

Increasing the Academic Vocabulary of Elementary Students



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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;
 - 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

- 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



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)



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)



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.



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 - Select words for robust, explicit instruction.

Second Graders	Fifth Graders
Enemy Pie by Derek Munson	The Family Under the Bridge 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



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

(Collins COBUILD School Dictionary of American English)

 Attention - If you give someone or something your attention, you look at them, listen to them, or think about them carefully.

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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.
- 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?"



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

Step 2. Present a student-friendly explanation.

- a) Tell students the explanation. OR
- 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 ______."



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

Step 3. Illustrate the word with examples.

- a) Concrete examples.
- b) Visual representations.
- 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 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?" It was not difficult for you.



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:

- Introduce the word?
- 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.



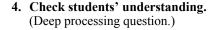
Illustrate the word with examples.

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 _____.



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





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



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 ____.

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

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Practice Activity: Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example D)

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"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 hones	sty,
that quality is a virtue." So when someone has a re	ally
good quality, we can that quality a	

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Practice Activity: Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example D)

3. Illustrate with examples. (And non-examples)

Being honest is a virtue . Ly Being kind is a	ying in not a virtue. . Being mean is not a
Being generous is a and not sharing is not a	Being greedy
Being reliable is ainconsistent so that people of	Being can not count on you is

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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

not a

virtues

virtuous

virtuously



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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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

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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?



word?

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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Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. 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.

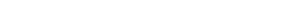


Conclusion

"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)

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)

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



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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On-line Dictionaries with Student-Friendly Explanations

Collins Cobuild Dictionaries (www.collinslanguage.com)

Pearson/Longman Education (www.longman.com) (www.ldoceonline.com)

Thompson/Heinle (<u>www.heinle.com</u>)

Another online dictionary (www.learnersdictionary.com)

Explicit Vocabulary Lessons - Elementary



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Websites

www.taggalaxy.com
 Displays photos for target word

www.freerice.com

Build vocabulary as you donate rice to the hungry.

www.elymonline.com

 Learn what words meant and how they sounded 600 or 2,000 years ago

www.wordsift.com

■ Paste in text. Identifies academic words in text.