

# Vocabulary Vine\*

<b>Time:</b> 5-10 minutes	<b>Subjects:</b> All	<b>Grades:</b> All	<b>Blooms:</b> Analyzing
<p>This is what it sounds like when your students create a vocabulary vine in your classroom.</p> <p><i>“Polygon. A polygon is a plane shape that has three or more straight sides.” “Triangle relates to polygon because a triangle is a 3 sided polygon.” “Legs relate to triangle because two of the sides of a triangle are called legs.” “Hypotenuse relates to legs because the hypotenuse is the third side of a right triangle.” “Right angle relates to hypotenuse because it is the angle across from the hypotenuse...”</i></p>			

\*Created by Linnea J. Lyding, Ed.D. (2013)

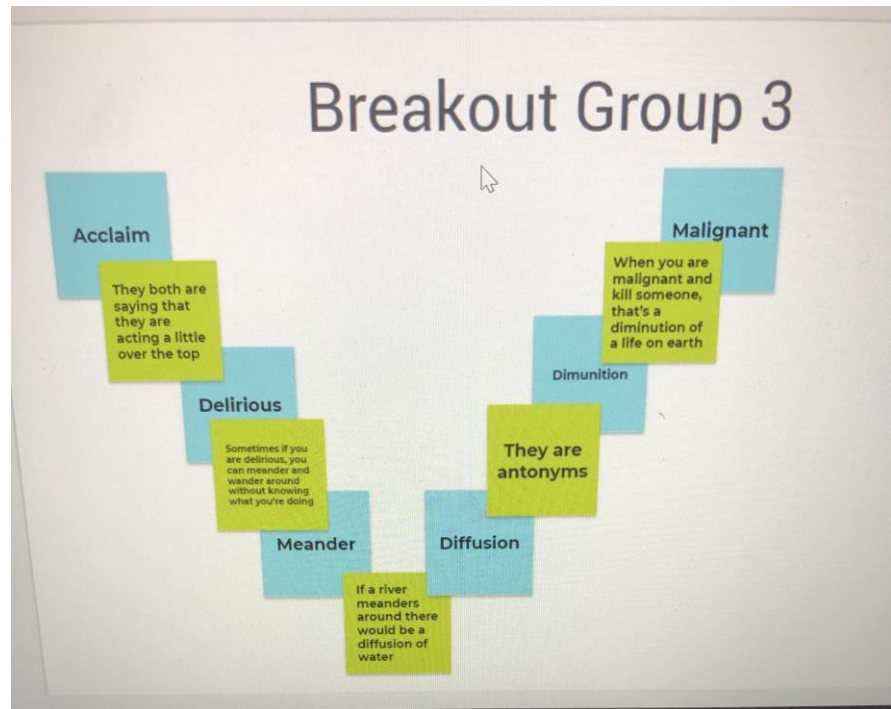
## **Materials:**    **Steps:**

Note cards or sticky notes with vocabulary words written on them.

1. Write the vocabulary words that you are reviewing on note cards. You can use the same words more than once. You will want to have a card or a sticky note for each student.
2. Distribute the cards/notes.
3. Designate a student to start the vine or start the vine yourself. The first person stands up, goes to an open area in the room, stands, and defines his word.
4. Then, a student comes up and stands next to the first person and talks about how this new word relates to the first word. They remain standing.
5. The next student can add his word to either side of the vine. Participants just need to make a connection between their word and the word next to them on the “vine.” Students remain standing holding their word so that other can see in case they want to connect.
6. The students come up one by one as they recognize a connection to their words.
7. Be prepared to support students who might be struggling with the connections.
8. To maintain the attention of all students even after they have presented their words, randomly ask students to restate a connection or expand on what was just said.

**\*Online?** This works very well on interactive whiteboards like Jamboard from the Google Suite. For this, you create a board for each small group. Put the vocabulary words on sticky notes on the board, and

have the students write out the connections with a different color sticky note. Here's a picture from Jessica McDermitt's high school English class.



**\*Limited Space?** You may want to build the vine on a wall using sticky notes.

- If you do not have room to create a human vine, you can create a vine on a wall with sticky notes. To do this, you can stack sticky notes with the words on them by the door.
- Students can pick them up as they come in.
- This version of Vocabulary Vine would sound the same; however, the student would place the note on the wall instead of standing next to someone.
- At the end of class, each student can grab a sticky note and restack it by the door. This will help the teacher prepare for the next class.

**Don't Panic:** Before doing this as a whole class, you may want to practice with small groups who are doing a reading exercise. Additionally, you can have students work as partners with one word. Be prepared to come alongside some students who may struggle with the concept initially.

**\*\*Due to their cognitive development, the younger the students are, the more concrete the connections will be.** To help your youngest students understand the concept, you might want to start with something they know, like animals. Example: "A cat is like a dog because they both have 4 legs. A rabbit is like a dog because it has fur."

**^Adaptations:**

- If you have students who struggle with coming up with a connection on the spot, have them start the chain, prepping them ahead of time if necessary.
- Less confident students can show you privately with their fingers when they have thought of one or two connections. These are the students to call on first to make the next connection. Each time they successfully participate in the vine, their confidence will grow.

**Alternatives:** Pair the students up and have them make their own vocabulary vine. Then, you (and the class, principal, parents...) can tour the classroom and enjoy watching while students share their vine.

**Value/Research:** You will love the depth of knowledge that students demonstrate in the Vocabulary Vine. This demonstration allows you to formatively assess the students' progress towards word mastery:

- The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) (2012) notes, "When students make multiple connections between a new word and their own experiences, they develop a nuanced and flexible understanding of the word they are learning" (Appendix A, p. 32).
- This type of retrieval practice "builds interconnected networks of knowledge that bolster and support mastery...[and] it also multiplies the cues for retrieving the knowledge, increasing the versatility with which you can later apply it" (Brown, Roediger, & McDaniel, 2014, p. 83).

**References:**

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010b). Common Core State Standards English language arts and literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects: Appendix A: Research supporting key elements of the standards and glossary of key terms. Washington, DC: Authors. Retrieved from [http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix\\_A.pdf](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_A.pdf)

Brown, P. C., Roediger, H. L., & McDaniel, M. A. (2014) Make it stick: The science of successful learning. Cambridge, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press