

## Ways to Develop Oral Vocabulary

### VOCABULARY

What is vocabulary development?

- Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and their meanings. Vocabulary development focuses on words beyond basic sight words. It involves words that are rich in meaning.
- Oral vocabulary is the set of words for which students know the meanings when they are spoken or read aloud to them. Emergent readers have a much larger oral vocabulary than print vocabulary. Developing students' oral vocabulary will help them to better comprehend text read to them. Oral vocabulary also helps readers make sense of words they see in print.
- Reading and writing vocabulary are words for which students know the meanings when they read and write them. Comprehension of text depends on understanding the words in a selection, and competent writing requires extensive and specific word knowledge. Students learn the meanings of many words indirectly as they listen to spoken language and read, but expanding students' vocabulary must include direct instruction in specific word meaning.

Vocabulary Routine

#### Define

- Say the word.  
Say: cooperate
- Define the word in simple, student-friendly language.  
Say: To cooperate is to work together to get something done.

#### Example

- Provide an example of the word used in a meaningful sentence.  
Say: I cooperate with my sister to clean our room.

#### Ask

- Ask students a question that requires them to apply the word, either by giving an example or explanation or by identifying a synonym or antonym for the word.  
Say: How do you and your family cooperate to get jobs done?

Interact with the Word

- After several words have been introduced, provide additional opportunities for students to apply and differentiate between words.  
Say: I am going to describe some things. If what I describe is an example of people cooperating, say cooperate. If it is not, do not say anything

Two children setting the table for dinner

Two children grabbing the same book

Two children putting crayons back in the box

Two children arguing about cleaning the pet cage

## Variations

### Text Read Aloud to Students

- Read aloud the selection.
- During reading, pause to give a brief explanation for each word that you have chosen to teach.
- After reading the story, use the routine above to fully introduce the meaning of the words.

## VOCABULARY ACTIVITIES

### Making Choices

Making choices allows students to apply the meaning of the new vocabulary word.

- Name a situation using the vocabulary word.
- If the situation is an example of the meaning of the word, students respond with the word.
- If the situation is not an example of the word, students do not respond.

Example:

Working together to clean up the classroom.

(cooperate)

Playing alone in the playground.

(no response)

### Examples and Non-Examples

This activity asks students to differentiate between two descriptions.

- Offer two descriptions, one a situation that is an example of the vocabulary word and one that is not.
- Students identify which is the example of the word.

Example 1:

Which one of these sentences tells about a talented person?

My brother plays soccer very well. (example)

My sister likes baseball.

Example 2:

Fill in an Example/Non-Example Chart.

Which of the following animals are mammals: cat, fish, frog, lion, dog, bird?

<b>Example</b>	<b>Non-Example</b>
cat	fish
lion	frog
dog	bird

### Word Associations

This activity asks students to associate one of their vocabulary words with a sentence or phrase.

- Ask students to name a vocabulary word that would go with a sentence or phrase.

Example:

Which word goes with a law that does not allow pets in a supermarket? (prohibit)

### Giving Two Choices

Ask questions for which students must choose a vocabulary word to answer.

Example:

If something is very good, it is splendid or foolish?

If someone is reluctant to leave, is that person in a rush to go, or does the person want to stay?

If someone is witty, does that person make you laugh or cry?

### Find the Missing Word

Create cloze sentences for each vocabulary word. Ask students to identify the word for each sentence.

Example:

The \_\_\_ watched the entire game. (spectators)

Thomas Edison \_\_\_ the lightbulb. (invented)

Weddings and birthdays are important \_\_\_. (occasions)

### Juxtapositions

Use two or more vocabulary words in a yes or no question.

Example:

Would an impatient person demand to be the first one served in a restaurant? (yes)

Would eating an immense bowl of pasta fill you up? (yes)

Would you be familiar with a new book? (no)

### Describe Personal Experiences

Applying vocabulary words to their own lives will help students gain a deeper meaning of the word. Have students relate new words to personal experiences.

Example:

Can you describe a time when you made an effort to be nice to a person you did not know very well?

Have you every bought things from a vendor? What were they?

What kinds of collections do you have?

### Sentence Starters

Sentence starters offer students the opportunity to apply the meaning of vocabulary words in a different context than that in which the word was introduced.

Example:

While playing with his friend, Jack became furious when \_\_\_\_.

I exclaimed when I found out \_\_\_\_.

One of the most pleasant experiences I ever had was when \_\_\_\_.

### True and False Statements

Have students respond to true and false statements about each vocabulary word.

Example:

An enormous dog will fit under a small chair. (false)

You might gasp if you were surprised by something. (true)

## VOCABULARY ACTIVITIES

### Morph Magic

Students morph words by adding as many parts to a base as they can. The goal of this activity is to examine the morphing of prefixes, suffixes, and various inflected endings.

- Give the student a base word, such as magic. Students score one point for each new word they make from the base word.

Example: magic

magical, magically, magician, magicians

- A variation is to include phrases.  
Example: magic school bus, magic trick
- Students can work in teams.

### Sorting in the Past

Students study past tense endings, a part of inflected morphology.

- Students can hunt for and make a list of words that end in –ed.
- Students then write the base word beside the word that ends in –ed.  
walked          walk  
hopped          hop
- Students score one point for each –ed word located in a text and the base word.

### Dictionary Turns

In this activity students become familiar with how dictionaries are arranged.

- Students can work in pairs as they use a dictionary.
- Students count the number of page turns it takes to find a word in a dictionary, and record this number on their score sheet.
- They then hunt for related words within three pages of the entry.
- Students score one point for each word they find related to the word they are hunting.

Example: play

player, playful, playground

### Vocabulary Concentration

- Begin with a list of 10 vocabulary words. Use words from content area studies or from the reading vocabulary word list.
- Students work with a partner to write 5 words on index cards and the definitions of the five words on separate index cards.
- Place all cards face down.
- Each student takes a turn turning over two cards.
- If there is a match between a word and its correct definition, the student takes the cards. Then the student takes another turn.
- If there is no match, the other student takes a turn.
- The student with the most pairs wins.
- Partners can exchange their cards with another pair.

### Root Tree

Students discover the generative nature of word roots in this study of derivational morphology.

- Students work in pairs.
- They draw a tree with six branches.
- At the root of the tree, students write a root they have chosen from a list of word roots provided.
- Related words are then written on the branches of the tree.
- Students can consult dictionaries, etymological, and word origin references to check for shared roots.

### Vocabulary Jeopardy

Students practice their vocabulary words by writing clues and questions for their words. These games can focus on many themes including Greek and Latin roots, characters in their readings, and the vocabulary from their content area studies.

- Students work in pairs to choose and write clues and questions for five words.
- Pairs play together with everyone's clues.
- The first pair picks a definition and gives the word in a question format.
- If the word is correct, the pair scores the points.
- If the word is incorrect, the next pair takes a turn.
- The pair with the most points wins.