

THE FAITHFUL READER

Vocabulary Instruction Part III: Other Ways to Assess and Practice

(for Vocabulary Instruction Part I, see January 2018's *The Faithful Reader*. For part II, see March/April.)

A quick recap: In Part I, we talked about how to begin choosing which vocabulary words are prioritized to teach. In part II, we talked about the importance of practice.

For Part II, we talked about practice. **Now, any of the practices we talked about in Part II - Frayer model, Connect 2, or Teacher's Definition, My Definition – can be used as an assessment.** The key is to make sure that you tell students that it will be used as an assessment, and let them know how you will score or grade it. A grading checklist or a rubric will be hugely helpful for this (see an example on page 3 of this newsletter).

Other Ways to Assess Vocabulary (in addition to Frayer, Connect 2, and Teacher's Definition, My Definition)

Listening in to Discussions

An excellent junior high teacher shared a story of walking around her classroom while students sat with their book club groups, discussing their novels. She overheard one student say to another, "Dude, no. That character died like three chapters ago." Overhearing this was perfect formative assessment: this student did not comprehend (or did not read) this section of the book.

Similarly, overhearing student discussions is a great way to hear whether they full understand and can use and apply vocabulary words. Unfortunately, it is often an incomplete way to assess. So more formal ways are needed.

You may choose to use a form like the one on page 4 of this newsletter to record information from groups' discussions. This can help you to plan mini-lessons or re-teaching as needed.

Would It Could It?

Similar to the game "Would You Rather?" you can ask students a question and then they have to provide a detailed answer that proves that they know the meaning(s) of the word. Clearly, this is not a yes or no response. You can also differentiate by allowing students to choose which questions they answer (e.g., Pick five questions to answer). You will need to model, show, and tell how you want students to respond. You will also need to create a grading checklist or rubric and share it with students before they begin the assignment. If you know you plan to use this assessment as a summative assessment, be sure to provide lots of practice throughout the unit so the newness of the skill doesn't detract from students' knowledge of the words.

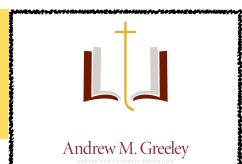
Would a miserly person leave a generous tip?

Could a garrulous person also be taciturn?

Could photosynthesis occur without chlorophyll?

Could you describe the Good Samaritan as draconian?

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PROFESSIONAL BOOKS

Looking for professional reading and resources for the summer? Here are a few!

***What School Could Be: Insights and Inspiration from Teachers Across America* by Ted Dintersmith** This book describes the author's visit to all 50 states and Canada to see schools in action. It describes some very innovative schools and educators. (Spoiler: when students are engaged and learning is meaningful, they want to be in school!)

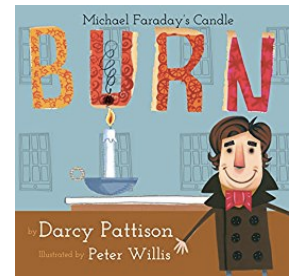
***Disruptive Thinking: Why How We Read Matters* by Kylene Beers and Robert Probst** These two authors have been educators for decades. This book points out the importance of not just comprehending what we read, but FEELING something. Their graphic BHH - what the book says, what my head says, what my heart says - is a great way to maximize comprehension.

***Fair Isn't Always Equal: Assessment and Grading in a Differentiated Classroom, 2nd ed.* by Rick Wormeli** The first edition of this book really shook a lot of educators. Hearing the overwhelming negatives of zeroes in the grade book and averaging students' scores will be a real wake-up call. This second edition provides additional examples and ways to adjust your grading and assessing to meet the needs of all learners.

Book Recommendations

***Burn: Michael Faraday's Candle* by Darcy Pattison illustrated by Peter Willis**

This book describes Michael Faraday's Christmas lecture at the Royal Institution in London, England. The lecture series started in London in 1825 and continues to this day, only stopping briefly during World War II. This book is a 'translation' of Faraday's original "Chemical History of a Candle" which has never been out of print. The first page shows the children's exciting to not just learn about science but SEE science. A great reminder of making learning meaningful, visual, and hands-on.



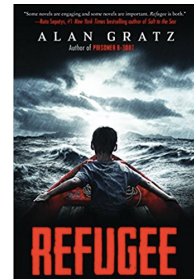
Independent Reading Level grade 4-5

Most appropriate for age 7 and up (some British spellings and scientific vocabulary)

Genre nonfiction picture book

***Refugee* by Alan Gratz**

This incredibly emotional book follows the story of three young people: Josef, a Jewish boy, in 1930s Nazi Germany, Isabel, a young girl in Cuba in 1994, and Mahmoud, a young boy in Syria in 2015. The chapters switch among the three stories, telling the heart-wrenching tales of raw survival. Not everyone survives. Gather your Catholic social teaching and some tissues. You won't want to put this book down.



Reading Level grade 5 (Lexile 800)

Appropriate for grade 5 - 7, ages 8-12

Genre historical fiction

Greeley Center Mission

We are Catholic educators who challenge Catholic schools to be excellent because they are essential in preparing students for the future.

Grading Criteria: Five-Square Vocabulary

Student Name: _____

Total points earned: _____/15

Student will earn 15 points for the following:

- ✓ The word and an accurate definition are written in the first box.
- ✓ A picture that shows the meaning of the word to the student is created. No coloring needed.
- ✓ The student uses an antonym or synonym or a phrase or sentence to describe what the word is like or not like.
- ✓ A sentence is chosen from any text that clearly shows the meaning of the word.
- ✓ The original sentence at the bottom is of fifth-grade quality – it is not too simple. It clearly shows the meaning of the word in the sentence.
- ✓ The sentence from any text and the original sentence both end with proper punctuation.

Example of an original sentence:

The patriot fought tirelessly for the independence of his country.

One point will be deducted for each of the following:

- The word is not listed in the first box.
- A definition is not given in the first box.
- The definition given in the first box is not correct.
- No picture is given.
- No antonym or synonym are given.
- No phrase or sentence are provided describing what the word is or is not.
- No sentence is provided from a text.
- The sentence provided from a text does not show the meaning of the word.
- The original sentence is too simplistic.
- The original sentence does not use the word’s definition correctly.
- The sentence from the text or the original sentence do not have correct punctuation.
 - **Two non-examples:**
 - “Aggressive and associate are connected because they both begin with the letter a.”
 - “Aggressive and associate are connected because you can associate aggressive.”
- The sentence is not of fifth-grade quality. It is too simplistic.
- The sentence does not end with proper punctuation.
- Common fifth-grade words are misspelled.

Date	<p>Conference #1 Name (s)</p> <p>compliment</p> <p>take note of...</p> <p>1-2 teaching points:</p>	<p>Conference #2 Name (s)</p> <p>compliment</p> <p>take note of...</p> <p>1-2 teaching points:</p>	Notes:
<p>Standards: Reading:</p>			
<p>Speaking & Listening:</p>	<p>Conference #3 Name (s)</p> <p>compliment</p> <p>take note of...</p> <p>1-2 teaching points:</p>	<p>Conference #4 Name (s)</p> <p>compliment</p> <p>take note of...</p> <p>1-2 teaching points:</p>	
<p>Language:</p>			