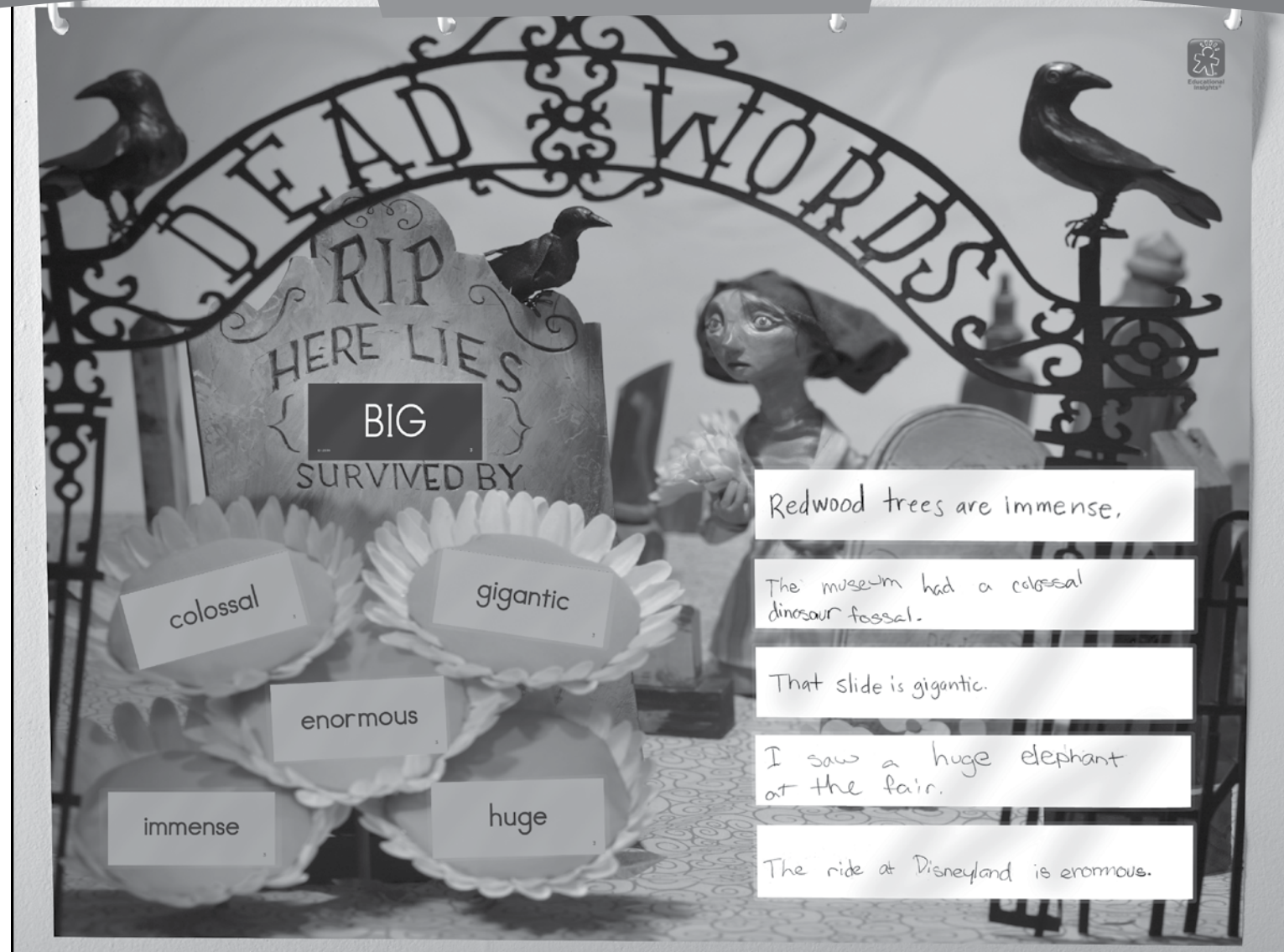




Dead Words™

Vocabulary Enrichment Center

Teacher's Guide



Some words have just been around too long. Lay them to rest with the *Dead Words Vocabulary Enrichment Center*. It's a great way to develop students' writing and speaking vocabularies.

Includes:

- Themed fabric center with pockets for displaying words and student-written sentences. Includes card storage pocket on back.
- 20 Double-sided word cards (40 overused words and 5 vocabulary-enriching synonyms)
- 1 Blank, write-on/wipe-off card for student-researched words
- Teacher Guide

Before You Begin

1. Before using your center, review the word *synonym*. Remind students that a synonym is a word that means the same or almost the same as another word. Work with students on some simple examples, such as: *big* and *large*, *little* and *small*, *happy* and *glad*, *father* and *dad*.
2. Explain to students that some words such as *good*, *pretty*, *nice*, and *said* have many synonyms that are more interesting. Skillful writers use these more descriptive words to make their writing more exciting.
3. Write the sentence pairs below on the board or read them aloud to students. Ask students what differences they notice about the sentences. Which sentences are more interesting? Identify the words in each sentence that contribute to making some sentences more effective than others.

The girl said, "I like this funny book."
The girl exclaimed, "I adore this hilarious book!"

The fat puppy ran under the table.
The plump puppy wriggled under the table.

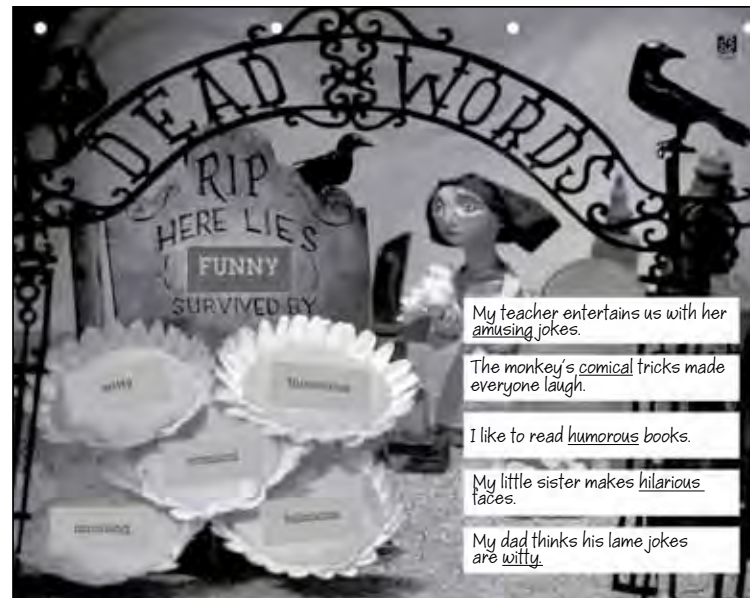
The baby cried when her mean brother took her toy.
The baby bawled when her cruel brother grabbed her toy.

Note: You can also use sentences from student writing, without identifying the authors.

4. Introduce the concept of "dead words," words that are overused or "used to death" in writing. Display the Dead Words Vocabulary Enrichment Center. Explain to students that your class will be using the center to learn new words to incorporate into their writing.

Using Your Center

1. Choose a target word you would like to work on with students. You can use the overused word cards in any order. They are numbered to make it easier to keep the target words and their synonyms together.
2. Place the target word in the top pocket of the tombstone. Depending on the age and abilities of your students, arrange some or all of the word's synonyms on the blooms below. For younger or more inexperienced students, you may wish to introduce just one new synonym a day.
3. Work with students to discuss the target word and its synonyms and to write sentences on the board or on chart paper using the words.
4. Assign students to write their own sentences using one or more of the synonyms on sentence strips or on pieces of paper cut to fit the sentence pockets on the right side of the chart. Post and rotate student work so students have an opportunity to learn from one another.



Additional Vocabulary Enrichment Activities

Dead Words Cemetery

Make copies of the reproducible tombstone in this guide. Assign small groups of students each a "dead word" from the list below. Provide a thesaurus or dictionary to each group, or direct students to use on-line thesauri for their research. When students have completed their research, they can teach their classmates the new words. As tombstones are completed, arrange them in a Dead Words Cemetery display. This is a great way to remind students to use more descriptive words in their writing.

Dead Words Dictionaries

As students learn more interesting words, have them create dictionaries. They can decorate construction paper covers and staple paper inside. Each entry should include: the dead word, one or more synonyms, and a sentence using each synonym.

Book It!

Provide a stack of picture books from your school library. Have small groups of students review the books, looking for words the authors used that were more interesting than dead words. Try it with student magazines and newspapers too.

More Dead Words List

Here is a list of additional words you can use to inspire student research.

ask	demand, inquire, interrogate, question, request
awesome	amazing, astounding, remarkable, splendid, tremendous
beautiful	glamorous, gorgeous, ravishing, striking, stunning
dark	dim, gloomy, murky, shadowy, shady
dirty	dingy, filthy, grimy, grubby, soiled
eat	chew, consume, devour, gobble, nibble
end	close, completion, conclusion, finale, finish
fair	impartial, just, objective, reasonable, unbiased
fall	collapse, descend, drop, plummet, plunge
gross	disgusting, foul, nasty, sickening, unpleasant
help	aid, assist, facilitate, relieve, support
interesting	captivating, enchanting, fascinating, motivating, stimulating
laugh	chuckle, giggle, guffaw, hoot, snicker
loud	deafening, earsplitting, piercing, shrill, thunderous
right	accurate, correct, exact, factual, precise
slow	dawdling, leisurely, poky, sluggish, unhurried
tired	bushed, drained, exhausted, fatigued, weary
useful	beneficial, constructive, functional, handy, practical
wet	clammy, drenched, moist, saturated, soaked
wrong	erroneous, false, inaccurate, incorrect, mistaken