# RAFT IDEAS

**Topics:** Vocabulary, Reading, Writing, Spelling, Collaboration
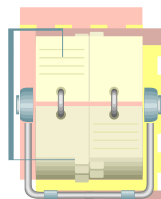
## Materials List
- ✓ Rolodex/Rotary File
- ✓ File Tabs
- ✓ Marker or Pen
- ✓ Dictionary or other reference materials

This activity can be used to teach:
Common Core English Language Arts Standards:
- Vocabulary (Grades 3-12, Language, 6)
- Research Projects (Grades 3-12, Writing, 7)
- Domain-specific scientific/technical vocabulary(Grades 6-12, Reading Science/Technical, 4)

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# Whirling Words
## Create a Classroom Word Bank from a Rotary File



Students will create a classroom word bank to store and use the vocabulary words that they have learned. The word bank can be used as a reference when reading, writing or to look up a word for correct spelling.

## Assembly
Word banks can be general or subject-specific. If you are creating a general file, then words should be placed filed behind the alphabet tabs that are included with most Rolodex/Rotary files. If the word bank is to be subject-specific, then replace the alphabet tabs with subject headings. For example, a science word bank might include headings such as Soils, Plants, Animals, Habitats, Rocks and Minerals, Inquiry Skills, etc. Write a heading on a tab and then provide blank cards for students to use when adding words.

## To Do and Notice
Introduce the word bank to students and model adding new words. Discuss the importance of correct spelling when creating a reference for others to use. Have students put their initials or name on each word card that they add or change. This will help you to monitor student participation and/or guide editing as needed.

## The Content Behind the Activity
The word bank provides a way for students to connect words and see relationships between words in a content area. The file will grow as a shared knowledge base that the entire class can use for reference to support writing activities. Adding words causes students to reflect on not only the meaning of the word, but the category that it should be filed behind. Some words may have more than one meaning and need to be filed in more than one place.

Students may also be interested in the Rolodex file as an older technology. The word Rolodex comes from a blend of two words, **rol**ling in**dex.** It was originally designed to hold business or address cards. Students might want to explore the newer technologies that many people now use for the same tasks.

## Taking it Further
Have students research other collaborative knowledge construction tools such as wikis. A wiki is a collaborative webspace where people add and edit content. A wiki can be public or shared by a small group requiring a password to make changes.

## Web Resources
- Wikis in Education - http://wikisineducation.wetpaint.com/
- Wikispaces - http://www.wikispaces.com/

**Web Resources** (Visit www.raft.net/raft-idea?isid=714 for more resources!)