Using Word Sorts to Monitor Comprehension

Overview

Using key vocabulary from content area units of study, students can show what they know and set goals for their own learning. Formative assessments will be used to frame instruction and provide frequent feedback and to inspire even the most unmotivated student.

Objective

Connect understanding of concepts to key terms/vocabulary.
Write complete sentences.
Set goals for learning upon reflection of understanding.
Determine how students are progressing towards proficiency in the unit and use that information to frame next-steps for teaching.

Materials

* Vocabulary terms (write on the board or use teacher created handouts)
* Student materials (pen/paper)
* Teacher created handouts:
  * [Odyssey Word Sort](#) (PDF)
  * [Romeo and Juliet Word Sort](#) (PDF)

Set Up and Prepare

* Create lists of scrambled like-terms (pairs of terms, for example) that stem from the unit of study from which students are working.
* Create a list of statements/sentences that demonstrate the relationship between two like terms as a "key" for students to gauge their own responses later.
* Inform students that by matching like terms and describing **why** they belong together, they and you will get a clearer idea of which direction you need to go in teaching the unit.

Directions

* Clarify instructions to students:
  "*Sort (or group) terms into pairs of like-terms that are related to...(a concept in the unit of study). Write statements for each pair of terms that discusses the relationship between those terms*"
* Model the process with one set of terms.
* Provide time for students to complete the task.
* Once students are done, provide samples of acceptable responses that show the relationship between pairs of terms.
* Ask students to reflect how close or different their responses were to yours.
* Instruct students to analyze which concepts they are strongest in and which need additional support for learning.
* Instruct students to write statements that reflect their understanding of what they discovered they know and what areas need additional time and support for learning.
* Collect responses to frame next steps for teaching the unit.

Supporting All Learners

Provide sentence frames to encourage the writing of complete sentences:

* *I believe that...*
* *From this week's learning, I think that...*
* *In my opinion...*
* *It seems to me that...*

Lesson Extensions

Provide specific websites or hard copy resources for students and parents to use as a tutorial for areas of additional support.

Home Connection

Provide specific websites or hard copy resources for students to use independently as a tutorial for areas of additional support.

Evaluation

* Are students on track for proficiency based on their performance/ self-analysis of the word sort task?
* What are your next steps as a teacher to provide support and instruction to meet the needs of all students?

Assess Students

Create a data analysis graph for students to see individual and class's progress towards standards achievement.