

# Grades 6–8

## Unit of Study: Disease and Society

McREL World History Standard 23.1

### Strategy in Action: How Does It Work?

1. Before using this strategy, decide which social studies vocabulary words to use. You can use specialized content and/or general academic words, but the strategy is more appropriate for specialized content words. These should be words that students have learned prior to this activity.

In this sample lesson, the teacher selects the following specialized content (SC) and general academic (GA) words that students have already learned during the unit:

SC	<i>Black Death</i>	<i>mortality rate</i>	<i>society</i>
	<i>death rate</i>	<i>plague</i>	
	<i>epidemic</i>	<i>social factor</i>	
GA	<i>century</i>	<i>disease</i>	<i>influenced</i>
	<i>decline</i>	<i>global</i>	<i>origin</i>
	<i>devastate</i>	<i>impact</i>	

2. To prepare for this lesson, make copies of the Content Links resource page to create word cards. Write each word on its own word card. If possible, have enough words so that each student in the class has his or her own word.  
In this sample lesson, the teacher has 30 students, so students will work in pairs. There are 15 words—one for each pair of students.
3. To begin the lesson, hold up each word card. Ask specific groups of students (e.g., students at table one, students in the first row) to read them. Ask students if they need clarification on any of the words' meanings. Encourage other students to define the words, point out resources in the room such as charts or photos, or use the words in context to help their classmates.  
In this sample lesson, the students ask for clarification of the term *epidemic*. The teacher reminds students that many of them had the flu during winter and explains that because it spread so quickly among them, that was an *epidemic* for the classroom.
4. Explain the directions for the activity. Tell students that each pair will make a link, or match, with another pair's vocabulary word. Pairs will then discuss how their words are related. Then they will share their ideas with the class.
5. Distribute one word card to each student (or to each pair of students). Then give students time to mingle. Students should find links for their vocabulary words.

6. Ask students to stand together with their partners and form a circle around the room. (Note: There is a chance that some students will find no match.)

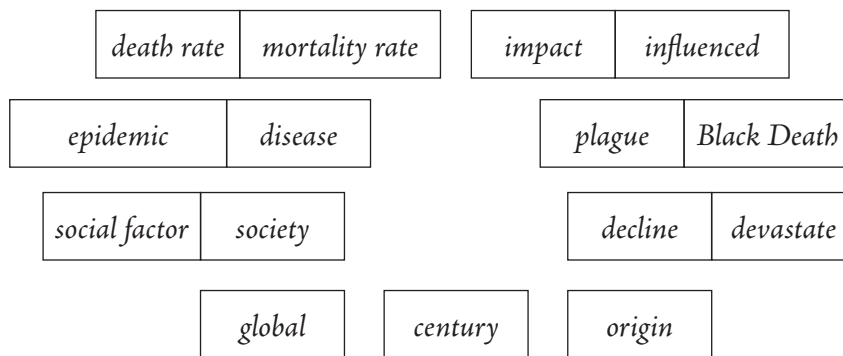
In this sample lesson, the following pairs are created: *impact* and *influenced*; *decline* and *devastate*; *plague* and *Black Death*; *death rate* and *mortality rate*; *social factor* and *society*; *epidemic* and *disease*. The words *origin*, *century*, and *global* were not linked with any other words.

7. Have each pair discuss with the class their words, the definitions, and how the words are connected. If some students found no match, ask them to explain why those words were difficult to relate to other words.

In this sample lesson, the first two pairs read their words (*impact* and *influenced*), explain what each word means, and tell how the words are linked by saying, “The *impact* that these diseases had *influenced* the world’s population.”

8. In conclusion, ask students how making connections between vocabulary words has helped them better understand those words. Ask students to write a brief response.

### Example



## Differentiation

### Above-Level Learners

After students have linked pairs of words, have pairs link their words to other pairs of students. Ask the group of students to explain how they linked the four words.

### English Language Learners

Make sure that students understand what the selected words mean. Modify the word cards by adding a simple sketch or visual representation of each word’s meaning.

### Below-Level Learners

Have students echo-read each word on the cards, with you as their role model. Review the definition and explanation of each word. Use pictures, sketches, or gestures whenever possible to communicate the words’ meanings.