

Learning together

The Ace of Definitions

ACTIVITY #1

SEQUENCE: DEVELOPING VOCABULARY –
THE MEANING OF WORDS – PRIMARY

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Purpose of the activity

The goal of this activity is to help your child better understand the meaning of a word based on the core and secondary information in a definition.



Relevance of the activity

Your child can use this strategy when reading a definition that is not easy to understand or when they need to explain the meaning of a word in their own words. It's also a great way to check their understanding of a new concept to be learned.



Supplies

- Your child's list of vocabulary words
- A text or book that they must read
- Objects in your home



LET'S GO!

Explain the activity:



We are going to identify the core and secondary information in a definition.

Explain why:



This strategy will help you to better understand the meaning of words when you read a definition in a dictionary or when you must explain the meaning of a word in your own words.

Explain when:



You can use this strategy whenever you encounter a new word, whether it's a word you hear or you come across with while reading.

Try it together:



In a definition, the core is the most important information: It is what allows us **to create the image** of the word in our head. It also allows us to classify a word in a category.

In general, the core is at the beginning of the definition, and the rest is secondary information, which adds **details** to **solidify the image** we are creating in our head.

Now, let's try to understand the meaning of a word based on its definition in the dictionary. First, let's look for a new word in a book.

Now that you've chosen the word, let's read the definition in the dictionary:

- What would be the core of this definition in your opinion and why?
- What would be the secondary information?
- Let's try to say the definition in our own words to see if we have understood what it means.

Now that you understand the core and secondary information in a definition, you can use it to define words in your own words. Let's try with the word «**table**»!



What is the core of the definition? What information allows us to classify the word «table» in a category?

- It is a piece of furniture, therefore it's category.

What would be the secondary information that could specify what piece of furniture we are talking about?

- We could specify its usefulness and what it looks like.

Without the secondary information, we wouldn't be able to get a clear picture in our head. We can now define the word «table» like this: A table is a piece of furniture on which we can eat, which generally has four legs, a flat top and can have various shapes and dimensions.



Quick tips!

Be sure that your child does not skip over a difficult word while reading. Encourage them to ask themselves questions as they read.

