Purpose of the Strategy: This activity is a great way to make vocabulary come alive. The magic square is an arrangement of numbers that can be added across, down, or diagonally, and will always equal the same sum.

Rationale: The Adventures of Tom Sawyer is a fun, adventure-filled novel, but Twain's vocabulary can present a problem for young readers. The vocabulary, in part, is difficult because they don't have a lot of context clues to help students determine meaning. Magic square vocabulary will help to address this type of vocabulary while maintaining students' interest. The example below comes from the chapters "Busy at War and Love" and "Showing Off in Sunday School," which are at the beginning of the novel, but the magic squares activity could be used for any part of the novel. The vocabulary activity should take place before the selected chapters are read.

Directions:

1. Select sixteen vocabulary words from the selected chapters to be used in the activity. Be sure to select words that students will be able to use in other contexts and are essential for understanding the novel. For each vocabulary word, provide a simple definition.

2. Create a worksheet with your "magic square," and two columns. You can play around to make the magic square different sizes, but a large square with sixteen small squares labeled A-P keeps the activity from getting too complex. The first column is a list of the vocabulary words labeled A-P. The second column is a list of the definitions in a different order labeled 1-16. As you order the

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definitions, make sure that you use a pattern that will ensure that the rows and columns will all add up to the same number. Various patterns can be found online.

3. Give the magic square vocabulary worksheet to students before they read the chapters that the words are from. Have the students work in pairs to match the vocabulary words with their definitions. They will be able to check their answers by adding up the columns and rows. If they are correct all of the rows and columns will add up to the same number, which is the "magic number." Give the students 10-15 minutes to work on the vocabulary worksheet without any aids, and then give them an additional 5 minutes to use a dictionary to find the definitions that they couldn't figure out on their own.

4. Remind students to look for these words in their reading. If you read the selected chapters together, pause when you come to the vocabulary words to bring students' attention to how they work in the sentence.

Assessment: This is an excellent activity for introducing new vocabulary, but because there is a mathematical pattern, some students can find the magic number and fill in the box without actually figuring out the correct definitions. Therefore, it would be effective to use a short written passage or verbal quiz to assess how well students have mastered the vocabulary.
**Magic Square Vocabulary**

"Busy at War and Love" and "Showing Off in Sunday School"

Directions: Select from the numbered statements the best match for each vocabulary word. Put the number in the proper space. The total of the numbers will be the same across each row and down each column; the total of the numbers is the magic number.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>an impostor; someone who deceives</td>
<td>to interpret</td>
<td>to treat with irreverence or contempt; to violate the sanctity of</td>
<td>extremely bold or daring</td>
<td>done secretly</td>
<td>something left out or neglected</td>
<td>disagreeable; harsh</td>
<td>crafty or cunning</td>
<td>to vex or irritate greatly</td>
<td>lying flat</td>
<td>unthinkable</td>
<td>to reduce the strength of</td>
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<td>Magic Number: 3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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Magic Square Vocabulary ANSWER KEY

"Busy at War and Love" and "Showing Off in Sunday School"

Directions: Select from the numbered statements the best match for each vocabulary word. Put the number in the proper space. The total of the numbers will be the same across each row and down each column; the total of the numbers is the magic number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. 16</th>
<th>B. 5</th>
<th>C. 9</th>
<th>D. 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E. 2</td>
<td>F. 11</td>
<td>G. 7</td>
<td>H. 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>I. 3</td>
<td>J. 10</td>
<td>K. 6</td>
<td>L. 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>M. 13</td>
<td>N. 8</td>
<td>O. 12</td>
<td>P. 1</td>
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</table>

Magic Number: 34

A. dilute (page 13) 1. an impostor; someone who deceives 16. to reduce the strength of
B. furtive (page 14) 2. to interpret
C. grotesque (page 14) 3. a person who undergoes severe or constant suffering (usually in defense of a belief)
D. audacious (page 16) 4. extremely bold or daring
E. construe (page 16) 5. done secretly
F. discordant (page 17) 6. something left out or neglected
G. profane (page 17) 7. to treat with irreverence or contempt; to violate the sanctity of
H. prone (page 17) 8. a person who is easily fooled
I. martyr (page 17) 9. fantastically ugly or absurd
J. vexation (page 17) 10. something that annoys
K. omission (page 17) 11. disagreeable; harsh
L. inconceivable (page 19) 12. crafty or cunning
M. gall (page 20) 13. to vex or irritate greatly
N. dupe (page 24) 14. lying flat
O. wily (page 24) 15. unthinkable
P. fraud (page 24)