

Sight vocabulary consists of words that students can identify immediately without decoding. It is an important component of word study instruction since students with a strong sight vocabulary can read more fluently and comprehends text more effectively.

1. Begin with words from the child's own experiences (friends and family).
2. Use high frequency words that children encounter in text frequently.
3. Give them daily opportunities to read, repeat readings of text, and activities using word walls.
4. Vocabulary encompasses the words we must know to communicate effectively (oral and reading).
5. Students learn the meanings of most words indirectly through their experiences and conversations with each other and those around them.
6. Read alouds and shared/guided reading help to develop vocabulary.

“No doubt you share the common childhood experience of having to go look up words in a dictionary, write the definition, and then write a sentence using the term, but how much of that vocabulary do you remember now? One of the least effective ways to study vocabulary is the *look and remember* technique followed by the *rote verbal rehearsal*, which is saying it over and over again usually in the exact language and format in the which the definition originally came.” Ed Ellis and Theresa Farmer The **Clarifying Routine: Elaborating Vocabulary Instruction**

Many of our students complete the assignment, but are not given enough time to actually learn what the words mean. BEWARE! Vocabulary enrichment should not be something our students are exposed to, has to remember for a test, and then forgets the information.

Many of our students will also be convinced that these are not words that people use, even if they have heard them many times, but didn't remember because there was no meaning attached to the word.

There is more to developing vocabulary than learning new words. Other skills include: figures of speech, multiple meaning words, confusing words (indifferent), and signal words (but, while, and however).

<u>DO.....</u>	<u>DON'T.....</u>
Less is more - depth is more. Teach fewer vocabulary terms, but teach them in a manner that results in deep understandings of each term.	Teaching or assigning words from textbooks just because they are highlighted in some way (italicized, bold print, etc.).
Teach terms that are central to the unit or theme of study. These are terms that are so important that if the student does not understand them, they will likely have difficulty understanding the remainder of the unit.	Teaching or assigning words just because they appear in a list at the end of a text chapter.
Teach terms that address key concepts or ideas. While a text chapter may contain 15-20 vocabulary terms, there may be only 4 or 5 that address critical concepts in the chapter. Sometimes only 1 or 2.	Teaching or assigning words that will have little utility once the students has passed the test.
Teach terms that will be used repeatedly throughout the semester. These are foundational concepts upon which a great deal of information will be built on over a long-term basis.	Assigning words the teacher cannot define, large quantities of words, or words that students will rarely encounter again.

1. Select words that have structure and organization behind them.
Present words in related groups. Example: Feelings and Emotions
Let them describe being *afraid* or *happy*. Discuss the degrees of emotion by asking if *terrified* is more than *nervous*? Is *ecstatic* better than *pleased*? Another example: Study word parts
Teach them that “ject” means “throw,” and then see if they can come up with meanings for *projectile*, *reject*, and *trajectory*. This type of teaching lends itself to individualized instruction. Students can be working on different words based on their ability level.
2. Incorporate Multisensory Learning.
Begin with an illustration or demonstration first. Then, when the word is used and the meaning discussed, they have an image to associate it with.
3. Always model activities first.
Demonstrate expectations using familiar words. Then, allow time for discussion and input, working in a group or with a partner, then, individual practice.
4. Keep an ongoing list posted in your classroom.
Continue to refer to the words throughout the year. If they are visible, they are more likely to see them, think about them, and use them. Try developing a vocabulary notebook for them to keep in their desk. This will help students that have trouble reading words from a distance that are posted on the board or wall.
5. Go beyond the definitions.
Draw or act out the meanings of the words.

Activities for Teaching Vocabulary

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1. Illustrate the words or play "Quick Draw."
2. Vocabulary Charades
3. Give credit for finding vocabulary words used in the real world.
4. Use the words yourself (**instruction and classroom discussion**).
5. Students answer questions that use the word (What are two ways you could tell a person just received **grim** news?)
6. Have students generate examples and non-examples for words. (Visual/Kinesthetic illustrations or verbal descriptions) Good example of the word or not? Wrong answers can be used as a good non-example.
7. Use cloze sentences before you expect them to use them in sentences themselves.
8. Use the words for ongoing written stories or to revisit previous writing.
9. Synonyms
10. Antonyms
11. Choose all possible answers. Give them a sentence in *fill in the blank* format. Give them multiple answers with several that could be correct. Give time for discussion regarding why they chose a particular choice.
The teachers ate lunch in the _____.
(restaurant/diner/snack/snack bar/cafeteria/salad bar)
12. Complete the sentence using previous lists. I was *exhausted* after _____.
13. Grouping: **field/yard/meadow**
14. Give them a list of grouped words and they must cross out the word that doesn't belong with the others in the group.
uncle/father/aunt/brother
15. Analogies are effective at all levels. **easy : hard :: cold : _____**
16. Label a picture. (**stem, leaves, roots**)
17. Revise and Edit. **She was very happy to achieve her pencil.**
18. Choose the best choice.
He dented thewater/car's bumper/tree limb
19. Choose the best, strongest, most intense words. (**surprise or astound, hurl or throw**)
20. Identify *slang* terms: **two cents or advise (opinion)/calm down or ease up**

21. Use inferences to guess the meanings of words from context. Teach techniques for guessing.
22. Give your students a definition, and let them find the word.
“Find a word on page#/paragraph that means *completed*”
23. Memory Game. Show the students a list of vocabulary words and the students recreate the list.
24. Write poems using vocabulary words. Read famous poems to discuss the possible meaning of unknown words.
25. Play word association. Begin by sitting in a circle. Teacher begins with a word and the students say a word associated with the previous word. **Foot, toe, ankle, shoe, run, slip, walk**
26. Personification/Nonsense words: Using these types of words, let the students create a song/poem. **The table is complaining, while the cups are quarreling. The cheese is slipping away, and the bread is looking uncomfortable.**
27. Acrostic Vocabulary
28. Vocabulary Riddles
29. Explain Yourself. **Would you rather be excited or exhausted?**
30. Make me smile. Students try to make you or a fellow classmate smile by saying vocabulary words in a funny manner.
31. Student Created Vocabulary Scrabble or Crosswords.
32. Vocabulary Bingo. Teacher calls out the definition and synonym instead of the actual word.
33. Partner Monologues. Students create a discussion using vocabulary words and have their conversation in front of the class.
34. Create newspaper headlines/create story/illustrate
35. Tent words. Students write synonyms on one side – antonyms on the other. Fold paper like a tent (hamburger fold). Other students try to guess the words that are hidden by the fold.

“We hear with our ears, but we listen with our minds” (Garman & Garman, 1992).

Listening to something and hearing something are two very different concepts.

Factors that influence listening behaviors: auditory acuity (the ability to hear), auditory perception (the ability to discriminate among sounds, blend sounds together, and hold sound sequences in memory), attention disorders, emotional disturbances, prenatal drug exposure, and language proficiency. Although we can do little about preexisting influences, we can have a great effect on other factors that influence children’s listening behavior – motivation, habits, and contextual variables.

It is a misconception that listeners are passive receivers of information and that the listening process is automatic. Good listeners are makers of ideas. They are active and get involved intellectually and emotionally because listening involves the reception and processing of incoming data. Listening is not just hearing; it is the construction of meaning from all signals –verbal and nonverbal that a speaker is sending.

Without engaging our active listening skills, we may have heard something but it has not registered in our brains.

Good listeners filter out much of what they hear in order to concentrate on a message. It is less than compliance, for it is possible to both hear and understand, yet not respond in exactly the way the speaker expects or wishes.

RESEARCH:

Most adults listen at only 25% efficiency; most adult listeners are preoccupied, distracted and forgetful nearly 75% of the time (Hunsaker, 1990).

We expect children to listen in school for as much as 50% of the time (Wolvin & Coakley, 1988).

Even in more developmentally appropriate classrooms, children spend about 25% of their time listening to teachers and peers (Hiebert, 1990).

Listening is one of the primary methods by which children acquire beliefs, norms, and knowledge bases of their society (McDevitt, 1990).

We obtain 80% of our knowledge through listening (Hunsaker, 1990).

What do our students say about listening? ☹

1st grader – “ A good listener means that you don’t talk.”

3rd grader – “A bad listener is someone who is confused and has to ask for help.”

5th grader – “Good listeners do well on the test and do things correctly.”

In order for teachers to be role models of active listening, they need to believe that:

- Teaching and learning can occur without teacher talk
- Emphasis on learning how to think
- Questions encourage deeper thinking and/or have more than one answer
- Students play a major role in formulating questions
- Students relate subject matter to their own lives
- They should spend as much time listening to one another as to the teacher
- Problems and conflicts are resolved by listening and talking together (adapted from Brown, 1991)

Strategies for Listening

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1. Student listening depends upon teacher behavior, modeling good listening habits, having developmentally appropriate expectations, managing the classroom well, and communicating effectively.
2. Listen-Listen-Listen to your students. It helps our students' feel valued and models good listening.
3. If a child is sharing a lengthy story and others are becoming restless, intervene by channeling the child's enthusiasm into other means of self-expression. "That sounds exciting, but don't tell us the ending yet –keep us in suspense, and that would be a great story to write about today."
4. Use a "show and tell" format where all participants are involved. Model good listening skills while students are discussing, and use guided practice when using a question/answer format. Gradually, they will learn the difference between a question and a comment. Lengthy, large group discussions are generally inappropriate for young children.
5. Another way to improve listening skills for young children is to make sure everyone is participating in circle time songs, games, and activities.
6. Redirect their attention by using a visual object/sound (bell, windchime, puppet, interesting object, etc.)
7. Use a menu or schedule.
8. Children are more motivated to listen when they know they will be expected to perform a specific, interesting task (immediate, tangible benefit). For example: cooking experience – the product will be edible, listening to peers respond to a story they have written – the story can be improved, listening to the procedure for conducting an experiment – the results will be useful, etc.
9. Teach them how to ask effective questions to clear up confusion.
10. Incorporate listening goals in your classroom.
11. Use a vocabulary curve (All of the *canine* owners line up).
12. Refer student questions back to the class.
13. Use visualization techniques.
14. Use graphic organizers.
15. Use reenactment.
16. Integrate listening activities throughout the day and across the curriculum.
17. Use buzz/bell words. Substitute a word in your directions/instruction with a bell or other sound. The students guess the missing word.

18. READ ALOUDS – teaches active listening skills and conditions them about the mechanics of reading.

A wise old owl sat in an oak.

The more he listened, the less he spoke;

The less he spoke, the more he listened.

Why aren't we like that wise old bird?"

- Mother Goose

References

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