

Bli vän med det skrivna ordet

DEN ÅTTONDE NORDISKA KONGRESSEN
OM **DYSLEXIPEDAGOGIK**

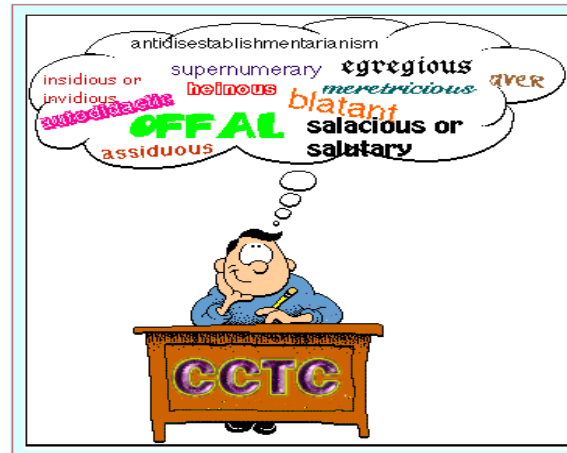


Ingen ska behöva komma efter

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Effective Vocabulary Growth:
Why it Matters and How it Works
University of Pittsburgh

Effective Vocabulary Growth: Why it Matters and How it Works



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Value of vocabulary instruction

- Who benefits from vocabulary instruction?
 - Everyone!!
- Who is most in need of vocabulary instruction?
 - Students with less language experience at home
 - Students who read less

What do we know about how vocabulary is acquired?

1. Vocabulary knowledge is a network of connected concepts
2. Vocabulary is learned from context– BUT ...
3. Learning is incremental

Vocabulary knowledge is a network of connected concepts

- *What is the significance of that?*
- You don't have a  in your **head**.

Vocabulary is learned from context—BUT...

The richest context for learning new words is immediate oral language and...



...as children enter school --

Source	Hard words per 1,000
Pre-school books	16.3
Adult conversation	17.3
Prime-time television shows	22.3
Children's books	30.9
Adult books	52.7
Newspapers	68.3

from Hayes & Ahrens, 1987

Written language presents challenges

- written context is not a reliable source
- the “here and now” is gone
- less repetition
- individual differences
- not all contexts are created equal



Contexts are not Created Equal

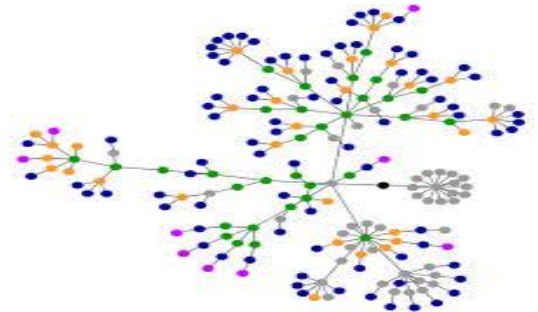
Ella watched as Nora got smaller and smaller and finally vanished.

Freddie looked at his team members and thought that each looked more hapless than the next.

It had been a long hike, with very steep cliffs on the way up. It was John's first experience mountain climbing, and he felt exhilarated.

Learning is incremental

- Knowledge of a word grows each time you encounter it in a new context.
- Connections from word → other words → familiar experiences.





Ella watched as Nora got smaller and smaller and finally *vanished*.

What do you know? Is *vanished*:

- more like *disappear* or *go away*?
- is it complete (might she be microscopic?)
- always gradual?
- unexpected?
- deliberate?
- restricted to people?

Rich and generalized understanding

- ❖ Allows speed and flexibility when making sense of a new context
- Speed – the reading process won't have to slow down
- Flexibility – you can make sense of a new use of the word

Getting to text understanding

Mrs. Thomas was distraught when she looked at her garden.



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Using knowledge of *distraught*

- When you're distraught you feel upset.
- A temporary emotion
- An external cause

Then switch to the context

- → What would cause someone to be upset when looking at their garden?

Text understanding

- “Mrs. Thomas is upset and she is looking at her garden.
- “Something happened to Mrs. Thomas’ garden and that has made her very upset.”
 - (reader is on the lookout for what might have happened)

What might have happened to her garden?



Given all that—what matters for kids learning words?

- Exposure: Number of words children heard at home
- Related to literacy in school at age 9
(Hart & Risley, 1995)



How do we develop that speed and flexibility?

- Provide learners:
 - exposure to lots of different contexts
 - active engagement with word meanings
 - connections between new words and what they already know

Starting point: Which Words?

Not all words have the same utility

So – which words are most useful?

... Focus on words needed for text
comprehension – Tier 2 words

Word Tiers: Tier I

- the most basic words
- *mother, big, run, pull*
- rarely require instruction in school
- children acquire them from conversation

Word Tiers: Tier 3

- very low-frequency words, often limited to specific domains
- *molecule, tundra, axle*
- best taught within a content area

Word Tiers: Tier 2

- characteristic of written language, i.e., text
- general words that go across domains
- *consistent, function, supportive*
- abstract, polysemous

Academic words

Academic Word List – AWL
(Coxhead, 2000)

SAWL (Carlund et al, 2012)

A few examples

Academic/Tier 2 words →

analyze

concept

fluctuate

inherent

duration

Choosing target words

- Tier 2 words for students at all levels
 - *concentrate, appropriate, admire*
- How do we know which will work?
- Choosing from texts read in the classroom
 - Provides context to initiate



What if:

- There are very few words worth teaching?
- There are many words to choose from?



Word Abundance

Some considerations:

- a set that describes the story
- words that you think your students would use
- words that could be used in talking about other texts

Word Scarcity

Consider words **about** the story!

What words could be used to describe characters and events?

A Bed Full of Cats

Flora is Lee's cat. Flora sleeps on Lee's bed. Lee likes it that way.

One morning Lee woke up and Flora was not in his room. Lee looked everywhere ...

Flora did not come home. Lee was very sad. Lee's family put an ad in the newspaper. Days and weeks went by. No one found Flora.

One night Lee felt a thump on his bed. He turned on his light. There was Flora with 4 kittens!

Now Lee has a bed full of cats and he likes it that way!

A few more ideas...

- search
- forlorn
- distraught
- assist
- astonished
- delighted

Teaching Words Effectively

- **Definitional and contextual information**
- **Multiple exposures in different contexts**
- **Active use of word meanings**

Format for Introducing Words

- Contextualize its role in the text:

In the story, Lee began to **search** for his cat.

- Provide a friendly explanation:

If you **search** for something that is lost, you look for it carefully in every place you can think of.

- Engage students with the word:

What if you lost your coat – what would you do to **search** for it?

Student-friendly Explanations

What is a friendly explanation?

Explanation of a word's meaning in everyday, connected language.

- If someone is **fortunate** they have a lot of good luck.
- When someone is **delighted**, they are very, very happy about something.

Following up

Lots and lots of interactions around words!



Example/Non-Example

- Which would be **cozy**, sitting on the couch covered with a warm blanket or sitting on a bike seat?
- Which would be **astonishing**, a dog who barked at you or a dog who said hello to you?

....Why?

Contexts and Situations

Prompt students to generate contexts or situations.

- For example: How might a cook ... a musician ... a basketball player ... a teacher show that they are:

versatile

clever

industrious

- Can be done in a variety of formats
- Make sure to follow up with discussion – *Why?*

Value-added Vocabulary

- Students need plenty of opportunities to integrate new words into their language
 - You need a rich medium for growing vocabulary



Interaction is powerful

- It takes a lot of effort learn a new word – **incremental**
- Encourage robust talk in classrooms



Find opportunities to keep attention on new vocabulary

Start the day:

- “Today is Friday. Let’s get **inspired!**”
- “Was anyone **reluctant** to get out of bed this morning?”

Incorporate into lessons:

- “Do you see any of the characters in the story as **manipulative?**”

Pictures That are Worth 1,000 Words



Rex had an **uncanny** way of letting his owners know he didn't want canned dog food.

Rex's **hapless** owner had forgotten to buy dog food—again.

Pictures That are Worth 1,000 Words



Have you heard? The latest **trend** is taking your cat on vacation.

My **definitive** answer is – You're not going anywhere.

Beyond the Classroom

- Challenge students to find their words outside of school:
 - In books, websites, newspapers, billboards, bus ads, radio, television, video games, magazines, menus, music, etc.
- Tally points on a classroom chart – make it public and motivating!

Effects of Extending Vocabulary

- **Word Wizard** – greater advantage for comprehension (4th graders)
- **In the Media** - A significant, positive relationship between taking part and students' gain scores from pretest to posttest (6th graders)

Take Home Message

- For successful vocabulary growth:
Give students –
 - lots of opportunities to interact with words
 - in and out of the classroom!



