

Vocabulary Word Map Activity

The purpose of the activity is for students to build their vocabulary word bank as well as to understand the meaning of the word as they read so they can understand that part of the story.

- As students read their AR book and come across an unfamiliar word (one they don't know the meaning of), I want them to use that word to complete the map.
- They use the web site www.powerthesaurus.org that gives a list of synonyms (similar meaning words) and antonyms (opposite meaning words).
- They are to choose a synonym that is understandable to them. For instance, if the word "condescending" appears in the story, the student would look it up in the power thesaurus. The first synonym is the word "pretentious". That is likely an unfamiliar word also, so the student should not use it as the synonym, but keep looking through the list of synonyms. A more familiar word listed is snobbish; another was stuck-up. That familiar word is what they are to write in the Synonym box. Do the same with antonyms. You'll see that the power thesaurus web site has a link to antonyms for the word you are looking up.
- The toughest part for the students is writing a meaningful sentence - one that has enough context clues in it so that someone reading the sentence can understand the word "condescending". For example, someone might write the sentence: Being condescending is not nice. There are no clues that tell me what condescending means. An acceptable sentence would be: Being condescending is not nice because acting like you are better than someone else is not nice.