p><b>We will use the blank <i>Semantic Mapping Sheet</i> to create a semantic map from the information in the text. Work with your partner and write the main topic of the text in the middle circle. Brainstorm possible categories related to the main topic to include in the semantic map.</b></p> <p><i>Allow partners time to work. Depending on the length and complexity of the text, it may be necessary to read more of the text to allow for deeper understanding of possible category titles. While students read, monitor their brainstorming discussions. Provide students with corrective feedback if they do not identify an appropriate category. If some students finish while others are still writing, prompt them to brainstorm descriptor words.</i></p> <p><i>After partners are finished, allow pairs to share which categories they wrote. If students identify an inappropriate category, explain why that category is not a strong fit for the topic and suggest and explain a more appropriate category.</i></p> <p><b>Now you will work independently to finish the semantic map. You should continue to write descriptor words in each category in the outside circles. Add as many descriptor words as you can. Try to use the words from the text as descriptor words.</b></p>
<p>Provide independent practice opportunities and check for understanding.</p>	<p><i>Provide students with additional guidance and support as needed. Prompt students to write a word from the text. If students do not know a key word from the text, explain the definition of the word and have them repeat the definition aloud.</i></p>

	<p><b>Nice work today! Semantic maps can help you understand words and organize information from text when you read. Knowing how to use this strategy will help to make you a better reader.</b></p>
<p><b>Error Correction</b></p>	
<p>Provide immediate and explicit error correction. Have students practice the correct responses.</p>	<p>If students make errors on their semantic maps, immediately correct the errors and explain why their answers were incorrect. Work with the students to correct their errors and have them explain why their new answers are correct.</p>

## Semantic Mapping Sheet

This handout will serve as a guide for students as they learn how to use semantic maps. The web graphic organizer includes titles of categories that relate to the headings in the text. Titles should be edited to coincide with the reading to help students organize the text's information in the most appropriate categories.

### Web Graphic Organizer—Example



**Web Graphic Organizer—Template**

