

### Students state the meaning in their own words.

Students now start to put the meanings of the new words “into their own words”. As each new word is re-visited, the students are actively involved in working out an accepted description of the word or term.

#### This can be approached in various ways:

- A general class discussion
- Small group work, leading to sharing ideas
- Brainstorming, using a word web of related words, concepts, semantic groups etc
- Providing a given definition, or description and selecting words that are familiar or make sense
- Using 2-step definition process to form a new definition  
(See Appendix, page 115, ‘Definitely Definitions’) >>
- Stating anything that students think they know about the word (word/world knowledge)
- Finding the word in a variety of sources: textbook, on-line, posters, wall charts, dictionaries.

Once the “class description” has been agreed on, record this as a visible reference e.g. on a Word Wall, a poster, or on the whiteboard for the duration of the topic, and ensure all students record the meaning in their notebooks.

### Random Mind Maps

When introducing a new topic, write a key word or term from the title of the topic in the middle of the board. Have students say any word that comes to mind that has to do with the topic. These can be anything from obviously to only vaguely related! Teachers should add words themselves, and may want to ensure that some essential vocabulary is included. Write these in black anywhere on the board.

Once enough words have been added (usually around 20 words), pick one word and circle it in a colour. The class then discusses what other words ‘belong’ to this one (i.e. semantic links), and what category is identified. Carry on until all words are categorized, and a name key is produced. In most cases 3 or 4 categories are identified.

**Purpose:** Getting students actively engaged in a new topic from the start. Drawing on students’ background knowledge. Identifying sub-topics involved in the main topic. Introducing essential vocabulary early in the new topic, with contextual cues such as links to background information and new ideas.

(See Appendix, page 124 for an example of a Random Mind Map) >>