

Project Words

A Plan for Better Vocabulary and Spelling

Objective:

Students will master the definitions and spellings of a selected group of words each week. They will be required to take and pass a didactic test on each group of words. This test will be a learning situation as well as a testing situation. 7th through 12th grades will have their own specialized lists to learn.

Overview:

Teachers will present a lesson which introduces ten new words to the class. The lesson will include correct spelling, definitions, and usage of the words. The students will be required to memorize the spelling and definitions of the ten words, and they will be expected to take and pass a computerized, multiple-choice test one week from the date the words are assigned.

The ten words being introduced will be given to the students, along with definitions, parts of speech, and usage examples. It is important that the teacher spend class time introducing the words and the importance of vocabulary in general. As part of the introduction, the teacher will pronounce the words so that the student can learn to pronounce them correctly. Lists of words will be designed by the staff and should reflect usage in literary works presented on each class level.

Every week the students in each class will take a computerized, multiple-choice exam on the previous week's words. While this is counted as a test, it will also become a teaching tool. Students will be required to pass each test before a grade is given on that test. Until the test is passed, it is equal to zero. They may take these didactic tests as many times as necessary to achieve a passing grade. To insure that all students take the tests, the department could require the average of all tests as a percentage of the term grade. Parents should be notified of this requirement.

Remedial work might be necessary for some of the slower students to eventually master the words. With persistence and a little help they will manage to accomplish the task.

Suggested methods for remedial work:

- assign peer student learning groups on days that you might assign as English labs in your classes
- require that students come after school on help night to study the words with you or peer student groups
- investigate tutor assistants offered by the school as aides to the slower students
- assign the student to work with the reading department to improve study skills

For the plan to work, it is important to maintain a regimented schedule. Students have to know that they can count on a weekly barrage of words. It is also important that teachers do not vary from the agreed upon lists and when they will be administered.

Teachers will be instructed on the use of the Multiple-Choice testing program and the Multiple-Choice test editor, so that they can help create lists that all teachers can use. All teachers should have a say in the words that are used and the types of questions that are asked.

Why Computer Technology

The element that will make this vocabulary lesson successful is the computer. It will allow the teacher to administer a repetitive lesson without an increase in workload. Young people are attracted to computers and like a good computer challenge, but there are also many other benefits to the type of didactic test:

- Teachers will not have to make up weekly tests
- Teachers will not have any papers to correct
- The computer will take care of all scoring and reporting of scores
- There will be no copying to do
- No large amount of paper is required
- Students can take the didactic test over and over until the information is firmly planted in their minds
- Students can work at their own speed
- Students can learn while they take the test
- Students will learn that they must read questions carefully or pay the penalty for their carelessness
- Students will learn that they must think carefully about their decisions
- Students can be given a variety of questions about the definitions, spellings, and usages of the words
- Students will get immediate gratification from correct answers and a quick admonishment for incorrect ones
- Students will receive a report card for each test they take
- Students are given an opportunity to improve their vocabularies and their grades

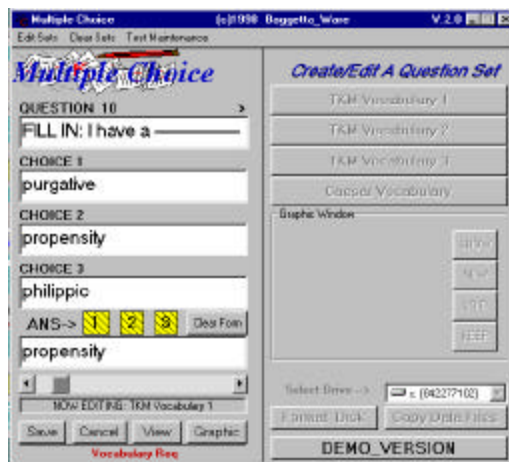
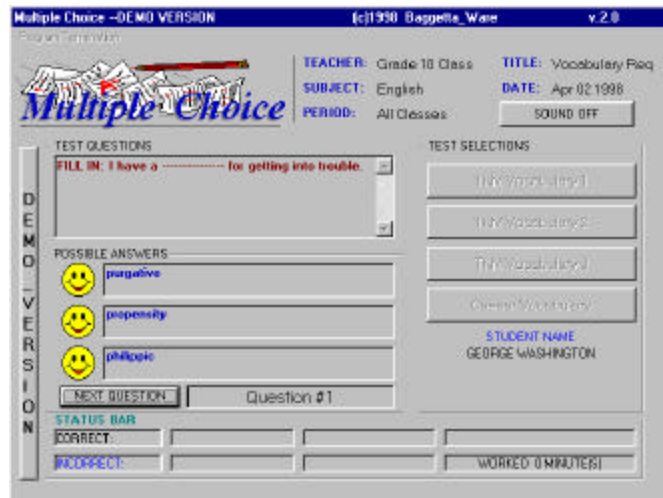
Testing Procedure

Multiple-Choice tests will be administered weekly to insure a consistency to the program. Teachers may administer paper tests if they want to, but use of the computer test will be more effective and will save considerable work.

Questions will be most effective if they are of different types, even though all will deal with the vocabulary words assigned. The Multiple-Choice computer program can handle many different shades of choice questions, and teachers will devise more as the program develops. Some of the types included in the demo program are as follows:

- Usage in terms of the plural
- Usage as part of speech
- Identification of the word from a definition choices given
- Fill-in the blank from choices given
- Usage in terms of spelling
- Identification of proper spelling of the word from choices given
- Identification of the word from a picture displayed
- Usage of the word in a sentence context
- Identification of definition from word choices given

THIS IS A SCREEN SHOT OF THE TEST AND A TYPICAL VOCABULARY QUESTION



THIS IS A TYPICAL SCREEN SHOT FROM THE TEST EDITOR. THIS IS USED TO MAKE THE TESTS THAT WILL BE TAKEN ON THE TEST PROGRAM ABOVE.