

Word Detective Circle

Use clues, word parts, tone, and figurative language to build meaning.

GRADE 9 • 9.RV

9.RV "The student will systematically build vocabulary and word knowledge based on grade nine content and texts. Vocabulary Development and Word Analysis Develop and accurately use general academic and content-specific vocabulary through..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

OUR GROUND RULES Read together first

1 Keep the topic card where everyone can see it.

2 Point to exact words from the topic when you speak.

3 Play a move card only after you complete its starter.

4 Listen for ideas you can build on or revise.

HOW TO PLAY Teams of 3 or 4

1. Choose one topic card and read it aloud.
2. Each player takes one role card. In a group of three, one player takes two roles.
3. Make enough copies of the move cards for each player to receive four cards. Shuffle and deal four cards to each player.
4. Take turns using one move-card starter to add a specific idea about the topic.
5. Put each used card in the middle. The round ends when every player has played all four cards.

AFTER THE ROUND Check what you did

☐ I used context to clarify a word or phrase.

☐ I used a word part to support a meaning.

☐ I explained a word's connotation.

☐ I explained an idiom or figurative image and its effect.


TOPIC CARDS · pick one per round

TOPIC	TOPIC	TOPIC
Team Tryouts A coach says, "Devon is persistent when learning a new skill," while a rival says, "Devon is stubborn." Devon adds, "I must break the ice with unfamiliar teammates." Analyze the two describing words, explain the idiom, and use un- in unfamiliar to support its meaning.	Library Poster A poster says, "Curiosity is a compass, and books are doors to unfamiliar worlds." Analyze unfamiliar using word parts and context, explain the connotation of curiosity, and explain the figurative images and their effect.	Science Fair A judge calls a project biodegradable and says its creator showed perseverance after failed tests. The judge adds, "Your patience is a bridge to better designs." Use bio-, de-, and -able plus context to explain biodegradable. Then analyze perseverance and the figurative comparison.

ROLE CARDS · one per player

ROLE	ROLE	ROLE	ROLE
Clue Scout Watch for context clues and ask the group to name the words that support an inference.	Parts Builder Watch for prefixes, roots, and suffixes, and help connect each part to a word's meaning.	Tone Tracker Watch for positive, negative, or neutral feelings connected to word choices.	Meaning Mapper Watch for idioms and figurative language, and help explain what they suggest.

MOVE CARDS · deal 4 to each player

MOVE CARD USE CONTEXT "The context clue ____ shows that ____ means ____."	MOVE CARD USE CONTEXT "I infer that ____ means ____ because ____."	MOVE CARD STUDY PARTS "In ____, the word part ____ means ____, so the word suggests ____."	MOVE CARD STUDY PARTS "The prefix, root, or suffix ____ helps me understand ____ as ____."
MOVE CARD CHECK TONE "____ and ____ both suggest ____, but ____ feels more ____."	MOVE CARD CHECK TONE "The word ____ has a ____ connotation because ____."	MOVE CARD EXPLAIN LANGUAGE "____ is figurative because _____. It suggests ____."	MOVE CARD EXPLAIN LANGUAGE "The phrase ____ means _____. Its effect is ____."

Print one card sheet per team. Cards last longer on thick paper.

RUNNING THE ROUNDS

Use one topic card per round, and require each player to play all four cards with ideas tied to the exact language on the card. If a player has a move that does not fit at first, the group may help locate a relevant word or phrase, but the player must complete the starter aloud. For uneven participation, call on the player with the fewest cards in the middle before inviting another player to add a new idea.

WHAT A STRONG ROUND SOUNDS LIKE

Ava	I infer that unfamiliar means not known because the poster describes worlds the reader has not explored yet.
Malik	In unfamiliar, the word part un- means not, so the word suggests not familiar or not known.
Zoe	The word curiosity has a positive connotation because it suggests an eager desire to learn.
Luis	Books are doors is figurative because books cannot open like actual doors. It suggests books give readers access to new ideas.
Ava	The phrase curiosity is a compass means curiosity guides a person. Its effect is to make learning sound like an adventure.

LISTEN FOR

- Specific context details used as evidence for a meaning
- Accurate connections between affixes and whole-word meanings
- Clear distinction between shared denotation and different connotations
- Literal explanations of idioms or figurative images followed by text effects

There are no right answers to the topic cards. Score the moves students make, not their opinions.