

Vocabulary Strategy

Strategy: Clunk Bug. The students will use the “clunk bug” to write definitions using their own words. It also strengthens knowledge of how to use context clues to improve comprehension. Definition of a clunk: A clunk is a word or phrase that the student does not understand.

Appropriate Grade Level: 2-5

Materials Needed:

- Expository text
- Vocabulary words that are defined in context using the “definition” type of context clue
- Clunk bug for each student

Procedures/Steps:

1. Before the activity, select several vocabulary words by identifying words that are defined in context using the “definition” type of context clue.
2. Prepare a list of signal words or punctuation, i.e., words or punctuation that indicates a vocabulary word is going to be defined in context.
 - Signal words include *is, means, i.e., and that is.*
 - Signal punctuation includes dashes and commas.
3. Have the students read the sentence with the vocabulary word and write the word on the back of the clunk bug.
4. Have the students identify key words in the sentence and write one word on each of the clunk bug’s legs.
5. Have the students use the words on the legs to write the definition of the vocabulary word in their own words.
6. Have the students refer to the dictionary or the glossary in the textbook to verify their answers.

Comments/Tips:

- This strategy could be used with expository text at a variety of reading levels.
- Works best for independent work or in a small group.
- Use as part of a 20-30 minutes/week vocabulary lesson when teaching types of context clues or prior to teaching a lesson.
- Can also be used during reading when students encounter vocabulary words that are defined in context.
- See website below for more specific information about this strategy. Included is a nice example of a clunk bug, how to use this strategy, and a sample lesson.

Source:

- Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2000). *Professional development guide: Enhancing vocabulary instruction for secondary students*. Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.
- www.meadowscenter.org/vgc/downloads/.../2003enhancVocab_present.pdf