
Implementing the Practice Guide's Recommendations in the Classroom: Academic Vocabulary, Content-Area Instruction, and Writing

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Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School

RECOMMENDATION 1 (p. 13)

Teach a set of academic vocabulary words intensively across several days using a variety of instructional activities.

CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING WORDS

(pp. 16–17)

- ❖ Words central to understanding the text
- ❖ Words frequently used in the text
- ❖ Words that may appear in other content areas

CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING WORDS

(pp. 16–17)

- ❖ Words with multiple meanings
- ❖ Words with affixes
- ❖ Words with cross-language potential

ZOO PASSAGE

Read the zoo passage.



ACADEMIC VOCABULARY SELECTED FOR IN-DEPTH INSTRUCTION (p. 17, Exhibit 1.3)

- ❖ Environment
- ❖ Exhibit
- ❖ Investigation
- ❖ Impact
- ❖ Pursuit
- ❖ Options



ACTIVITY 1

- ❖ Using the zoo passage, choose one more word that you think should be taught to help students comprehend the passage.
- ❖ Use the criteria on the handout to justify your choice.

STUDENT-FRIENDLY DEFINITIONS



DICTIONARY DEFINITIONS (p. 18)

- Definitions alone tell little about how a word is actually used.
- Definitions do not effectively convey new concepts.
- Denotation vs. Connotation

DICTIONARY DEFINITIONS

- **ally:** one associated with another (denotation)
- **ally:** Someone who helps you with what you are trying to do, especially when there are other people who are against you (connotation)

STUDENT-FRIENDLY DEFINITIONS

Contain two important elements.

1. Characterize the word:

- Student-friendly definitions describe the word by focusing on specific aspects of its meaning rather than on a general description.
- Characterize the word by asking yourself:
Why do we have this word particularly?
Why do we have such a word?

STUDENT-FRIENDLY DEFINITIONS

2. Explain the meaning in everyday language:

- The definition is crafted using words that are part of the students' vocabulary and that convey the connotation of the word.

EXAMPLE DEFINITION: CORE READING PROGRAM

Artist: a person who makes art

An **artist** is a person who draws or paints pictures or creates sculptures as a job or hobby.

ACTIVITY 2



Friendly



Unfriendly

FRIENDLY OR UNFRIENDLY?

Reluctant: unwilling; with hesitation

If you are **reluctant** to do something, you do not want to do it and hesitate before doing it, or do it slowly and without enthusiasm.

STUDENT-FRIENDLY DEFINITIONS ONLINE

- Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English
<http://www.ldoceonline.com>
- Merriam-Webster Learner's Dictionary
<http://www.learnersdictionary.com>
- Collins COBUILD Advanced Dictionary
<http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english-cobuild-learners>

DEVELOPING EXAMPLES, NON-EXAMPLES, AND CONCRETE REPRESENTATIONS OF WORDS

NON-EXAMPLES (pp. 18–19)

- Non-examples, or contrasting examples, help pinpoint the meaning of a word by providing instances where the definition does not apply.
- Contrasting examples help solidify meanings and prevent misconceptions by explicitly telling students the attributes that are not part of the word's connotation.

CONCRETE REPRESENTATIONS (pp. 18–19)

- Concrete representations of words include pictures, diagrams, gestures, facial expressions, demonstrations, objects, and so on.
- When students are given concrete representations of words, the students' brains are able to make connections between language, which is abstract, and something tangible.

ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE WORD LEARNING



IDEA COMPLETION

Given a scenario, students provide a rationale to demonstrate their understanding of a word's meaning.

The small child was **forbidden** to play with the matches because...

Variation:

Would you want a **frail** person on your football team? Why? Why not?

(Adapted from Beck, I., McKeown, M., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction*. New York: The Guilford Press.)

QUESTIONS, REASONS, AND EXAMPLES

Students interact with target words by responding to questions and giving examples.

*Why is it good to **contemplate** the possible consequences for your behavior?*

(Adapted from Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002)

DESCRIBING/EXPLAINING

Place these phrases on the word line *Little Endurance* to *Great Deal of Endurance*. Explain your placement.

How much endurance does it take to...

- participate in a decathlon?
- undergo an appendectomy?
- tolerate a child who is having a tantrum?
- listen to an engaging speaker for an hour?

Little Endurance.....Great Deal of Endurance

(Adapted from Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002)

STUDENT-FRIENDLY DEFINITION

Protest: If you protest against something or about something, you say or show publicly that you object to it.



EXAMPLES

Examples **within** the context of the selection:

Some Americans **protested** because they were against the war in Vietnam.

EXAMPLES

Examples **beyond** the context of the selection:

- The citizens **protested** against a nuclear power plant that was going to be built in their city.
- The members of the Occupy Movement **protested** because they objected to the economic inequality in the United States and around the world
- The child began to **protest** when he was told that his cell phone was being taken away until his grades improved.

NON-EXAMPLES

- Campaigning for a candidate whom you want to win an election
- Campaigning for or against the passage of a ballot measure or a law

CONCRETE REPRESENTATIONS

Antiwar Protest



CONCRETE REPRESENTATIONS

Occupy Movement



ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE WORD LEARNING

Describe a **protest** you participated in or heard about.

*Jeremy decided to take part in the **protest** because...*

*Joan decided not to take part in the **protest** because...*

(Adapted from Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002)

ACTIVITY 3

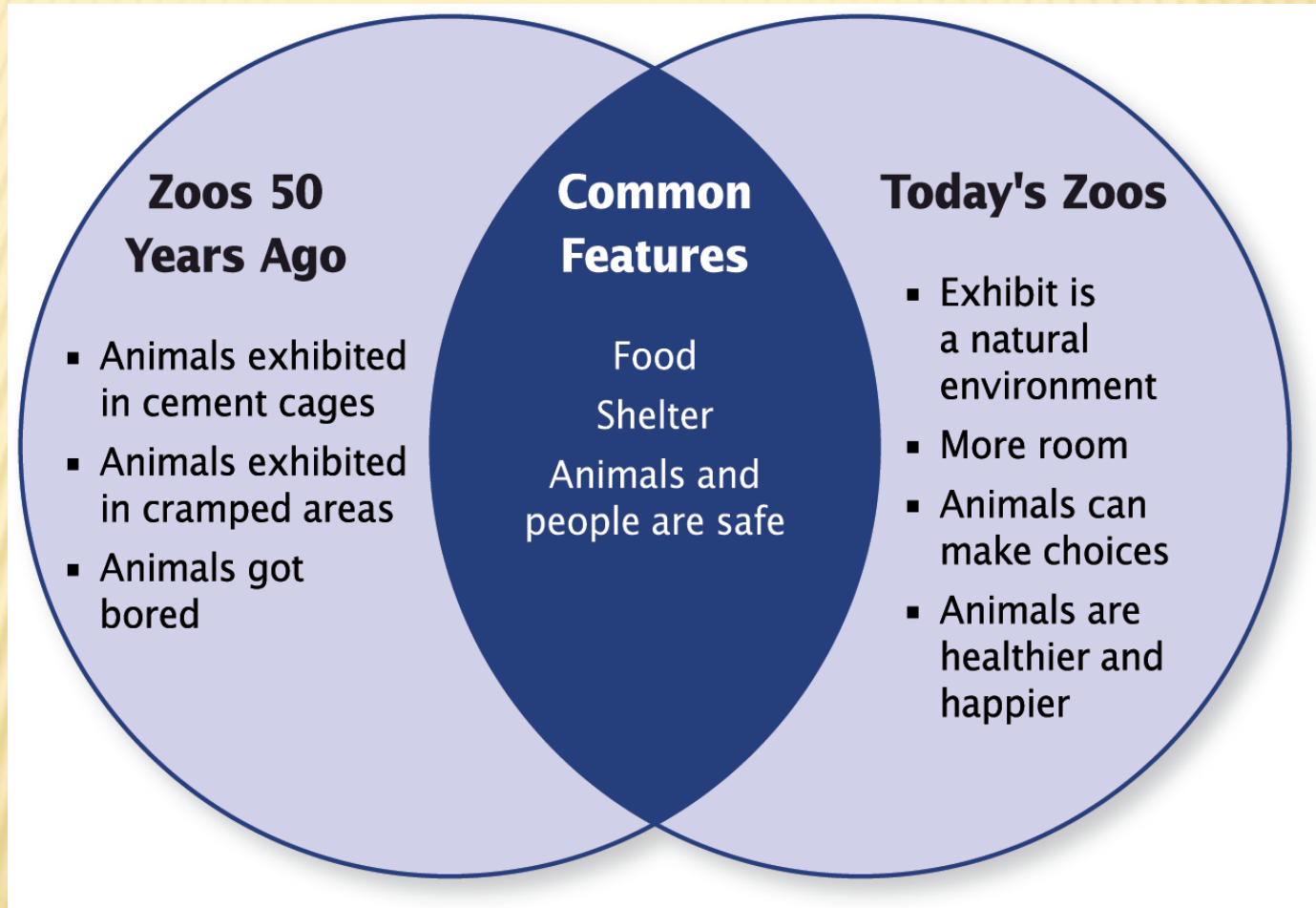
Develop:

- ❖ 1 student-friendly definition
- ❖ 1 example
- ❖ 1 non-example

RECOMMENDATION 2 (p. 31)

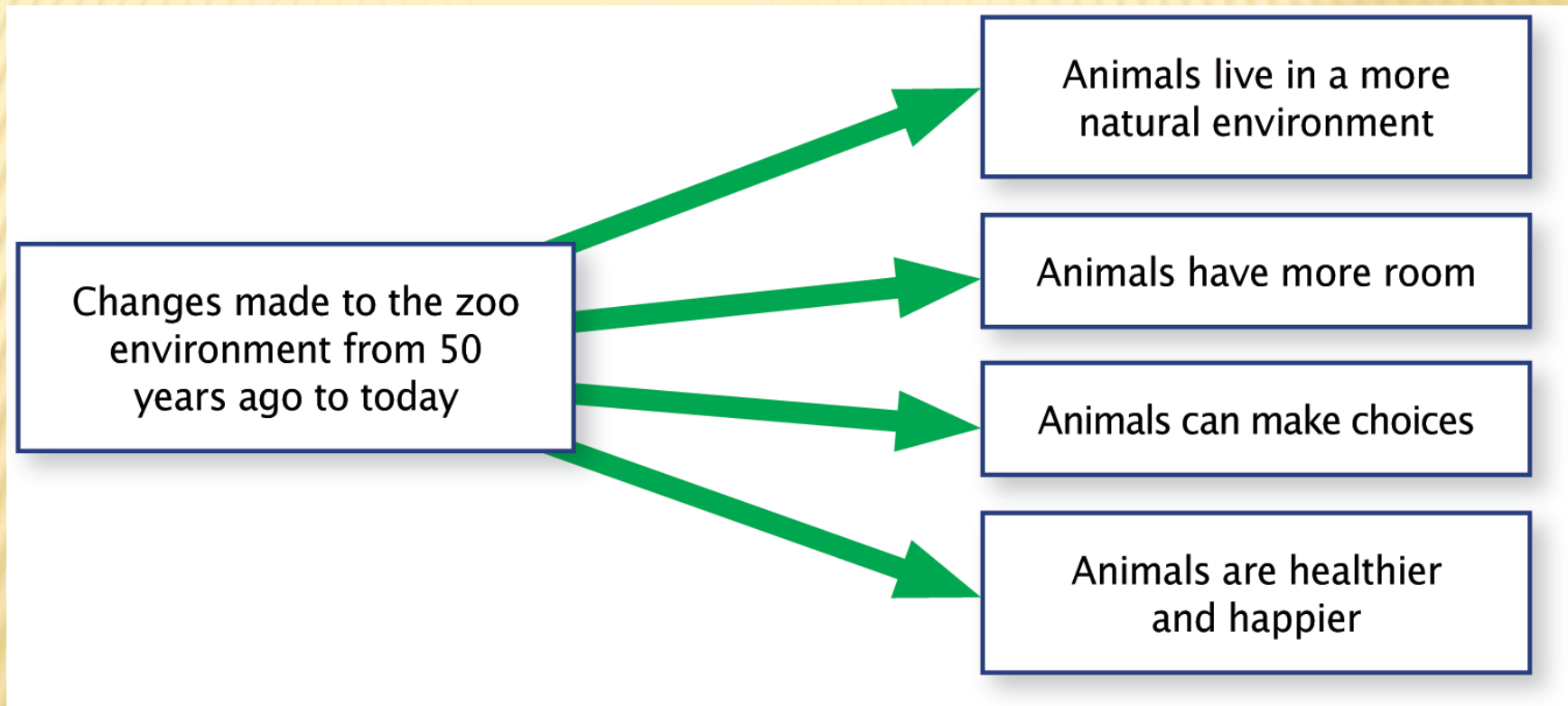
Integrate oral and written English language instruction into content-area teaching.

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER: VENN DIAGRAM (p. 36, Exhibit 2.2)



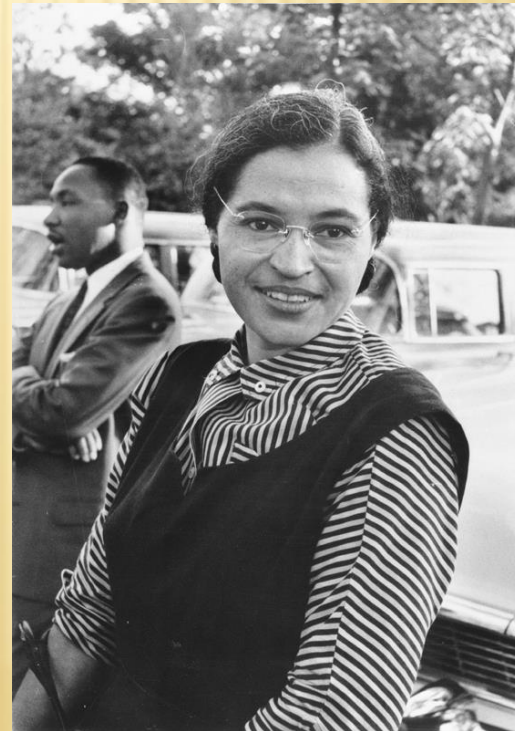
CAUSE/EFFECT GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

(p. 36, Exhibit 2.2)



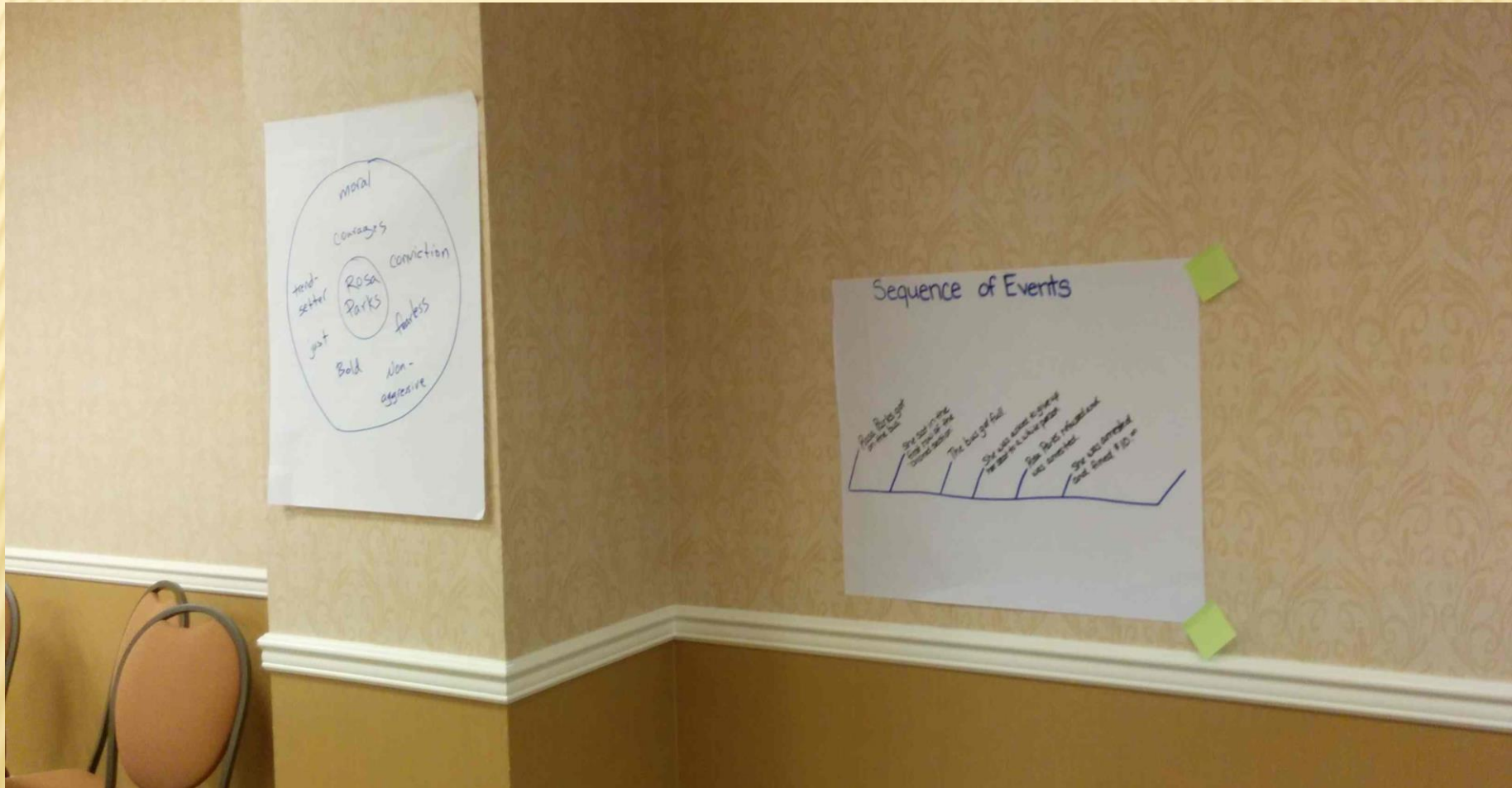
ROSA PARKS

Read the passage about Rosa Parks.



ACTIVITY 4

Discuss the type of graphic organizer you would develop for this passage.



Character Map



Bridge Map

Rosa Parks

as

SPUTNIK

~~Sparked~~ ~~the~~
Civil Rights
movement

Space
Race

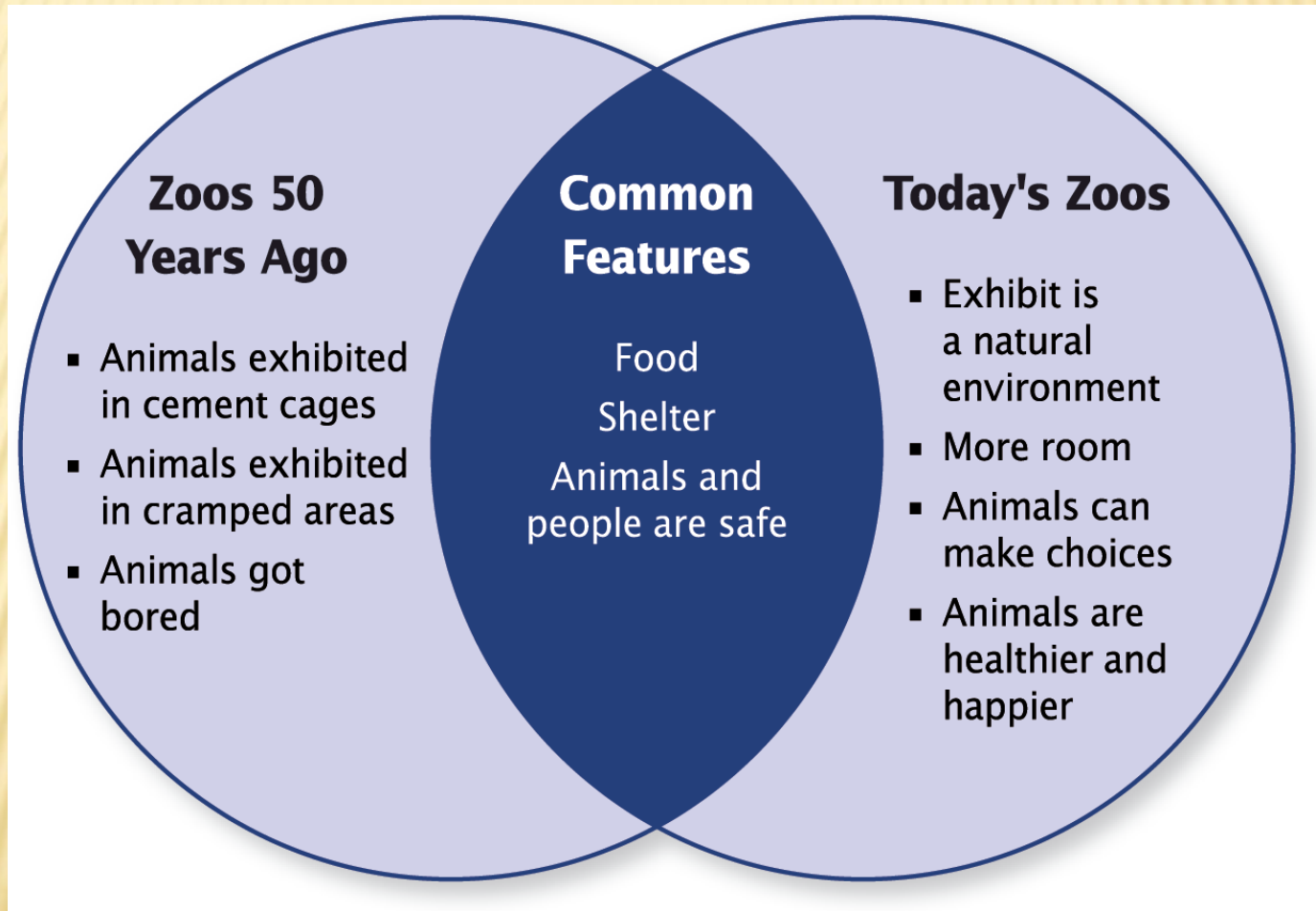
SPARKED

relating factor

RECOMMENDATION 3 (p. 47)

Provide regular, structured opportunities to develop written language skills.

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER: VENN DIAGRAM (p. 36, Exhibit 2.2)



Writing Framework (p. 50, Exhibit 3.2)

HANDOUT: COMPARE/CONTRAST INSTRUCTIONAL ROUTINE

Compare and Contrast Writing Framework

(Topic Sentence)

There have been many changes made to zoos; I would rather visit a zoo that has a (an) _____ (new/old) gorilla exhibit for two reasons.

First, _____

Second, _____

(Concluding sentence)

QUESTIONS



Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School

Zoo Passage

When you walk into a zoo today, the exhibits look different than they used to look years ago. Before the 1970s, zoos had cages with tile walls and floors. Now, animals in zoos live in more natural environments. For example, instead of enormous gorillas pacing back and forth in cramped cement areas, they play on soft grass and nap in trees. Before, large birds lived in small cages. Now, zoos have large exhibits where birds can stretch their wings and soar from tree to tree. According to zoo design expert Jon C. Coe, these changes often have a positive impact on animals' health and happiness.

Still, creating better living spaces is just one step toward improving the lives of animals that live in zoos. Even in exhibits that look like their natural environments, animals can become bored. According to Coe, boredom can have harmful effects.

"An exhibit may look great, but it isn't doing much for the animal unless it also involves a choice of things to do all day," said Coe. Animals need to be challenged with activities such as looking for food and exploring their surroundings. In fact, some research has shown that giving zoo animals more options and activities promotes good health and lowers incidents of violent behavior. Today, several zoos have created living environments for their animals that involve the kinds of pursuits that Coe described. For instance, the orangutans at the National Zoo in Washington, DC, can travel across the zoo on overhead ropes to visit friends.

Coe recommends more investigation into these types of zoo exhibits and their impact on animal health. With this new pursuit of creating more natural environments in zoo exhibits, he sees a happier and healthier future for many zoo animals.

Criteria for Choosing Words

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Criteria for Choosing Words | 4. Words that may appear in other content areas |
| 2. Words central to understanding the text | 5. Words with multiple meanings |
| 3. Words frequently used in the text | 6. Words with affixes |
| | 7. Words with cross-language potential |

Rosa Parks

On December 1, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks took the bus home from her job as a seamstress in a department store. She sat in the fifth row, which was designated as the first row of the "Colored Section." As her ride home continued, the bus became full. When this occurred, the seats in the front of the bus were supposed to be given to white passengers. The bus driver ordered Rosa Parks and three other African Americans to move to the back of the bus so that white bus riders could sit in their seats. When Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat, she was arrested and fined 10 dollars. Parks' courage set off a series of events that changed the United States.

Student Friendly Definitions Online

1. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English: <http://www.ldoceonline.com>
2. Merriam-Webster Learner's Dictionary: <http://www.learnersdictionary.com>
3. Collins COBUILD Advanced Dictionary
<http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english-cobuild-learners>

Compare/Contrast Instructional Routine to Accompany the Writing Framework

(Exhibit 3.2, Page 50)

1. Prior to the writing lesson, the teacher should lead the students in completing a graphic organizer that shows how to compare and contrast two concepts/topics in a selection the students have read. For example, in Exhibit 2.2 on p. 36, there is a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting zoos 50 years ago to zoos today, based on the passage in Exhibit 1.2, p. 15.
2. Using the information in the graphic organizer, the teacher reviews the important information about how the two concepts/topics are alike and different by stating, “Let’s use the information we wrote in the graphic organizer to talk about the ways that zoos today differ from zoos 50 years ago.”
3. The next step is to create the topic sentence in the Writing Framework. To determine the nature of the topic sentence, the teacher should decide whether the purpose of the writing assignment is to explain the similarities and differences between the concepts/topics or to take a position on a concept/topic. In this example, students are going to take a position on the topic of zoos 50 years ago versus zoos today.
4. If students have had little or no instruction in generating topic sentences, the teacher should develop one in advance for the students. For students who are in the process of learning to compose a topic sentence independently, the teacher should lead the class in writing a topic sentence.
5. After the topic sentence has either been supplied by the teacher or written by the class, the teacher directs students to use the information in the graphic organizer to complete the Writing Framework. For example, for the Compare and Contrast Writing Framework in Exhibit 3.2 on p. 50, the teacher may say the following:

“We have decided to take the position that we would rather visit a zoo that has a new gorilla exhibit for two reasons. Four reasons appear on the graphic organizer we created:

- (1) Exhibit is a natural environment.
- (2) Animals have more room.
- (3) Animals can make choices.
- (4) Animals are healthier and happier.

Choose two of these reasons and write about them by explaining what they mean. You can go back to the reading or remember the information we discussed in class when we completed the graphic organizer. Remember not to copy the information from your book. You are to explain each reason in your own words.”