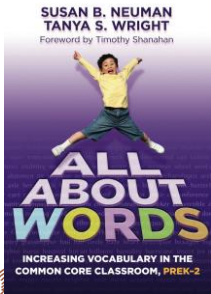




Word Wizardry: Vocabulary Enhancement in Early Childhood

PreK through Grade 1
Susan B. Neuman
New York University



Teacher's
College
Press, 2013





Tip of the iceberg



- Knowledge
- Symbolic representations
- Build concepts



All about words



Poll question

- Vocabulary is THE strongest predictor of children's achievement
 - Not only in elementary school but in high school

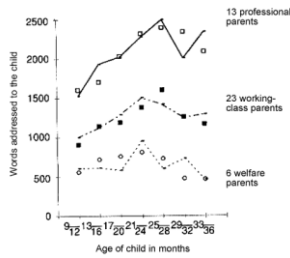


Relation to other skills

- Children of poor, marginalized populations
- Children of families who speak a language other than English
- Mother's education



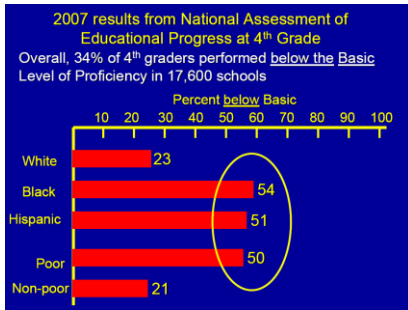
Risk factors



Hart and Risley...



Poverty

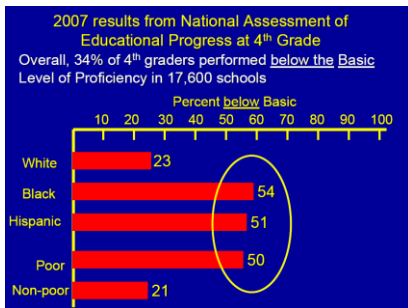


NAEP 2012

- Cumulative model of expectations
- Academic Vocabulary
- Building knowledge through texts
- Creating cross-textual experiences
- Integrating technology and print
- A focus on evidence



Career and College Ready Standards



NAEP 2012

- The numbers are larger than you can imagine



No. of words children will need to know



Poll question

- Children are 'word sponges'
- They learn words through day to day activities
- They learn through 'teachable moments'



Common myths



Poll question

- Children will need explicit AND implicit instruction
- Explicit: A 'cave' is a hole in the mountain"
- As opposed: What is a cave?



Key principles

- Be intentional in our word selection
- Words from core reading program
 - Platypus
 - Around
- OR:
 - Ride
 - move



Question: are these words important?

Key principle

- INSTEAD: insects, antennae, segments, legs
- Parts of the body: brain, heart, lungs



Knowledge networks

- Camouflage
- Habitat
- Survival



Key principle

- Ongoing professional development



Key principle

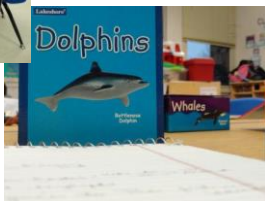
Creating a vocabulary rich environment





Creating cozy spots for reading





- Purposeful talk: Why do you think?
- Challenging words: meteorologist
- Extend and clarify
- "Taking it up a notch"
 - Compare/contrast
 - If/then



Oral language



Eye to eye instruction

- Implicit instruction
- Explicit instruction



Building vocabulary



Poll question

- The problem
- "A space probe is an unpiloted spacecraft that leaves Earth's orbit to explore the Moon, planets, asteroids, comets, or other objects in outer space as directed by onboard computers and/or instructions sent from Earth."
-
- Grade 6 text



Building vocabulary

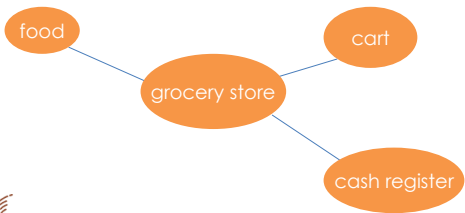
- o 'asteroid'
- o 'comet'
- o 'Atmospheric conditions'
- o 'space probes'

- o What is similar about them?



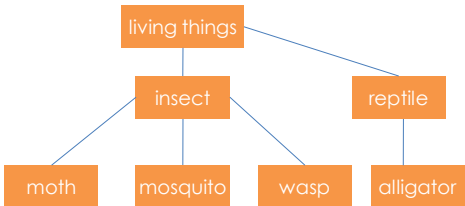
Difficult words

- o Traditionally, much instruction has been designed around themes



thematic vs. categories

- o We teach children words and content in categories



thematic vs. categories

- Not necessarily 'tier II' words
- Not necessarily 'academic' words
- Rather they are 'content-specific' words: words that are essential for learning content

• STEP 1



Difficult words

- Plants
 - Stems, petals, leaves,
 - Photosynthesis; oxygen and carbon dioxide
- All about me
 - Heart, lung, brain, blood



An example

- A common teaching sequence
 - Identify words: 8-10
 - Child-friendly definition
 - "A dolphin is a marine mammal. It looks like a fish but it has lungs and breathes air just like us"

• STEP 2

How do we go about teaching vocabulary?



- Give children many opportunities for guided practice.
 - Pictures; rhymes; riddles;
 - Call and response techniques



Step 3

- Distributed review
 - Over learning
 - Weekly, monthly, and over time



Step 4

- Progress monitor

WOW Labels

Point to the picture that shows a katydid.

Category-distractor Target Thematic-distractor

WOW Hybrid

Which is an insect? (Category membership)
Which has 3 body segments? (Conceptual properties)

Target Thematic-distractor Out-of-Category-distractor



Step 5



New words

- Teach content-rich words (5-step series)
- +
- Make sure these words are related in categories (to form a semantic network)
- =
- SELF TEACHING DEVICE
 - Ex: Is a spider an insect? A spider has 8 legs, and all others have 6, so it is not a spider



To summarize

- Text sets



Materials to use

- Focus on a topic of interest
- A series of books that use multiple genre
 - Pattern books or predictable books
 - Narrative nonfiction
 - Informational

Features of text sets



- Daily readings of books in text sets
- Start with predictable books (gives children the names they can remember)
- Move on to narrative nonfiction; spend at least two times a week reading these books
- Turn to Information books

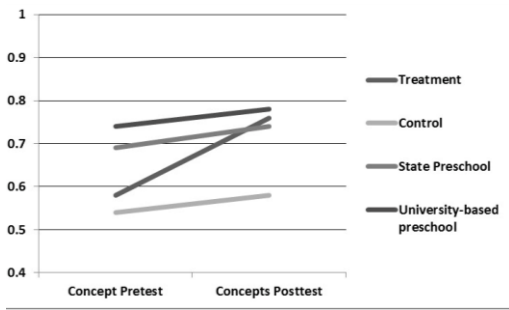
Activities



- Supports word knowledge and conceptual development
- Enables children to develop 'inter-textual links' as they compare and contrast across genres
- Helps them to learn the 'features of information books.'

Why is it powerful?





Evidence



Poll question

- Principles:
 - The notion of acceleration
 - Content-rich vocabulary
 - Organization of word knowledge
 - Use of text sets
 - Gradual release of control
 - Lots of practice and distributed review
 - Don't be afraid of challenging students; they love it!



Reducing disparities

Book: All About Words (Teachers 'College Press, 2013)

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Contact information