

**Illinois State Board of Education**  
**English Language Arts Content Area Specialists**  
**Ten Important Words Strategy**

The strategy Ten important Words Plus is based on principles of effective vocabulary instruction and can be used at any grade but can be very useful with elementary students when paired with the Frayer model.

- Distribute a text to be read and 10 sticky notes to each student.
- Students read the text and, while reading, identify and record 10 words from the text they consider key to the content.
- Students construct a bar graph with their notes. As identical words are contributed, vertical columns are constructed.
- Each new word begins a new column.
- Engage students in a discussion about the graph and choose the words that the group feels most identifies the key concepts of the text.
- Distribute a Frayer model chart to pairs of students. Pairs will choose one of the words from the graph and fill in the Frayer model chart. Students can replace examples and non-examples with synonyms and antonyms if need be.
- Students find other ways to use the word in context and share their findings in a group setting.

Frayer, D., Frederick, W. C., and Klausmeier, H. J. (1969). A Schema for Testing the Level of Cognitive Mastery. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Center for Education Research.

Yopp, R.H., & Yopp, H.K. (2007). Ten important words plus: A Strategy for building word knowledge. *The Reading Teacher*, 61(2), 157-160.