



Wordsplash

Source: Dorsey Hammond, Oakland University, Rochester, MI

A Wordsplash is a collection of key terms or concepts taken from a written passage—a chapter in a textbook, a newspaper or magazine article—which the students are about to read. The terms selected represent important ideas that the teacher wants students to attend to when they actually do the reading later, but initially the students' task is to make predictive statements about how each of the terms relates to the title or main focus of the reading. Most terms selected for a Wordsplash are familiar vocabulary for students. The novelty of the terms is only the way in which the terms are associated with the new topic.

Display selected terms randomly and at angles on a visual (overhead or chart). Students brainstorm and generate *complete statements* (not just words or phrases) which predict the *relationship* between each term and the broader topic. Once students have generated statements for each term they turn to the printed material, read to check the accuracy of their predictive statements and revise where needed.

When students have read and revised their predictions encourage them to quiz each other on the correct information.

Suggestions, Applications and Variations:

- Create a Wordsplash prior to viewing a film: pause the film periodically for students to discuss/revise predictions.
- Create a Wordsplash prior to having a *guest speaker*: if time permits share the students' predictions with the speaker in advance of his presentation.
- Create a *Picture Splash*: "What do you think these pictures have to do with Christopher Columbus and his voyage?"
- Use the Wordsplash as a summarizing strategy: *students read and then create their own Wordsplash* of what they consider to be the key terms or ideas in the passage.

