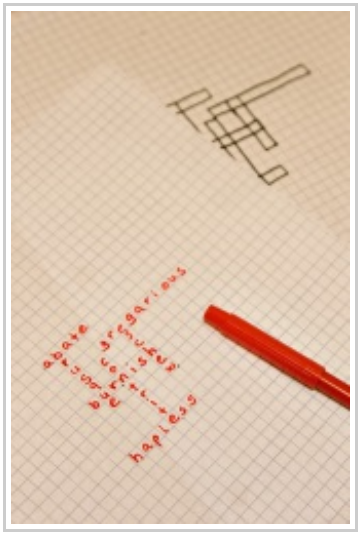
The SAT Crossword Challenge



Struggling to memorize all those SAT words? How about challenging Mom or Dad to a crossword puzzle duel? Beware, parents! Your child's self-created puzzle may prove harder than the ones you clip from the newspaper.

What You Need:

- Graph paper, several sheets
- Plain paper, one sheet
- Pencil
- Assigned vocabulary words along with their parts of speech and definitions

What You Do:

1. Have your child use the graph paper and the pencil to create a crossword puzzle that uses the assigned vocabulary words.
2. First, create the answer key by arranging the assigned words vertically and horizontally on the graph paper, one letter per square, with letters sharing boxes where words overlap. Then trace the boxes around the letters, and give each word in the puzzle a number. (Number the across clues as they appear on the paper from top to bottom, then number the down clues as they appear from left to right.)
3. Next, take a second piece of graph paper, and create a blank crossword puzzle. Do this by copying the boxes for each of the numbered words in exactly the same location as they appear on the first sheet of graph paper. Write in the numbers for each word, but do NOT write in the letters. If your child chooses, he may shade in unused portions of the graph paper with a pencil, colored pencil, or crayon to provide contrast between the crossword squares and the unused graph lines.
4. Next, take the blank sheet of paper, and begin writing clues for each word in the crossword puzzle. Write all the across clues first. Clues can be definitions of words, parts of speech clues, or applications of words. The clue may be written as a fill-in-the-blank, or in any other format he wishes. Of course, the time he's spending writing these clues is his own vocabulary study time, and he probably doesn't even realize it!
5. Finally, the showdown begins! Your child gives the blank crossword puzzle and the sheet of clues to Mom or Dad and challenges them to solve it without his help. Are you up to the challenge? You may be surprised at just how difficult high school vocabulary words may be!

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