

Collins Writing Exchange

Practical Ideas, Tips, and Resources for Improving Learning Through Writing

FOCUS ON VOCABULARY

Vocabulary Cards

Vocabulary development is key to learning. Whether focusing on technical terms specific to a content area or on general academic vocabulary that spans all disciplines (often encountered in high-stakes assessment prompts), every teacher is involved in teaching vocabulary. Research shows that direct instruction is a critical strategy for improving vocabulary, but how do we get students to *remember* the vocabulary we teach?

In addition to direct instruction, research reveals that learners need to "make new words their own" by developing their own definitions. This is done by representing them non-linguistically, putting them in the context of a sentence, and using them numerous times—all accomplished with Collins Vocabulary Cards.

Our Vocabulary Cards are an easy and versatile solution to the vocabulary conundrum. They do not take a great deal of time to create, but when used on a regular basis, the results are impressive. This hands-on learning tool can be used to reinforce vocabulary throughout the year. Vocabulary Cards include the added bonus of providing a tool for self- and peer-quizzing and other retrieval activities that promote long-term retention.

Get started with the Vocabulary Card resources below.

General Academic Vocabulary Lists

- [Grades K-2](#)
- [Grades 3-5](#)
- [Grades 6-12](#)

Vocabulary Card Templates

- [Generic Template](#)
- [STEM Template](#)

Side One

Word: _____

Illustration:

Name _____

Side Two

Definition:

Sentence:

Generic Vocabulary Card Sample

Side One

Word: _____

Diagram:

Side Two

Definition:

Real-Life Application:

STEM Vocabulary Card Sample

TIP OF THE MONTH

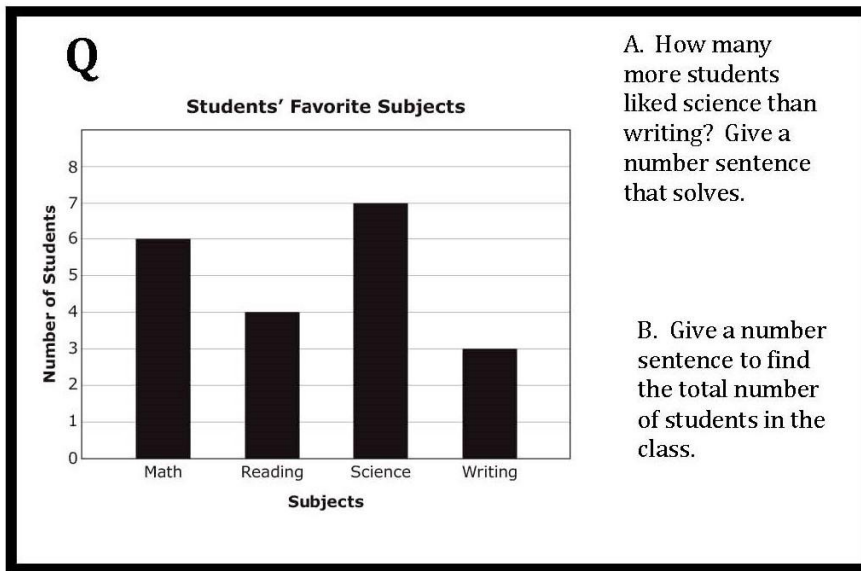
Make Vocab Stick!

If you're looking for long-term impact, creating Vocabulary Cards is just the first step. The next is to use the cards as part of your instructional routine. Have students store their Vocabulary Cards in resealable bags or on metal rings for easy access and set aside a few short blocks of time each week for study. Students can quiz themselves or work with a partner, they can sort or categorize their words, they can play a teacher-created game, or they can participate in one of the fun, collaborative, retrieval-based activities below.

Quiz-Quiz-Trade

This low-prep, high impact interactive partner activity gets everyone talking while trading question-and-answer cards.

Quiz-Quiz Trade Sample Math Card



A

a. $7 - 3 = \square$
4 more students liked science

b. $6 + 4 + 7 + 3 = \text{total}$
 $20 = \text{total}$

1

I Have-Who Has?

This listening-based game practices key vocabulary and keeps everyone on their toes.

I Have-Who Has? Sample Game Card

<p>I have <u>passage</u>.</p> <p>Who has <u>to bring something to an end</u>?</p>	<p>I have <u>conclude</u>.</p> <p>Who has <u>the order of words, actions, or events</u>?</p>
<p>I have _____.</p> <p>Who has _____?</p>	<p>I have _____.</p> <p>Who has _____?</p>

Teach me [how to use these two activities](#) in my classroom to facilitate retention of key vocabulary.

FEATURED RESOURCE

Mystery Word Riddles

One way to encourage students to use multiple vocabulary words in context is by writing Mystery Word Riddles. Students of all ages enjoy writing clues to describe new words and then taking turns to guess each other's "mystery words." This is another great [Type Three writing](#) assignment that's quick enough to incorporate into most lessons and worthwhile enough to use frequently throughout the year.

Mystery Word Riddle Assignments

- [Grades K-2](#)
 - [Grades 3-12](#)
-

ONE-MINUTE CLINIC

Frequently Misused Words

Speaking of vocabulary, what about those words that students (and many adults) so often misuse in their writing? *Their, there, and they're. Affect and effect. Accept and except.* Vocabulary Cards can be used to tackle these and other common misuses.

Visual cues and use of the word in a sample sentence are key to helping students to differentiate between similar words. Frequent retrieval practice using these cards strengthens memory. And holding students accountable for "correct spelling of frequently misused words" as the third [Focus Correction Area](#) (FCA) on Type Three writing encourages students to apply the words in context.

Click below for our ready-to-use tip sheets on Frequently Misused Words. And check out our [Essential Conventions Check Mate](#) products for more student and teacher resources on grammar and mechanics topics.

Frequently Misused Words Tip Sheets

- [Grades 2-3, Level P](#)
 - [Grades 4-6, Level A](#)
 - [Grades 6-9, Level B](#)
 - [Grades 9-12, Level C](#)
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QUICK LINKS



Quickly diagnose student writing skills and habits and plan purposeful assignments and instruction for the entire school year with [Writing Roadmap](#). Watch the [overview video](#) with author Kristine Gibson. Or, [download the PDF](#) of the Preview booklet.

NEW! Retrieval Routine

An easy-to-implement, 4-step routine that establishes good academic habits, builds classroom stamina, and improves learning.

Video Course

A six-part *Introduction to the Collins Writing Program* course with Dr. John Collins. Get started using Collins Writing [here](#).

[Check Your Collins IQ](#)

Try a sample of our quick self-assessment survey to review Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced Collins implementation strategies.

[Essential Conventions](#)

Check Mate™ and other resources to tackle the rules of writing that are teachers' biggest pet peeves!

[Free Resources](#)

Ready-to-use Type Threes, Focus Correction Area lists, graphic organizers, and more!

[PD Options](#)

Everything you need to know about our PD options, workshops, institutes, and courses.

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