MINI-LESSON - VIRTUAL

Vocabulary Mini-Lesson: Synonyms and Antonyms

Begin by helping students review vocabulary words, definitions and usage. Getting to know a new vocabulary word requires an understanding of both its function and application to other words. Recognizing the relationship between two words and applying it to another word-set encourages higher-order thinking about vocabulary concepts.

Mini-Lesson Components
Tools required:

- Access to an online dictionary and thesaurus such as https://www.merriam-webster.com
- Blank synonym/antonym graphic organizer. Download one here:

1. Start with an example using the word "enormous." Provide a definition for the word based on a specific usage. Point out that there can be differences in meaning that will affect the choice of synonym and antonym. For example, broadcast can mean to sow seeds, or to transmit a message over radio or television. Based on the usage, synonyms for broadcast would change.

2. Include the link to the blank Synonym/Antonym Graphic Organizer. If students don't have a home printer, they can draw the simple organizer on a piece of paper using two boxes.

3. Focus on synonyms first: Ask students to write down three synonyms – similar words – for enormous, based on the definition you provided. Ask them to use an online dictionary and thesaurus to look for synonyms of the word. Then, write their selections down on the synonym section (left-hand side) of the graphic organizer. Stress the importance of knowing the definition of a word to help differentiate the meaning of the synonyms.

4. Now on to antonyms. Introduce the idea that antonyms mean the opposite or reverse of each other and provide an example. For instance, down is an antonym for up. Using the same vocabulary word and graphic organizer from the synonyms exercise, ask students to write three antonyms in the right-hand side of the box. Emphasize the importance of the use of a dictionary and thesaurus.

5. Ask students to take a picture of their work and send it to you.

6. Now, students can apply the process to their next BrightFish Vocabulary synonym/antonym activity. Remind students that the BrightFish system has an online dictionary that they can use. Click on the word options to reveal the definition and compare it to the target word. Tip: Re-read the target word definition by clicking on it. Review all selections before clicking the Check Answer button.