Science Strategy # 5-Content Knowledge-Vocabulary

One of the things that makes content-heavy subjects so challenging is the amount of vocabulary involved. Though each topic or concept has its own unique vocabulary, there are ways to approach learning and studying it that will make it seem a lot less overwhelming, not to mention easier to remember!

One Way to Approach Science Vocabulary: Using Etymology

* A lot of science vocabulary was developed using Greek and Latin etymology. Looking for common Greek and Latin prefixes, roots, and suffixes in your vocabulary list for a single unit, as well as applying some of them to different units, will make learning and remembering vocabulary easier.

**Examples: micro** (prefix meaning **“small”**); **astro** (root meaning **“star”**); **ist** (suffixmeaning **“one who”** or **“a person who”**

* Breaking down longer words into these syllables can help you learn their definitions

**Example: microbiologist- a person who studies tiny organisms**

**(micro=small; bio=life; ology=study of; ist=one who)**

* Pay attention to parts of speech, and the words and endings that denote them, as well as to word families

**Examples:**

**Pasteurize: to kill disease-causing organisms in milk**

**(ize** is a verb ending; **to** is used define a **verb; kill** shows **action)**

**Pasteurization: method used to kill disease-causing organisms in milk**

**(ation** is a noun ending;a **method** is a **thing,** and therefore a **noun)**

**Louis Pasteur: scientist who invented a method used to kill disease-causing organisms in milk** (connecting the person to his or her invention is another way to remember every related definition!)