The Mystery Words strategy is designed to empower students with a skill to easily learn new vocabulary words. It’s fun to practice this technique at home. Try creating mystery-word skits as a family – it’s a great way to improve everyone’s vocabulary while letting imaginations run wild. Your child will be able to guide the family, but here are the basics:

Get the definition
The first step in creating a great mystery-word skit is to find out what the word means.

Create “sounds like” words
The next step in building an amazing mystery-word skit is to come up with some “sounds like” words for your mystery word.

Associate the definition to the “sounds like” word
The last step is to associate the definition to the “sounds like” word. Remember that our brains love crazy and outrageous associations.

Here’s an example to get you started.

Mitigate: (verb) to lessen the severity of something.
  Sample sentence: “Wearing mittens, a hat, and a parka will mitigate the icy cold wind.”

Scene: You and a friend approach an iron gate in a freezing blizzard. On the other side of the gate is a warm house with a roaring fire in the fireplace. You try desperately to open the gate, but it is so cold you cannot bear to touch it. You get the bright idea to put on mittens to open the gate. With mittens, gates open easily in the cold. “Mittens-gate” lessens the severity of the cold iron.