Clustering

A useful strategy for introducing vocabulary words for a particular unit of work. Can also be used for maintaining/reinforcing/revising vocabulary words.

- Create and then give students a packet of vocabulary words (about 20) for your current topic.

- Have students, in small groups, arrange words in clusters (groups) according to the meaning of the words. It's okay to have a pile of 'don't knows'.

- Encourage students to discuss and negotiate where/how/why words should be grouped.

- Ask students to give each cluster a heading (supply blank pieces of paper for this).

- Each group can then share/justify how they have prepared their clusters.

This strategy provides students with an opportunity to think about and discuss/debate the meanings of words and the relationship between words. Students are reminded of words they already know and are introduced to new vocabulary.

Teachers can use this strategy to find out what students know about the topic being studied. Additionally teachers can contribute to student discussions in ways that will help students clarify their understandings.

DNA	mRNA	tRNA	Gene
Enzyme	Transcription	Translation	Amino Acid
Functional Protein	phenotype	Genotype	Mutation
Mutagen	Metabolism	Gene Expression	Nucleotide
Deoxyribose sugar	Ribose sugar	Nitrogenous base	Triplet
Codon	Anticodon	degeneracy	Ribosome