

Inspiration®

Visualizing Vocabulary

Subject Areas: All subject areas

Grade Level: 6 – 12 (ages 11-18)

Time: At least one 45-minute class period; time outside of class as necessary

Lesson Objective:

Students will be better able to understand and recall a vocabulary word.

Common Core State Standards¹:

Reading Standards for Grades 6-12 in English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Standard 4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Writing Standards for Grades 6-12 in English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Standard 6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Overview:

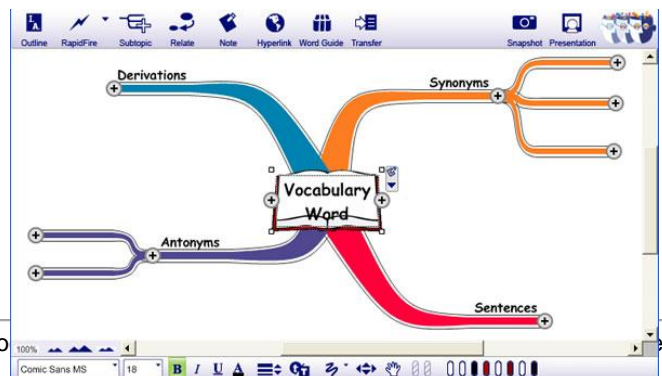
Creating visual representations of knowledge leads to deeper cognitive processing and greater retention of information. Use the *Vocabulary Word* template (**Inspiration Starter>Templates>English Language Arts>Vocabulary Word**) with your students to help them study vocabulary. Students can use mind mapping in Inspiration®'s **Map View** to help them explore definitions, synonyms, antonyms, word origin and sentence context, and to create visual cues for each word. Mind maps have an organic appearance, like a tree with many branches. They are quick to create because the structure is always the same and Inspiration's mind mapping tools are efficient to use. With a central trunk (main idea), the thickest branches are main subtopics, and the thinner branches are subtopics of those. These visual cues help students as they mind map prior knowledge about a word and build new knowledge related to it.

Preparation:

- This lesson requires the Inspiration software application published by Inspiration Software, Inc. 30-day trials can be downloaded at <<http://www.inspiration.com/Inspiration>>.
- Access to library resources and/or the Internet would also be helpful for student research.

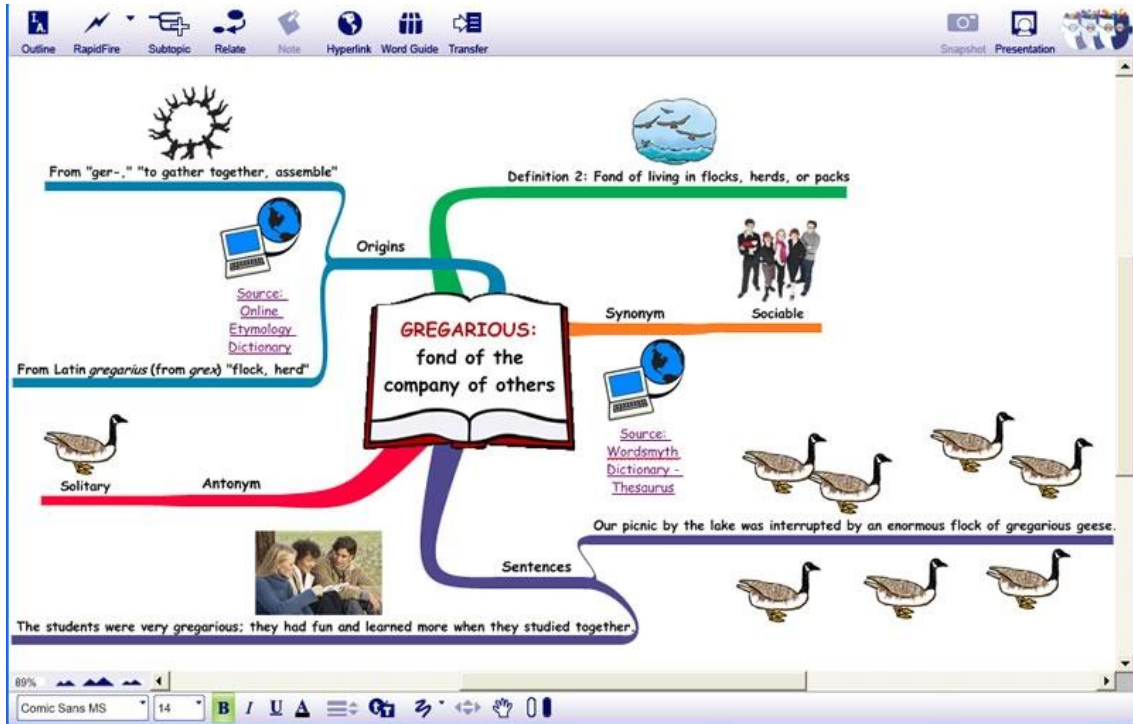
Lesson:

1. Explain that with Inspiration students can mind map or diagram a vocabulary word by adding text and symbols to represent words and ideas visually. Open the *Vocabulary Word* template (**Inspiration Starter>Templates>Language Arts>Vocabulary Word**) and show the different areas of the



template to the students. Provide clear directions about the sentences. For example, you might require one vocabulary sentence to be quoted from a common class text and one to be the student's original creation to demonstrate that they know how to use the word in context.

2. Open the *Vocabulary Mind Map Example* in this folder so students have an idea of a finished diagram. Point out the use of symbols which add visual meaning and make information easier to remember. Be sure that students know how to use the **Symbol libraries** and the **Hyperlink** tool for definitions.



3. Students can complete their own mind maps or diagrams for vocabulary words. They can use the **Symbol libraries** to replace the central image with a symbol that provides a visual cue for the vocabulary word. They can use the links provided on the diagram to research synonyms, antonyms and the origins of the word, and use **Notes** and/or switch to **Outline View** to add details.

Adaptations / Extensions:

- Students can create mind maps or diagrams of different words, then “publish” their work by making brief presentations to the class about their words. To create a presentation including visual talking points and elements of their mind maps, students can use the integrated **Presentation Manager**. See the *Creating Oral Presentations I and II* lesson plans for more information about this process.
- Students can print out their diagrams for home study of the vocabulary words. Alternatively, flashcards could be prepared by printing just the words and central visual cues on one side of a piece of paper and the complete diagram on the other.
- This lesson can be used in any content area that requires students learn new vocabulary.

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