

Burke and Vocabulary

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The Teaching of Vocabulary, when we think strictly “vocabulary”; in other words, the politics of vocabulary

- Rote memorization/Spelling
- Word parts
- Isolated exercises
- Thematic “handouts”
- “Words” associated with text
 - Basic definitions
 - “Find” in the literature
- Problems? Omissions?

Types of “Vocabulary”

- Vocabulary from context – knowledge of word meanings in various readings/genres
 - Literal, figurative, rhetorical, etc.
 - Multitude of texts (auto-da-fe in the *Candide* sense vs. the religious or historical document)
- Jargon, literary and otherwise
- Basic definition/word meaning

Why teach “Vocabulary”

- Essential for fluency and comprehension
 - While much is known about the importance of vocabulary to success in reading, there is little research on the best methods or combinations of methods of vocabulary instruction and the measurement of vocabulary growth and its relation to instruction methods. (National Reading Panel, 2006)
 - Essentially too many variables
- Standardized testing
- Vary classroom instruction, technique

Therefore . . .

- We should teach vocabulary, but no consensus exists in the research realm as to how.
- READ! The more the merrier. . .
- Questions
 - How much class time should be devoted to vocabulary instruction?
 - What constitutes vocabulary instruction?
 - What methods should be employed?

Enter Burke – Differentiating Vocabulary

- Burke is the “king” (maybe a minister, in the British sense) of variety
- Breakdown of Vocabulary Methods and how they work
 - Isolation exercises – basic meaning
 - Multi-contextual exercises (multimodal)
 - Jargon

Isolation Exercises



- Vocabulary Squares (*RR** 270)
 - Four basic concepts
 - Use in a sentence
 - Word variations (nouns, adjectives, verbs, etc.)
 - Definition
 - Picture
- Benefits
 - If done correctly, it guarantees understanding of the word.
 - Forces students to analyze the word textually and visually
- Drawbacks
 - Time consuming
 - Possibly difficult to assess (grade)

**RR* – refers to

Burke, Jim. *Reading Reminders: Tools, Tips, and Techniques*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000.

Vocabulary Squares

Burke, Jim. *Reading Reminders: Tools, Tips, and Techniques*.
Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann,
2000. 270.

Root/Part of Speech He alienated his friends from himself.	Variations on the Word alienated, alienating, alienator, alienation
ALIENATE	
Picture/Logo 	Definition (VERB) To cause to become unfriendly or indifferent / estrange
Root/Part of Speech Her mind was full of egotism - she never thought about others feelings.	Variations on the Word egotistical, egotistically, egotist, egotistic ↳ altruism egocentric, egotize
EGOTISM	
Picture/Logo 	Definition The belief that self-interest is the just and proper motive force.

Isolation Exercises, continued

- Word substitution exercise (*RR 268*)
 - Student or teacher finds words in a piece of text that should be replaced with a synonym. Students generate the synonym.
- Benefits
 - Forces students to really analyze the meaning of a word in a text. Stresses clarity in language.
 - Shows how synonyms can change the meaning of the text.
- Drawbacks
 - Evaluation problems if students just insert simple synonyms without careful evaluation

Samples

President George W. Bush's 2005 State of the Union Address

- First, we must be good **stewards** of this economy, and **renew** the great **institutions** on which millions of our fellow citizens rely.

Sample Two

Declaration of Independence

- When in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to **dissolve** the political bands which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal **station** to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God **entitle** them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which **impel** them to the separation. We hold these truths to be **self-evident**, that all men are created equal, that they are **endowed** by their Creator with certain **unalienable Rights**, that among these are **Life, Liberty** and the **pursuit of Happiness**.

Isolation Exercises, continued

- Word Journals (*RR 268*, attributed to Janet Allen)
 - Students create a four column list made of words they encounter; the four columns are "Don't know at All"; "Have Seen or Heard, But Don't Know the Meaning"; "I Think I Know the Meaning"; and "I Know the Meaning"
 - Benefits
 - Makes students pay attention to language usage to identify words for the their lists.
 - Generates good discussion; competition
 - Drawbacks
 - Could seem perfunctory for the student
 - Potential for embarrassment
 - Could take away from the reading experience

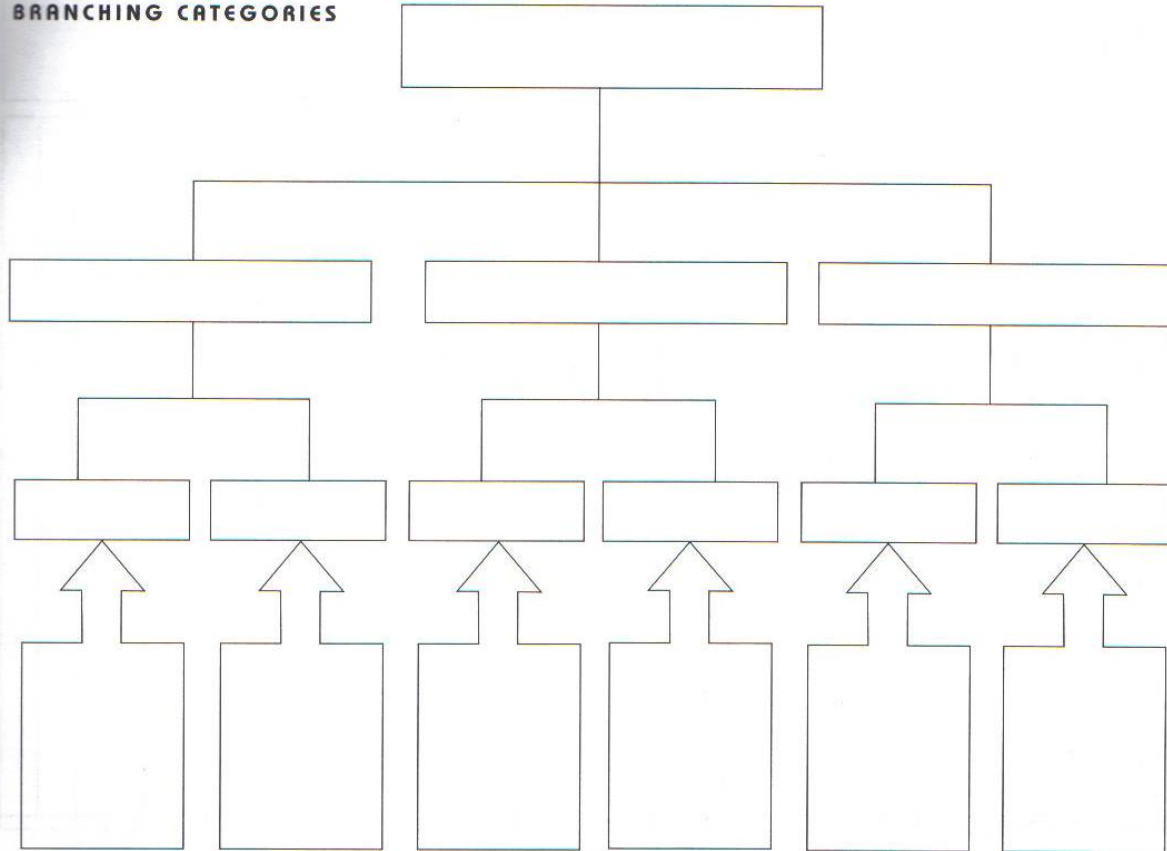
Multi-contextual Exercises

- Categorical Thinking (*RR A7*)
 - For use with difficult, abstract terms, all in different contexts and media
 - *Hubris*, hero, power, loyalty, murder, punishment

CATEGORICAL THINKING

Student _____ Period _____ Date _____

BRANCHING CATEGORIES



Appendix 3

Burke, Jim. *Reading Reminders: Tools, Tips, and Techniques*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000. A7.

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Categorical Thinking Continued

■ Benefits

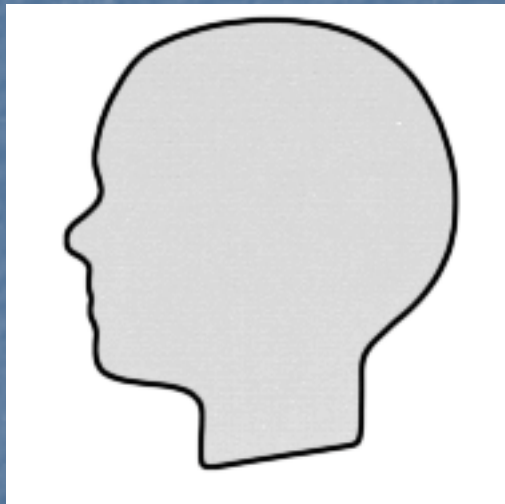
- Allows students to see how words take on different meanings in different contexts.
- Generates very lively discussion

■ Drawbacks

- Very “organized.” Sometimes students struggle to get the stuff in the right packaging.

Multi-contextual Exercises

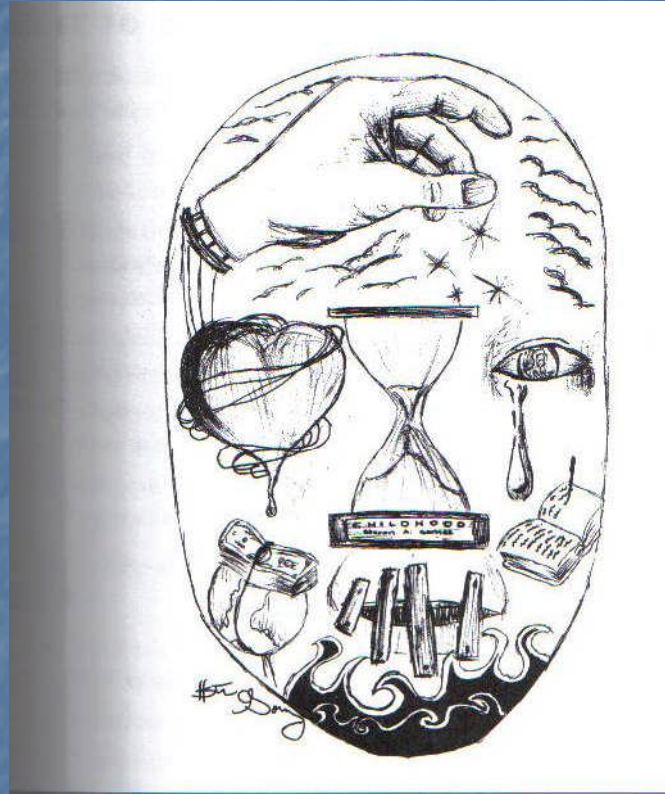
- Open Head Diagram (*RR 69*)



Students draw qualities/representations about a person/character in the diagram. Students or teachers could generate the quality/representation

- **Benefits**
 - **Students have to really think to visualize and produce a term**
- **Drawbacks**
 - **Really hard on the non-artists**

Open Mind Diagram Sample



Burke, Jim. *Reading Reminders: Tools, Tips, and Techniques*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000. 69.

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Multi-contextual Exercises (for the daring)

- Role play and tableau (*RR 223*)
 - Alienation
 - Altruistic
 - Exceptional
- Benefits
 - Really forces the students to internalize meaning.
 - Opens up the class; could free some of the tension (if there is any)
- Drawbacks
 - Fear, nerves, embarrassment

Questions/Comments

This slide show will be available on the Day of Reading website and on my school's website:

<http://www.wcusd15.org/gudwienm>

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