

Getting Vocabulary to Stick

WELCOME!

Materials available at: GreatMiddleSchools.org/words

- PowerPoint Presentation (PDF)
- Strategy Guides (download for your subject area)
- Vocabulary Map Template

Social Media:

- Facebook @MCPER.EDU & @middleschoolmattersinstitute
- Twitter @MCPER_EDU

Using Essential Words to Build Content Knowledge

March 1, 2020

Making Middle School Matter Symposium (TASSP)

Presentation by *Middle School Matters* at *The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk*

About

This resource was developed with funding from the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, through Grant R305A170556 to The University of Texas. Use only with permission.

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Who Are We?

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The Middle School Matters Story

George W. Bush Institute
education reform initiative



Institute of Education Sciences
research study



Our Focus

**PD practices &
instructional
materials based
on high-quality
research**



**Teacher
perspectives and
professional
wisdom**



**PD that works for
middle schools**



READING IN THE CONTENT AREAS

What It's All About



Session Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn the research base for explicit vocabulary instruction
- Receive an overview of the Essential Words strategy
- Practice developing a sample lesson
- Leave ready to share the strategy with your colleagues

According to Research...

- Vocabulary is highly correlated with what other component of reading?
- What percent of instructional time is typically devoted to vocabulary instruction?
- How many exposures to words do students need to fully learn their meanings?
- What does vocabulary instruction typically look like in classrooms?

According to Research...

- Vocabulary is highly correlated with **reading comprehension** – as high as .8 and correlations increase as students get older (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; Torgesen & Wagner, 2006; Torgesen et al., 1997).
- **5% to 10%** of instructional time is typically devoted to vocabulary (Durkin, 1978/79; Roser & Juel, 1982; Scott, Jamieson, Noel & Asslin, 2003).
- Researchers estimate it could take **as many as 17 exposures** for a student to learn a new word (Ausubel & Youssef, 1965).

What Does Vocabulary Instruction Typically Look Like?

- Copying vocabulary definitions from textbook glossary = 18.3% of class time in 8th grade Social Studies classrooms (Swanson, Wanzek, Vaughn, Fall, Roberts, Hall, & Miller, 2017)
- Definitions, context clues (Watt, 1995)
- Rarely observed (Watt, 1995):
 - Multiple exposures
 - Activation of prior knowledge
 - Strategies for independent word learning

REFLECT:

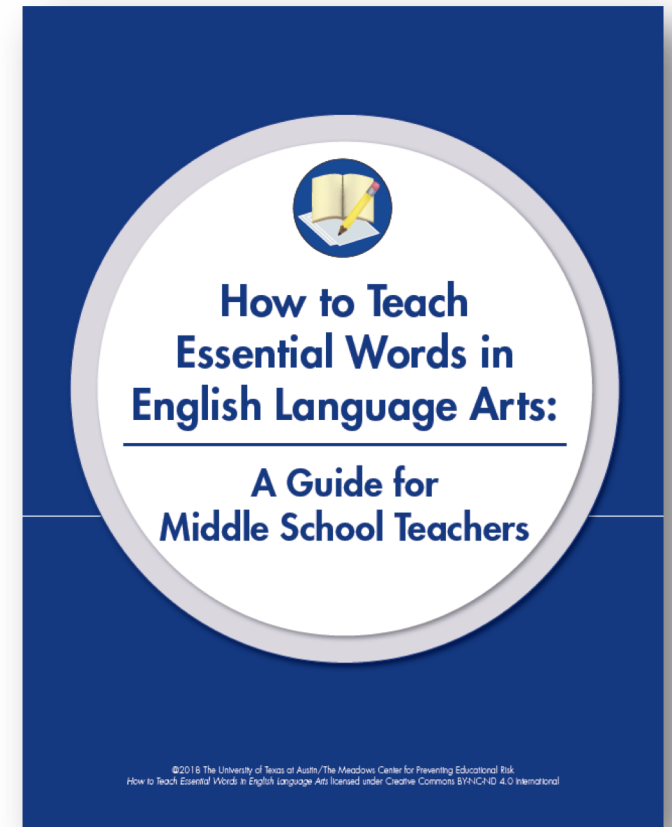
- How does this compare to your campus/district?
- How would you like to see vocabulary taught?

The Essential Words Routine

Teachers pre-teach the meanings of important words using a

- (1) simple graphic organizer and
- (2) instructional routine

- Research-based (really!)
- Strategy Guide developed with teachers



Why is the Essential Words Routine Effective?

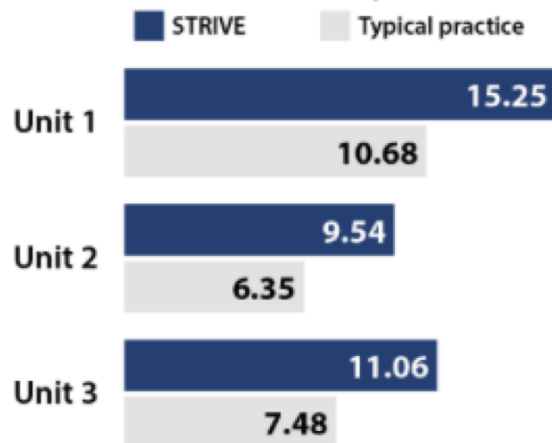
- Explicit
- Brisk pace
- Careful word selection
- Engaging
- Immediate student practice
- Activates background knowledge
- Used across content areas



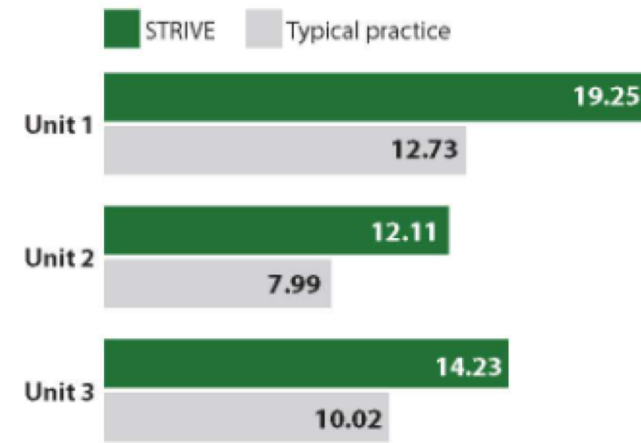
How Do We Know It's Effective?

- Part of teacher-directed explicit instruction, which research indicates has an influence on vocabulary acquisition (e.g., Elleman et al., 2009; Harmon et al., 2005)
- RCTs with three cohorts of students who received social studies instruction with a vocabulary map/explicit vocabulary routine outperformed students receiving typical instruction on measures of vocabulary. (STRIVE Project: <https://www.meadowscenter.org/projects/detail/strategies-for-reading-information-and-vocabulary-effectively-strive>)

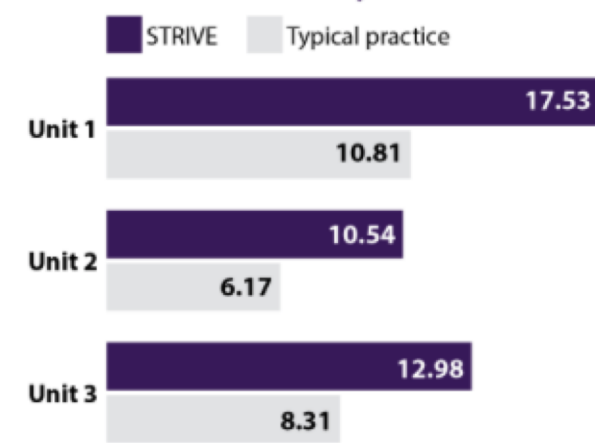
Social Studies Vocabulary: Mean Scores



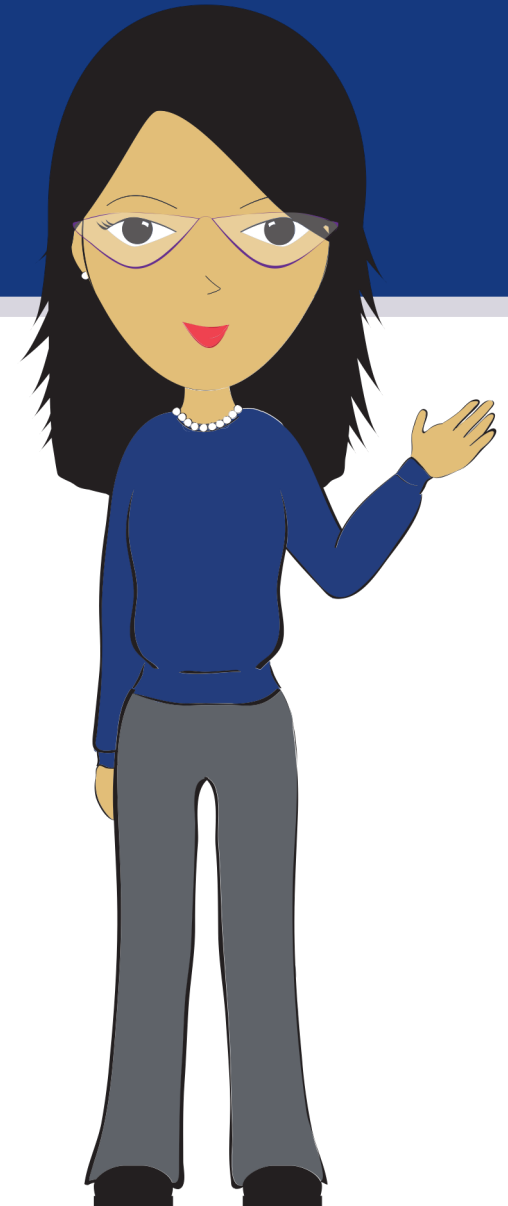
Social Studies Vocabulary: Mean Scores



Social Studies Vocabulary: Mean Scores



Let's Try It



Laissez-faire

- A policy or attitude of letting things take their own course
- Minimal government interference in economic affairs of individuals and society

Related words: “allow to do” (in French); hands-off

Example Sentences

1. When Greta and Joe got into an argument, their friends adopted a laissez-faire attitude because they did not want to take sides.
2. In the United States, laissez-faire economic policies reached their height in the 1870s during the Industrial Revolution. One of the unintended consequences was merging of businesses and less competition.



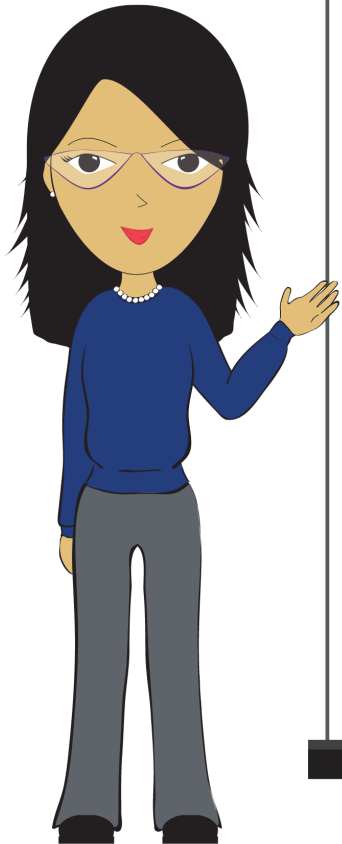
Turn and Talk

1. Have you ever adopted a laissez-faire attitude about something? What was it?
2. Discuss how a laissez-faire economic policy might affect workers and consumers.

What Did You Notice?

- What did the teacher do?
- What do the students do?

How is it Done?



How is it done?

Step 1: Teachers select the most essential words students need to know for the unit or the passage they are about to read.

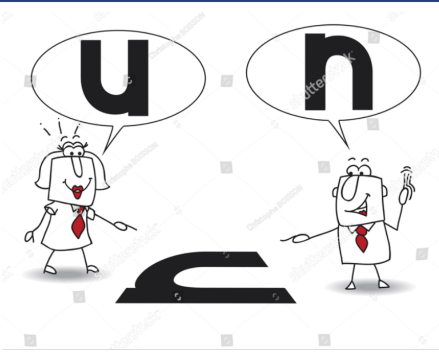
Step 2: Teachers prepare a graphic organizer, called a “vocabulary map,” for each word.

Step 3: Teachers show the vocabulary map to students and use it as a guide to present important information about each word.

perspective (*perspectiva*)

A way of looking at things or thinking about something; “walking in someone else’s shoes”

Synonyms:
point of view, interpretation, opinion



Example Sentences

1. Max’s **perspective** on going to the swim party changed when he found out that his friends weren’t going.
2. The Diary of Anne Frank describes what it was like during World War II from the **perspective** of a 13-year-old Jewish girl living in the Netherlands.

Turn and Talk

1. Tell your partner one way that you have a different **perspective** from someone in your family.
2. How do you think Anne Frank’s perspective of World War II is different from a soldier’s **perspective**?

<https://greatmiddleschools.org/toolkits/reading/vocabulary-maps/>

Why Is It Helpful?

- Activates students' background knowledge to increase comprehension
- Prepares students for learning new information
- Provides the Velcro that allows new information to stick



A Cl

The word (+ cognate/translation)

student-friendly
definition

picture: the simpler, the better!



Synonyms:

words that students are likely
to know already

Example Sentences

1. Simple sentence containing the targeted word.
2. An excerpt from the text you're reading that contains the word.

Turn and Talk

1. A question to spark students' discussion that is something relatable to their prior knowledge or experience
2. A question to spark discussion that relates the word to your course content

Student Expectations

Students:

- Track the teacher
- Respond to prompts
- Participate in Turn and Talks

Students do NOT:

- Take notes
- Guess at the definition
- Make their own vocabulary maps



And after that...? (The Big Picture)

- Students read their text (or engage in another learning activity)
- Students use what you've already taught them to help them learn
- Students engage in **additional opportunities to practice** these essential words

REMEMBER:

- Essential Words Routine is ONLY used to PRETEACH important vocabulary before reading/learning.
- It is a BEFORE READING activity.

IMPLEMENTATION

A decorative white geometric shape, resembling a stylized arrow or a downward-pointing chevron, is positioned on the right side of the dark blue background, pointing towards the bottom right corner.

Digital Materials

- Essential Words Strategy Guide
- Blank vocabulary template
- Google Image search tips

greatmiddleschools.org/words

Step 1: Select Words

- Ask yourself:
 - What is most important for my students to learn?
 - What are the main learning objectives for this unit or passage?

Selecting Words



CHECKLIST FOR SELECTING WORDS

Words to Choose

- Essential to understanding the main idea of the text or unit
- Used repeatedly or frequently encountered
- Not part of students' prior knowledge

Words NOT to Choose

- Concepts NOT central to the text or unit
- Proper nouns or Latin names
- Specific to a certain situation or topic (e.g., discussed only once in the unit)

Examples	Non-examples
tyranny conflict tactic	any proper noun excommunicate mercenary
equation inequality	onomatopoeia coordinate plane
conserve mutate	allele autotroph

Sample Words

Social Studies	Science	Math	ELA/General
conflict	conserve	equation	distinguish
character	mutate	inequality	interdependence
conflict	variable	proportion	
tactic	ecosystem		

How Many Words Should I Pick?

- Single reading passage = 2 or 3 words
- Entire unit = up to 5 words

You know your students best,
so adjust accordingly!

Step 2: Develop Vocabulary Maps

Tools available

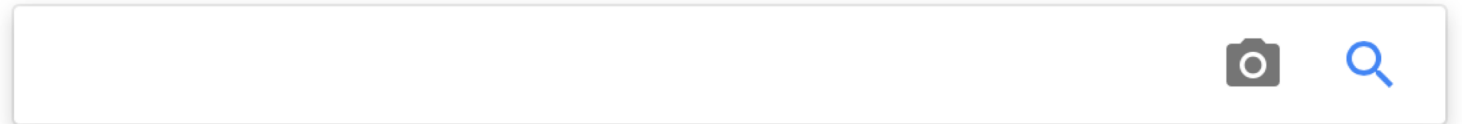
- GreatMiddleSchools.org/words
 - Template
 - Instructions for finding images

TIP: Divide and conquer!



A Note on Visuals

- The simpler the better
- Search and copyright issues—see handout
- Try synonyms





Cognate or translation
for English learners →

compassion (*compasión*)

Student-friendly definition →

Showing great care or concern

Synonyms or related
words →

Synonyms:
tenderness, sympathy



Visual
representation
to make the
word vivid →

First example relates to
students' everyday lives →

Example Sentences

1. The Red Cross workers showed great **compassion** toward the people of Haiti after the earthquake struck by providing food and shelter to many homeless people.
2. Mahatma Gandhi is known throughout the world for his **compassion**, dedication to peace, and commitment to nonviolence.

Second example relates to
the unit of study or passage →

Turn and Talk

1. Tell your partner about a time you showed **compassion** toward others.
2. Why do you think that Gandhi is known for his **compassion**?

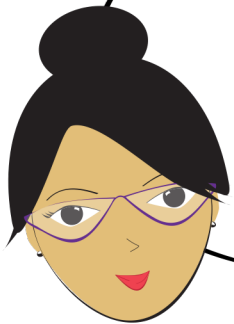
First question
relates to students'
prior knowledge
or experience →

Second question
relates to your
course content →

Step 3: Deliver Instruction

- Display the vocabulary map and deliver instruction one word at a time.
- Students:
 - Should NOT take notes
 - Should track the teacher
 - Respond to prompts and show understanding during turn-and-talks.
- Teach with a brisk pace (3-5 minutes per word).

Set the Purpose for Instruction



Today I am going to teach you some important words before we read this chapter in our novel.

When preteaching essential words before reading a text



Today I am going to teach you some important words and concepts for our unit on the American Revolution.

When preteaching essential words before starting a new unit

Turn-and-Talks

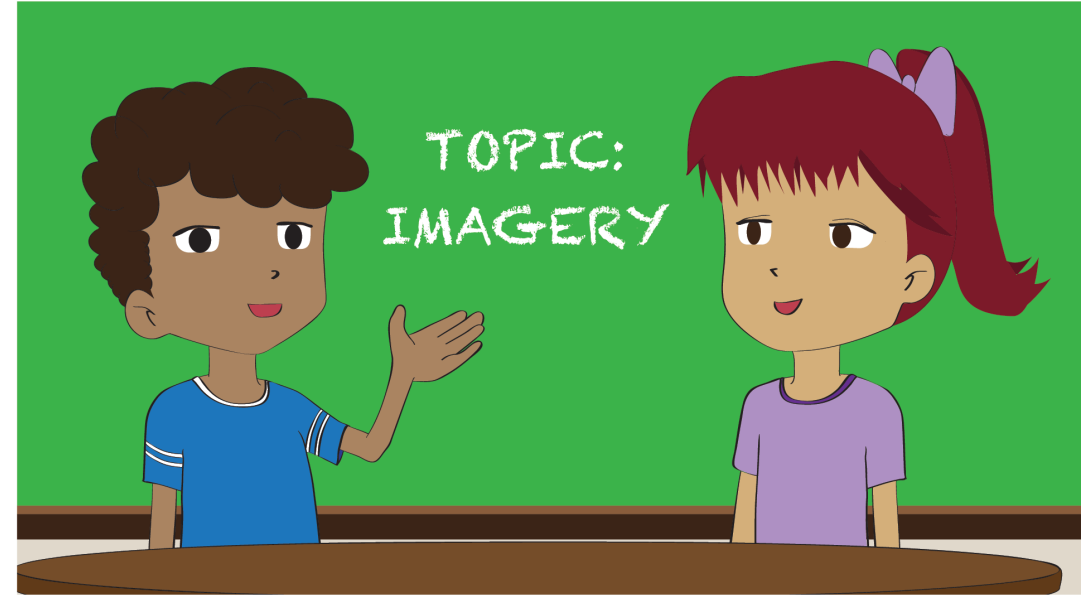
HOW TO STRUCTURE TURN-AND-TALK ACTIVITIES

1. Provide a prompt for students to discuss. It should be relatable for students so that they can draw on their prior knowledge or life experience.

Example: Brainstorm some words that would provide imagery to your reader if you were describing your favorite food.

2. Have students turn to their partner and discuss the prompt (10 to 20 seconds). Monitor students' conversations to check for understanding.
3. Select students to share thoughts and ideas from their discussion with the whole group (30 seconds).
4. Repeat steps 1 to 3 with a second prompt that sparks discussion related to your course content.

Example: How does the narrator probably feel, and how do you know?



Let's Practice Creating a Vocab Map

- STEP 1: Choose a word you might teach.
- STEP 2: Select the definition, synonyms, etc. you would include on the vocabulary map.
 - Highlight or write on map. Feel free to work together.
- STEP 3: Be prepared to discuss and explain your selections.

How Did It Go?



8th GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES, Free Support & Materials

Contact: lettyrmartinez@austin.utexas.edu

Professional Development



- Strategies to enhance student comprehension, critical thinking, and content understanding
- Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits
- Coaching for teachers

Lesson Materials



- Fully prepared materials developed by researchers at The University of Texas at Austin and Florida State University
- Units for Colonial America, Road to Revolution, and Revolutionary War
- Alignment with state standards

Other Benefits



- Stipends to all teachers
- Summative report describing success of the project at the school

Our Choices

bravado (*bravata*)

Confident or brave talk or behavior meant to impress or deceive other people

Synonyms:

chest thumping, showing off



Example Sentences

1. The athlete's bravado was shown as he ran confidently onto the field.
2. Although Michael suspected they were lost, he displayed a false bravado so the hikers would assume they were on the right path.

Turn and Talk

1. Tell of a time when you had to display bravado.
2. Do you think police officers or firefighters ever have to display bravado?

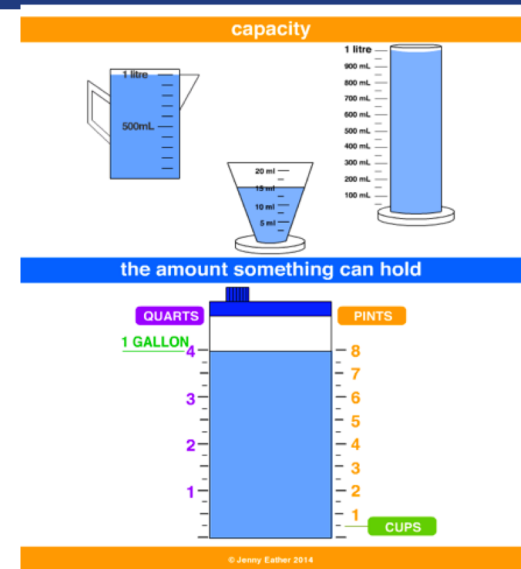
Our Choices

capacity (*capacidad*)

The amount something can hold

Synonyms:

holding power, space, volume



Example Sentences

1. The stadium was filled to capacity for the championship game.
2. Water has a lot of heat capacity. It takes a lot of energy to raise the temperature of water.

Turn and Talk

1. Estimate the capacity of our school's cafeteria.
2. Describe the customary and metric units used for capacity to your partner.

Our Choices

revenue (*ingresos*)

An amount of money regularly coming in

Synonyms:

Taxes, income, fees



Example Sentences

1. When the computer store's revenue went down, the manager was afraid he might be fired.
2. Britain needed more revenue to meet its war expenses and pay the debt from the French and Indian War.

Turn and Talk

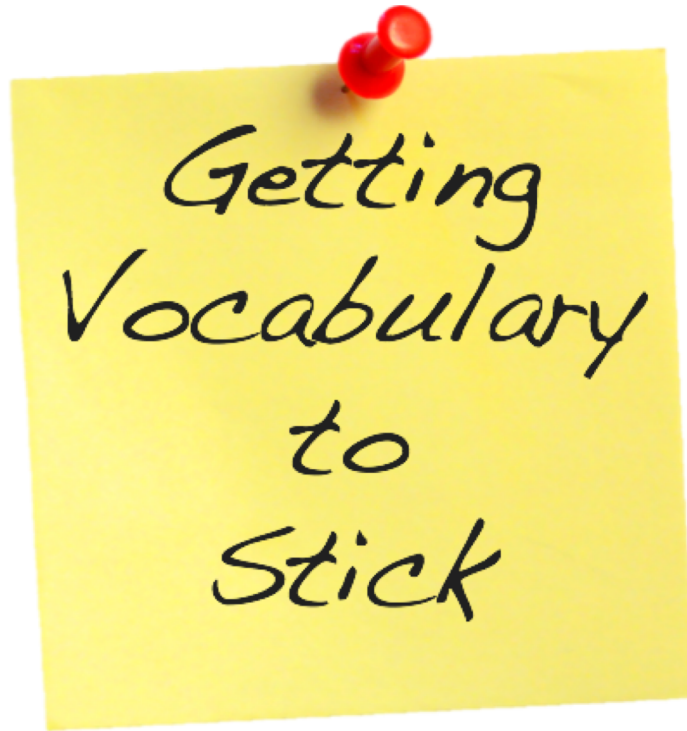
1. In your community and across the country, how does our government use the revenue that is collected?
2. How do you think the colonists felt when the British taxed them in order to raise revenue?

Let's Discuss

- What are you taking with you?
- Linger questions?



In Closing



- This is just the first step!
- Provide additional practice opportunities—See Strategy Guide
 - Warm Ups
 - Frayer Model
 - Writing Prompts
- Greatmiddleschools.org/words