

Verbal and Visual Word Association (VVWA)

Verbal and Visual Word Association (VVWA) puts together a graphic representation of a vocabulary word with the definition and a personal association. This strategy may be used before, during or at the end of a lesson. VVWA has been shown to be especially effective for low-achieving learners and ESOL learners in content-area classes.

How to implement the strategy:

1. Select a vocabulary term(s) that would be appropriate for completing VVWA.
2. Direct students to draw a rectangle divided into four sections for each vocabulary term.
3. In the upper-left box of the rectangle, students should write the vocabulary word. In the box below, they should write the definition. (Instruct students to write the definition in their own words instead of copying from a “glossary.”)
4. Next, students will need to draw a visual representation in the upper-right box of the rectangle (next to the vocabulary word).
5. For the final box (lower right), have students write their own personal association, an example or characteristic that relates to the vocabulary term.

Word	Visual Representation
Definition	Personal Association/Examples/Characteristics

Additional Resources:

- Barton, M. and Heidema, C. (2002). Teaching Reading in Mathematics. Aurora, CO: McREL.
- Getting Ready to Read: Extending Vocabulary - Verbal and Visual Word Associations (includes template) <http://oame.on.ca/main/files/thinklit/VerbalVisual.pdf>
- Verbal and Visual Word Association (includes science and social studies examples and blank template) <http://wvde.state.wv.us/strategybank/VerbalandVisualWordAssociation.html>