

Vocabulary





1. Why is
Vocabulary
important?

2. Tips on how
you can support
your child's
Vocabulary
development.

Why is learning vocabulary important?

Studies have shown that vocabulary size is a strong predictor of reading comprehension and future academic success.

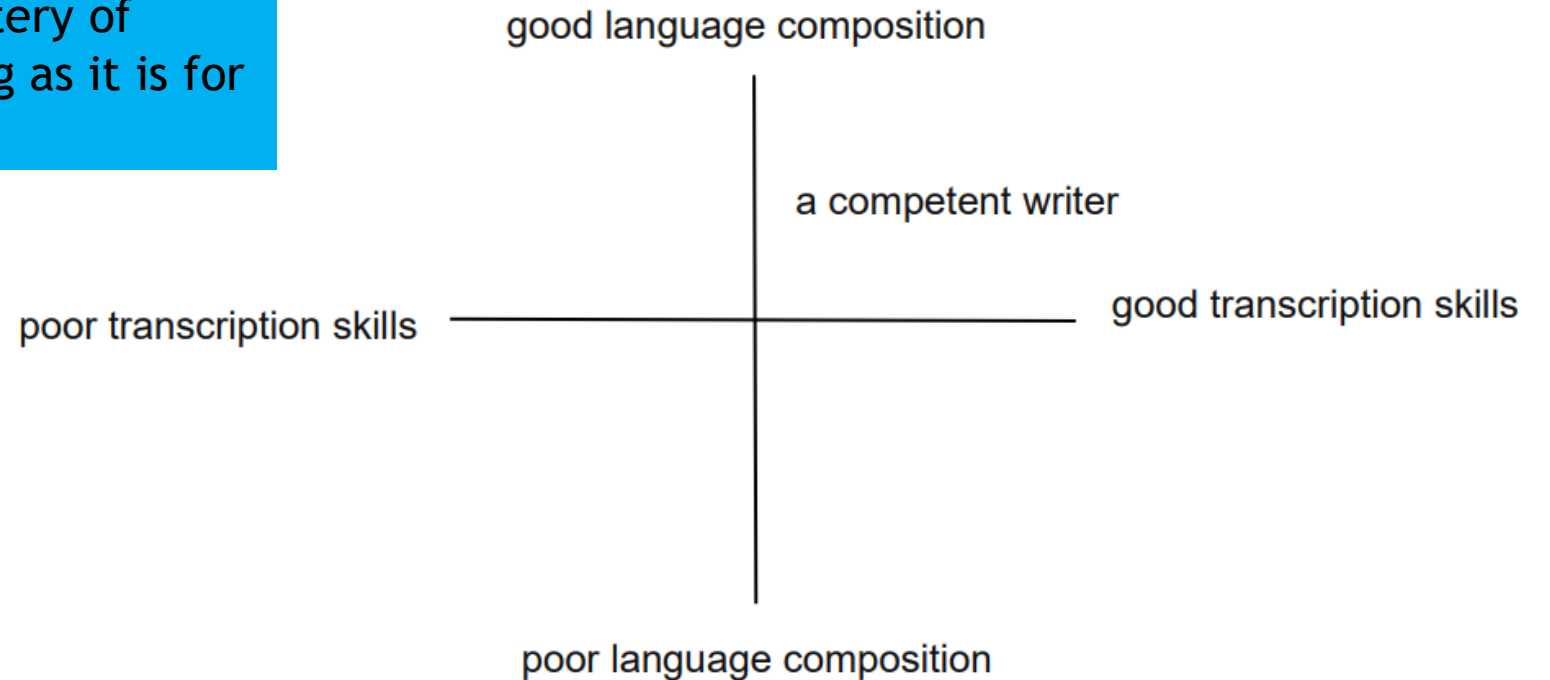
Learning words is important. The more words a child knows, the more it will help them at school.

“The more you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.” (Dr. Seuss)

The value of talk to children's mastery of language is as important for writing as it is for reading.

Learning new words in home language is vital.

Figure 1: An illustration of the simple view of writing



Easy to assume vocabulary is 'caught
not taught'



Vocabulary Knowledge is Essential for Reading

What percentage of words do we need to know to understand text?

95%

If 75% words are understood, can you tell what is being described here?

[redacted] is a [redacted] where [redacted] changes to a gas or [redacted]. Water changes to a [redacted] or steam from the [redacted] created when [redacted] bounce into one another because they're [redacted] up [redacted] [redacted] from our body is a great example of [redacted]

If 75% words are understood, can you tell what is being described here?

Evaporation is a **process** where **liquids** changes to a gas or **vapour**. Water changes to a **vapour** or steam from the **energy** created when **molecules** bounce into one another because they're **heated** up. **Sweat drying** from our body is a great example of **evaporation**.

On Average how many times does a typically developing child need to hear a word to learn it?

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6 times

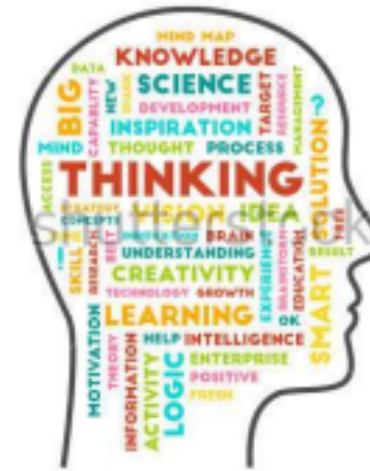
A child with language delay, needs to hear a word 36 times to learn it.

How many words does
The average 6 year
old know?

14,000

How many words
does the average
adult know?

50-60,000



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What can we do to support language learning?

Children first learn language through talk. Interactions with adults enable them to develop their speech and their control of spoken language.

It is about talking as much as it is reading and writing. Have fun with words to encourage your child to get interested about vocabulary.

When families help their children learn words, it really makes a difference.

If your child comes home with a word from school, or you find a new word in a book, tell them more about the word.

Libraries, audiobooks and reading to your child are a great way to come across new words.

Look up words in a dictionary or on an online dictionary.



▶ Retaining information



▶ 10% of what we read, we retain



▶ 20% of what we hear, we retain



▶ 30% of what we see, we retain



▶ 50% of what we see and hear, we retain



▶ 70% of what we say ourselves, we will retain.

Everyday things you can do to support vocabulary

Learning new words as you read

Helping your child learn the meaning of new words

Enjoying books is a good first step in learning to read.

To become good readers, children need to know letters and sounds but they also need to know what the words mean.

You can help your child to learn new words by using this bookmark and talking about new words as you read with your child.

Remember:

- Have fun with words.
- It is about talking as much as reading.
- When talking about words, use comments rather than questions.

Word Aware New Words

These ideas can be used when you are reading and talking about books with your child.



Before you read the book, say, 'Let's look out for new words that you've never heard before.'



Once in a while, stop and ask, 'Did you hear any new words?'



If your child says 'Yes', talk about that word's meaning.

If your child says 'No', identify a word you think might be tricky. Talk about what the word means.



Learning new words



**If a child doesn't know a word,
encourage them to ask.**

1

Listen, praise and add an extra word. E.g I made a big tower! Yes, it is big and tall.

2

Play- add some talk to your play and add some new words to your child's vocabulary as you play

3

Talk about where you are going and what they will see.

4

Touch, taste and smell- use a describing word e.g rather than it smells good or bad- add words such as creamy or bitter, or , it feels rough or cosy

5

Cooking: use interesting words such as blending, rising, sprinkle

Concepts are words that help shape how we think about the world: straight, later, tall, behind, soft, new.

Stick to the exact word. E.g tall. Don't introduce new words such as tallest, taller until the word tall is secure.

Helping your child to understand concepts



Opposites should be taught separately as this can be confusing for children. If tall is the word which is being taught, say "not tall" rather than short, until secure.

Do the activity in home language. Repeat the new word as much as you can to reinforce the learning.

What does 'cosy' mean?

Comments rather than questions support children's learning of new vocabulary.

That bed looks 'cosy'. I bet it is nice and warm.

Sh



Share attention

Be at the child's level. Pay attention to what they are focused on.

R



Respond

Follow the child's lead. Respond to their non-verbal and verbal communications. You could make a brief comment on what they can see, hear or feel.

E



Expand

Repeat what the child says and build on it by adding more words to turn it into a sentence.

C



Conversation

Have extended back and forth interactions. Give children time to listen, process and reply.

Some difficulties children have when learning new words:

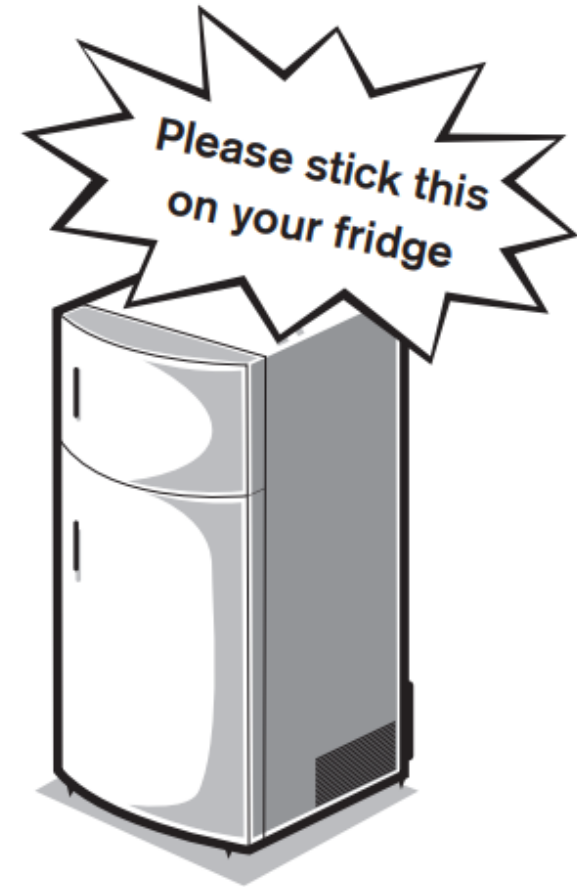
- Confusion between words which sound similar, e.g. thirty/thirteen, no/know.
- understanding words which have a different meaning depending on the context. E.g. 'odd' can mean an odd number in maths or something 'strange'. 'Field' can mean a magnetic field or a football or farmer's field.
- Can't understand when many words are used to express the same concept, e.g. 'plus', 'together', 'add', 'sum of' in maths.

What can we do?

- Using the context to help decode words in reading. E.g. "Henry tries to squeeze through the gap in the" (what's this? Pointing to fence). This can help children who are finding words difficult to recall.
- Using semantic prediction (world knowledge) to help decode words in reading. E.g. "It was very cold. Everything was frozen. The boy slipped on the"
- Ensure children have the grasp of one word for a concept before confusing with multiple words.
- Talking about words which have more than one meaning e.g key, table etc

Fridge words

These are words that your child has been learning. Stick them on the fridge or somewhere you can see them every day. Your child needs to **hear** new words lots of times before they start to use them. Asking, 'What does this word mean?' is not helpful. **Use these words** whenever you can.



Learn and play some simple word games.

Use games to review words you have already taught

Eg **Five things**

Show children an object or a picture. Discuss what you all know about it. Once five suitable suggestions have been made, say and act them out all together.

Eg for **astronaut**: '**Astronauts** can go in a rocket. **Astronauts** can walk on the Moon. **Astronauts** can explore outer space. **Astronauts** can land the spaceship. **Astronauts** are really smart.' Accompany each sentence with an action.

Children who enjoy words are better word learners

Eg **'I Spy' variation**

A variation on the traditional 'I Spy' game. Adapt it by using adjectives instead, such as: 'I spy something coloured **red** / **blue** ...' or 'something **round**/ **spiky**/ **shiny** ...', or 'something that is **big**/ **beautiful**/ **smelly**/ **growing**/ **hot**/ **noisy** ...'

Word games to try at home

Early years/KS1

What do you see?

Tidy up time

Gobbledygook

I give you this gift

KS1 and KS2

What am I?

Word spinner

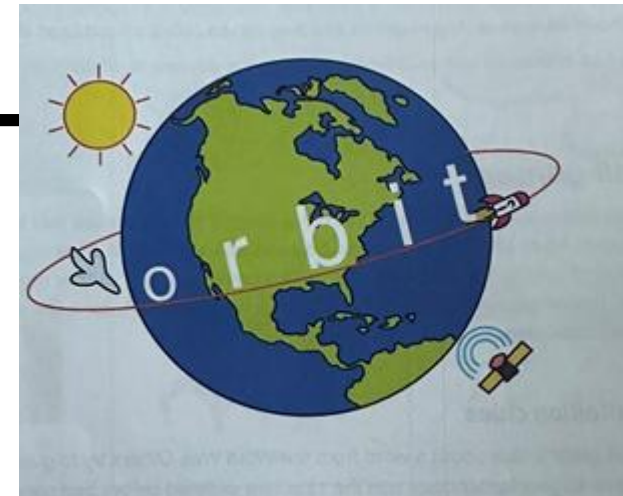
Alphabet topic

Reverse Taboo

Pictograms



Scrabble, boggle, wordsearch,
crosswords



Making vocabulary tools

Vocabulators

Fortune tellers

Magic books

Vocabulators



Quick and easy to make and cheap!

To make you need:

- empty drinks bottle,
- pasta/rice,
- shiny craft bits
- pictures or small objects of topic words.

Fun for younger children to explore/make.

Children with additional needs

What's in the bag? (nouns)

Find it (nouns)

Teddy play (nouns)

Teddy does it (verbs)

Take photos (verbs)

Link it to the objects (verbs)

Use objects, rather than pictures where you can.

Review words your child knows, to ensure they retain them.

Make activities fun so they have high impact. Children learn best when they enjoy themselves.

Nouns, verbs and concepts should be the focus.
Everyday nouns such as: objects, body parts, clothing, places, people, transport
Verbs such as: laugh, jump, run, walk, sleep, sing, build, draw, feel, hear, small, taste
Concepts of size, touch, sound, movement, positional, quantity (empty, full, more)

Make sure you build in lots of repetition so your child hears the same word over again.

Give lots of different examples of the word so they get the full understanding of it.

How to help your child learn words

Things to remember:

- Words are important
- Home support for vocabulary makes a difference
- Have fun with words
- It is about talking as much as reading and writing
- When talking about words, use comments rather than ask questions
- Do a little every day.

