

WORD FOREST TEACHER'S GUIDE

A repeatable 25–45-minute vocabulary lesson for students in grades Pre-K–2.

Uses the *Sudoku Forest*  game.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to describe the similarities and differences of a series of images.
- Students will be able to construct complete sentences using grade level vocabulary words in context.
- Students will be able to use spatial and temporal vocabulary to describe the steps needed to solve simple logic puzzles.

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

This short activity is designed to help students practice using grade level temporal and spatial vocabulary words using the *Sudoku Forest* game.

In the game, different animals are placed on a puzzle board according to certain rules and restrictions. After doing this, students will then describe the animals and their relative location to one another using the vocabulary words they will be learning in their proper context.

This activity can be implemented multiple times throughout the school year as students are exposed to new vocabulary words, or for review, remediation, or even just practicing using various spatial, temporal, and descriptive words in proper context.

Several lists of vocabulary words sorted by recommended grade levels are provided in the

ELA Common Core STANDARDS CORRELATIONS

Kindergarten

L.K.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on kindergarten reading and content.

- A. Identify new meanings for familiar words and apply them accurately (e.g., knowing duck is a bird and learning the verb to duck).

L.K.5: With guidance and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- A. Sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.
- B. Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs and adjectives by relating them to their opposites (antonyms).
- C. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at school that are colorful).

1st Grade

L.1.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 1 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.

- A. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

Standards correlations continue at the end of the document.

word list sections. Feel free to add to, subtract from, or adjust these lists as you see fit for the ability level and needs of your students.

The student handouts are designed to be used as templates rather than stand-alone assignments, so you can use the same style of prompts for any of the *Sudoku Forest* puzzles. There are three templates in the student handout document, one for 2x2 puzzles (Part 1), one for 2x3 puzzles (Part 2), and one for 3x3 puzzles (Part 3).

For students who cannot yet read and write on their own, you can circle the blanks on the student handout for those students, or display the student handout as a prompt and allow students to respond orally.

PROCEDURE

1. Hook

Begin the lesson by introducing the game *Sudoku Forest* to your students. Explain the rules and allow them to solve the first few puzzles (cards 1–12 are level-1 difficulty). If your students are up for the challenge, offer one or more of the level-2 or level-3 puzzles (cards 13–66). Encourage students to talk through their thinking while they solve the puzzles. Take special note of any of the words students use that may be already on the vocabulary list.

*"The **orange** animal can't go in the spot **next to** the bunny, it has to go **down** in the **bottom corner**, **here**."*

2. Instruction

Introduce the vocabulary words you want your students to practice today. Share any words you heard students using that were on the list, or were similar to the words on the list, while they were solving the puzzles. Review the meaning and usage of each word.

*"I heard you using words like **next to**, **down**, **bottom**, **corner**, and **here**. Good job! Those are on our list, so now we will try to use these other words too."*

3. Student Activity

Students will pick a puzzle, solve the puzzle, then describe the location of each animal on the grid or relative to another animal. Parts 1 and 2 of the student handout have some guided prompts for students to follow to help them construct these description sentences. These parts are especially helpful for lower-level students who are not quite fluent with reading and writing.

For students that are able to read and write fluently, they can move on to Part 3 of the student handout once they understand the procedure and the goal from Parts 1 and 2. Part 3 is less guided and allows students freedom with how they word their responses. You can provide them with a different list of vocabulary words, or expand the list you already gave them, as they repeat the process with Part 3. Students should try to use as many of the vocabulary words as they can in their description.

Afterward, have students share their descriptions of their puzzle solutions with you or each other to see if they were descriptive enough to solve the puzzle without any clues from the card.

4. Conclusion

To reinforce with students how important these words are for communication, spend five minutes to have a student try to describe the location of any one animal on a puzzle without any of the spatial words they practiced. They will see quickly how much harder it is without the vocabulary words.

"We like vocab words because they make it easier for us to understand each other."

Assessment

For students that cannot yet read or write, you can assess student learning based on how many of the selected vocabulary words they used in their oral responses to the prompts from the student handout. If they struggle to use the selected words on their own, give them a choice between two words to use in a full sentence to describe something about the animals on the puzzle.

For students that can read and write, the student handout can be collected, graded, and displayed if you choose.

Extension Activities

Other activities that could accompany this lesson include:

- Have a spelling bee with the vocabulary words.
- Have students make their own *Sudoku Forest* puzzle with descriptions for clues instead of icons.
- Display several *Sudoku Forest* puzzles and several verbal descriptions and challenge students to find which puzzles match which descriptions.

WORD LISTS: SPATIAL WORDS

Pre-K

back	bottom	by	close	down	front	here
high	in front of	inside	left	next to	outside	over
place	right	side	there	to	top	under
up	where					

Kindergarten

above	across	anywhere	around	back	below	beneath
beside	between	center	direction	everywhere	location	low
middle	nowhere	separate	somewhere	together		

1st Grade

alongside	east	edge	far	near
north	position	south	west	

2nd Grade

adjacent	border	column	horizontal
opposite	row	vertical	

WORD LISTS: PHYSICAL DESCRIPTORS

Pre-K

big	little	long	short	soft	hard	itty bitty
tiny	black	blue	green	grey	orange	pink
purple	red	white	yellow			

Kindergarten

tall	short	fat	skinny	large	small	smooth
bumpy	thick	thin	furry	feathery		

1st Grade

teeny	huge	wide	narrow	deep	shallow
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2nd Grade

enormous	gigantic
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WORD LISTS: TRANSITION WORDS

Pre-K

after	before	soon	then	when	first
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Kindergarten

second	third	fourth	earlie	last
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1st Grade

during	finally	later	next	now
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2nd Grade

following	immediatley	meanwhile	once
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WORD FOREST

STUDENT HANDOUT

PART 1 - WORD CIRCLES (PUZZLES 1-12)

Choose a puzzle. Circle the right words.

Puzzle Number



The (**Pink** | **Green** | **Orange**) pig is on the
(**Right** | **Left**) side of the puzzle and
on the (**Top** | **Bottom**).



The (**Red** | **Orange** | **Blue**) dog is
(**Over** | **Under** | **Next To**) the pig.



The (**Green** | **Grey** | **Red**) frog is (**Under** | **Over**)
the dog on the (**Left** | **Right**) side of the puzzle.



The (**Black** | **Yellow** | **White**) bunny is
on the (**Right** | **Left**) of the frog and
(**Over** | **Under**) the pig.



PART 2 - FILL IN OR CIRCLE (PUZZLES 1-12)

Choose a puzzle. Fill in or circle the right words.

Puzzle Number

2



The (Small) frog is on the
(**Left** | **Right**) part of the puzzle
(Above) the (**Smooth** | **Furry**) dog.



The bunny with (Tall) ears is in the
(**Top** | **Bottom**) part of the puzzle
(Beneath) the (**Smooth** | **Furry**) pig .



The (Orange) dog is in the
(**Top** | **Bottom**) of the puzzle and also
on the (**Left** | **Right**) side, so they are
(Below) the frog.



PART 3 - WHERE ARE THE ANIMALS?

Choose any puzzle with all nine animals. (Puzzles 43–90). Use words to describe where each animal is.

Puzzle Number

43



Pig is in the bottom corner on the right. Pig is beneath cat and next to frog.



Dog is in the top middle.



Frog is in the bottom row in between duck and pig.
Frog is in the middle of the bottom.



Rabbit is above bird. Rabbit is next to dog. Rabbit is in the top row. Rabbit is in the left column.



Hippo is in the middle. Not the top, not the bottom, not the left, not the right.



Panda is in the top next to dog. Panda is on the right above cat.



Bird is in the middle of the left. Below rabbit, right of hippo, above duck.



Cat is in the middle of the right. The right column, the center row.



Duck is in the bottom left.

L.1.5: With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- B. Sort words into categories (e.g., colors, clothing) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.
- C. Define words by category and by one or more key attributes (e.g., a duck is a bird that swims; a tiger is a large cat with stripes).
- D. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at home that are cozy).

2nd Grade

L.2.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 2 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.

- A. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

L.2.5: Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- A. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe foods that are spicy or juicy).



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