Literacy Strategy
World Wide Vocabulary

An online dictionary can be used to discover and learn new vocabulary in many different content area classrooms. To help students feel more comfortable with the technology, it is important for the teacher to demonstrate how to locate sites that will enhance the lesson as well as how to navigate around the sites. It is also important that students recognize the author of the web sites that will be visited or the source of the information found.

Information software is another way to incorporate vocabulary activities. Packages that focus on particular subject areas, encyclopedias, and software programs that accompany textbooks give students an opportunity to search for word meanings in a different and exciting way. Online word games, word searches, and puzzles can reinforce the learning of new words and their definitions. Students often enjoy constructing their own word puzzles and games using the computer.

A guide sheet can be helpful for students to use with an online vocabulary activity or with a computer software program. Each student can be assigned particular vocabulary words to find. The words can be known words, unknown words, or a combination of words students may or may not be familiar with in the context of the lesson. Students could also work in pairs or small groups of three depending upon the availability of computers, a student's knowledge of technology, etc. Assignments can vary in terms of finding definitions, using the words in sentences, and restating the meaning of words in context.

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