Teaching Notes

The goal of RI.8.4 is for students to determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings, and to analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. The following information contains ideas that teachers can incorporate into their classroom as well as additional resources to peruse and integrate into instruction as appropriate.

Activities

1. Create a list of higher-grade-level words and their definitions that can be used to explain a specific topic or concept of your choice. Once students are familiar with their meanings, have them use those words to develop a paragraph that uses three to five of those words to explain the subject on their own. When they are finished, have students share their paragraphs with the class and compare how each student interpreted the subject.
2. Create a list of common Latin roots and affixes, and have students study and work with using those words. Then create a matching item quiz that tests students' knowledge of Latin roots, and have them also practice by using the roots and affixes in sentences. This could also be adapted for a bingo-type game or a *Jeopardy*-type game for lower stakes.

Writing Prompts

1. Find another technical report much like the one from the module that uses some higher-grade-level words, and have students indicate unfamiliar words as they read it. Have students practice the various strategies for using context clues to determine the meanings of technical words, and then have students rewrite the section or sentence that contains the word to incorporate their newfound definitions. For the full text of the report used in the module, click this link: http://www.jec.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/6aaa7e1f-9586-47be-82e7-326f47658320/stem-education---preparing-for-the-jobs-of-the-future-.pdf
2. Find a nonfiction informational text and have students indicate any words they may be unfamiliar with. Once students determine their meanings, have students write a summary paragraph that explains the same topic while using the new vocabulary.

Additional Resources
Consider these additional resources when teaching RI.8.4:

- **"Using Structural Analysis to Determine the Meaning of Words":** This video explains how to use structural analysis of words to find their meanings: http://study.com/academy/lesson/using-structural-analysis-to-determine-the-meaning-of-words.html
- **"Unfamiliar Words":** This source offers a plethora of resources such as worksheets, activities, and lesson plans for teaching how to use context clues for determining the meaning of words: http://www.internet4classrooms.com/grade_level_help/language_unfamiliar_words_language_arts_eighth_8th_grade.htm