

How to Develop a Personal Glossary

When you read material for classes, you will come across words that are unfamiliar to you. It is easy to find out what a single word means, but it can be difficult to remember the meaning of several different words. *Terminology* is the study of words and what they mean. A personal glossary is a tool that can help you with terminology because it provides a list of words and their meanings to which you can refer at any time. You can use your own words to explain the meaning of the words in your personal glossary, but be sure that what you write is accurate.

Some activities will instruct you to add words to your personal glossary, and these words often will be in bold type. However, you should get in the habit of adding all words that are unfamiliar to you to your personal glossary. The more you add words to your glossary, the better you will be able to remember and understand the information in the activities.

Personal Glossary Guidelines

You can keep your personal glossary in your digital notebook. If instead you are using a paper-based notebook, you can use the last 25 pages of the notebook for your glossary. You can also turn your paper-based notebooks upside down and backwards, then begin your glossary on the first page. There are different ways you can start your personal glossary. One way is to use the last 25 pages of your technology notebook. Another way is to turn your technology notebook upside down and backwards and start your glossary on the first page. This makes it easy to find where your glossary starts and ends.

Organize your personal glossary so that the words are grouped by activity and chapter. It is too hard to organize the words alphabetically—both when you are building your glossary and when you are trying to find a word.

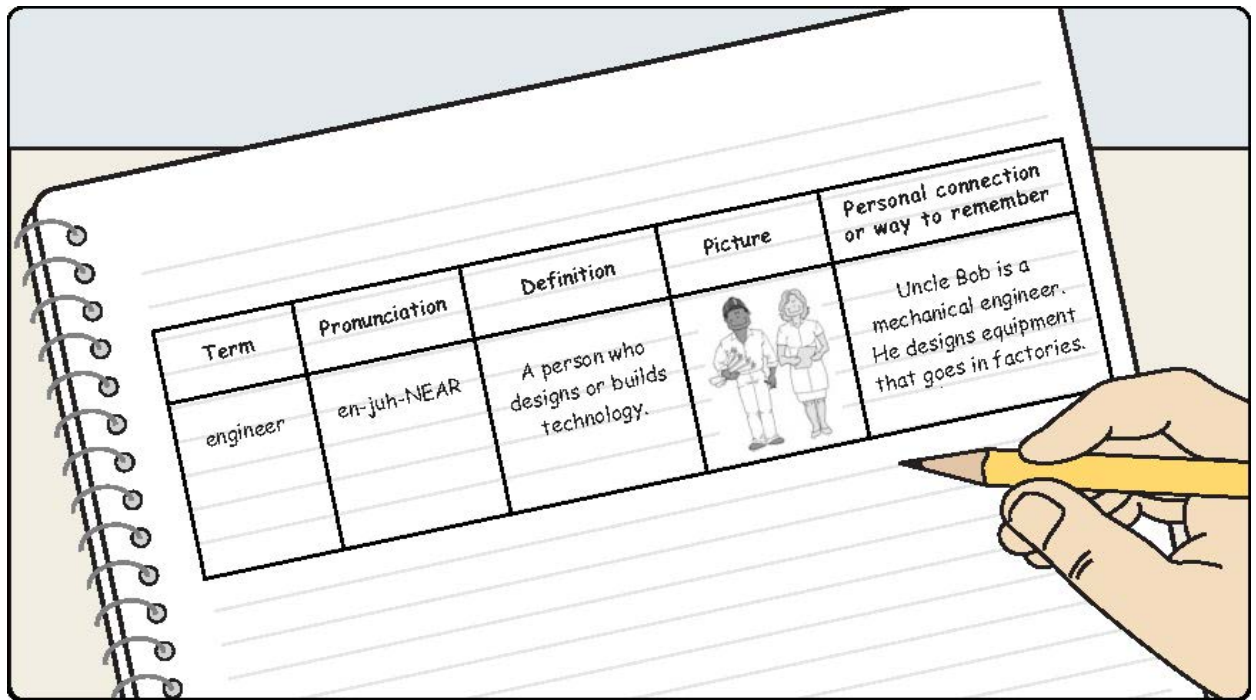


Figure 1: A sample personal glossary entry. Use this chart as a guide for creating your personal glossary. You may not need to fill in all the columns for every entry, but the more you fill in, the easier it will be to remember the word.

A chart like the one in figure 1 is a good way to keep track of the entries in your glossary. The parts of this chart are described below.

1. In the first column, write down the word or term.
2. In the second column, write down the pronunciation. You will not have to write down the pronunciation for some terms.
3. In the third column, write down the definition of the word. Use your own words to create a definition from the information you read.
4. In the fourth column, draw a picture that helps define the word or term.
5. In the fifth column, write down a personal connection. For example, if you have heard a word or term before, write down when, where, or how you heard it.