



Vocabulary Telephone

Building word knowledge and conceptual understanding using key vocabulary

Suggested Time: 20 minutes

Student Tasks:

- Review Vocabulary List
- Use vocabulary in context in original sentences
- Play Vocabulary Telephone

Online ThinkCERCA Resources

- Glossary in lessons

Rationale/Research Base

This Vocabulary Telephone strategy can help students build connections to new vocabulary while also practicing fluency and pronunciation in a fun, entertaining way.

Optimal Application Notes:

Choose a set of vocabulary words that align with the learning objectives of the lesson or unit. Consider the difficulty level based on the student's proficiency. Ensure students have access to the vocabulary list and definitions during the activity. Consider the number of words you want each group to get through when determining group size.

Before:

- Ask students to move into their groups and ensure their circle is tight enough to allow for whispering of their sentences.
- Have students count off in each group so they know which student is doing the first word, second word, etc.
- Explain the rules of the Vocabulary Telephone game. Clarify the objective, which is to correctly use each word in an original sentence and pass the sentence to the last person in the circle accurately.
- Consider allowing students time to write their sentences with their words on paper before starting for more challenging vocabulary.

During:

- Students work in circles to whisper their original sentences to one another and determine accuracy of usage.
- Circulate the room to monitor participation and clarify misconceptions or misunderstandings of the share outs at the end of each round.

After:

- If time allows, consider having students add on a sentence as they pass the message. Alternatively, you can extend the game by introducing new sets of vocabulary words for continued practice.
- Ask students to make note of which words they feel more confident with and which words might need additional practice. Reinforce the importance of the vocabulary words in the context of the reading lesson.

Scaffolds & Supports:

- Provide a smaller list of keywords.
- Consider variations such as pictures or images as well as definitions and synonyms.

Vocabulary Telephone

Instructions: Create an original sentence using new vocabulary and whisper it around your telephone circle without changing the sentence.

Review:

- Review the vocabulary, definitions, and parts of speech. Make sure you understand the meaning and context of each word.

Guidelines for Vocabulary Telephone:

- Prepare Materials: Make sure you have your vocabulary list and definitions with you as you move into a circle with your group.
- Understand the Rules: In this game, the objective is create an original sentence using one of the vocabulary words and whisper it to the next person. Your group must pass the sentence to the last person in the circle without changing it. The last person will repeat the sentence aloud to the group, name the vocabulary word, and read it's definition for the group
- Begin the Game: Decide who will go first.
- Take Turns: The first person in the circle creates their sentence using the first word on the list. Person 1 then whispers the sentence to the person on their left. Continue passing the sentence around the circle until it is whispered to the last person.
- Share the Word: The last person will repeat the sentence aloud for the group, identify the vocabulary word, and read the definition aloud to the group. The group will determine if the sentence still matches the original and if it still makes sense based on the definition.
- Continue Playing: The person to the left of player one will now create a sentence using the second vocabulary word and repeat the steps of Telephone. Continue until all words have been 'Telephoned' or your teacher ends the activity.
- Reflect and Discuss: After the game, take a moment with your group to reflect on the words you now have a better understanding of and which words you might still need additional practice with.

Extension Activity (Optional):

- To further reinforce understanding of the vocabulary words, consider using multiple words in compound sentences, or adding a new sentence containing a word to the Telephone message as it is passed to each student.