

Skills lists within each margin show which skill(s) the strategy supports.

11.14 Get Help from Cognates

Skills

- analyzing
- inferring
- activating prior knowledge

Progression

Is able to use context and prior knowledge to infer and is ready to learn to analyze word parts and apply a knowledge of grammar, morphology, and/or etymology.



Hat Tip

No More "Look Up the List" Vocabulary Instruction (Cobb & Blachowicz, 2014)

Research Link

In a study of Spanish-English bilingual kindergartners and first graders, researchers found that children who were exposed to more Spanish knew more English cognates than those who received balanced amounts of Spanish and English or who were exposed to more English (Pérez, Peña, & Bedore, 2010). A speaker of two (or more) languages has an expanded repertoire of linguistic resources, with particular word-learning benefits when languages have related origins.

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A **Strategy** is a step-by-step how-to that can be used in any instructional format and in any subject. It's important that you give children a *how-to* to scaffold their practice until they develop automaticity.

Strategy If the word looks, or is pronounced, like a word you know from another language, think about what the word means in the other language. See if a similar meaning would fit in the context in which you encountered the English word.

Teaching Tip This strategy would be best for those who are learning a second language or who is studying another language. Be aware that some words are phonologically similar and orthographically similar and orthographically similar (e.g., *animal* [English]—*animal* [Spanish])—“perfect cognates” (e.g., *animal* [English]—*animal* [Spanish])—“perfect cognates” (e.g., *animal* [English]—*animal* [Spanish])—“perfect cognates” (e.g., *animal* [English]—*animal* [Spanish]). Especially tricky are “false cognates” which are phonologically similar but not related in meaning (e.g., *record* [English]—*recordar* [Spanish]) or *record*, which means “to remember or remind” in Spanish (Rosen, 2014).

Prompts

- Do you know a word in another language that sounds like this word?
- Think about what the word means in the other language.
- What might this word mean in English?
- Think about how it's used here—does the word fit here?

Prompts can be used when supporting students' practice through feedback and coaching. Prompts help the strategy go from something you *tell* or *demonstrate* to something you *guide* students to do. Prompts, especially those in the comprehension chapters, are great to use as turn-and-talk or stop-and-jot prompts for interactive read-aloud lessons.

Hey! That Sounds Just Like a Word I Know...

In English...	In Spanish...
Abuse	Abuso
Abbreviate	Abreviar
Accept	Aceptar
Majority	Mayoría
Realization	Realización

① **THINK** of a word you know in another language that looks for sounds like the word.

② **THINK** what does the word mean in the other language?

③ **CHECK** does the word in this book mean the same?

↓ ↓
"cognates"—there are hundreds + hundreds of them!

Visuals are included for all lessons. Although most are examples of class or individual anchor charts, you may also see a tool such as a personalized strategy card or bookmark, student writing, or even photographs of students in action with the strategy.

THE READING STRATEGIES BOOK 2.0

11.15 Use a Reference

Strategy If you can't figure out a word in the way of your understanding, find a reference within or outside of the book to see how the word is being used in the context. Explain what the word means to you.

Lesson Language When you've found a word you may choose to look it up. You don't want to interrupt your reading on every page to run to a reference, but if you find that not knowing the word interferes with understanding what you're reading, or if you are just really curious about what the word might mean, you may choose to find a definition. Whether you use an online dictionary, a printed dictionary, or a glossary within the text, the important thing to remember is that a simple definition is rarely enough to really help you understand the word. Always think about the context in which the word appears to make sure you're choosing the right definition (as we know many words have multiple meanings!).

Teaching Tip As standard dictionaries assume a fluent, adult audience, be sure to have children's dictionaries available, physically or online, for younger learners. For quick access with older learners, let them know they can type *define* plus any word into Google, which displays definition(s) from the Oxford Dictionary, plus other useful information, like audio pronunciations and synonyms. You might also consider various browser extensions, such as Google Dictionary, which can display the definition of any word encountered online with a simple click. These and similar tools are helpful for English language learners.

Lesson Language is included with some of the lessons to show how I might explain or demonstrate a strategy to an individual, small group, or whole class. You don't always need to explain or demonstrate; some children will be able to get to work after only hearing the strategy. Adapt any and all language to make it your own: match what you say to the age and experiences of the readers you're teaching; use the books I chose, or use ones you know and love.

Teaching Tips are small bits of advice—about text types to use, modifications to consider, extensions to try, background knowledge, and so on—for teachers to keep in mind when planning.

REALLY can't figure out a word (and you want to know its meaning) LOOK IT UP!

choose the right definition. ✓

Skills

- building knowledge
- self-monitoring
- synthesizing

Progression

Is confidently and independently using a variety of strategies to figure out unfamiliar words and is ready to supplement word learning outside resources.



Research Link

In a study using eye-tracking technology, researchers found that readers whose second language was English relied on dictionary use even when an unknown word was irrelevant and the meaning could be easily inferred (Prichard & Atkins, 2021). This underscores the importance of helping readers to consider when it's worth pausing their reading to turn to a resource.

Skill Progression Callout in the margin reminds you when and for which readers this strategy might be most helpful, and the highlighted dots remind you of the stage of the progression.

Research Links offer empirical support for the strategy. In most cases, the link offers direct support for the strategy, other times for the skill, and occasionally a bit of related information that will be helpful to know when teaching the strategy.

Comprehending Vocabulary and Figurative Language

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