

# Dynamic Vocabulary Instruction

## Increasing the Academic Vocabulary of Elementary Students

Anita L. Archer, PHD  
archerteach@aol.com

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## Topics

- Importance of Vocabulary Instruction
- Components of a Vocabulary Program
- Read-Alouds
- Explicit Vocabulary Instruction
- Word-Learning Strategies
- Independent Reading

The content of this presentation is expanded in Chapter 4 of the following book:  
Archer, A., & Hughes, C. (2011). *Explicit Instruction: Effective and Efficient Teaching*.  
NY: Guilford Publications.

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## Importance of Vocabulary Instruction

- Receptive Language
  - Reading Comprehension (Chall, Jacobs, & Baldwin, 1990; Nagy, 2005; Scarborough, 1998, Stahl & Fairbanks, 1987)
  - Listening Comprehension
- Expressive Language
  - Writing
  - Speaking
- Overall Reading Achievement (Stanovich, et al., 1993)
- Overall School Success (Becker, 1977; Anderson & Nagy, 1991)
- Hallmark of an Educated Individual (Beck, McKeown, Kucan, 2002)

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## Importance of Vocabulary Instruction

- Children's vocabulary in the early grades related to reading comprehension in the upper grades.
  - Preschool - Children's vocabulary correlated with reading comprehension in upper elementary school. (Dickinson & Tabols, 2001)
  - Kindergarten - Vocabulary size was an effective predictor of reading comprehension in middle elementary years. (Scarborough, 1998)
  - First Grade - Orally tested vocabulary was a significant predictor of reading comprehension ten years later. (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997)
  - Third Grade - Children with restricted vocabulary have declining comprehension scores in the later elementary years. (Chall, Jacobs, & Baldwin, 1990)

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## Importance of Vocabulary Instruction

### ■ Vocabulary Gap

- Children enter school with different levels of vocabulary. (Hart & Risley, 1995)
- By the time the children were 3 years old, parents in less economically favored circumstances had said fewer words in their cumulative monthly vocabularies than the children in the most economically advantaged families in the same period of time.
- Cumulative Vocabulary (Age 4)
  - Children from professional families 1100 words
  - Children from working class families 700 words
  - Children from welfare families 500 words

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## Importance of Vocabulary Instruction

### ■ Vocabulary Gap

- Meaningful Differences in Cumulative Experiences (Hart & Risley, 1995)

	Words heard per hour	Words heard in a 100-hour week	Words heard in a 5,200 hour year	3 years
Welfare	620	62,000	3 million	10 million
Working Class	1,250	125,000	6 million	20 million
Professional	2,150	215,000	11 million	30 million

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## Importance of Vocabulary Instruction

### ■ Vocabulary Gap

- Linguistically “poor” first graders knew 5,000 words; linguistically “rich” first graders knew 20,000 words. (Moats, 2001)
- Children who enter school with limited vocabulary knowledge grow more discrepant over time from their peers who have rich vocabulary knowledge. (Baker, Simmons, & Kame'enui, 1997)
  - The number of words students learn varies greatly.
  - 2 versus 8 words per day
  - 750 versus 3000 words per year

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## Importance of Vocabulary Instruction

### ■ Vocabulary Gap

- Gap in word knowledge persists though the elementary years. (White, Graves, & Slater, 1990)
- The vocabulary gap between struggling readers and proficient readers grows each year. (Stanovich, 1986)
- After the primary grades, the “achievement gap” between socioeconomic groups is a language gap. (Hirsh, 2002)
- For English Language Learners, the “achievement gap” is primarily a vocabulary gap. (Carlo, et al., 2004)

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## Importance of Vocabulary Instruction - Conclusion

- To close the vocabulary gap, vocabulary acquisition must be accelerated through intentional instruction.
- Vocabulary instruction must be a focus in all classes in all grades.

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## Components of a Vocabulary Program

- **High-quality Classroom Language** (Dickinson, Cote, & Smith, 1993)
- **Reading Aloud to Students** (Elley, 1989; Senechal, 1997)
- **Explicit Vocabulary Instruction** (Baker, Kame'enui, & Simmons, 1998; Baumann, Kame'enui, & Ash, 2003; Beck & McKeown, 1991; Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002; Biemiller, 2004; Marzano, 2004; Paribakht & Wesche, 1997)
- **Word-Learning Strategies** (Buikima & Graves, 1993; Edwards, Font, Baumann, & Boland, 2004; Graves, 2004; White, Sowell, & Yanagihara, 1989)
- **Wide Independent Reading** (Anderson & Nagy, 1992; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998; Nagy, Anderson, & Herman, 1987; Sternberg, 1987)

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## Use High Quality Language

- Use high quality vocabulary in the classroom.
- To ensure understanding provide a little explanation of the unknown word's meaning.
  - Directly tell students the meaning of the word.
    - "Don't procrastinate on your assignment. Procrastinate means to put off doing something."
  - Pair the unknown word with a synonym.
    - "Laws have their genesis -- their beginning -- in the legislative branch of the government."
    - "What is your hypothesis -- your best guess?"

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## Read-Alouds

- Vocabulary can be gained from listening to others read.
  - Listening to a book being read can significantly improve children's expressive vocabulary. (Nicholson & Whyte, 1992; Senechal & Cornell, 1993)
  - Print vocabulary is more extensive and diverse than oral vocabulary. (Hays, Wolfe, & Wolfe, 1996)
  - Wide disparities exist in the amount of time parents read to their children before 1st grade.
    - Adams (1990) estimated that she spent at least 1000 hours reading books to her son before he entered first grade.
    - Teale (1984) observed that in low-income homes the children were read to for about 60 hours prior to first grade.

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## Read-Alouds

- Choose **interesting, engaging** narrative passages or informational text that attract and hold children's attention. The vocabulary should be somewhat **challenging**. (Biemiller, 1995; Elley, 1989)
- Use **performance-oriented reading**. Read with expression and enthusiasm.
- Provide students with a **little explanation** of novel words that are encountered in context. This is another example of "fast mapping". (Brabham & Lynch-Brown, 2002; Brett, Rothlein & Hurley, 1996; Beck, Perfetti, & McKeon, 1982; Elley, 1989; Penno, Wilkinson, & Moore, 2002; wasik & Bond, 2001; Whitehurst et al., 1998)

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## Read-Alouds

- **Actively engage students** during the story book reading to increase vocabulary gains. (Dickerson & Smith, 1994; Hargrave & Senechal, 2000; Senechal, 1997)
- Ask questions that promote passage comprehension. **Retell** and **prediction** questions are particularly useful.
- Use a variety of responses including:
  - Group (choral) responses
  - Partner responses
  - Action responses

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## Read-Alouds

- For young students, read the book **several times** to increase greater gains in vocabulary. (Senechal, 1997)
- Provide a rich discussion before and after reading of the book.
  - "What was your favorite part of the book?"
  - "What really surprised you in the story?"
  - "What would be another ending for the story?"

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## Read-Alouds

Did the teacher:

1. Select an interesting, engaging, challenging book? **Yes No**
2. Read the book with enthusiasm and expression? **Yes No**
3. Provide a little explanation of novel words?  
**Yes No**  
**Example words:**
4. Actively engage the students? **Yes No**

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## Explicit Vocabulary Instruction

- Evidence suggests that as late as Grade 6, about 80% of words are learned as a result of direct explanation, either as a result of the child's request or instruction, usually by a teacher.

(Biemiller, 1999, 2005)

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## Explicit Vocabulary Instruction

- Sources of words for vocabulary instruction
  - WORDS from read-aloud books
  - WORDS from core reading programs
  - WORDS from reading intervention programs
  - WORDS from content area instruction
    - Math
    - Science
    - Social studies
    - Health
    - Art, PE, music, etc.

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## Explicit Vocabulary Instruction- Selection of Vocabulary

- Select a **limited number** of words for robust, explicit vocabulary instruction.
- **Three to ten words** per story or section in a chapter would be appropriate.
- Briefly **tell students the meaning of other words** that are needed for comprehension.

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## Explicit Vocabulary Instruction- Selection of vocabulary

- Select words that are **unknown**.
- Select words that are **important** to passage understanding.
- Select words that students are likely to encounter in the **future** and are generally useful. (Stahl, 1986)
  - Focus on Tier Two words (Beck & McKeown, 2003)
- Select words that are more difficult to obtain.
  - Words having an abstract versus concrete reference.
  - Words with no known synonym.
  - Words not clearly defined in passage.

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## Explicit Instruction of Words- Selection of Vocabulary (Beck & McKeown, 1985)

- Tier One - Basic words
  - chair, bed, happy, house
- **Tier Two** - Words in general use in many domains (*Academic Vocabulary*)
  - concentrate, absurd, fortunate, relieved, dignity, convenient, observation, analyze, persistence (Academic vocabulary)
- **Tier Three** - Rare words limited to a specific domain (*Background Knowledge*)
  - tundra, igneous rocks, constitution, area, sacrifice fly, genre, foreshadowing

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## Explicit Instruction of Words- Selection of Vocabulary

- “Goldilocks Words”
  - Not too difficult
  - Not too easy
  - Just right

(Stahl & Stahl, 2004)

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## Explicit Instruction - Select words for robust, explicit instruction.

Second Graders	Fifth Graders
<b>Enemy Pie</b> by Derek Munson	<b>The Family Under the Bridge</b> by Natalie Savage Carlson (for Chapter 1)
perfect	monsieur
trampoline	cathedral
enemy	cowered
recipe	hidey-hole
disgusting	hyacinths
earthworms	fragile
ingredients	oleanders
horrible	gratitude
nervous	fastidious
invited	loitering
relieved	roguish
boomerang	adventure

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## Explicit Instruction of Words - Selection of words

- Also, teach idioms (*A phrase or expression in which the entire meaning is different from the usual meaning of the the individual words.*)

“The car rolling down the hill caught my eye.”

“Soon we were in stitches.”

“The painting cost me an arm and a leg.”

“The teacher was under the weather.”

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## Explicit Instruction - Prepare - Student-Friendly Explanations

- **Dictionary Definition**  
**relieved** - (1) To free wholly or partly from pain, stress, pressure. (2) To lessen or alleviate, as pain or pressure
- **Student-Friendly Explanation** (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2003)
  - **Is easy to understand.**
  - When something that was difficult is over or never happened at all, you feel **relieved**.

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## Explicit Instruction - Prepare - Student-Friendly Explanations

- **Dictionary Definition**
  - **Attention** - a. the act or state of attending through applying the mind to an object of sense or thought  
b. a condition of readiness for such attention involving a selective narrowing of consciousness and receptivity
- **Explanation from Dictionary for English Language Learners**  
(*Elementary Learner's Dictionary* published by Oxford)..
  - **Attention** - looking or listening carefully and with interest

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## Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Preparation - Student-friendly explanation.

Word	Definition	Student-Friendly Explanation
<b>train</b> <b>trained</b>	Teach a particular skill or type of behavior through practice and instruction over a period of time.	When you teach an animal to do something, you <b>train</b> the animal.
<b>follow</b> <b>followed</b>	Go or come after a person or thing proceeding ahead.	If you are in line and you walk right after the person in front of you, you <b>follow</b> them.
<b>travel</b> <b>traveled</b>	Make a journey typically of some length or abroad.	When a person or an animal goes from one place to another, they <b>travel</b> . When you <b>travel</b> , you usually go a long way.
<b>migrate</b> <b>migrated</b>	Move from one region or habitat to another especially regularly according to the seasons.	
<b>survive</b> <b>survived</b>	Continue to live or exist, especially in spite of danger or hardship.	

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## Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Instructional Routine

(Note: Teach words **AFTER** you have read a story to your students and **BEFORE** students read a selection.)

### Step 1. Introduce the word.

- a) Write the word on the board or overhead.
- b) Read the word and have the students repeat the word.  
If the word is difficult to pronounce or unfamiliar have the students repeat the word a number of times.

*Introduce the word with me.*

**“ This word is relieved. What word?”**

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**Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.** Instructional Routine (continued)

**Step 2. Present a student-friendly explanation.**

- a) Tell students the explanation. OR
- b) Have them read the explanation with you.

*Present the definition with me.*

***“When something that is difficult is over or never happened at all, you feel relieved. So if something that is difficult is over, you would feel \_\_\_\_\_.”***

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**Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.** Instructional Routine (continued)

**Step 3. Illustrate the word with examples.**

- a) Concrete examples.
- b) Visual representations.
- c) Verbal examples.

*Present the examples with me.*

***“When the spelling test is over, you feel relieved.”***

***“When you have finished giving the speech that you dreaded, you feel relieved.”***

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**Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.** Instructional Routine (continued)

- Step 4. Check students' understanding.
- Option #1. Ask deep processing questions.

*Check students' understanding with me.*

***When the students lined up for morning recess, Jason said, “I am so relieved that this morning is over.” Why might Jason be relieved?***

***When Maria was told that the soccer game had been cancelled, she said, “I am relieved.” Why might Maria be relieved?***

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**Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.** Instructional Routine (continued)

- Step 4. Check students' understanding.
- Option #2. Have students discern between examples and non-examples.

*Check students' understanding with me.*

***“If you were nervous singing in front of others, would you feel relieved when the concert was over?”***

***Yes “Why?”***

***“If you loved singing to audiences, would you feel relieved when the concert was over?” No “Why not?”***  
*was not difficult for you.*

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**Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.** Instructional Routine (continued)

- Step 4. Check students' understanding.  
Option #3. Have students generate their own examples.

*Check students' understanding with me.*

***"Tell your partner a time when you were relieved."***

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**Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.** Instructional Routine (continued)

- Step 4. Check students' understanding.  
Option #4. Provide students with a "sentence starter". Have them say the complete sentence.

*Check students' understanding with me.*

***Sometimes your mother is relieved. Tell your partner when your mother is relieved. Start your sentence by saying, "My mother is relieved when \_\_\_\_\_."***

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**Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.**

Did the teacher:

1. Introduce the word?
2. Present a student-friendly explanation?
3. Illustrate the word with examples?
4. Check students' understanding?

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**Practice Activity:  
Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example A)**

1. Introduce the word.

*This word is **migrate**. What word?*

2. Present a student-friendly explanation.

*When birds or other animals move from one place to another at a certain time each year, they **migrate**. So if birds move to a new place in the winter or spring, we say that the birds \_\_\_\_\_. Animals usually migrate to find a warmer place to live or to get food.*



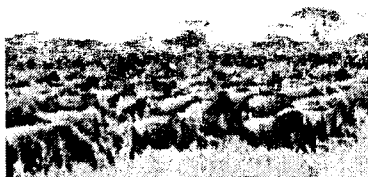
**Illustrate the word with examples.**

*Sandhill Cranes fly from the North to the South so they can live in a warmer place. Sandhill Cranes \_\_\_\_\_.*

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### Practice Activity: Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example A)

The wildebeests in Africa move to a new place so that they can find water and grass. Wildebeests \_\_\_\_\_.



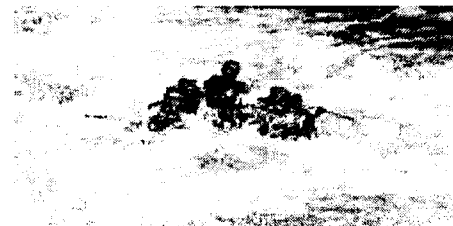
4. Check students' understanding.  
(Deep processing question.)

Why might birds migrate? Tell your partner. (The teacher monitors and coaches. Then the teacher calls on individuals.)

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### Practice Activity: Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example B)

1. Introduce the word.  
*This word is **survive**. What word?*
2. Present a student-friendly explanation.  
*When people or animals don't die when things are very bad or dangerous, they **survive**.*
3. Illustrate the word with examples.  
*Look at the people on this river. It is very dangerous. However, they don't get hurt or die, they \_\_\_\_\_.*



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### Practice Activity: Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example B)

4. Check students' understanding.

(Examples and non-examples)

*Get ready to tell me if this group would survive.*

*If the winter was very cold and all food was buried under the snow, would whooping cranes survive? \_\_\_\_\_ Ones, tell your partner why they wouldn't survive?*

*If whooping cranes had plenty of food and the weather was warm, would they survive? \_\_\_\_\_ Twos, tell your partner why they would survive?*

(Deep Processing Questions)

*If a rabbit was being chased by a coyote, what could the rabbit do to survive?*

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### Practice Activity: Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example C)

1. Introduce the word.  
*"This word is **abundant**. What word?"*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*Again, \_\_\_\_\_ . Abundant is an adjective.*
2. Introduce the meaning of the word.  
*"When there is plenty of something, there is an **abundant** amount. So, if you have plenty of something, you have an amount that is*  
\_\_\_\_\_."

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**Practice Activity:  
Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example C)**

3. **Illustrate with examples.**  
 If you have lots of food in your house, you have **abundant food**.  
 If you had a huge supply of paper, you would have \_\_\_\_\_.  
 If you had enough pencils for everyone, you would have \_\_\_\_\_.  
 If you had more than enough money to live on, you would have \_\_\_\_.
4. **Check understanding.**  
 Get read to tell me if this would be abundant. Say **abundant** or not.  
 If you had 2 pencils for the year? *Not*  
 If you had 40 pencils for the year? *Abundant*  
 If the class had 800 books? *Abundant*  
 If the class had 30 books? *Not*  
 If the family had enough food for one day? *Not*  
 If the family had enough food for 3 months? *Abundant*

**Practice Activity:  
Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example D)**

1. **Introduce the word.**  
 "This word is **virtue**. What word? \_\_\_\_\_.  
 Again, \_\_\_\_\_. *Virtue is a noun.*"
2. **Introduce the meaning of the word.**  
 "When someone has a really good quality like honesty, that quality is a **virtue**." So when someone has a really good quality, we can that quality a \_\_\_\_\_.

**Practice Activity:  
Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example D)**

3. **Illustrate with examples. (And non-examples)**  
*Being honest is a **virtue**. Lying in not a **virtue**.*  
*Being kind is a \_\_\_\_\_. Being mean is not a \_\_\_\_\_.*
- Being generous is a \_\_\_\_\_. Being greedy and not sharing is not a \_\_\_\_\_.*
- Being reliable is a \_\_\_\_\_. Being inconsistent so that people can not count on you is not a \_\_\_\_\_.*

**Practice Activity:  
Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example D)**

4. **Check understanding.**  
 Make a T chart on your paper. Now, label the columns 'virtue' and 'not virtue'. With your partner, write in a virtue and then the opposite of that virtue.

A virtue	Not a virtue
patient	impatient, annoyed
orderly, neat	messy

**Practice Activity:  
Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example D)**

*These words are in the same family as virtue. Echo read the words.*

virtue  
virtues  
virtuous  
virtuously

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**Practice Activity:  
Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example D)**

*When I touch a word, say the word.*

*Kindness is a **virtue**.*

*Courage and effort are also **virtues**.*

*When a person is kind, that person is **virtuous**.*

*When the person helps another person, he acts **virtuously**.*

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**Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.** Review

After teaching the group of vocabulary words, review the words using a "word association" activity.

Words displayed on screen:

1. enemy, 2. disgusting, 3. invited, 4. relieved

*I will tell you about a word. Form the number of fingers that goes with the word on your desk. When I say "show me" put your fingers in the air.*

- *Someone that hates you. Form the number on your desk. Show me. What word?*
- *If you don't like a food, you might say it is \_\_\_\_\_. Show me. What word?*
- *When a test is over, you often feel \_\_\_\_\_. Show me. What word?*
- *When you are asked to a party, you are \_\_\_\_\_. Show me. What word?*

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**Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.** Review

After teaching the group of vocabulary words, review the words using a "choice" activity.

Words written on board or displayed on screen:

**enemy, disgusting, invited, relieved**

- *If you felt **relieved** after a test, was the test probably easy or difficult?*
- *If an **enemy** gave you the answers before a test, would you believe the answers to be correct or incorrect?*
- *If the food was **disgusting**, would you ask for more or spit it up?*
- *If you were **invited** to a party, would you be asked to come or to stay away?*

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## Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Word Walls

- Create a **word wall** in your classroom.
  - Post a reminder of the context.
    - Copy of the cover of the read-aloud book
    - Copy of the first page in the story
    - The topic in science or social studies
  - Post the vocabulary words (number words).
  - Incorporate the words into your classroom language.
  - Encourage students to use the words when speaking and writing.

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## Vocabulary Logs

- Have students maintain a log of vocabulary to facilitate study and review.
- What can be recorded on a vocabulary log?
  - Word
  - Student-friendly explanation
  - Any of these options
    - A sentence to illustrate the word's meaning
    - Examples and non-examples
    - An illustration
- In lower grades, create a group log on a flip chart.

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## Practice Activities

- Practice activities should:
  - Be **engaging**.
  - Provide **multiple exposures** to the words. (Stahl, 1986)
  - Encourage **deep processing** of the word's meaning. (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002)
  - When possible, connect the word's meaning to **prior knowledge**.
- Provide practice over time.

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## Example Practice Activity - Yes/No/Why

1. Do territories that are possessions have autonomy?
2. Can incidents cause compassion?
3. Do people always comply with their obligations?

(Beck, Perfetti, & McKeown, 1982; Curtis & Longo, 1997) Items taken from REWARDS PLUS, Sopris West.

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## Example Practice Activity - Yes/No/Why

1. Could a disgusting enemy be horrible?
2. Would you be relieved if you could concentrate on the test?
3. Would it be disgusting to eat earthworms?
4. Could an enemy do disgusting things?

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## Example Practice Activity - Completion Activity

1. **confine:** If you keep someone or something in a certain place, you confine it.  
Things that can be confined are \_\_\_\_\_.
2. **persistent:** If you keep doing something again or again OR you keep trying to do something and you never give up, you would be persistent.  
I was very persistent when \_\_\_\_\_.

(Curtis & Longo, 1997)

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## Example Practice Activity - Word Pairs

(Stahl & Kapinus, 2001)

Word Pair	Same	Opposite	Go Together	No Relationship
nomad - wanderer	X			
nomad- settler		X		
desert- city				X

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## Example Practice Activity- Sentence Substitution

1. When the spelling test was over, Kaiya was relieved.
2. After reading the children's stories, the teacher said that she was very impressed.
3. Marcus couldn't concentrate on his math assignment.

(Lively, August, Carlo, & Snow, 2003)

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### Example Practice Activity - Odd Word Out

(Rasinski, Padak, Nelson, Nelson, 2007)

Read the four words. With your partner determine which word doesn't fit with the other words. Generate all possible ways to eliminate a word.

**humiliate**      **emancipate**

**abuse**      **cruelty**

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### Example Practice Activity - Word Sorts

(Gillett & Temple, 1983)

#### Word Bank

Senators	House	Laws
Justices	Senate	Constitution
Vice president	Congress	Unconstitutional
President	Supreme Court	Declare war
Representatives	Agriculture Department	Amend Constitution
Cabinet	Defense Department	Collect Taxes
Departments	District Courts	Veto Bills

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### Example Practice Activity - Word Sorts

(Gillett & Temple, 1983)

Legislative Branch	Executive Branch	Judicial Branch

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### Example Practice Activity- "Meaningful Sentence" Writing

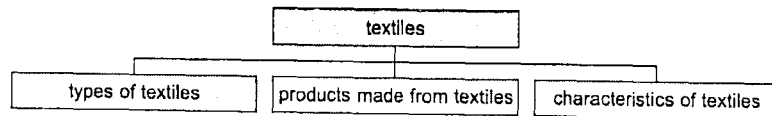
(adapted from Success for All)

- Students write a sentence answering three to four of these questions:  
**who, what, when, where, why, how**
- *Not OK*  
It was meager.
- *OK*  
At the end of the month, our dinners were meager because we had little money.

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## Example Practice Activity - Semantic Mapping - Structured

(Heimlich & Pittelman)



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## Example Practice Activity - Semantic Mapping

(Heimlich & Pittelman)

Directions:

1. Have students brainstorm words that come to mind when given a target word.
2. Have students brainstorm possible categories for the words.
3. Have students arrange brainstorm words in categories.

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## Example Practice Activity- Word Association

- Present a number of words.

1. representative 2. socialism 3. reform 4. revolution 5. tributary

- Play... I am thinking of a word.....

"I am thinking of a word that goes with river."

"I am thinking of a word that refers to a person that takes ideas to the government."

"I am thinking of a word that means a change."

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## Example Practice Activity- Word Association - Challenging

- Present a number of words.

concentrate relieved enemy impressed absurd educated

- Play... Select a word. Defend your choice.

"What word goes best with the word humor. Tell your partner and defend your choice."

"What word goes best with a game. Tell your partner and defend your choice."

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## Word-Learning Strategies

- Use of context clues.
- Use of dictionary, glossary, or other resource.
- Use of meaningful parts of the word.
  - Compound words
  - Prefixes
  - Suffixes
  - Word families

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## Word Learning Strategies - Use of context clues

- When using the context clues, students infer the meaning of the word by scrutinizing the surrounding text.
- Teach students to use context clues to determine the meaning of unknown vocabulary. (Gipe & Arnold, 1979)
- However, if a student reads 100 unfamiliar words in reading, he/she will only learn between 5 to 15 words. (Nagy, Hermann, & Anderson, 1985; Swanborn & de Glopper, 1999)

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## Word Learning Strategies - Use of context clues

### Strategy - Context Clues

1. Read the sentence in which the word occurs for clues as to the word's meaning.
2. Read the surrounding sentences for clues as to the word's meaning.
3. Ask yourself, "What might the word mean?"
4. Try the possible meaning in the sentence.
5. Ask yourself, "Does it make sense?"

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## Word Learning Strategies - Use of context clues

- Beginning in kindergarten, model how to determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word using context clues.
- Provide simple practice in inferring word meanings from context.
- But not always!  
Example: *Jason went into the school. He was very anxious.*

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## Word Learning Strategies - Use of glossary/dictionary

### Strategy - Glossary/Dictionary

1. Locate the unknown word in the glossary or the dictionary.
2. Read each definition and select the meaning that best fits the sentence.
3. Try the possible meaning in the sentence.
4. Ask yourself, "Does it make sense?"

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## Word Learning Strategies - Compound Words

- Teach students that the meaning of compound words can often be derived from the meaning of the two smaller words.

birdhouse    waiting-room  
starfish     fingernail  
weekend    mailbox  
raincoat    daydream

- But not always!  
 butterfly  
 hotdogs

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## Word Learning Strategies - Prefixes

- Elements attached to beginning of English words that alter meaning.
- Prefixes are useful because they are
  - used in many words,
  - consistently spelled,
  - easy to identify,
  - clear in meaning. (Graves, 2004)
- Teach very common prefixes. Un, re, in, and dis found in 58% of prefixed words.

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## The Most Common Prefixes in English

Prefix	Meaning	% of prefixed words	Examples
un	not; reversal of	26%	uncover
re	again, back, really	14%	rewrite
in/im	in, into, not	11%	incorrect, insert
dis	away, apart, negative	7%	discover, discontent
en/em	in; within; on	4%	entail
mis	wrong	3%	mistaken
pre	before	3%	prevent
pro	in favor of; before	1%	protect
a	not; in, on, without	1%	atypical

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## Word Learning Strategies - Prefixes

1. Introduce prefix.  
*"Re means again. What does re mean?"*
2. Determine meaning of a word with a prefix.  
*"Read the word." rewrite*  
*"If you rewrite your paper, you write it \_\_\_\_." again*  
*"Read the word." rebuild*  
*"If you rebuild a house, you build it \_\_\_\_." again*  
*(Repeat with retell, redo, repaint, remake.)*

But not always! real, rent, reign

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## Word Learning Strategies - Suffixes

- Elements attached to ending of English words.
- Can change the part of the speech or the meaning.
- Focus on common derivational suffixes.
  - able, ful, less, ness, or
- Introduce the suffix and use to determine the meaning of a number of words (ful -helpful, truthful, mouthful, joyful).
- But not always! grateful

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## The Most Common Suffixes in English

Suffix	Meaning	%of prefixed words	Examples
s, es	more than one; verb marker	31%	movies
ed	in the past; quality/state	20%	walked
ing	when you do something; quality, state	14%	walking
ly	how something is	7%	lovely
er, or	one who, what/that/which	4%	teacher, tailor
tion, sion	state, quality; act	4%	action; erosion
able, ible	able to be	2%	comfortable
al, ial	related to, like	1%	fatal

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## Word Learning Strategies Roots (Greek and Latin Roots)

- When teaching a word with a Greek or Latin root, use it as an opportunity to introduce the meaning of the root. Introduce the root within the target word and then expand to other words.

### Example: hydroelectricity

*"This word is hydroelectricity."*

*"The first part of the word is **hydro**. Hydro is a root that means water.*

*So in this chapter the word hydroelectricity refers to electricity produced by the movement of water."*

*"Let's look at some other words that include **hydro**."*

dehydration	hydraulic
hydroplane	hydroelectric
hydrophone	hydrophobia

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## Common Latin and Greek Roots

<b>aqua</b>	water	Greek	aquarium, aqueduct, aquaculture, aquamarine, aquaplane, aquatic
<b>aud</b>	hearing	Latin	audio, audition, audiovisual, auditorium, audiotape, inaudible
<b>auto</b>	self	Greek	autograph, autobiography, automobile, autocrat, autonomy
<b>astro</b>	star	Greek	astronomy, astrophysics, astrology, astronaut, astronomer, asterisk
<b>biblio</b>	book	Greek	Bible, bibliography, bibliophobia, bibliophile, bibliophile
<b>bio</b>	life	Greek	biography, biology, autobiography, bionic, biotic, antibiotic, biome, biosphere, biometrics
<b>chrono</b>	time	Greek	synchronize, chronology, chronic, chronicle, anachronism
<b>corp</b>	body	Latin	corpse, corporation, corps, incorporate, corporeal, corpulence
<b>demo</b>	the people	Greek	democracy, demography, epidemic, demotic, endemic, pandemic
<b>dic, dict</b>	speak, tell	Latin	dictate, dictation, diction, dictator, verdict, predict, contradict, benediction, jurisdiction, predict, indict, edict
<b>dorm</b>	sleep	Latin	dormant, dormitory, dormer, dormouse, dormition, dormitive
<b>geo</b>	earth	Greek	geology, geologist, geometry, geography, geographer, geopolitical, geothermal, geocentric

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## Common Latin and Greek Roots

<b>graph</b>	to write, to draw	Greek	autograph, biography, photograph, telegraph, lithograph
<b>hydro</b>	water	Greek	hydroplane, dehydrate, hydroelectric, hydrogen, hydrophone
<b>ject</b>	throw	Latin	reject, deject, project, inject, injection, projection
<b>logos, logy</b>	study	Greek	geology, astrology, biology, numerology, zoology, technology, psychology, anthropology, mythology
<b>luna</b>	moon	Latin	lunar, lunacy, lunatic, interlunar
<b>meter</b>	measure	Greek	meter, thermometer, diameter, geometry, optometry, barometer, centimeter, symmetry, voltammeter
<b>mega</b>	great, large, big	Greek	megaphone, megalith, megalomania, megatons, megalopolis
<b>min</b>	small, little	Latin	minimal, minimize, minimum, mini, miniature, minuscule, minute, minority
<b>mit, mis</b>	send	Latin	mission, transmit, transmission, remit, missile, submission, permit, emit, emissary
<b>path</b>	feeling, suffering	Greek	pathetic, pathology, apathy, antipathy, sympathy, telepathy, empathy, sociopath
<b>ped</b>	foot	Latin	pedestrian, pedal, peddle, peddler, pedicure, pedometer
<b>philia</b>	love, friendship	Greek	philosopher, Philadelphia, philanthropist, philharmonic, philip

## Common Latin and Greek Roots

<b>phono</b>	sound	Greek	phonograph, microphone, symphony, telephone, phonogram, megaphone, phony, euphony, xylophone, phony.
<b>photo</b>	light	Greek	photograph, photosynthesis, telephoto, photometer, photophilia
<b>port</b>	carry	Latin	port, transport, transportation, portable, portage, report
<b>spect</b>	see	Latin	respect, inspection, inspector, spectator, spectacles, prospect
<b>scope</b>	look at	Greek	microscope, telescope, periscope, kaleidoscope, episcopal
<b>sol</b>	sun	Latin	solar, solar system, solstice, solarium, parasol
<b>struct</b>	build, form	Latin	instruct, instruction, construction, reconstruction, destruct, destruction, infrastructure, construe, instrument, instrumental
<b>tele</b>	distant	Greek	telephone, television, telegraph, telephoto, telescope, telepathy, telethon, telegenic
<b>terra</b>	land	Latin	territory, terrestrial, terrace, terrarium, extraterrestrial, Mediterranean Sea, terra colta, subterranean

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## Word Learning Strategies- Word Families

- A group of words related in meaning. (Nagy & Anderson, 1984)
- If you know the meaning of one family member, you can infer the meaning of related words.

enthusiasm	collect	educate
enthusiastic	collecting	educated
enthusiastically	collection	education
	collector	educator

wild  
wilderness

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## Word Learning Strategies - Word Families

### Word Family

educate  
educated  
education  
educator

### Introduce the words in relationship to each other.

*"Teachers teach you how to read and write. They educate you. When you learn to read and write, you are educated. In school, you get an education. A teacher is an educator."*

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## Independent Reading

- "The best way to foster vocabulary growth is to promote wide reading." (Anderson, 1992)
- "...it must be acknowledged that relying on wide reading for vocabulary growth adds to the inequities in individual differences in vocabulary knowledge."  
Struggling readers do not read well enough to make wide reading an option. To acquire word knowledge from reading requires adequate decoding skills, the ability to recognize that a word is unknown, and the competency of being able to extract meaningful information about the word from the context. Readers cannot be engaged with the latter two if they are struggling with decoding. Thus, depending on wide reading as a source of vocabulary growth leaves those children and young people who are most in need of enhancing their vocabulary repertoires with a very serious deficit." p. 6 (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002)

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## Variation in Amount of Reading

Percentile Rank	Minutes per day reading in books	Minutes per day reading in text	Words per year in books	Words per year in text
98	65.0	67.3	4,358,000	4,733,000
90	21.2	33.4	1,823,000	2,357,000
80	14.2	24.6	1,146,000	1,597,000
70	9.6	16.9	622,000	1,168,000
60	6.5	13.1	432,000	722,000
50	4.6	9.21	282,000	601,000
40	3.2	6.2	200,000	421,000
30	1.8	4.3	106,000	251,000
20	0.7	2.4	21,000	134,000
10	0.1	1.0	8,000	51,000
2	0	0	0	8,000

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## Increasing Amount of Independent Reading

- Maximize access to books.
  - Extended library hours
  - Classroom libraries
  - Book sales, book exchanges
- Establish time for independent reading.
  - Silent Sustained Reading
  - Partner Reading
  - BUT don't substitute silent reading for reading instruction.
  - Expect reading outside of class.

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## Increasing Amount of Independent Reading

- Encourage selection of books at the independent reading level.
  - Teach the “five-finger test”.
- Encourage students to read “familiar” books.
  - Same author
  - Same character
  - Same genre
  - Books in a series

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## Increasing Amount of Independent Reading

- Enhance personal motivation.
  - Establish a school climate that encourages reading.
  - Have book-rich environments.
  - Provide book recommendations.
    - Bulletin boards posted with recommendations
    - Book tables
    - Book clubs

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## Conclusion

**“Words are all we have.”**

Samuel Beckett

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## Recommended Books

Archer, A. & Hughes, C. (2011). *Explicit instruction: effective and efficient teaching*. New York: Guilford Press.  
([www.explicitinstruction.org](http://www.explicitinstruction.org))

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G. & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: robust vocabulary instruction*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Baumann, J. F. & Kame'enui, E.J. (2004). *Vocabulary instruction: research to practice*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Diamond, L. & Gutlohn, L. (2006) *Vocabulary handbook*. Berkeley, CA: CORE.  
([www.corelearn.com](http://www.corelearn.com))

Graves, M. F. (2006). *The vocabulary book: Learning and instruction*. New York, New York: Teachers College Pres.

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## Recommended Books

- Marzano, R.J. (2004). *Building background knowledge for academic achievement*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Marzano, R.J., & Pickering (2005). *Building academic vocabulary: Teacher's manual*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Stahl, S. A. (1998). *Vocabulary development*. Cambridge, MA : Brookline.
- Stahl, S. A., & Kapinus, B. (2001). *Word power: what every educator needs to know about teaching vocabulary*. Washington, DC: NEA.

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## Dictionaries with Student-Friendly Explanations

Collins Cobuild Dictionaries ✱  
([www.collinslanguage.com](http://www.collinslanguage.com))

Pearson/Longman Education  
([www.longman.com](http://www.longman.com))  
([www.ldoconline.com](http://www.ldoconline.com))

Thompson/Heinle  
([www.heinle.com](http://www.heinle.com))

Another online dictionary  
([www.learnersdictionary.com](http://www.learnersdictionary.com))

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## Websites

- [www.taggalaxy.com](http://www.taggalaxy.com)  
Displays photos for target word.
- [www.freerice.com](http://www.freerice.com)
  - Build vocabulary as you donate rice to the hungry.
- [www.elymonline.com](http://www.elymonline.com)
  - Learn what words meant and how they sounded 600 or 2,000 years ago
- [www.wordsift.com](http://www.wordsift.com)
  - Paste in text. Identifies academic words in text.

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## Read-Aloud References

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G. & Kucan, L. (2005). *Read-aloud anthology*. Steck-Vaughn.

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G. & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: robust vocabulary instruction*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Trelease, J. (2004) *Read aloud handbook*. Penquin Books.

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