

VOCAB GUIDE

Vocabulary is vital to supporting the work students do in our courses. While it may seem simple or elementary, without a solid grasp of vocabulary, we create a barrier for students in terms of accessing, understanding, and applying what they need to do the work of a historian. A routine focus on vocabulary is a small practice that will go a very long way.

But how do we teach vocabulary in a way that makes it memorable and useful? Well, vocabulary has to be more than just a list of words students memorize and bemoan. These words represent big (and sometimes medium-sized) concepts critical to the unit, to the lesson, and to the individual readings and videos. And, it turns out, just memorizing the definition doesn't always help students understand what a word means. To really understand—and be able to use—a word, you need to see the word in a variety of contexts.

Also, it's not just about ensuring your students are learning the words. It's about you—and your students—identifying which words they should learn. As a starting point, the OER Project has reviewed all course assets and identified words within each that are vital to understanding the content, and that might also be unfamiliar to a lot of students. However, this approach won't meet the needs of every student. As with everything we do, there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Regardless of what's in the course glossary, the words your students are familiar with will change from student to student, class to class, and year to year. And there is no way you can track all of this, so, perhaps more than anything in the course, students have to take some responsibility for their own vocab needs.

Given these varying needs, we address vocabulary in three ways in the course. The first way, Word Wall, addresses the disciplinary vocabulary that we think all students using our courses will need, depending upon where they are in the course. The second, Vocab Tracker, is the most personalized approach to vocabulary, where students really have to take charge of their learning. The last way is focused on applying new vocabulary. We encourage you to use all of the activities listed below, and to add you own vocabulary practices. Ideally, focus on what works best for your students, keeping in mind the individual needs of each.



Word Wall

Word Walls are the broadest, and in some ways, the most generic approach to learning vocabulary in our course. These activities, found in the first lesson in each unit, focus on the words we have identified that we feel most students will need to learn to successfully engage in the content. We make a variety of suggestions about how to create and work with Word Walls and hope that classrooms build on these throughout each unit. The lists we provide are suggestions—feel free to use different words!

WORLD HISTORY PROJECT / LESSON 1.0 ACTIVITY

VOCAB – WORD WALL

STUDENT MATERIALS

Preparation

- Download the Era 1 Glossary

Purpose

Vocabulary has to be more than just a list of words to memorize and groan about. These words represent big (and sometimes medium-sized) concepts critical to the era. And, it turns out, just memorizing the definition doesn't necessarily help you understand what the word means. To really get the meaning of each word, you need to see it in a variety of contexts. In this era, as in each era in the course, there are three types of vocab activities. Early in each era, there's a word wall (such as the one here), which will help you become familiar with the words for that era. Later in each era, there's a second activity that's a deeper exploration of some of those words. In this era, for example, that second activity is live concept mapping. Finally, every era includes a vocab tracking activity, where you can keep a personalized list of words that are new to you.

Practices

Reading, writing

This activity is focused on helping you learn course vocabulary, which is one way to ensure you're able to fully engage with the WHP course content. This is especially true for the readings in the course. If you don't understand the words you're reading, you won't be able to glean the main ideas of texts, and therefore may miss out on important aspects of the topic you're studying. Additionally, as you build up your vocabulary, you will become an even better writer.

Process

In this activity, you'll work with your class to create a word wall using the Era 1 vocabulary. You're going to do this throughout the era by adding one word at a time so you don't get overwhelmed with a big list of new words all at once.

Your teacher will assign a vocab card to each of you. Once you get yours, pretend that you have the MOST important word to help you understand Era 1, and prepare to argue why that is. Look at your vocab word and take a few minutes to look it up in the Era 1 Vocab Guide and then examine the era itself (click around and quickly skim the content) to see where in the era your word might be most applicable. Once you've done your research, get ready to argue for why your word is the "best" one to start with. After everyone has given a pitch on their word, you'll all decide which word should make it onto the wall first.

Your teacher may add some fun twists to this assignment, so be sure to listen closely for directions!

WORLD HISTORY PROJECT / LESSON 1.0 ACTIVITY

VOCAB – WORD WALL

Name: _____ Date: _____

Word/Phrase (part of speech) word forms – plural/tenses	Definition (in your own words)	Synonyms	Antonyms	Use in a sentence
Adapt (v.) adapting, adapts, adaptations, adaptor, adapter, adaptable; adaptation, misadaptation; adaptive, adapted, adaptability	Make (something) suitable for a new use or purpose; modify.	Modify; alter; change; adjust; convert; transform.	Conform; misfit; misapply; misadjust; stity.	Any life form must adapt to and interact with its physical environment.

Vocab - Word Wall

Vocab Tracker

Whereas the Word Wall provide a universal approach to vocab, the vocab tracker is much more a personalized, attending to individual student's needs to offer differentiation. It is meant to be used daily and throughout the course. The vocab tracker is a graphic organizer that provides a place for students to keep their own personal vocabulary list. These lists may include everyday words or disciplinary words. They will likely include Word Wall words. We refer to the vocab trackers in our Three Close Reads process to encourage them to engage in vocabulary practices while reading. Early in the course, it may be important to carve out class time for individual vocab tracking. Getting students into the habit of identifying and learning what they don't know will help them more successfully engage with the content, and it is also a good practice for them to engage in all their classes, not just social studies. You can find the tracker in every unit as well as in Teacher Resources.

WORLD HISTORY PROJECT / LESSON 1.0 ACTIVITY

VOCAB – TRACKING

STUDENT MATERIALS

Purpose

As you know, there is a glossary of words for this course that all students need to know to be able to take part in the course. However, there are a lot of words in the course, so it's highly likely you're going to come across a bunch of words you don't know that are not in the glossary. This repeated activity will help you become more familiar with a process for how to independently learn the meaning of new words.

Process

Throughout the course, you'll very likely encounter new and unfamiliar words. Some of these words will be addressed as part of the whole class vocabulary activities; however, many more of these words will not. Take out the Vocab Tracker and follow your teacher's directions about how to look up that word. Any time you encounter a word you don't know in the course, add it to this tracker! By the end of the year, your personal lexicon will be huge, you'll be a better writer, and you'll very likely be better prepared for standardized tests.

WORLD HISTORY PROJECT / LESSON 1.0 ACTIVITY

VOCAB – TRACKING

Name: _____ Date: _____

Word/Phrase (part of speech) word forms – plural/tenses	Definition (in your own words)	Synonyms	Antonyms	Use in a sentence
Adapt (v.) adapting, adapts, adaptations, adaptor, adapter, adaptable; adaptation, misadaptation; adaptive, adapted, adaptability	Make (something) suitable for a new use or purpose; modify.	Modify; alter; change; adjust; convert; transform.	Conform; misfit; misapply; misadjust; stity.	Any life form must adapt to and interact with its physical environment.

Vocab - Tracking

FUN ACTIVITY

We've already mentioned that vocab should not just be a list of words to bemoan and memorize. So, we've tried to include some fun activities for learning and applying vocab. This is not your run-of-the mill Sesame Street type fun (although there is nothing wrong with *C Is for Cookie*)—we hope this kind of fun helps engage students with vocabulary. Towards the end of the first five units of each course, we have included a vocab activity that is typically more creative and active than the word walls or vocab trackers. These activities often use unit level words, but you can adjust as you see fit for your students, especially if you want to include words from vocab trackers. While we don't have fun vocab everywhere, the activities can really be used anywhere in the course. These activities include live concept mapping, word wheel, word relay, word sneak, and the What's My Word? activity. As you come up with other fun ways to help your students learn and apply vocabulary, please share those methods with other OER Project teachers in our community.

WORLD HISTORY PROJECT 1200 / LESSON 4.2 ACTIVITY

VOCAB – WORD SNEAK

TEACHER MATERIALS

Preparation

- Download the Unit 4 Vocab Guide
- Create vocab cards for your students, making sure there are enough for each student to have four (you can repeat words as needed).

Purpose

In this vocab activity, students are given a stack of vocab words to “sneak” into a conversation with a fellow classmate. This is probably the most difficult—and perhaps silliest—of all the vocab activities. Students have to incorporate Unit 4 vocabulary as seamlessly as possible into a conversation. Although difficult, this is one of the best ways to use and apply new vocabulary—in context.

Process

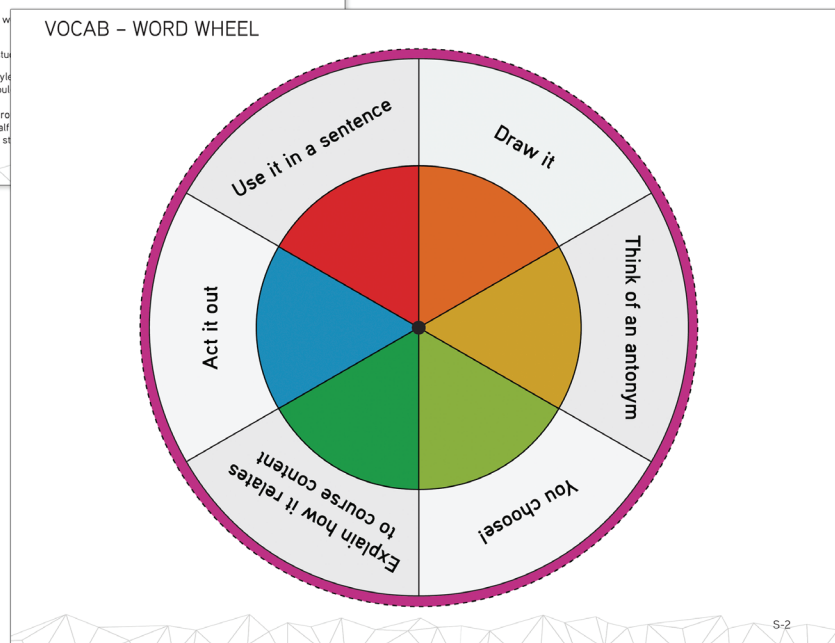
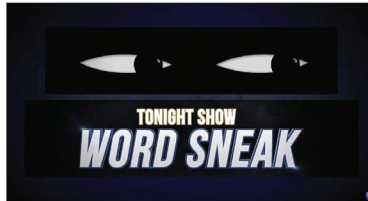
Ask your students if they've ever seen the “word sneak” game on Jimmy Fallon. If not, and you feel it's appropriate, you can [show them this clip](#) which models how the game works. Otherwise, you can kick off the activity by telling them you're going to play the word sneak game. The idea is that students are given a stack of about four vocab cards, and asked to have a casual conversation with a classmate. Their job is to use their vocab words as part of that conversation, sneaking them in wherever appropriate.

Here are the steps:

- Give each student in the class four vocab cards.
- Partner them with someone else in the class. Tell them not to share their words with their partner.
- Have them engage in a five-minute conversation, and see how many words they can sneak into the conversation while they are chatting. There are two things they need to know for their conversation:
 - They have to integrate their words in a legitimate way that makes sense.
 - They may need to steer the conversation in a different direction as a way to get to their word.
- Have students debrief their conversations with the class at the end of the activity.

Here are some optional ways to change up this activity. Choose whichever ones work best for your students:

- If any student pairs are willing, have them model this process in front of the class, fish-bowl style.
- Some students might need an initial prompt to get the conversation going. The Unit Problem could work from the unit.
- Instead of one conversation to cover all the cards, you could have students engage in lightning round conversations. A simple way to do this is to have students create two circles: half the class is the inner circle; half the class is the outer circle. After each round, the inner circle can rotate one student.



Fun activities: Word Sneak and Word Wheel