

Lesson 10: Studying Content-Specific Language

Newspaper Focus: News and Feature Stories

Background – Every subject or topic has some vocabulary that is used primarily with it. For example, an *infield fly* is specific to baseball and *adagio* is specific to music. Students who have limited prior knowledge and experiences have difficulty with the vocabulary used in reading about topics that are unfamiliar to them. A student who has never attended, participated in or watched a baseball game has no experience with the jargon of that sport. The newspaper provides opportunities for students to experience a wide range of vocabulary because it contains stories and sections about many different subjects and topics.

5-8 English Standards

A. PROCESS OF READING

1. Formulate questions to be answered while reading.
4. Use specific strategies (e.g., rereading, consultation) to clear up confusing parts of a text.
8. Read for a wide variety of purposes (e.g., to gain knowledge, to aid in making decisions, to receive instructions, to follow an argument, to enjoy).

B. LITERATURE AND CULTURE

9. Apply effective strategies to the reading and use of moderately long nonfiction texts (e.g., reference sources, articles, editorials, histories, biographies, autobiographies, diaries, letters, and commentaries) which have an appropriate complexity of content and sophistication of style.

C. LANGUAGE AND IMAGES

3. Consult pertinent information sources on language use (e.g., a dictionary, a thesaurus, a handbook on style).

D. INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

1. Seek appropriate assistance when attempting to comprehend challenging text.
6. Describe new knowledge presented in informational texts and how it can be used.
7. Identify common technical terms used in informational texts.

9-12 English Standards

A. PROCESS OF READING

1. Demonstrate an understanding that reading is a gradual process of constructing meaning and revising initial understandings.
6. Use the context of a work to determine the figurative, idiomatic, and technical meanings of terms.
7. Use the context of a work to determine the meanings of abbreviations and acronyms.
8. Find the meaning of relatively uncommon technical terms used in informational texts.

C. LANGUAGE AND IMAGES

3. Compare the ways various social, occupational, and cultural groups use language, and comment on the impact of language use on the way people are viewed and treated.
6. Use dictionaries, handbooks, and other language-related resources to evaluate the accuracy of their use of English.

D. INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

3. Use discussions with peers as a way of understanding information.
5. Analyze and synthesize the concepts and details in informational texts.

F. STANDARD ENGLISH CONVENTIONS

2. Demonstrate how language usage may depend on the situation.

H. RESEARCH-RELATED WRITING AND SPEAKING

1. Develop an appropriate strategy for finding information on a particular topic.