

Engagement Toolkit for Social Studies





Play Dough Processing

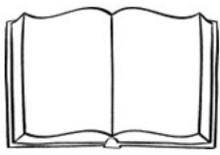
What is it?

Play Dough Processing allows students to create 3-D images of key vocabulary terms.

How to do it:

1. Prepare the materials before class. You will need Play Dough (found at the Dollar Store or Amazon) and tooth picks. I also recommend baby wipes for easy clean up after you are finished. Print the Play Dough Processing handouts (1 set for each class) and cut them out.
2. Place your students into small groups (3 or 4). Give each group different colored Play Dough tubs and tooth picks. Pass out the cards to your students and challenge your students to create a 3-D image to represent the vocabulary term.
3. After they have created their image, they need to write a short summary detailing how their creation matches the definition.
4. Give your students a **STRICT** time limit on this activity. This should take them no longer than 10-15 minutes! After all of your students are finished, display the products and allow your students to examine the different products. To extend the activity, they can give feedback or praise on post-it notes.





Vocabulary Pyramid

What is it?

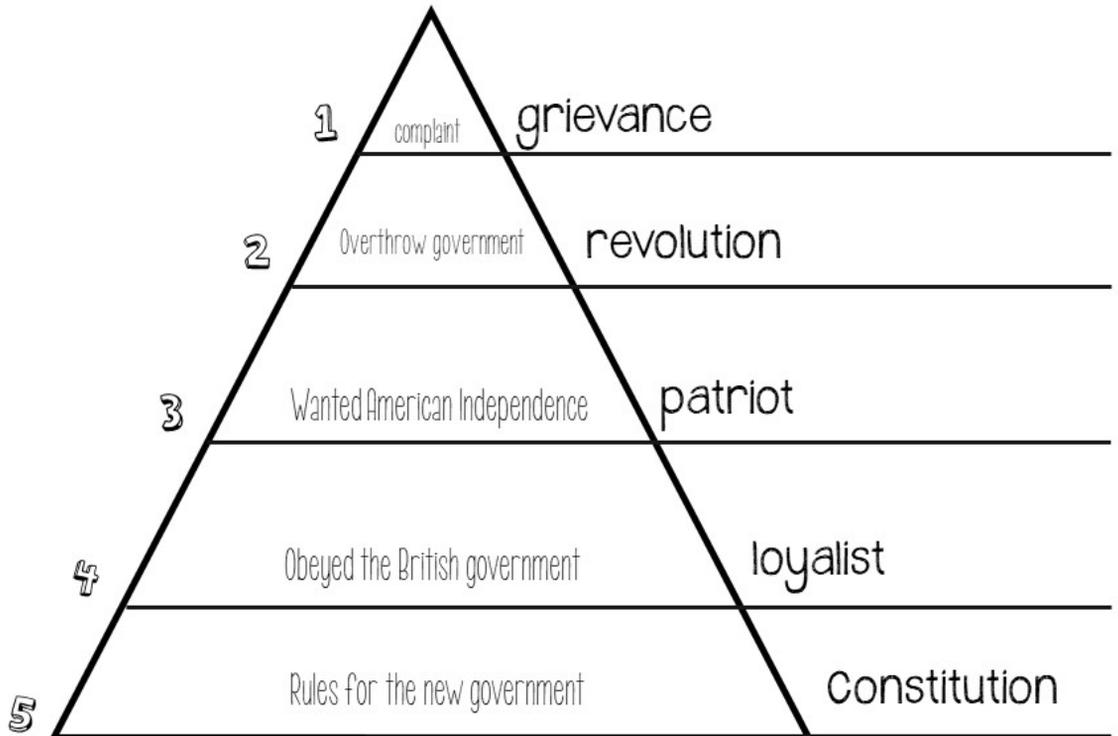
Vocabulary Pyramid is a strategy that encourages students to define words in a simplified way.

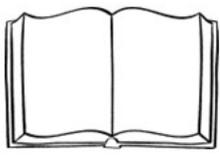
How Does It Work?

1. Pick 5 or more words.
2. Give students the pyramid template or have them draw it in their notebooks.
3. Each line of the pyramid is numbered, that number corresponds to the number of words the student can use to define the vocabulary term.
4. Extension: have students draw a visual for each term

Why use it?

This strategy encourages students to use higher levels of thinking and process the vocabulary in such a way that the teacher can tell if the student understood the vocabulary terms and concepts.





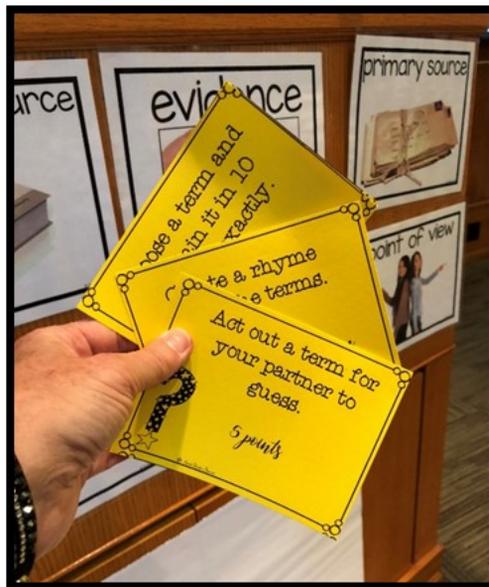
Connection Cards

What is it?

Connection Cards are a way for students to play a variety of games with vocabulary terms.

How to do it:

1. These cards are designed to encourage students to interact with your word wall. You will need your vocabulary terms posted in a word wall for this activity.
2. Prep the activity by printing and cutting out several sets of the connection cards.
3. Place students with a partner or in a small group of 3 to 4 students - tell your students that they will be competing against each other to see who can earn the most points in a vocabulary game.
4. Give each group a stack of cards. Each student will draw a card. When they complete the task on the card, they will earn the points indicated. Each person can earn up to 10 points each round.
5. Play the game for 5-10 minutes and then allow your students to tally up their points.





Discussion Strategy

Chat Cards

Steps:

Prepare a series of open-ended questions about your topic.

1. Give each student one of the "Chat Cards".
2. Ask an open-ended question to your class. Call on the first speaker. They will answer your question, and then call on the next speaker. That student can then choose to "Share" and complete a statement from the "Share" statements, or "Sum It Up" and complete a statement from the "Sum It Up" statements.
3. Allow your discussion to continue for a few minutes with about 4-5 students responding.
4. Continue with the lesson, asking open-ended questions and allowing different students to use the "Chat Cards."



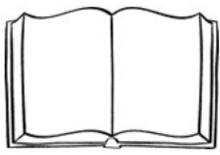


Discussion Strategy

L Corner Debate

Steps:

1. Place a sign in a different corner of the classroom that reads - Mildly Agree, Mildly Disagree, Strongly Agree or Strongly Disagree.
2. Write a provocative statement that deals with your topic. Your statement needs to be broad enough that there are several different points of view. Examples can include:
 - Affirmative Action is no longer necessary.
 - The Civil Rights Movement is over.
 - The government should take any action to ensure public safety.
3. Read aloud the statement, and give students a few minutes to collect their thoughts about the topic. Ask students if they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the statement. To keep student from wandering, have them write their answer and reasons why on an index card. Direct those who strongly agree to move to the corner of the classroom where the Strongly Agree sign is posted, those who mildly agree to move to the corner of the classroom where the Mildly Agree sign is posted, and so on...
4. Hopefully, you have four groups gathered in different corners of the classroom. Appoint one student in each corner to be the note taker, and give students 5-10 minutes to discuss with the other students in their corner the reasons they strongly agree, mildly agree, mildly disagree, or strongly disagree.
5. At the end of the discussion period, ask one student from each group to share with the class some of the ideas they discussed in their group.
6. At the end of the discussion time, each student uses those notes to write a concise paragraph stating his or her position on the issue. (for example, *I strongly agree with the statement [statement goes here] because...*) Students should include in their paragraphs the four strongest points supporting their position.



Question Dice

Steps:

1. Give students a passage of text to read and a pair of dice. Allow your students to read with a partner or small group. After a given time or number of paragraphs, the students stop. Student A rolls the dice. Challenge the student to make a question using the two sides that face up. The rest of the group answers or discusses the question. Students can write down the question to have a record and/or review later. The group reads again, and the student B rolls the dice. This process continues throughout the reading time.
2. As you monitor, you can pull good questions to review with the entire class. You can correct question structure/grammar as well.
3. You can have groups share their best question with the class and/or have students explain how this process helps them ask better questions. If students write their questions, you can grade that paper. (And have them pick one to answer)

First Die: Who, What, Where, When, Why, How (you could also substitute which)
Second Die: was/were, had, did, could, would, should.

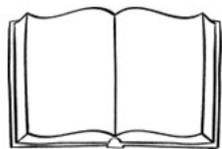
Examples:

After reading, student A rolls the dice and gets "who" and "could." If the reading is about the American Revolution, a possible question could be, "Who could the most important person in the war?"

"When" + "Had" = When had the British passed the Intolerable Acts?

"What" + "Would" = What would be different if the American Revolution had happened 10 years earlier or later?





Text Coding

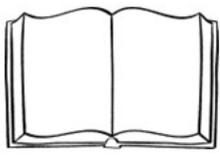
Steps:

1. Give students a passage of text to read and a Text Coding Card.
2. Choose a code from the card you want to focus on for the lesson - for example ? - I have a question about this. Model using a text code with the first paragraph.
3. Allow your students to read with a partner or small group. After a given time or number of paragraphs, the students stop and code the text.
4. When your students finish reading, they can compare codes with other students in the class.

Text Coding

- ✓ I know this
- X This is not what I expected
- ★ This is important
- ? I have a question about this
- ?? I am really confused
- !!! This surprises me
- This is new information
- RR I have to reread this section

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Pick a Card

What is it?

This strategy encourages all students to think more about what they read and confidently share their observations and opinions. Responding to prompt cards, students write on sticky notes and then share their feelings, reactions, and questions about portions of or the entire text they were assigned to read.

How does it work?

1. Prepare materials. Create three sets of reading response cards with the following prompts:

- I never thought that....
- I can relate to this chapter because...
- I thought....
- I was imagining that...
- I can't believe...
- What I didn't know was...
- I think the author...
- it's hard to believe that...
- I wonder why...
- I learned...
- What if...
- I was really interested that...
- I was surprised by...



2. Place students into groups of four. Have each student draw two cards and place them face up in the center of their table. Give students each two sticky notes and tell them to write their responses to any two cards after they finish reading. Once students have completed their sticky notes, have them share their responses with their group members.



Increase Engagement

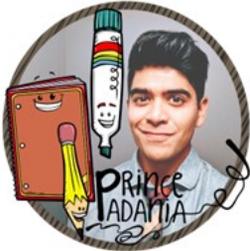
Popsicle Stick People

What is it?

This tool increases engagement by allowing teachers to use several different random response or grouping strategies.

How does it work?

1. Allow your students to choose a Popsicle Stick Person - make sure you have a matching popsicle stick with the person's name on it. When you need to call on a student at random, pull one of the famous people's name out of a cup and call on that student.
2. Use the Popsicle Stick People for grouping - Find a Popsicle Stick Partner that your famous person has something in common with. Or, create a group of 3 that includes all....
3. Use Popsicle Stick People to enhance reading - students can pretend to role play that individual as they read the text.



PS - If you want different historical figures for the Popsicle Stick people, you can find more in Prince Padania's store on TPT.





Increase Engagement

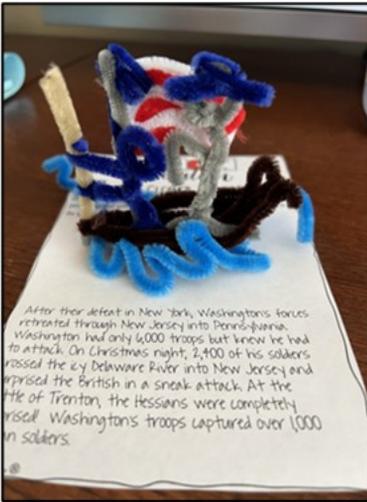
Pipe Cleaner Project

What is it?

This tool increases engagement by allowing students to create mini-sculptures out of pipe cleaners.

How does it work?

1. Once you have finished teaching a topic, give your students a variety of colored pipe cleaners.
2. Ask your students to use the pipe cleaners to create a representation of the topic. Once they have created the pipe cleaner project, they will need to write about their sculpture.



Washington Crossing the Delaware River before the Battle of Trenton.

PIPE CLEANER PROJECT

Directions: Use your pipe cleaners to create an object that represents your topic.

Place your pipe cleaner project in the space below and write a short summary explaining your topic.

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Task Card War

What is it?

This strategy is designed to increase engagement with Task Card questions.

Directions:

- ❖ Each player needs an equal amount of soldiers.
- ❖ Place the task cards face down.
- ❖ Take turns answering the questions.
- ❖ If you get a question correct, take your opponent's soldier, if you get the answer incorrect, give a soldier to your opponent.
- ❖ If there is a dispute over the correct answer, check the answer key.
- ❖ The player with the most soldiers at the end of the game wins!





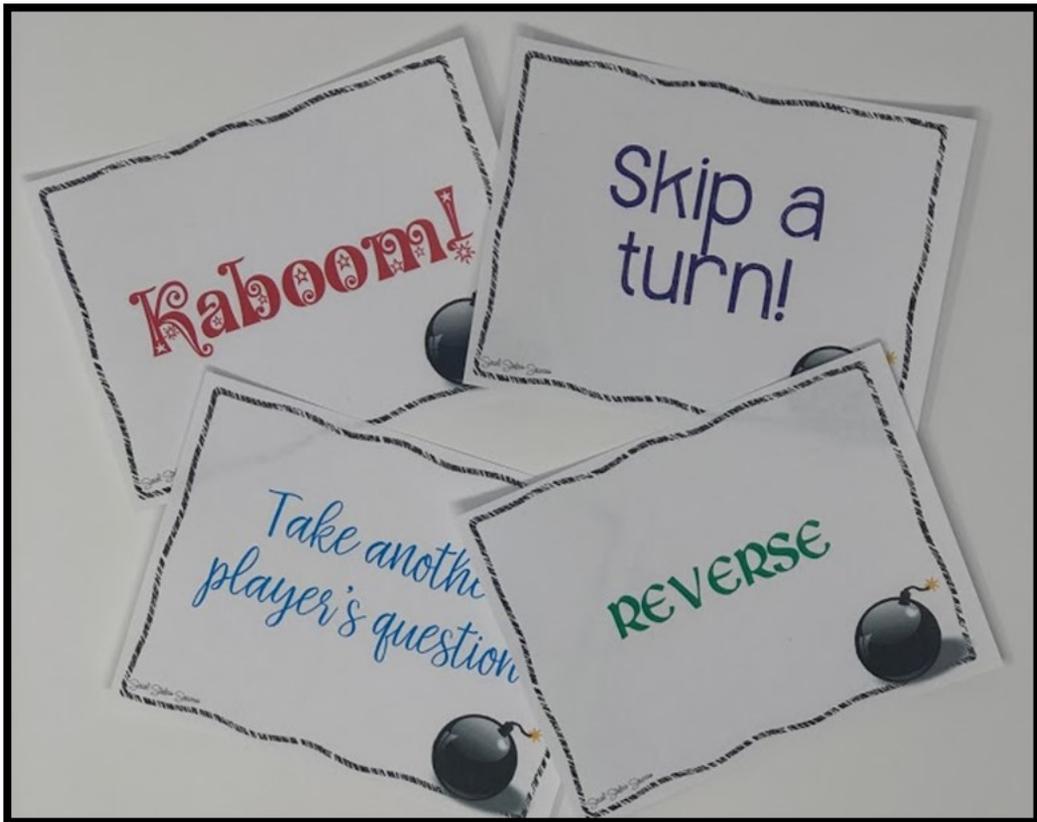
What is it?

This strategy is designed to increase engagement with Task Card questions.

Directions:

Print off a set of task cards. Combine one set of the Kaboom! Cards with the task cards. Play the set of cards similar to "Uno".

1. Take turns choosing questions and answering them.
2. If you get the question correct, keep it. If you pull an action card, complete the action.
3. If you choose a Kaboom! card, all of the questions you answered go back in the bag.
4. The person with the most correct questions at the end of the game - wins!





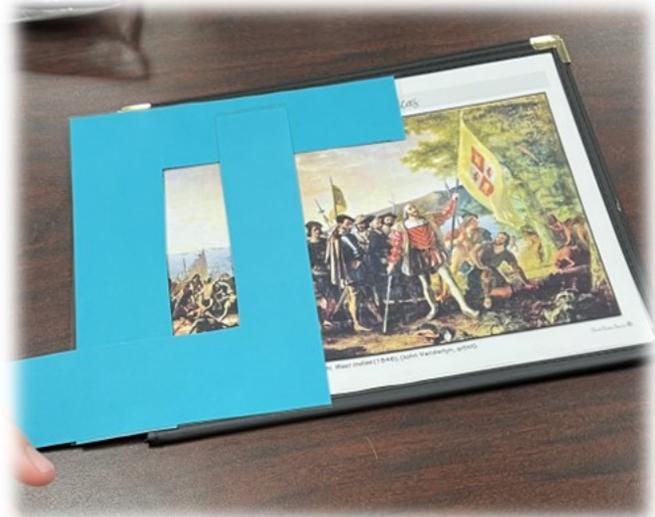
Crop-It

What is it?

Crop-it is a hands-on learning routine where teachers pose questions and students use paper cropping tools to "crop" to an answer found in a primary source. The routine helps students look carefully at a primary source to focus on pieces of evidence that support their ideas. Students use the evidence from their "crops" to build an interpretation or story.

Directions:

1. Create the crop-it tools out of card stock. Each student will need their own set.
2. Choose a visual that supports or introduces your topic. Make enough copies so that each student has their own visual.
3. Place the students with a partner to discuss.
4. Pass out a set of two crop-it tools to each student. Demonstrate how to use the crop-it tools to focus on a particular piece of a source. Show students how to make various sizes of squares, triangles, rectangles, and lines crop to "crop" or focus attention to an important part of the source.
5. Invite students to carefully explore their image by using the tools. Pose a question and ask students to look carefully and "crop" to an answer. Ask each question and then pause for students to crop to an answer. Questions for the crop-it can be found on the following page.

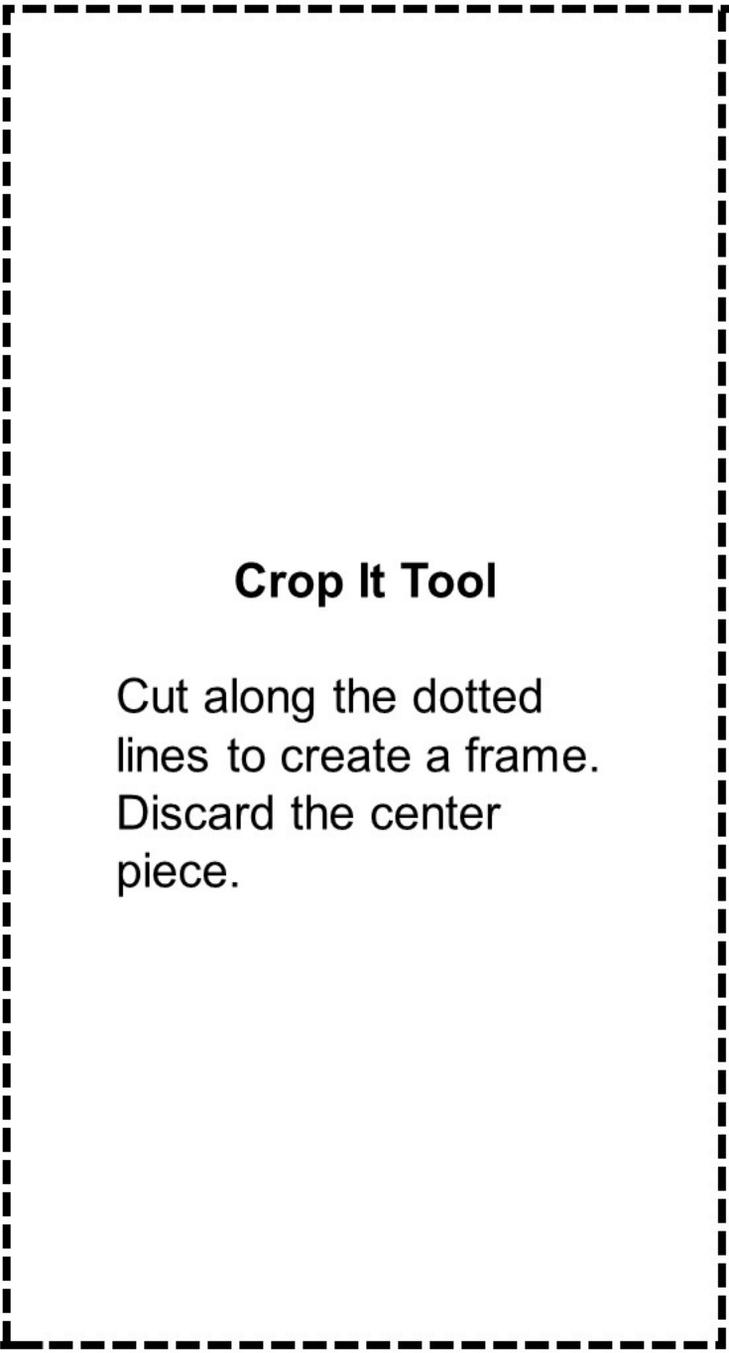


Crop-It Questions

Choose from the following questions for your students to use the Crop-It Tool.

- Crop to show what first caught your eye – Why did you first notice this part?
- Crop to show who or what this image is about. Why is this person or thing important?
- Crop to a clue that shows where this takes place. What do you think is happening?
- Crop to a clue that tells when this is happening. What helps us recognize specific times or eras?
- Crop to show the most important part of the image. Why is this part important?
- Crop to show tension or a problem in the image. Why is this important to the image or era?
- If you were to create a title for the image, what part of the image would you crop to highlight the title? What is the title you would create?
- Crop to a spot that you have a question about. What is your question?
- Crop to a spot that this image tells us about the past. How does it show the past?
- Crop to a place where you would add something to this image. What would you add and why?
- Crop to a spot that shows the emotion expressed in the image. What emotions are you seeing? Why are they important to the image?
- Crop to a spot that shows action. What action is occurring and why is it important to the image?





Crop It Tool

Cut along the dotted lines to create a frame.
Discard the center piece.