

## Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers are useful tools for teaching vocabulary because they help students organize and visualize what they are learning. All students benefit from graphic organizers, because the activity employs several different intelligences and aids in the study of language and vocabulary. Remember that at the beginning of this chapter we asserted that vocabulary should be studied and not memorized. There are many resources for graphic organizers, and from the array we have selected a few that we like and believe are particularly useful for students with special needs. Figures 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, and 6.6 offer graphic organizers that are useful for teaching vocabulary.

### Ten More Vocabulary Activities

1. *Sticky Notes.* Use these while reading. Students can record unfamiliar words and develop definitions based on the context from their reading.
2. *Words Walls.* This strategy is often considered for younger students, but adolescent students benefit as well. The students can select words to contribute to the word wall, which should be displayed in the classroom. Pictures can be added to the words to convey the meaning. A multimodal display like this is particularly beneficial for students with special needs.
3. *Vocabulary Self-Selection.* Students select unfamiliar words from their reading and compile them in a journal or dictionary. Encourage students to draw pictures and experiment with the words in their writing.
4. *Vocabulary Cartoons.* Have the students pick words from a prepared vocabulary list (probably one for a novel or literature unit). The students can draw a one-to-three-frame cartoon that reflects and teaches the meaning of the vocabulary.
5. *Picture Dictionary.* Have students draw illustrations of vocabulary words and bind them in a personal book or a classroom dictionary.
6. *Word-of-the-Day.* Similar to the calendars, the students can bring a word of the day in for the students to discuss and display in the classroom.
7. *Word Games.* Bring in games that students can play.
8. *Crossword Puzzles and Word Searches.* These are great tools for students to learn new words. Several Internet sites allow teachers to create custom word puzzles.
9. *Internet Sites.* The following sites teach students about vocabulary.

1. <http://www.freevocabulary.com> (contains over 5,000 words that students can study for college entrance examinations).

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2. <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/vocabulary.htm> (a vocabulary-building Web site, with quizzes and interesting information about word roots and origins).

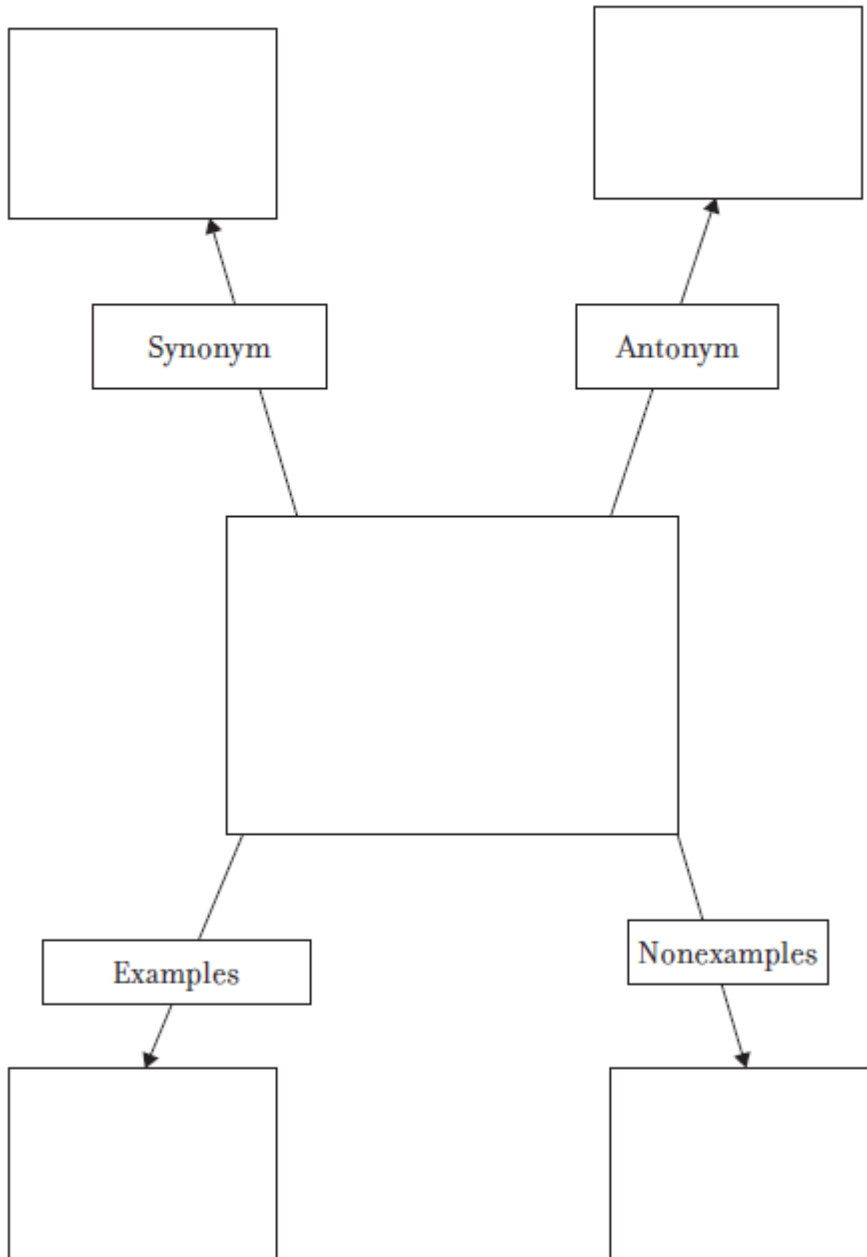
3. <http://www.englishonline.net/word.html> (a word-a-day Web site that students can visit).

4. <http://www.superkids.com/aweb/tools/words/hangman/sat1.shtml> (play hangman with college entrance exam words; college entrance exam vocabulary tests are composed of words commonly found in the literature classics).

10. *Bingo Games*. Use the vocabulary words and definitions as a pre-reading activity.

Figure 6.3 Word Map Template

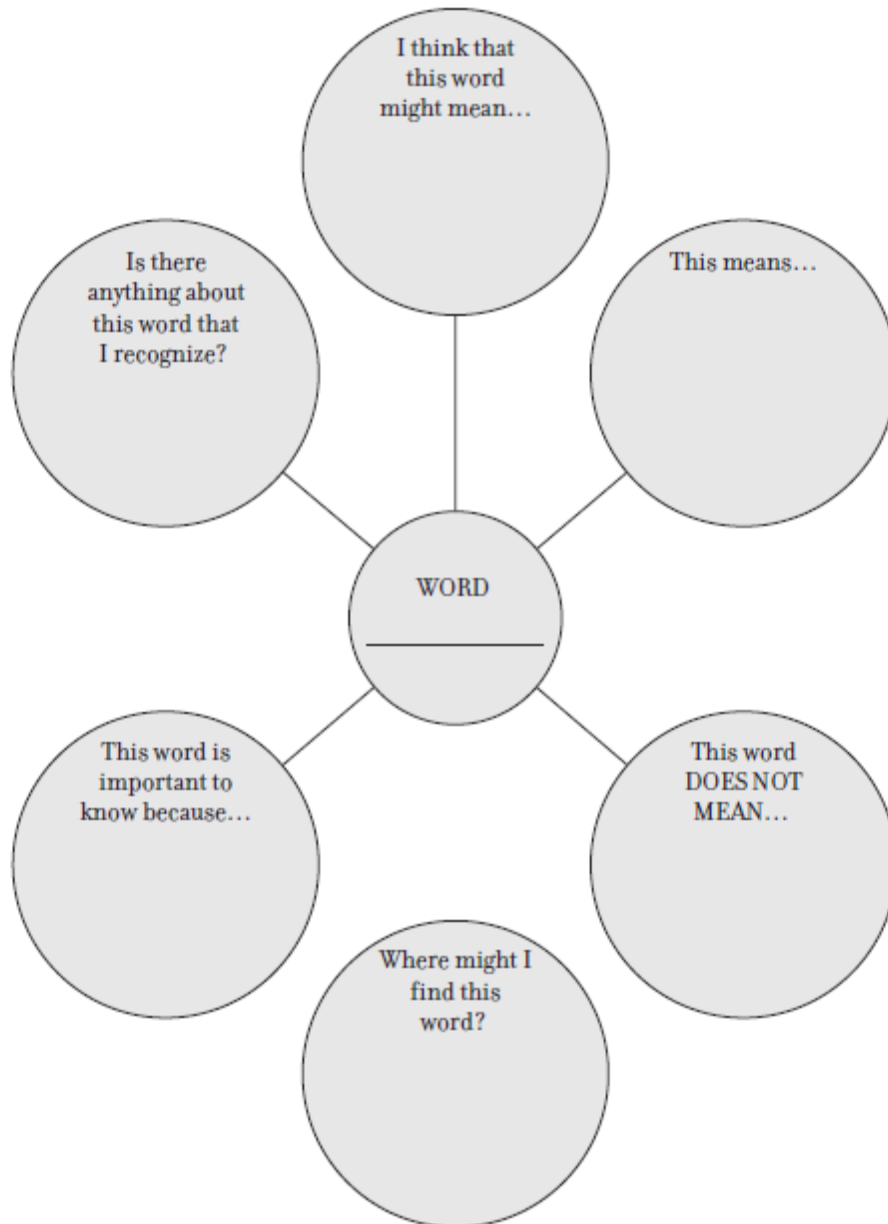
### WORD MAP



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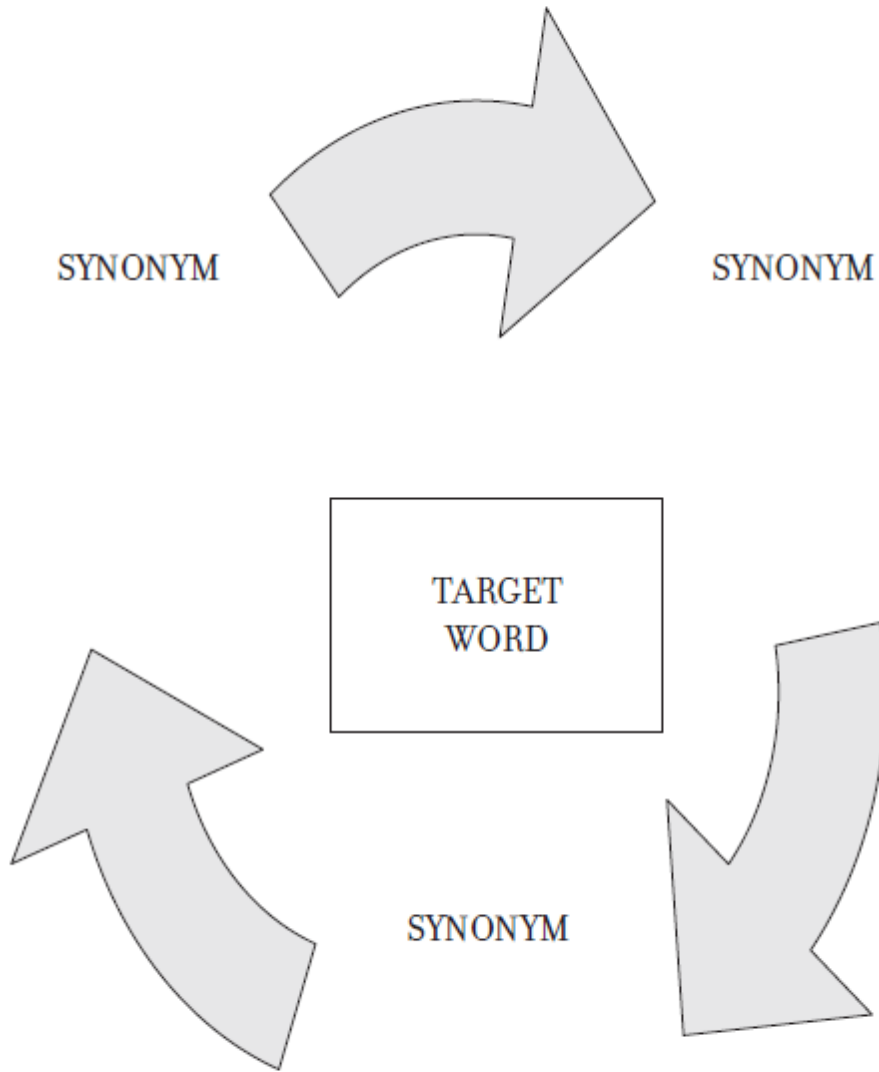
Figure 6.4 Word Detective Template

## WORD DETECTIVE



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Figure 6.5 Word Chain Template



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Figure 6.6 Contextual Word Map Template

LOOKING AT WORDS IN CONTEXT

