My Own Acronym

Are you looking for an easy way to help your students review for your final exam? Try “My Own Acronym.” When used as a during-reading or post-reading/reviewing activity, this strategy allows students to connect new and old knowledge, synthesize their learning, evaluate their understanding and summarize what they have read/learned.

How to Use It:

1. Either you or the students select a word or phrase that represents the topic being studies (I like giving the students the challenge of thinking of one word or phrase that summarizes an entire chapter).
2. Have students write that word/phrase vertically in the spaces down column 1, entering one letter in each block.
3. Explain how an acronym works. Instruct students to write a word, phrase, or sentence that begins with each letter and that describes some important aspect or characteristic of the topic, word, or phrase.
4. Tell students to be prepared to share and explain their responses with another student a small group, or the whole class.

Tips/Variations:

1. Post finished student work to provide students with ongoing visual cues and review.
2. Keep in mind that multiple answers can be generated for each letter.
3. Consider using this tool as a pre-reading activity to build prior knowledge. After completing the reading activity, allow students to change or complete the acronym to better reflect their new knowledge.
4. To get students started, fill in one or more of the letters with a key word or phrase.
5. Everyone in the class can use the same acronym, or students can use different acronyms.
6. Students can work individually or in groups.

Beers & Howell (2003). *Reading strategies for the content areas*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

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*Directions*: Write the word or phrase that summarizes the reading (provided by the teacher or created by you) in the spaces down column 1, one letter per block. Use the letter in the block on the left as the beginning of a word, phrase, or sentence that supports or provides details for your topic word or phrase.

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| **Word / Phrase** | Begin this line of your acronym with the letter in Column 1.  Write the rest of your word or phrase in this column. |
| A | All represented |
| **M** | Many opportunities |
| **E** | Earth |
| **R** | Republic |
| **I** | Independence |
| **C** | Caring |
| **A** | Achievable goals |
| **N** | Nation |
| **F** | Forefathers fought for it |
| **R** | Religious freedom |
| **E** | Eagle—symbol of freedom |
| **E** | Equal rights for all |
| **D** | Democracy |
| **O** | Open-minded |
| **M** | Melting pot of cultures |