

Wordsplash

This technique was originally developed as a pre-reading strategy by reading researcher Dorsey Hammond of Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan, who calls it the Key Word strategy.

A "Wordsplash" is a collection of key terms or concepts selected from a reading, a chapter in a textbook, a lecture, a demonstration, or from audiovisual materials which students are about to read, see or hear. The selected terms are splashed at angles on a chart or overhead transparency. Students are asked to generate complete statements -- not just words or phrases-- which show the terms predicted relationship to the topic. Students usually work in small groups to generate statements.

Once the statements are generated, the printed material is presented to the students. They read it together and pause after each paragraph or two to check their predictions against the data that is presented. Students should modify their statements as needed and place a question mark next to any statements which are neither verified or negated.

The same procedure can be followed for a lecture, demonstration or audiovisual presentation, with the teacher pausing periodically for students to examine their statements.

Roles can be assigned to students: recorder; reader; checker

Another option is too give groups or individuals copies of the splash on which to record their statements.

Once students are familiar with the strategy, they can create their own word splashes. Used in this manner, the strategy becomes a summarizing device. This can also be used as a form of alternative assessment.

