INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES



Word Play

This strategy can be used to practice using parts of speech or vocabulary words.

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WORD PLAY

Summary

Word Play is similar to Mad Libs—it is an engaging way to reinforce vocabulary, grammar, and content knowledge across various subjects. This activity involves providing students with a sentence or a passage that has had key words removed. Students are to fill in the blank spaces with appropriate terms based on context clues, prior knowledge, or a specific word category (e.g., nouns, verbs, scientific terms, historical events).

Procedure

1. Determine what vocabulary, concepts, or skills you want students to practice. Decide whether the focus is on **content knowledge** (e.g., science terms; historical events) or **language skills** (e.g., parts of speech).
2. Write a short passage, paragraph, or set of sentences related to your subject. Ensure the text includes key terms or concepts that students need to learn.
    - Write your own passage or consider using an AI chatbot (see Robo-Reads for guidance).
3. Choose words that are important for understanding the topic (e.g., subject-specific vocabulary, numbers, names, actions).
4. Label the blanks with clues so that students know what type of word to insert (e.g., noun, verb, historical event, scientific term).
5. Have students work individually or with a partner.
6. *Suggested scaffolding:* Consider starting students with a silly example to help model the activity before providing the content-specific example. If needed, you can also provide a word bank.
7. *Optional Extension:* Have students create and play their own Word Play passage.

MadLibs. (2024). Teaching MadLibs in the Classroom. Penguinclassroom.com. https://madlibs.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/MadLibs-Teachers-Guide-nocrops.pdf