Wide Reading

Affixes

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Instruction, Tools and Stragegies

FLORIDA READING ASSOCIATION

Leading the way to literacy

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Teachers on
The Cutting Edge: Vocabulary–Instruction, Tools, & Strategies

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Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Foreword

The Studies and Research Committee of the Florida Reading Association (FRA) presents Volume 15 of *Teachers on the Cutting Edge*, one of the benefits of membership in FRA. Designed to aid teachers and administrators in their efforts to learn about research and best practices that support literacy development, this volume includes a representative sampling of research literature and pedagogical techniques on *Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies*.

Because vocabulary provides labels for concepts, students' learning of vocabulary is essential for comprehension. The articles reviewed in this volume address some of the following issues related to K-12 vocabulary knowledge and instruction:

- the quality and quantity of students' vocabulary knowledge;
- dimensions of vocabulary instruction and their effects on reading comprehension;
- research on effective vocabulary instruction in schools;
- suggestions of practical strategies that have led to students' learning, using, and remembering new words;
- guidelines for evaluating vocabulary instruction and activities;
- effective vocabulary strategies with special needs and ESL students;
- the relationship of vocabulary acquisition to reading, writing, spelling, and speaking; and
- vocabulary instruction in content areas.

FRA's Studies and Research Committee hopes that Florida educators will gain insights by reading these summaries of articles and books on vocabulary and that they will share this issue of *Teachers on the Cutting Edge* with colleagues, school leaders, parents, policymakers, and friends in order to enlighten key stakeholders about the latest information on vocabulary instruction, tools, and strategies. In fact, FRA encourages educators to copy and distribute the summaries presented here for use by individuals and institutions.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Beck, I. L. & McKeown, M. G. (2001). Text talk: Capturing the benefits of read-aloud experiences for young children. *The Reading Teacher*, *55,*10-20.

Summary

Beck and McKeown review the research literature on the kinds of texts and the kinds of talk that are most beneficial for read-aloud experiences. According to their findings, texts need to be challenging, presenting concepts that will encourage children to apply their strategies. Talk should encourage students to reflect on ideas and to stretch, moving beyond the illustrations and their own background experiences. Beck and McKeown report what they learned from observing kindergarten and first-grade children as their teachers read to them. Children often responded on the basis of information from pictures, and pictures frequently interfered with students' constructing story meaning. Children often responded on the basis of their background knowledge, ignoring what was read to them in the story or selecting only tangential information. Their teachers usually clarified students' comments or asked them to retell specific information from the text. Beck and McKeown then discuss their strategy of Text Talk, which is designed to promote student comprehension and further student language development. The kinds of questions Beck and McKeown would have the teacher ask elicit greater language production and vocabulary development. Initially, teachers needed to provide much support and feedback before students were able to successfully engage in higher level efforts to construct meaning.

Implications

- Before a read-aloud, think carefully about which pictures should be shared with students, as pictures may interfere with their processing of the vocabulary and the ideas of the text.

- Although activating prior knowledge is important, children may rely too much on prior knowledge and not listen carefully to the ideas presented in the text.

- Think how students might be redirected when they give responses that are only tangential to the information presented in the read-aloud text. How will they be moved from relying predominantly on their background knowledge to processing the ideas the author is developing in the text?

Word Wisdom . . .

"Words are all we have."

-- Samuel Beckett

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Allen, J. (2000). Word matter tensions. *Voices from the Middle*, 7, 4-8.

Summary

In this brief article, Allen asks the question: "How can we effectively teach new words, and what can we do to make sure students remember those words?" She makes three major recommendations to answer this question. Her first recommendation is to read. Teachers should offer students exposure to a variety of words and multiple opportunities to discuss uses of language that may be new to them. She suggests choosing readings from novels, news articles, nonfiction, informational texts, letters, poetry and student writing.

Second, she recommends extending word study to concepts and words critical to understanding textbooks and life settings and to consideration of word study as a tool for effective writing. She suggests the use of graphic organizers to organize and focus word study. Her third suggestion is what she calls "taking the tops off of our heads." Students see and hear their teachers' thinking. "This mediation not only shows students how we go about making sense out of what we read and say, but also gives them models for doing the same." Allen concludes that students must learn to love words and to have multiple and diverse ways of expressing what is important to them.

Implications
Teachers in grades 4-12 can benefit from the ideas suggested in this article. These techniques can be used in any content area class as well as in language arts and reading classes.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Harmon, J. M. (2000). Assessing and supporting independent word learning strategies of middle
school students. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 43*, 518-527.

Summary

Harmon reveals profiles of three students of varying ability as they determine the meanings of unfamiliar words encountered during independent reading. She describes the value of the profiles in assessing independent word-learning strategies and how such information can drive instruction.

Harmon reviews a variety of instructional techniques for teaching independent word-learning strategies, explains the use of think-alouds as a tool for observing students' approaches to figuring out unfamiliar words, and describes the learning strategies of the three learners. She suggests the kinds of support middle school students may need if they are to become independent in learning new words. She provides a chart for documenting the strategies learners use as they encounter unfamiliar words.

Implications
Learners need to understand effective approaches to interpreting word meanings. It is important that teachers become aware of the strategies students currently use.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Graves, M. F. (2000). A vocabulary program to complement and bolster a middle-grade comprehension program. In B. M. Taylor, M. F. Graves, & P. Van den Broek (Eds.), *Reading for meaning* (pp. 116-135). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Summary

Learning vocabulary is an enormous task. Students may encounter up to 100,000 different words in their school textbooks. Even by learning 3,000 to 4,000 words per year, students may encounter thousands of unfamiliar words in their texts. To facilitate learning vocabulary, Graves advocates using a four-part vocabulary program.

1. Wide Reading–Teachers need to have large collections of current and enticing books, magazines, and other reading materials that their students can use for independent reading. Teachers also need to read aloud to students, show their enthusiasm for reading, and encourage students to read widely in all content areas.

2. Teaching Individual Words–Teachers need to select words that are important to understanding the selections in which they appear; words that can be "unlocked" by using context or structural analysis skills; words that will enhance students' context, structural analysis, or dictionary skills; or words that will be useful outside the context of the selection in which they appear. They need to teach words that represent available concepts as well as words that represent new and challenging concepts.

3. Teaching Word-Learning Strategies –Teachers need to teach students to use context, word parts and the dictionary to learn or verify word definitions. They should model the strategies with simplified, concrete materials and gradually release responsibility for using the strategies to the students.

4. Fostering Word Consciousness–Teachers should model the use of precise language, encourage students' uses of precise language, and participate in word play with students.

Graves suggests that teachers who spend an average of 15 minutes a week on independent reading (not all of the reading time will deal with vocabulary), 20 minutes on teaching new words, 20 minutes on teaching new strategies, and 10 minutes on fostering word consciousness– a total of an hour and 5 minutes a week–will find that their students' knowledge of words has grown tremendously.

Implications

A relatively small investment of time spent on vocabulary-related activities can have a great impact on students' vocabulary knowledge.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Konopak, B. C., and Mealey, D. L. (1992). Vocabulary learning in the content areas. In E. K. Dishner, T. W., Bean, J. E. Readence, & D. W. Moore (Eds.) *Reading in the content areas: Improving classroom instruction* (3rd ed.). pp.174-182, Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

Summary

In the content areas, students may have trouble with both general and technical vocabulary words. General words have everyday meanings that are not associated with a specific content area. Technical words are either general words that have a specialized meaning in a particular content area or words with one distinct meaning and application for a particular content area. In either case, learning only a definition is not enough. The meaning needs to be elaborated and connected to other words. In learning words, the new information may be assimilated into existing schema or the existing schema may be altered to accommodate the new information.

Teachers often use the dictionary as the major tool for vocabulary study, having students find the definition of a word and, perhaps, use it in a sentence. This practice usually results in rote learning and rapid forgetting. Students have trouble with locating the definition that is appropriate for the context and with using the definition accurately. Teachers also may have students use contextual analysis to define words. While target words in content area texts may be defined in the text, other unfamiliar words may not have sufficient clues in the context to enable students to define them. The authors suggest, then, that teachers use direct vocabulary instruction to teach new words. Although this practice is time consuming and may make students too dependent on the teacher, it can be very effective if the teacher selects student-directed instructional strategies. As to whether to teach new words before or after reading the text, the authors suggest that time is less important than the nature and delivery of the instruction.

The authors give four guidelines for instruction:
- Instruction should help students relate new vocabulary to their background knowledge.
- Instruction should help students develop elaborated word knowledge.
- Instruction should provide for active student involvement in learning new vocabulary.
- Instruction should develop students' strategies for acquiring new vocabulary independently.

Regardless of the instructional practices used, the authors note that nothing will help students learn new vocabulary like a teacher who is enthusiastic about learning new words.

Implications

Teachers need to abandon the look-up-the-word-in-the-dictionary method of vocabulary instruction in favor of practices that lead to having students actively engaged in redeveloping elaborated meaning.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Beers, K. (2003) Vocabulary: Figuring out what words mean. In K. Beers.
When kids can't read, what teachers can do, (pp.176-203). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann

Summary

In this chapter, Beers focuses her attention on effective vocabulary development for students who are reading far below middle school or high school standards. She offers eight suggestions along with practical strategies for implementation that have led to students learning, using, and remembering new words.

Her first suggestion is to assign word study, not word memorization. She feels that students learn more words when teachers focus on fewer words and use those words in their own speech. She challenged a group of teachers to learn the words two weeks prior to the students' being introduced to the words and to use them repeatedly in class.

The second suggestion involves context clues or, as she puts it, use the context as a clue. Teaching students *how* to use the context as a clue requires that students see relationships among words and make inferences about the passage.

Suggestion three addresses teaching word parts. She encourages teachers to agree to systematically teach specific roots and affixes at each grade level and to use graphic organizers such as vocabulary trees to help students learn roots.

Her fourth suggestion is to turn students on to words; make vocabulary instruction enjoyable.

Suggestion five involves the use of graphic organizers rather than using the dictionary alone. Graphic organizers help dependent readers to organize information and see relationships that they otherwise might not see.

The sixth suggestion uses student-created logographs as tools for remembering words.

Suggestion seven emphasizes the value of combining reading aloud and using SSR.

Her last suggestion is that teachers should ask the right questions. To do this they must first know what the student doesn't know about a word being studied. She offers a set of key questions to ask that correspond to teaching objectives.

Implications

Although these suggestions are directed toward teachers of dependent readers, they can be used for all. Anyone working with students (6-12) with reading difficulties should read this book.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Baumann, J. F., & Kameenui, E. J. (1991). Research on vocabulary instruction: Ode to Voltaire.
  In J. Flood, J. M. Jensen, D. Lapp, & J.R. Squire (Eds). *Handbook of research on teaching
  the English language arts.* (pp. 604-631). New York: Macmillan.

Summary

Baumann and Kameenui's must-read chapter has three major divisions: theoretical and
pedagogical issues that haunt research on vocabulary instruction, research on vocabulary
instruction, and what our knowledge about teaching vocabulary means for classroom practice.
Issues related to vocabulary knowledge and instruction include: the quality and quantity of
students' vocabulary knowledge; dimensions of vocabulary instruction and their effects on
reading comprehension; the state of vocabulary curriculum and instruction in schools; and what
is known and not known about the breadth and depth of students' vocabulary knowledge.
Baumann and Kameenui suggest 10 global instructional decisions regarding vocabulary
instruction. They follow under implications.

Implications

- Establish vocabulary learning goals for students.

- Include both teacher-initiated vocabulary learning and student self-initiated strategies for
  vocabulary learning**.**

- Include instruction in specific-word and transferable and generalizable vocabulary strategies.

- Select strategies and procedures that are carefully aligned with established vocabulary goals.

- Provide struggling learners with a systematic and sustained program that accelerates their
  learning of words and strategies.

- Select assessment tasks and formats that are consistent with strategies and goals.

- Consider the costs and benefits of instruction in terms of student and teacher time and effort.

- Select the most effective and efficient strategies for each instructional objective.

- Don't limit strategies to a narrow set of vocabulary instructional techniques. Use a range of
  empirically validated instructional procedures.

- Continually evaluate learning objectives and the procedures and techniques used to
  accomplish vocabulary goals.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Carr, E., & Wixson, K. (1986) Guidelines for evaluating vocabulary instruction. *Journal of Reading*, *29*, 588-595.

Summary
Useful and theoretically sound guidelines for evaluating vocabulary instruction when applied to vocabulary activities can assist teachers in selecting those that hold the most promise for improving both vocabulary and reading comprehension. The guidelines proposed by the authors require that instruction should (1) help students relate new vocabulary to their background knowledge; (2) help students develop elaborated word knowledge; (3) provide for active student involvement in learning new vocabulary; and (4) develop students' strategies for acquiring new vocabulary independently. The authors provide an explanation of each of the four guidelines; then, offer a variety of examples of procedures that reflect the guideline. They then use an evaluation matrix to examine specific procedures used for vocabulary instruction to determine whether each procedure incorporates all four guidelines. They found that many instructional procedures meet the first three guidelines, but only a handful are designed to promote independent learning of new vocabulary.

Implications
Because there are myriad activities available and limited instructional time, it is important that teachers choose those strategies/activities that are most effective in developing students' vocabulary.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Curtis, M.E., & Longo, A. M. (2001, November). Teaching vocabulary to adolescents to improve comprehension. *Reading Online,* 5. Available:
    http://www.readingonline.org/articles/art_index.asp?HREF=curtis/index.html

Summary
A 16-week intervention (45 minutes a day/5 days a week) significantly improved the comprehension of middle and high school students reading below grade level from instruction that developed their vocabulary through reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Five principles (listed below) guide the work of teachers and students through each week of the intervention. Sample activities are provided.

(1) Introduce and activate word meanings–support students in creating contexts in which word meaning can be applied rather than ask students to infer meaning for given contexts. (2) Present words in a variety of contexts including cloze, paragraph cloze, read and respond, and read aloud. (3) Provide multiple opportunities to learn and to expand on meaning. (4) Promote active and generative processing. Each week students write about an assigned topic using at least 5 of the vocabulary words. (5) Provide ongoing assessment and communicate progress. Tests, activities, and grading criteria are provided.

Implications
With the limited time a teacher has in middle school, a vocabulary program that addresses reading, writing, speaking and listening is worth exploring.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Allen, J. (2002). "I am Thorgood, King of the Orgies": The reading challenge of content
vocabulary. *Voices from the Middle*, *9*, 22-27.

Summary
Allen discusses two difficulties that students find consistently get in the way of their success
during content reading: "boring texts and too many difficult words."   She suggests three
techniques to overcome these difficulties: verbal association to anticipate content, interactive
word study, and explicit word study. Supporting these techniques are activities and graphic
organizers found in her 1999 book, *Words, Words,Words* and a new book, *Common Ground*.
Anticipating vocabulary based on the various elements of the text supports the critical role of
word connections and gives students a strategy to activate prior knowledge before reading. One
activity is the graphic, "Things We Can Read from A - Z." For interactive word study, she
recommends story impressions, and for explicit word study she demonstrates "Word in My
Context."   She goes on to state, "our best resource for word learning is still an interesting text."

Implications
This article offers the teacher of grades 4-12 a glimpse of the resources available to them in Janet
Allen's books. Many teachers have found them to be both practical to use and valuable for
helping students to become active learners.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Bone, B. (2000). Lessons from a vocabulary journal. *Voices from the Middle*, *7*, 18-23.

Summary
Bone reflects on her high school vocabulary experiences and says that her vocabulary journal
"serves as a constant reminder of what does not work …" In an attempt to find something that
could work with her sixth and seventh grade students, Bone turned to Janet Allen's book, *Words,
Words, Words*. Through the use of Allen's graphic, "What We Read from A to Z," she was able
to activate prior knowledge and decide what vocabulary students would find difficult during
shared reading. She then made lists of those words and determined which she could quickly
define in context and which would need more detailed instruction.

She went on to help students make meaningful connections with vocabulary and to build concept
knowledge. By finding meaning in words as they read and connecting that meaning to their
lives, students were able to remember words and their definitions beyond the end of the period.
Through the use of several graphic organizers, Bone demonstrates the process she developed for
vocabulary instruction in her classroom. In this way she was able to help students make learning
continuous, meaningful, and enjoyable.

Implications
This article can serve as an example for other classroom teachers to follow in designing
vocabulary instruction in middle grade classrooms.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Baumann, J. F., Edwards, E. C., Font, G., Tereshinski, C.A., Kameenui, E. J., & Olejnik, S. F.
(2002). Teaching morphemic and contextual analysis to fifth-grade students. *Reading
Research Quarterly, 37*, 150-178.

Summary

Baumann et al. explore the effects of instruction in morphemic analysis (selected prefixes) and
contextual analysis (selected context clue types) with four classes of fifth-grade students.
Classes were assigned to the following conditions: morphemic-only, context-only, combined
morphemic-context experimental group and an instructed control group. Instruction took place
in 12 50-minute sessions over a 4-week period. Data were gathered on 20 days spread over a 5-
week period. Students in the various conditions were taught 60 low-frequency target words, 30
morphemic prefixes and 30 context words. Students were tested on their recall of taught word
meanings; on their transfer of skills to uninstructed words containing taught morphemic elements
or taught context clues; and on their comprehension of text containing transfer words. Students
selected from the different conditions were also interviewed individually. Results indicated an
immediate and delayed effect of morphemic and contextual analysis instruction and an
immediate effect of morphemic and contextual analysis instruction for transfer words.
Instruction in neither skill, either in isolation or in combination, enhanced overall text
comprehension.   Students were as effective at inferring word meanings when they received
instruction in separate skills as when the skills were presented in combination.

Implications

- Teach students the meanings of select morphemic elements as this knowledge enables them
  to infer the meanings of untaught words.

- Teach context analysis strategies as this instruction enables students to infer additional
  meanings from context.

- Teach morphemic and contextual skills in combination, rather than in isolation.

- Review these strategies as the effect of initial instruction dissipates with time.

Word Wisdom . . .

"To call forth a concept, a word is needed."

-- Antoine Laurent Lavoisier

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Hopkins, G., & Bean, T. W. (2000). Vocabulary learning with the verbal-visual word association strategy in a Native American community. In D. W. Moore, D. E. Alvermann, & K. A. Hinchman (Eds.), *Struggling adolescent readers: A collection of teaching strategies* (pp. 107-115). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Summary

This article describes an action research project implemented by one of the authors, Gary Hopkins, while teaching secondary students in Lame Deer, Montana on a Cheyenne reservation. While working with these students, he identified the need for more direct instruction in vocabulary and decided to try the verbal-visual word association strategy. He named his strategy 'Vocabulary Square' and used it while teaching prefixes and suffixes.   The students divided a paper into four sections: the upper left-hand corner=root; the upper right-hand corner=dictionary definition; the lower left-hand corner=own definition; and the lower right-hand corner=a drawing or example.

Hopkins modeled the strategy, using a think-aloud procedure, and provided many opportunities for guided practice. He found the students to be apprehensive, at first, but soon enjoyed the chance to do something different from responding to multiple choice questions. Students in the junior high and high school settings performed well and with greater enthusiasm.

Implications

Although many students require a direct instruction model for vocabulary development, we must be sure to meet the specific needs of these students within their cultures. It is important to become very familiar with students' societies and interests, to provide models and strategies based on that knowledge. We assist our students in comprehending and remembering, when we help them bring background knowledge and personal experiences to the learning tasks.

Word Wisdom . . .
        "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world."
                                                --Ludwig Wittgenstein

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

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

Summary

Beck, McKeown, and Kucan offer a perspective for thinking about how students learn words and how their learning can be supported and maintained. They discuss the importance of direct vocabulary instruction and what kinds of words are important to teach. They offer criteria for selecting words and give examples to demonstrate the criteria. They question many existing teaching practices, especially relying on dictionary definitions. They discuss the unreliable nature of natural contexts for deriving word meanings and provide an approach teachers can use to help students deal with new words in context more effectively. Two chapters provide a sequence of activities for introducing sophisticated words to young children and for extending vocabulary growth beyond the primary grades. Much attention is given to developing a rich verbal environment where attention to word meanings and word usage is an ongoing aspect of classroom interactions.

Implications

- Teachers need to create verbal environments where sophisticated, interesting, and precise language is encouraged.

- Teachers need to model and demonstrate interesting language use.

- Posters and bulletin boards need to reflect a lively interest in words.

- An abundance of books needs to be present, especially poetry texts that will help to develop a love for words and how they are used.

- Students need to develop student-friendly explanations of words, rather than dictionary definitions.

- Students must use words in meaningful settings, applying them immediately after they have learned the meanings. Students need repeated exposures in many contexts.

Word Wisdom . . .

"One forgets words as one forgets names.
One's vocabulary needs constant fertilizing or it will die."

-- Evelyn Waugh

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Biemiller, A. (2001, Spring). Teaching vocabulary, early, direct and sequential. *American Educator*, *25*, 24-28. Also available:
  http://www.aft.org/american_educator/spring2001/vocab.html

Summary
Biemiller suggests that vocabulary development is ignored in many classrooms, especially in the critical years before grade three. He urges a more teacher-centered and carefully planned vocabulary curriculum, beginning with the early school years. While many children learn to successfully identify words, their reading instruction needs to continue with intensive vocabulary development. According to Biemiller, children need to understand at least 95% of the words in any text they read. When they don't, they lose overall text meaning and they are unable to infer meanings of any unfamiliar words. Biemiller cites research indicating that children learn from 600-1200 root words each year of elementary school. Additional research suggests that they need to have from 11,000-14,000 known root words before they enter college. Before age 10, most of these root words are learned by direct explanation. According to Biemiller, early vocabulary limitations are rarely made up. Many children are already way behind their peers in vocabulary development by the end of grade two. To catch up, these students would have to learn vocabulary at above-average rates. Vocabulary instruction needs to be planned and words need to be systematically taught. Biemiller contends that vocabulary instruction needs to be heavily teacher centered.

Implications

- Vocabulary instruction needs to be a stronger component of every classroom at every grade.

- Primary teachers need a stronger vocabulary program right from the start. Biemiller suggests that if students don't fall behind by second grade, they will not be behind their peers in later grades.

- Words need to be directly modeled and directly taught. Incidental learning is not enough for adequate vocabulary development.

- Vocabulary instruction needs to be teacher centered and teacher led. Incidental learning is not enough to accelerate vocabulary growth.

Word Wisdom . . .
   "Keep on reading. Keep on meeting unfamiliar words on printed pages.
       Keep on getting acquainted with the faces of words. Read!."
                                                   -- R. Flesch and A. H. Lass

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Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Blake, M. E. & Majors, P. L. (1995). Recycled words: Holistic instruction for LEP students.
    Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, *39*, 132-137.

Summary
Blake and Majors remind teachers that LEP students experience "academically devastating"
differences between conversational and academic language proficiency. What she calls "social
proficiency" is usually achieved in two years; "academic proficiency" can take seven years or
more.

In order to assist these students in acquiring second language fluency, it is important to integrate
language experiences with content instruction. Holistic lessons featuring hands on, art-based
experiences are invaluable in helping LEP students to acquire academic proficiency. The authors
refer to the use of "recycled words."

Their strategy has five stages: prereading, oral reading, focused word study, quizzes or tests, and
writing workshop activities. In prereading, vocabulary is selected from both texts and social
settings.   The teacher selects words to be used, leads oral drills for practice, and provides
vocabulary worksheets as reinforcement. In oral reading, "jump- in" reading is recommended
using interesting, challenging materials. Word study features color-coded word cards for drill
and games. Evaluation activities include crossword puzzles, quizzes, and numbered lists of
definitions. The last stage is a writing workshop focusing on teacher-authored material using the
targeted words.

Implications
The plan suggested in this article could be useful for teachers of middle school students.
However, more interactive activities might be added for variety and active learning.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Nagy, W. E. (1988). *Teaching vocabulary to improve reading comprehension.* Newark, DE:
    International Reading Association.

Summary
Not all vocabulary instruction is equal. Many teachers fail to help students increase their
vocabularies and their reading comprehension due to a misguided understanding of what this
instruction entails. Nagy gives excellent examples of problems when traditional methods are
used. He provides illustrations of effective vocabulary instruction, including graphic organizers
for various strategies. Nagy states that "...the purpose of this book has been not to present
specific new techniques of vocabulary instruction, but to describe how different approaches to
vocabulary contribute to reading comprehension." (p. 39)

Implications
Good vocabulary instruction requires a variety of strategies, adequate opportunities for
exploration, and usage in meaningful contexts.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Cunningham, A. E., and Stanovich, K. E. (1998). What reading does for the mind. *American Educator,* Spring/Summer,1-*8.* Available:
http://www.aft.org/american_educator/spring_sum98/index.html

Summary
The authors describe a number of cognitive consequences of reading that extend beyond the immediate task of gaining meaning. They confirm others findings that the bulk of vocabulary growth during a child's lifetime occurs indirectly through language exposure rather than through direct teaching; reading volume rather than oral language is the prime contributor to individual differences in children's vocabularies. They review several studies they have conducted regarding reading and vocabulary development.

In one, they analyzed three different categories of language: written language sampled from materials ranging from preschool books to scientific articles; words spoken on various television shows; and adult speech varying in formality. What became immediately apparent is how lexically impoverished most speech is compared to written language. In another they examined whether reading volume accounts for difference in vocabulary development. They found that reading volume contributed significantly and independently to vocabulary knowledge in fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade children. Furthermore in all their studies, they have found that reading demonstrated significant dividends for all types of readers, from the struggling to the effective reader.

Implications
Children at all reading levels need to be given time to read and encouraged to read.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Rasinski, T. V., et al. (Eds.) (2000). *Teaching word recognition, spelling, and vocabulary: Strategies from The Reading Teacher*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Summary
This publication includes significant articles on word recognition, spelling, and vocabulary previously published in *The Reading Teacher*. The articles specifically addressing vocabulary instruction include "essential words" for survival and success in everyday life and a strategy "The Word Storm," addressing students' speculations about the functional application of words learned in context. There are also articles related to finding smaller words in larger ones to help with recognition and vocabulary understanding, as well as techniques for scaffolding and having fun with language and vocabulary development. Each selected article offers strategies for immediate application.

Implications
Many aspects must be considered when addressing good vocabulary instruction. The ages of the students and their background knowledge will influence the scaffolding required by the teachers for instruction

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Gonzalez, O. (1999). Building vocabulary: Dictionary consultation and the ESL student.
Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, *43*, 264-270.

Summary

Dependence on dictionary use in vocabulary acquisition is frequently discouraged because stopping to look up words while reading takes the reader's attention from the text, interferes with short-term memory, and disrupts comprehension of the reading material. However, some researchers see the dictionary as an indispensable asset for language learners when it helps them understand the context surrounding the unknown word.

Adult second language learners seem to have the same problems with dictionary usage as young students who are native speakers of English.   Research shows a strong correlation between the amount a person reads and the size of that person's vocabulary. Learners develop different strategies for getting meaning from context. Appropriate dictionary skills are necessary for both ESL learners and native speakers in order to learn new words.

Students in this study were asked to maintain a weekly collection of three newspaper articles and to select five unfamiliar words from each. They were to write summaries of each article and to either guess the meaning of the unfamiliar words from context or to find the meaning in a dictionary. Several types of definition errors were found. Students accepted inadequate interpretation of word meanings, they did not match the syntactical patterns, or they were confused about morphological cues.

Implications

Use of dictionaries seems to help the ESL student compensate for vocabulary deficiencies and assists them to become more fluent readers. However, the following ideas must be kept in mind: ESL students must learn efficient dictionary habits, beginning students need a "learner dictionary," dictionary use helps students develop more vocabulary, interesting reading material must be provided, and ESL learners independently develop strategies that meet their needs.

Word Wisdom . . .
"Words--so innocent and powerless as they are, as standing in a dictionary, how potent for good and evil they become, in the hands of one who knows how to combine them."

--Nathaniel Hawthorne

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Graves, M. F., & Watts-Taffe, S. M. (2002). The place of word consciousness in a research-based vocabulary program. In S. J. Samuels & A. E. Farstrup (Eds.). *What research has to say about reading instruction.* (3rd Ed., pp. 140-165). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Summary

Graves and Watts-Taffe describe the value of a four-part vocabulary program that includes wide reading, teaching individual words, teaching word learning strategies, and fostering word consciousness. Their program components evolved from research and instruction over a period of 15 years. Most of the chapter focuses on the fourth component, fostering word-consciousness. Graves and Watts-Taffe suggest that word consciousness is a disposition toward words that is both cognitive and affective. Students who are word conscious know many words and know them well They are interested in words, they find words intriguing, and they gain satisfaction from using them well and from seeing or hearing them used well by others. First, Graves and Watts-Taffe suggest why awareness and interest in words and their meanings is necessary. Then they suggest the following approaches to fostering word consciousness: modeling, recognizing and encouraging adept diction; promoting word play; providing intensive and expressive instruction; involving students in original investigations about words and their use; and teaching students about words, including Nagy and Scott's five aspects of the complexity of word knowledge: incrementality, multidimensionality, polysemy, interrelatedness, and heterogeneity.

Implications

- Model your enthusiasm for words and your proficiency in adept word usage.

- Consider using a "word-of-the-day" strategy in your classroom.

- Encourage students to collect and study words that particularly interest them.

- Scaffold students as they learn new words.

- Promote word play including teaching homophones, homographs, idioms, clichés, and puns.

- Use Beck and McKeown's intensive reading instruction and Duin and Graves' expressive instruction.

- Encourage research on words and their origins; investigate dialects and usage.

- Teach the complexity of word knowledge, using Nagy and Scott's categories for guidance.

Word Wisdom . . .
  "There's something special about people who are interested in the printed word.
   They are species all of their own–learned, kind, knowledgeable, and human."
                                                                        -- Nathan Pine

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Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Summary

The author describes her use of various instructional strategies at their point of use. She recommends analyzing and sorting words into groups, looking for words related structurally or etymologically, and making generalizations about connections.   She defends the importance of contextually relevant word study in all areas of the curriculum. Students with limited vocabulary have difficulty comprehending what they hear as well as what they read because they lack the scaffolding necessary for concept building. These individuals may have limited understanding of related concepts and word labels and have problems relating new concepts to prior knowledge.

Hennings warns against the assumption that students have the necessary vocabulary skills to ensure success in content texts or the ability to comprehend words in listening as well as reading. To help teachers solve these problems, she suggests a series of principles:

- Emphasize Greek and Latin roots or bases.
- Associate new terms with others containing the same root.
- Introduce and review meanings of prefixes.
- Point out prefixes that have a negative connotation.
- Introduce word elements that refer to size and number.
- Stress how variations of a word are built through the addition of suffixes.
- Assist students with suffixlike endings such as –cracy and –archy.

Hennings urges content area teachers to watch for "teachable moments" to integrate vocabulary study into ongoing content area classes.

Implications
The information in this article can be especially helpful to reading specialists in middle and high schools working with content area teachers. Many content area teachers search for ways in which to assist students with reading skills, and vocabulary is a good place to start.

Word Wisdom . . .
   "A definition is the enclosing of a wilderness of ideas within a wall of words."

--Samuel Butler

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Johnson, D., & Steele, V. (1996). So many words, so little time: Helping college ESL learners acquire vocabulary-building strategies. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *39*, 348-357.

Summary
According to the writers, ESL students feel they need to rapidly increase their reading vocabularies in order to deal with academic subjects at the college level. There seems to be little research in the area of strategies to help such students acquire vocabulary quickly. Generative strategies, those student-initiated and monitored, were selected for study. Each strategy integrates vocabulary learning with content. Vocabulary building activities are provided in a non-threatening setting. All activities must be scaffolded.

Although the primary vehicle for vocabulary development must be reading continuous text, there are some words that are best handled through direct instruction and use of a dictionary. For most other words, dictionary use interrupts the flow of reading. Peer teaching activities where students themselves select words and "teach" them to classmates can be very effective. Explicit strategies for using context and structure are necessary for ESL students to cope with content area vocabulary. They need to know how to determine words in context and how to use word-part analysis. Semantic mapping allows students to relate words to ideas in a broader context. The relation of visual images to new words is also useful.

Implications
Even though ESL students may be reluctant to give up reliance on dictionaries, they learn that it is more efficient to rely on other strategies. Both theory and research support the use of many strategies in vocabulary instruction for ESL students.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Laflamme, J. G. (1997). The effect of the multiple exposure vocabulary method and the target reading/writing strategy on test scores. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 40*, 372-381.

Summary
This article reports the effects "Target Reading/Writing Strategy" on students' verbal scores on the PSAT. The strategy includes three steps. In step one, the teacher identifies target abilities; in step two, the teacher selects reading passages and questions; in step three, students write original paragraphs accompanied by questions focusing on the target abilities. Students in the experimental group scored higher than the control group on the PSAT. Findings suggest that when teachers center instruction on specific verbal skills, students will show progress in those areas.   The writer cautions that the study contains "inherent problems that affect the generalizability of the results."

Implications
The vocabulary and reading/writing methods can give teachers a model to improve verbal abilities and cover content at the same time.   These methods are easily transferred to content area classes.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Nagy, W. E., & Scott, J. A. (2000). Vocabulary processes. In M. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, P.D.
    Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.). *Handbook of reading research* (Vol. 3, pp. 269-284). Mahwah,
    NJ: Erlbaum.

Summary
Nagy and Scott review the research on vocabulary acquisition, how school children add words to
their reading and writing vocabularies, and how they learn the meanings of new words from
context, word parts, and definitions. They develop the concepts of **incrementality** (knowledge
develops in many steps); **multidimensionality** (word knowledge consists of many types of
knowledge); **polysemy** (words have multiple meanings); **interrelatedness** (knowledge of the
meaning of one word is not independent of one's knowledge of other words); and **heterogeneity**
(knowledge of a word varies with the kind of word) to demonstrate the complexity of word
knowledge. Nagy and Scott state that students need metacognitive and metalinguistic abilities to
play an active role in their word learning and to assume responsibility for their own vocabulary
growth.

Implications
- Knowing a word is more than knowing a definition. Vocabulary instruction must be rich and
  multifaceted. There must be multiple and varied encounters with a word before a student
  understands what a word means.

- Effective use of context clues requires a reasonable level of metalinguistic awareness,
  including an
  understanding of syntax and word order.

- Students must be taught to be strategic and flexible in their use of word parts (morphology).
  Instruction needs to be ongoing through the grades, even into high school.

- Conscious attention to words and to the choice of the right word will help students grow in
  vocabulary and in their ability to select words for their speaking and writing.

- Students need immersion in massive amounts of rich written and oral language to gain word
  meanings and to gain the metalinguistic sophistication needed for most school tasks and for
  independent vocabulary learning.

Word Wisdom . . .
            "Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body."

                                                    --Richard Steele

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Rosenbaum, C. (2001). A word map for middle school: A tool for effective vocabulary
    instruction. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *45*, 44-49.

Summary

According to this article, middle school students need an interactive framework in order to develop vocabulary skills. Rosenbaum found a vocabulary webbing activity that she adapted into a word map for her students.

In order to complete the word map, the student writes a new word and the page number, copies the sentence or phrase in which the word was found, and then looks in the dictionary for the definition that supports the context. This definition is written on the map along with a synonym and an antonym for the new word. The next step focuses on structural analysis and morphology as the student records another form of the word on the map. Following this, the student records a phrase, an example, a sketch, or a personal clue to the word. The final stage is to write an original sentence using the word appropriately on the word map.

At first the teacher supplied the words. Later, students became responsible for words to map. Students soon began using the mapped words in both written work and in conversation.

As students began to feel they were in control of their own learning, they suggested review activities for the class. *Jeopardy*-type activities allowed students to share their knowledge with classmates, to develop sensitivity toward new words, and gain independence in the acquisition of new vocabulary.

Implications

Students in middle and high school benefit from this type of activity.   It provides the type of active learning so important to adolescents.

Word Wisdom . . .
    "The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the
            difference between lightning and the lightning bug."
                                                                -- Mark Twain

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Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Swanborn, M. S. L., & De Glopper, K. (1999). Incidental word learning while reading: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, *69* (3), 261-285.

Summary

Swanborn and De Glopper report a meta-analysis of 20 studies to determine the effect of incidental word learning. Incidental word learning is defined as word learning that is not intentional. To be included in the meta-analysis, studies met specific criteria. The subjects were generally unaware of the focus of the study. Either there was no reading purpose stated or the purpose was one with which the subjects were very familiar. Subjects were not directed to learn new meanings for words. The words were not highlighted or underlined or set off in any way, and texts that were read were authentic texts that were not written purposefully for the study. All studies were coded for study conditions, subject factors, assessment factors, and material-related factors by three independent coders. The meta-analysis confirmed that incidental word learning takes place during natural reading. The higher the grade level and reading level of the student, the more the student learned words incidentally. The researchers conclude that during natural reading circumstances students will spontaneously derive and learn the meaning of about 15 words of every 100 unknown words they encounter.

Implications

- Students need to learn how to become skilled in deriving word meanings from context**.**

- Students need to develop strategies for retaining the meaning of a word after they have derived
  it. Training in memory skills may be useful.

- Students improve in their ability to use incidental learning over time. Younger children will need more support.

- Heavy vocabulary loads in a text interfere with incidental learning. Texts need to be selected carefully.

- Students' vocabulary can grow from incidental reading.

Word Wisdom . . .
    "As sheer casual reading matter, I still find the English dictionary the most interesting book in our language."
                                                    -- Albert Jay Knock

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Harmon, J. M. (2000). Vocabulary teaching and learning in a seventh-grade literature-based classroom. In D. W. Moore, D. E. Alvermann, & K. A. Hinchman (Eds.), *Struggling adolescent readers: A collection of teaching strategies* (pp. 174-188). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Summary

Harmon conducted a qualitative study to identify the extent to which a literature-based classroom can provide good vocabulary instruction. She observed a middle school teacher, Denise, during a six month period, while she provided a comprehensive literature-based program in a seventh grade classroom, using trade books as the major instructional materials.

The author looked at the opportunities for three major components to be addressed: "(a) instruction or learning episodes that expand knowledge schemas, (b) social interactions and interventions, and (c) wide reading." (p. 175) Denise believed that promoting critical reading and reasoning was paramount. To that end, she provided numerous opportunities for her students to use language in a variety of ways, while requiring them to participate in conversations that helped them analyze issues and expand their vocabulary usage. She modeled thinking, providing many teacher-directed lessons with an extensive elaboration of vocabulary word definitions and examples.

Social interactions were addressed through student participation in book discussion groups, where students were placed into literature circles and often modeled the teacher-directed lessons. Sustained Silent Reading was a 20-30 minute component of each class, during which time students could read widely and have the opportunity to enrich their understanding of word meanings and multiple usage.

Harmon found that "...this program encompassed a variety of important teaching and learning events where the teacher offered clarification about new words and learners practiced their existing repertoire of independent word learning strategies." (p. 186)

Implications

"Literature-based reading programs can be fruitful grounds for vocabulary teaching and learning at the middle school level." (p. 187) Students must be provided with varying opportunities for vocabulary development, based on their interests and needs, led by a knowledgeable literacy teacher, who addresses the three components listed above.

Word Wisdom . . .
> "A room without books is like a body without a soul."
> --Ciciero

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Harmon, J. M., & Hedrick, W. B. (2000). Zooming in and zooming out: Enhancing vocabulary and conceptual learning in social studies. *The Reading Teacher, 54*, 155-159.

Summary

Because words encountered in content area texts are labels for concepts that cannot be defined simply, Harmon and Hedrick describe a "conceptually driven framework" (p. 156) that can be used to teach the complexity of vocabulary in social studies and other content area subjects. The activity described involves various tasks, such as "…defining and identifying the concept, comparing and contrasting it to similar concepts, and understanding how the concept is situated within a larger context" (p. 156).

The article next describes the Zooming In and Zooming Out process. In social studies, Zooming In involves identifying the concept, person, or event; listing the most important and least important information; and listing "unrelated or improbable ideas, actions, or expectations related to the concept" (p. 156). Zooming Out involves listing similar or parallel concepts, relating the concept to other ideas or events, and devising a summary statement of the concept.

The authors then describe the procedures for incorporating Zooming In and Zooming Out into a social studies lesson and provide sample visual representations of two concepts. The first step in the process is brainstorming as a whole class what students know about a topic and recording students' responses—a process that involves both Zooming In and Zooming Out. The second step has students reading a designated passage and noting new information—a process that involves Zooming In. After reading, the next step is again zooming in by adding new information to the original list, discussing in small groups the most important and least important information, and voting as a whole class on the facts to include in the information display on the board, chart, or overhead. Students zoom out on the next three steps when they discuss ideas, people, or places to include in the "similar to" category; ideas, events, or people to include in the "related to" category; and nonexamples to include in the"unrelated" category. Prompts for eliciting discussion in each category are suggested by the authors. Students finally work in small groups or as a whole class to devise a summary statement. The authors conclude by suggesting activities for extending students' learning about a concept.

Implications

Devising a visual representation of vocabulary using the Zooming In and Zooming Out process will enhance word learning and concept building in content area subjects.

Word Wisdom . . .

"A powerful agent is the right word."

-- Mark Twain

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Nilsen, A. P., & Nilsen, D. L. F. (2002). Lessons in the teaching of vocabulary from September 11 and Harry Potter. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 46,* 254-260.

Summary
As teachers of English in prewar Afghanistan, Nilsen and Nilsen (2002) realized the difficulty that English speakers had with Farci, Pashtun, and Arabic words in the news after September 11th. They also noted "how comfortably children were learning dozens … of new names as they read Harry Potter books …" (p. 254). To aid readers in understanding these new words, Harry Potter author, J. K. Rowling uses morphemes to create words and provides multiple experiences with the same morphemes, such as *Hogwarts*, *Hogsmeade*, and *Pigwidgeon*.

Nilsen and Nilsen then provide suggested activities for words from the Harry Potter books to show students how morphemes were used to invent words, how various words build on each other, and how metaphors are used to develop additional meanings. For example, *portkey,* which is used in the books to transport people to specific places, uses the Latin meaning of *port* as a gateway or passage in such words as airport, seaport, import, export, and transport. Another activity uses names of spells, such as *expelliarmas* (a spell used to send something or someone away) to show two morphemes are incorporated in this invented word–*ex* meaning *from* and *pell* meaning to *drive*.

The authors also explain how characters names are used creatively for characterization and for places. After studying how Harry Potter books use morphemes, the authors suggest studying rich English morphemes, metaphors, and idioms, such as *arm*–firearms, unarmed, armless, give one's right arm, up in arms, long arm of the law. According to the authors, these activities will help students see connections in words.

Implications
Helping students recognize morphemes and connections between new words and words they already know will help them learn the new words. In addition, being playfully engaged with words will enhance students' learning of new vocabulary.

Word Wisdom . . .
   "When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone,
      "it means just what I choose it to mean--neither more nor less."
                                                      -- Lewis Carroll

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Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Dixon-Krauss, L. (2001-2002). Using literature as a context for teaching vocabulary. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 45,* 310-318.

Summary
Dixon-Kraus reports a research study conducted in a secondary classroom to investigate a mediation model design for vocabulary instruction, based on Vygotsky's cultural-historical theory. Vocabulary words were identified from the book *The Animal Farm* and used to provide instructional materials and activities.

Data collection included pre- and post tests, journal writing entries, and students' affective responses. Interesting information included the vocabulary words used in the study.

Implications
- Vocabulary words should come from student texts.
- Students should have multiple opportunities for application of the studied vocabulary, both oral and written.
- Developing word knowledge in the context of the reading provides an opportunity for broader understandings.
- "The mediation model design for classroom research provided a dynamic, collaborative for developing our knowledge about teaching vocabulary and transferring that knowledge to the teacher's classroom practice." (p. 317)

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Blachowicz, C., & Fisher, P. J. (2002). *Teaching vocabulary in all classrooms. (2nd Ed.).* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.

Summary
Research has shown that vocabulary understanding is an integral part of reading comprehension. This textbook is comprised of ten chapters that include a theoretical framework, guidelines for vocabulary instruction, multiple instructional strategies, and activities for students from kindergarten through adult. Many graphic organizers are provided for clear understanding of strategies. Each chapter includes a "Prepare Yourself," a "Strategy Overview Guide," "Teaching Idea Files," and a resource list.

Implications
Good vocabulary instruction will help students with reading comprehension. It is important to become familiar with numerous strategies to provide the best assistance for all students. This resource would be appropriate for both beginning and more seasoned teachers.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Summary

Based on recent conversations on the RTEACHER listserv electronic mailing list, the authors decided to share views and practices of the participants as well as provide a focus for instruction. It appears that vocabulary has not been emphasized as much as other components in the reading program. In many instances, the focus on dictionary usages has been abandoned, but it has not been replaced with good instructional strategies.

This article identifies "five general categories for conceptualizing the nature of rich vocabularies." (p. 264). Using this framework helped the authors address incidental and intentional learning and classroom environments as they promote the development of rich vocabularies.

Incidental vocabulary learning occurs in all aspects of our lives, including the classroom setting where conversations, word plays, and read-alouds can provide a wealth of opportunities to learn multiple meanings and in-depth understandings. Intentional learning plays an important role in a good literacy program. Cited research supports intentional, explicit, and systematic instruction that includes teaching definitions, in-depth instruction, and synonyms.

"Listserv members also recommended teaching students specific strategies for problem solving, refining meanings, and uncovering appropriate uses of words." Teaching structural analysis helps students become more independent when attacking new words. Metacognitive strategies encourage self-exploration and greater understandings.

Experience-rich, print-rich, language-rich, and 'fascinate'-rich environments play important roles in vocabulary development. There are many things for the teacher to consider when developing a balanced, enriched vocabulary program.

Implications

Students learn vocabulary through all aspects of their lives. Instructional experiences must encourage in-depth word learning in a rich environment with many opportunities for application and exploration.

Word Wisdom . . .

"Slang is the language that rolls up its sleeves,
spits on its hands and goes to work."

--Carl Sandburg

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source
Towell, J. (1998). Fun with vocabulary. *The Reading Teacher, 51,* 356-358.

Summary
Towell presents an acrostic to introduce effective vocabulary activities that also will be enjoyable for children. The acrostic and activities are listed below.

> V–Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS); Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic-Tactile (VAKT)
> O–Onsets and rimes
> C–Color shock; clusters
> A–ABC book; anagrams
> B–Book boxes; boxes for visual configuration; banks for words
> U–Unusual and unknown words
> L–List-Group-Label; Language Experience Approach
> A–Active involvement
> R–Repetition; rhymes; riddles; roots
> Y–Yarns

The article includes a brief summary of the activities with many examples and suggestions for children's literature to teach or reinforce word knowledge. Towell maintains that engaging students in motivating, active vocabulary activities will lead to independence in word learning.

Implications
Teachers need to help students develop independent word-learning strategies through the use of fun activities.

Word Wisdom . . .

"How can any man judge unless his mind has
been opened and enlarged by reading?"

--John Adams.

Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

Source

Marzano, R. J. (2003). *What works in schools: Translating research into action.* Alexandria,
VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Summary

Based on his review of numerous research studies, Marzano identified the critical components of a successful vocabulary development program: wide reading, that includes "subject matter content and content of their choice" (p. 140); direct instruction on words and phrases specific to the subject matter; many exposures to new words; and encouragement for students to "elaborate on their understanding of new words using mental images, pictures, and symbols" (141). Bringing a personal experience to the vocabulary words enhances the understanding and provides better opportunities for memory and usage.

The author suggests two additions "to the typical SSR approach: (1) ask students to identify interesting words and try to determine their meanings, and (2) encourage students to keep track of these words in a personal vocabulary notebook."

Implications

We can no longer play guessing games about vocabulary instruction, assuming that the students will learn vocabulary from wide reading alone. We now know the important components of a good vocabulary development program and must plan accordingly.

Word Wisdom . . .
      "A small drop of ink produces that which makes thousands think."
                  --Lord Byron

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Vocabulary: Instruction, Tools, and Strategies

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