Teacher Guide for Meaning Mapper
Building Connections, Building Vocabularies!

Meaning Mapper is a brief, teacher-led activity to help students build connections among words each day of the Article-A-Day routine. Start Meaning Mapper at the beginning of the week and finish it by the end! Here are the three easy steps:
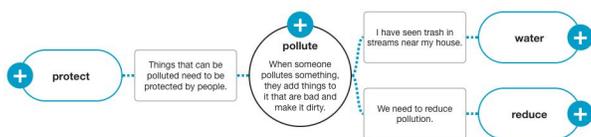

Monday:
Introduce the purpose and the focus word

- Tell students, "Creating a map of words helps you discover all the ways words connect, making learning words easy and fun!"
- Have a student read aloud the focus word and have students put the definition in the beginning screen -- this will open their maps for them.
- Ask students to think about connections with words they know: "What words does this word make you think of or remind you of? Why?"
- Have students share their answers with a partner.
- Ask partners to choose a word they discussed and add it to their maps. Then tell them, "Fill in the connection box with something you find interesting about how the two words connect. For example, I find it interesting that [model with an example of how a word you know relates to the focus word]."

ReadWorks Supports
- Digital/printable student maps customized for each supported Article-A-Day set
- Focus words and their definitions that appear in two or more articles in the Article-A-Day set so your students have seen them repeatedly


Monday-Thursday:
Add words and connections from each day's article

- After the Article-A-Day routine each day, students choose a word from the article they read that connects to a word or words already on their maps.
- Students share word choices with a partner and talk about how those words connect to a word on their maps.
- Students add their new words to their maps and fill in the connection boxes with what they find interesting about how the two words connect.

ReadWorks Support
- A word bank provided with each article in case students get stuck
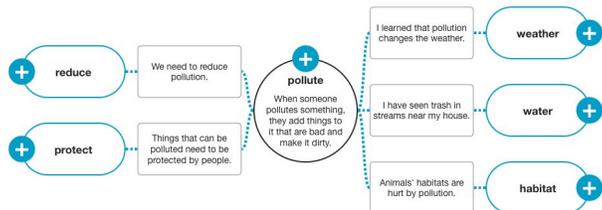
Friday: Create a Class Meaning Map!

- Starting with the focus word, ask students to share words from their maps and create a class Meaning Map.
- You can also do this step throughout the week instead of all at once on Friday.

Hints and Tips

How can I differentiate to support all of the students in my classroom?

- The digital maps are interactive so that students can add as many connections as they want (see below for how to add new branches). Encourage students who are working more quickly to dig deeper and add as many as they can, which also gives time for students moving more slowly.

- If your students are not able to read the articles independently, Meaning Mapper can be done as a read-aloud by projecting different articles for the class to look for connections in together. We have found that students have more success in finding words to add to their maps when they are able to look at the article.

- If your students struggle with understanding the concept of meaning mapping and/or finding words to connect to the focus word, the entire activity can be done as a class for as long as needed for students to gain confidence.

Talking about how words connect is not something my students do naturally. How can I support students in seeing connections between words so they feel confident completing their connection boxes?

- Share with your students the many different ways that words can connect:

  - Connections of meaning: Two words that mean very similar things or related things (predator, carnivore)

  - Connections of information: Two words that are related to the same topic (dinosaur, fossil)

  - Connections of word forms or word parts: Two words that share a root or other word part (fossil, fossilize)

  - Connections to a word's different meanings: Words can connect to the same word but through different definitions of that word (for instance, bird —-> duck <—— hide)

- Encourage your students to make connections not just from the focus word to new words (which can feel limiting) but from new words to more new words. For example, in the image below, notice how the focus word (pollute) has two connections (reduce, water), and then how one of those has a connection to another new word (recycle).
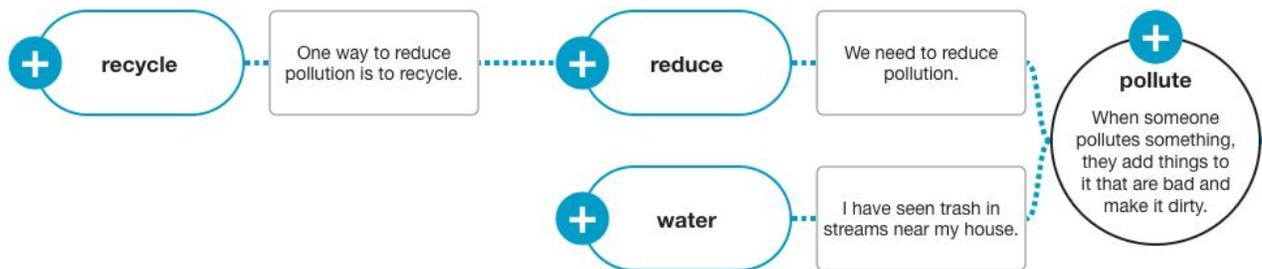
How do students create new branches on the map?

The digital maps are interactive so students can add as many connections as they want. They just click the blue plus sign!