

## **Interactive Word Walls: Transforming Content Vocabulary Instruction**

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Word walls are designed to serve as visual scaffolds and are a common classroom tool used to support reading and language arts instruction. To support vocabulary development in science and support students who are ELLs, Husty and Jackson (2008) created interactive word walls that resemble semantic maps (Masters, Mori, and Mori 1993). Semantic maps are graphic organizers that help students identify important ideas and how those ideas fit together. They visually showcase relationships among concepts and may also be referred to as web or concept maps. An interactive word wall, as opposed to the traditional word wall, provides visual aids that assist in illustrating word meanings and conceptually organize words to deepen understanding. These word walls usually include a visual representation of the word along with a vocabulary label. Definitions are optional. In this article, the authors describe an interactive word wall designed to support vocabulary development in middle-school science students, especially ELL students. (Contains 5 figures.)

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