

Teacher Activities

Level E, Page 13 Vocabulary in Action

Vocabulary Word: **dismal**

Discussion Through Art: **Small Groups**

Read aloud the Vocabulary in Action feature and discuss the definition of **dismal**. Provide examples of dismal situations. Distribute newspapers and magazines to small groups. Have each group create a collage on poster board or construction paper that expresses the word *dismal* to them (*a natural disaster, images of someone having a bad day*). Ask each group to present and explain its collage to the entire class. In addition to discussing the chosen images and how each represents a dismal situation, brainstorm how the situations could have positive outcomes.

Level E, Page 18 Vocabulary in Action

Vocabulary Word: **distract**

Discussion Through Art: **Individuals**

Read aloud the Vocabulary in Action feature. Discuss the quote by Henry David Thoreau, giving a brief overview of who he was and his relationship to nature. Discuss the importance of nature and our relationship to it. Ask each student to draw a sketch that represents inventions “which **distract** our attention.” Have each student write a caption for his or her sketch that explains the distraction, what it distracts from, and how to avoid it.

Level E, Page 31 Vocabulary in Action

Vocabulary Word: **inflammable**

Classroom Discussion: **Whole Class**

Read aloud the Vocabulary in Action feature and discuss the definition of **inflammable**. Point out to the class that there is also a second definition of *inflammable*. Have a volunteer to look it up in a dictionary. Point

out that inflammable also means “easily, inflamed, excited, or angered.” Engage the class in a discussion about situations in which they or someone they know were “inflammable.” Discuss the relationship between the two definitions—how they are the same and how they are different.

Level E, Page 42 Vocabulary in Action

Vocabulary Word: **homogenized**

Recipe Invention: **Small Groups**

Read aloud the Vocabulary in Action feature. Give students the definition of **homogenize**—“to blend diverse elements into a uniform mixture.” Discuss the example of milk given in the Vocabulary in Action feature and have students tell what elements are blended. Then have small groups generate “recipes” in which diverse ingredients are blended, or homogenized. Tell them that they can be real recipes (*pancakes*) or invented recipes (“*green goop*” made with green gelatin, milk, flour, etc.).

Level E, Page 45 Vocabulary in Action

Vocabulary Word: **atmosphere**

Plants and the Atmosphere: **Small Groups**

Read aloud the Vocabulary in Action feature and discuss the definition of **atmosphere**. Provide small groups with potting soil, two paper cups, and grass seed. Have each group plant grass seed in two cups, placing one cup in an area where it will get plenty of air and sunlight and the other cup in dark area, such as a coat closet or pantry. Have students take care of the plants for two weeks. At the end of the two weeks, have each group summarize its findings in a brief report telling how the **atmosphere** affected both plants.

Level E, Page 46 Notable Quotes

Vocabulary Word: **progress**

History Hunt: **Individuals**

Read aloud the Notable Quote by James Bryant Conant. Discuss moments in our nation's history when **progress** and effort have prevailed, such as Henry Ford's auto assembly lines or Thomas Edison's incandescent light bulb. Have each student research a historical figure who has "[made] progress only when he sticks his neck out" (*George Washington Carver, Harriet Tubman, the Wright Brothers*). Ask students to answer the following questions: *How did this individual help move our country forward? What progress was made? How did the individual stick out his or her neck? Would you feel that you could do the same?* Have each student share his or her findings with the class.

Level E, Page 52 Vocabulary in Action

Vocabulary Word: **vaccine**

History Lesson: **Small Groups**

Read aloud the Vocabulary in Action feature and discuss the definition of **vaccine**. Provide small groups with the name of a specific disease to research (*polio, small pox, chicken pox, measles, mumps, rubella, whooping cough*). Have each group provide a brief report on the disease, who invented the vaccine, to whom the vaccine is given, and its effect. The lesson can also emphasize discoveries of other ways to prevent illness (*hand washing, getting enough rest and nutrients, covering your mouth when sneezing and coughing*).

Level E, Page 65 Vocabulary in Action

Vocabulary Word: **sinister**

Fairy Tale Revision: **Individuals**

Read aloud the Vocabulary in Action feature and discuss the definition of **sinister**. Brainstorm examples of sinister characters in fairy tales (*Little Red Riding Hood, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty*). Have volunteers answer the following questions: *What did this sinister character do? How did he or she affect the story? What was your reaction to this character?* Ask each student to rewrite a fairy tale, changing the sinister character into someone good. Have each student share his or her story with the rest of the class. Ask students to tell how the lack of a sinister character changes the story.

Level E, Page 78 Vocabulary in Action

Vocabulary Word: **vertebra**

Art Project: **Individuals**

Read aloud the Vocabulary in Action feature and discuss the definition of **vertebra**. Review the importance of the vertebra to the human body and other organisms. Discuss the differences between organisms that have vertebra and those that do not. Ask the following questions: *How would the world be different if humans didn't have vertebra? What would we be able to do? What would we not be able to do?* Using poster board and markers, have students sketch how life would be different if human beings did not have vertebra. Students should also write a brief caption describing their sketches.

Level E, Page 86 Vocabulary in Action

Vocabulary Word: **manacle**

Class Discussion: **Whole Class**

Read aloud the Vocabulary in Action feature and discuss the definition of **manacle**. Have students read Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. Ask why the word *manacle* is used. How does the word tie into the speech and the time period? Have students write a sentence in which they use the word *manacle*.

Level E, Page 99 Vocabulary in Action

Vocabulary Word: **magnify**

What Do You See?: **Whole Class**

Read aloud the Vocabulary in Action feature and discuss the definition of **magnify**. Hand out magnifying glasses and ask each student to use it to magnify and sketch an object. Then have other students guess what each object is depicted in the sketches. Ask the class to share their answers about what they saw, tying into the discussion that magnified objects often "appear larger than they actually are" and often more detailed. Ask students to tell what details they notice in the magnified image that they couldn't see without magnification.