



SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

## STRATEGY: VOCABULARY CHART

### Strategy Overview

It is important for students to keep a record of new words they learn. This can be done in a notebook or a journal, but the [Vocabulary Chart Handout](#) is a useful, all-in-one record. The chart also allows students to gauge how well they know the word from time to time using the second, third, and fourth columns.

The fifth column lets students record initial impressions, which can be useful if they later refine how they approach learning new words. For example, maybe a particular word was similar to another word they already knew or a word they were familiar with in another language. The sixth and seventh columns provide spaces for definitions and the words used in example sentences. Students may need to be reminded that their sentences should reflect the meaning in a context related to the text they are studying.

An advantage of using a vocabulary chart or vocabulary cards is that students can refer to terms learned in previous lessons. For example, several of the terms in Lesson 20 of the *We the People: The Citizen & the Constitution* middle school book are used in previous lessons, including *framers* (p. 106), *electoral college* (p. 141), *factions* (p. 24), *necessary and proper clause* (p. 133), and *enumerated powers* (p. 132).

### Example

*We the People*, middle school, Lesson 20

1. Ask students to list the vocabulary words and phrases (p. 172) on a copy of the Vocabulary Chart Handout.
2. Students check the appropriate categories (columns two–four) to show their knowledge of each word. (These categories encourage students to think about what it means to know a word and sends a message that it is “okay” to admit to not knowing a word well.)
3. For each word or phrase, students indicate the thinking they tried in order to figure out the meaning. (This process encourages students to uncover their own thinking strategies for determining meanings without using a dictionary. For instance, students might be reminded of a word in Spanish or another language, or they might use root words to guess the meanings.)
4. Ask students to provide a definition in column six and a sentence example in column seven of the handout. This step may be done later, after the student is immersed in the lesson.