Professional Learning Community

EMERGENT LITERACY

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

Module 3: Vocabulary

(Sessions 7–9)

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Acknowledgments

The authors thank these individuals and their staffs for their contributions throughout the development of the modules.

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Introduction

Professional Learning Community: Emergent Literacy was developed to support preschool teachers through collaborative learning experiences in a literacy professional learning community (PLC). PLCs are a form of professional development in which small groups of educators with shared interests work together with the goals of expanding their knowledge and refining their craft. PLC members often share the goal of improving student achievement by enhancing their own teaching practice.

PLCs typically meet regularly to learn new topics, share ideas, and solve problems. Teams determine the topics they want to learn and the methods they want to use to gain the knowledge. PLC members might read and discuss articles or books, attend trainings or conferences on an area of interest, or ask an expert to speak to the group. A facilitator or team leader might guide PLC members in learning a new topic, perhaps with professional development materials designed to walk them through the content.

Children entering kindergarten and grade 1 vary greatly in their emergent literacy skills. Children with strong literacy skills in early elementary school are likely to become good readers, while children with weak literacy skills are likely to remain poor readers.[1] Families provide children with their first literacy experiences using interactions, conversations, books, and other print materials. Preschool teachers continue that learning by teaching the foundations of literacy, or emergent literacy skills. Emergent literacy skills include print knowledge, phonological awareness, vocabulary, and oral language. Preschoolers who learn these skills are less likely to develop future reading problems and more likely to read with ease, understand what they read, and succeed in school.[2]
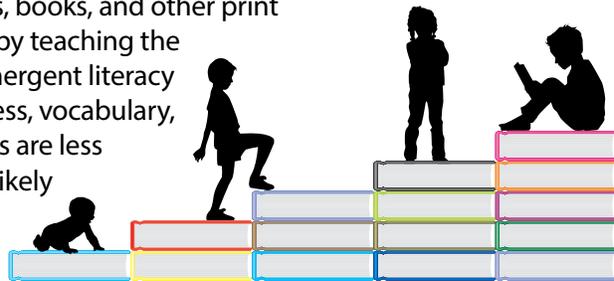
The *Professional Learning Community: Emergent Literacy* materials can be downloaded for free at https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southeast/elplc.

Purpose of This Guide

This guide was developed for preschool teachers to participate in the *Professional Learning Community: Emergent Literacy*, which helps preschool teachers in collaborative learning experiences apply evidence-based strategies in their instruction. In turn, preschool teachers can provide 3- to 5-year-old children with evidence-based language and literacy instruction. Through this collaborative learning experience, preschool teachers expand their knowledge base as they read, discuss, share, and apply evidence-based key ideas and strategies.

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1   Duncan et al., 2007; Juel, 1988; Wagner, Torgesen, & Rashotte, 1994; Wagner et al., 1997.
2   Kaplan & Walpole, 2005; Sparks, Patton, & Murdoch, 2014.

Overview of Modules and Sessions

The *Professional Learning Community: Emergent Literacy* comprises four modules: Print Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Vocabulary, and Oral Language (table 1). Each module includes 3 sessions, for a total of 12 sessions. The first two sessions of each module take about 90 minutes to complete, and the last session of each module takes about 60 minutes. The topics of the sessions are the emergent literacy skills that preschoolers need in order to become successful readers. The accompanying Facilitator Guide includes a structured plan for a facilitator to lead participants through each session.

It is recommended that the sessions be completed in sequential order. The timeline for completing them is flexible; they can serve as a year's worth or more of professional learning. If the recommended time for each session is not available, complete what you can with the time you have and then pick up where you left off the next time you meet.

Table 1: Overview of Session Topics and Timing by Module

Module	Session and Topic	Minutes
1 Print Knowledge	1. What Print Knowledge Is, Why It Is Important, How to Teach It Effectively	90
	2. Teaching Print Knowledge and Using Small-Group Explicit Instruction	90
	3. Teaching Print Knowledge Using Print Referencing During Read-Alouds, Considerations for English Learner Students and Students With Disabilities, and Additional Resources	60
2 Phonological Awareness	4. What Phonological Awareness Is, When It Develops, and Why It Is Important	90
	5. Levels of Phonological Awareness and Features and Examples of Effective Phonological Awareness Instruction	90
	6. Phonological Awareness Instruction In Action, Considerations for English Learner Students and Students With Disabilities, and Additional Resources	60
3 Vocabulary	7. Background on Vocabulary	90
	8. How Do Children Learn New Words, Which Words Do I Teach, and How Do I Use Dialogic Reading to Teach Vocabulary?	90
	9. More Ways to Teach Vocabulary, Considerations for English Learner Students and Students With Disabilities, and Additional Resources	60
4 Oral Language	10. What is Oral Language, Why Is It Important, How Do Children Develop Syntax, and How Do I Teach Syntax?	90
	11. Teaching Oral Language Through Conversations and Supporting Peer-to-Peer Language Interactions	90
	12. Oral Language and Listening Comprehension, Considerations for English Learner Students and Students With Disabilities, and Additional Resources	60

Five-Step Process for Each PLC Session

Each session follows a five-step process for collaborative learning (table 2). The process was adapted from Wald and Castleberry's (2000) five stages of work for teams engaging in a collaborative learning cycle.

Table 2: Five-Step Process for Each Session

Step	Description
STEP 1	**Debrief** Participants discuss their experiences with and reflections on an instructional practice that they have planned and implemented since the previous session.
STEP 2	**Define and Discuss Session Goals and Content** Facilitator gives brief statements about previous session goals and the current session's goals: "where we've been and where we're going." Facilitator shares foundational and background information while engaging participants in discussions or activities that support prior reading.
STEP 3	**Learn and Confirm** Participants explore new practices and compare them to current practices. Participants access and build their background knowledge and experiences related to the session's topic. Participants are explicitly taught the session's content through, for example, models, videos, and discussions.
STEP 4	**Collaborate and Practice** Participants collaborate in pairs or small groups to practice applying strategies and activities.
STEP 5	**Reflect, Plan, and Implement** Participants reflect on what they learned during the session, plan how the activities and strategies will be implemented in their classroom before the next session, and then implement their plan in their classroom. All participants will be prepared at the start of the next session to share their experiences.

Organization of this Guide

For each module, the Participant Guide includes a self-study reading assignment to be completed before each session and a set of activities to be completed during and after each session. The guide also includes a copy of the presentation slides used during each session (with room for notes), a set of reproducible materials that can be used in the classroom, a glossary of terms used throughout the module, and a list of resources that participants can explore for additional information.

Self-Study Reading

Before each session, you will complete a self-study reading that provides evidence-based content on the topic of that session. The reading includes the what, why, and how for each instructional practice as well as classroom scenarios that demonstrate effective instruction. During each session, you will have the opportunity to discuss, view examples of practice, and process the information. Participating in the sessions will help you develop a deeper understanding of the self-study reading content. The last section of the self-study reading in the third session of each module provides a list of free additional resources related to the module's topic, including articles, websites, and children's activities.

Activities

The first activity in each module is to answer a set of frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the module topic based on your background knowledge and experience. The FAQs are based on education leaders' submissions that were compiled during the development of *Professional Learning Community: Emergent Literacy*. At the end of each module, you will revisit the FAQs and reflect on how your understanding changed over the course of the module.

During each session you will engage in collaborative hands-on activities, some of which incorporate videos. For example, after viewing and discussing a video about Dialogic Reading, you will create a Dialogic Reading lesson plan to teach in your classroom. In other activities, you will be asked to share and reflect on your classroom teaching experiences. Table 3 includes information about the videos of vocabulary instruction in preschool classrooms.

Table 3: Videos of Vocabulary Instruction in Preschool Classrooms

Title	Link	Duration
Video 1: Building a Network of Words	https://youtu.be/o0cCUj8YPoo	3:23
Video 2: Dialogic Reading with Narrative Text	https://youtu.be/JWW2iweXJug	14:14
Video 3: Dialogic Reading with Expository Text	https://youtu.be/wH3AWoenTBg	21:53
Video 4: Play-Based Interactions with Teacher Guidance	https://youtu.be/93K68UIBa7w	9:36
Video 5: Explicit Instruction for Specific Words	https://youtu.be/k43FasPgojA	14:27

At the end of each session is a set of self-study activities for you to apply what was discussed during the session and to encourage self-study between sessions. The self-study activities will take approximately 30–60 minutes to complete. Each self-study activity follows the same structure that includes something for you to:

DO

DO an action step, such as trying a new strategy in your classroom and responding to reflection questions.

WATCH

WATCH, for example, a video about applying instructional strategies.

READ

READ to prepare for the next PLC session.

Slides

The slides presented by the facilitator during each session are provided after the self-study reading assignment and activities for the three sessions in each module. Use them for reference and notetaking during and between sessions.

Reproducible Materials

Reproducible instructional materials used throughout the sessions are provided after the presentation slides. You are encouraged to use these materials in your classroom.

Glossary

The glossary defines the words in bold type and is located after the Reproducible Materials section.

Session Schedule

Use table 4 to keep track of your session schedule. The gray color indicates the other modules that comprise this PLC. Our current focus is Module 3, Vocabulary.

Table 4: Session Schedule

Module	Session and Topic	Duration	Date and Time	Place	Completed
1 **PRINT KNOWLEDGE**	1. What Print Knowledge Is, Why It Is Important, How to Teach It Effectively	90 minutes			
	2. Teaching Print Knowledge and Using Small-Group Explicit Instruction	90 minutes			
	3. Teaching Print Knowledge Using Print Referencing During Read-Alouds, Considerations for English Learner Students and Students With Disabilities, and Additional Resources	60 minutes			
2 **PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS**	4. What Phonological Awareness Is, When It Develops, and Why It Is Important	90 minutes			
	5. Levels of Phonological Awareness and Features and Examples of Effective Phonological Awareness Instruction	90 minutes			
	6. Phonological Awareness Instruction in Action, Considerations for English Learner Students and Students With Disabilities, and Additional Resources	60 minutes			
3 **VOCABULARY**	7. Background on Vocabulary	90 minutes			
	8. How Do Children Learn New Words, Which Words Do I Teach, and How Do I Use Dialogic Reading to Teach Vocabulary?	90 minutes			
	9. More Ways to Teach Vocabulary, Considerations for English Learner Students and Students With Disabilities, and Additional Resources	60 minutes			
4 **ORAL LANGUAGE**	10. What is Oral Language, Why Is It Important, How Do Children Develop Syntax, and How Do I Teach Syntax?	90 minutes			
	11. Teaching Oral Language Through Conversations and Supporting Peer-to-Peer Language Interactions	90 minutes			
	12. Oral Language and Listening Comprehension, Considerations for English Learner Students and Students With Disabilities, and Additional Resources	60 minutes			

Session 7: Background on Vocabulary

Key Terms	Definition
connected text	Words in sentences, phrases, and paragraphs (as opposed to words in isolation as in a list).
expressive vocabulary	Words that we can produce to communicate, either orally or in writing.
lexical knowledge	Information known about words and about the relations among words.
network of words	An interconnected web of words. Networks of words help us more quickly remember and recall words that are associated with the same topic. They also help us readily learn new words that connect to established networks.
oral language	The system of words and word combinations used to communicate with others through speaking and listening. We use oral language to express and comprehend knowledge, ideas, and feelings.
receptive vocabulary	Words that we understand when we hear or read them.
Simple View of Reading	Reading comprehension (RC) equals the product of decoding (D) and language comprehension (LC), or D x LC = RC.
vocabulary	Knowledge of words and word meanings. It includes the words that make up speech (what we say) and text (what we read and write).
word gap	The difference in vocabulary-learning opportunities among children.

📖 Self-Study Reading

What Is Vocabulary?

Vocabulary is an important emergent literacy skill. **Vocabulary** is the knowledge of words and word meanings and includes the words that make up speech—what we say—and text—what we read and write. Vocabulary knowledge is essential for listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Researchers once thought that acquiring language began when a child begins to utter words, typically during the first year. They now know that it begins much earlier. Think about the language an infant and toddler may hear prior to preschool, all of which contributes to his or her **oral language** and vocabulary development, which in turn supports comprehension. Vocabulary knowledge is a key element of the broader concept of oral language, which is explored in Module 4. However, this module focuses on vocabulary knowledge.

Vocabulary knowledge includes understanding the meaning of a word as well as being able to pronounce the word and to use the word to communicate a specific message. Children build their vocabulary in a variety of ways, such as talking with adults and other children and listening to (and eventually reading) stories.

Listening

Speaking

Reading

Writing

When Does Vocabulary Develop?

Well Before Kindergarten!

From even before birth, a child's brain is open to learning language.[3] Children naturally absorb and gradually, through repeated exposures, make sense of the speech that surrounds them. Research has revealed that the first three years of life are more important than previously thought. Findings indicate that the brain continues to develop long after birth. So, the experiences a child has, including experiences in which the child can build and hear vocabulary, help determine how connections form in the brain. In fact, the size of a child's vocabulary is strongly related to how much, and how, parents talk with their child.[4] Consider the age and vocabulary growth for a typically developing child:[5]

- By age 1 a child can name a few things, such as *bottle*, *cup*, *dog*, and *ball*.
- At 18 months a child has an expressive vocabulary of about 50 words.
- Around age 2, a child's expressive vocabulary is more than 200 words, and he or she can speak in two-word phrases.
- Between ages 2 and 3 a child can speak in three- or four-word sentences using verbs and pronouns (I, me).

Early language experiences at home and in preschool play an important role in the development of children's vocabulary. Talking and listening to children make a difference in their language development. Conversations with children throughout the day about their experiences help them learn language. These experiences can be regular occurrences such as meals or a trip to the grocery store. The quantity, quality, and responsiveness of both parent and teacher talk can support children's vocabulary growth.[6]

Because the language children acquire from birth through preschool is foundational for future vocabulary development, it is critical to capitalize on this time in order to help children develop vocabulary knowledge.[7] Helping children build their vocabulary is an essential part of a preschool classroom and should be a daily focus. As you will learn throughout this module and in Module 4: Oral Language, the combination of intentional activities and frequent, extended conversations with children can accumulate across the school year to support meaningful vocabulary development.

The Word Gap

As with print knowledge (Module 1) and phonological awareness (Module 2), children enter preschool with vast differences in vocabulary knowledge. Many young children receive little support for vocabulary growth during their everyday lives.[8] The quantity, quality, and diversity of language heard may be different for children from various socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.[9] Of course, within all socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds is substantial variability in children's early language experiences.[10] However, for children who receive less early support, recent research shows large differences in vocabulary development in children as young as 15 months. For some children the gaps relative to peers who receive richer input widen over time.[11] By age 4 a child from a well-resourced family typically experiences many more words and a more diverse set of words than does a child from

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3   Hoff, 2006; Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, 2015; Romeo et al., 2018; Saffran, 2003.
4   Cartmill et al., 2013; Hart & Risley, 2003; Pace, Luo, Hirsh-Pasek, & Golinkoff, 2017; Pan, Rowe, Singer, & Snow, 2005; Rowe, 2012; Zimmerman et al., 2009.
5   American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, n.d.
6   Mol & Neuman, 2014.
7   Farkas & Beron, 2004.
8   Hart & Risley, 1995; Hoff, 2003; Neuman & Wright, 2014.
9   Hoff, 2006; Rowe, 2012.
10 Gilkerson et al., 2018.
11 Fernald, Marchman, & Weisleder, 2013; Rodriguez & Tamis-LeMonda, 2011.

a low-resourced family.[12] This difference in vocabulary-learning opportunities and therefore in word knowledge is referred to as the **word gap**.

For most children the word gap is the result of fewer prior opportunities to learn rather than a limited capacity to learn.[13] Given the opportunity to experience consistent, intentional, and evidence-based language environments, even children who enter preschool with small vocabularies can acquire new words.[14] The good news is that effective vocabulary instruction can help reduce the word gap, which in turn can help limit reading difficulties later on.[15] However, without effective teaching in preschool and beyond, the word gap often widens as students proceed through school.[16] Children who enter preschool with stronger vocabularies continue to learn new words at the same or a greater rate than do children who enter preschool with weaker vocabularies. Thus, their word gap either stays the same or, even worse, widens.

You can narrow the gap by immersing children in language activities that are meaningful and strategically planned to increase vocabulary knowledge. With robust instruction most children can learn the new words that are intentionally taught. In addition, children will continue to acquire new vocabulary words through daily experiences such as the play-based conversational interactions described later in this module and in Module 4. As with any learning opportunity, children will vary in how readily they learn new words through these classroom experiences.[17] Suggestions for teaching vocabulary to children who need the most support, including those who enter preschool with identified language-related disabilities, are discussed later in this module.

Why Is Vocabulary Important?

The Value of Communicating

Module 4 explores in detail all the reasons why having strong oral language skills is key to successfully communicating ideas, needs, and goals and supporting personal relationships with family and friends. This module focuses on the connections between vocabulary—and broader oral language skills—and the development of reading.

The Simple View of Reading

Vocabulary knowledge is essential for reading comprehension. Reading comprehension consists of two parts. One part is recognizing words on the page (decoding, or translating a word from print to speech), and the other is the language skill that enables understanding those words after decoding them (language comprehension). This is referred to as the **Simple View of Reading**.[18] The Simple View of Reading states that reading comprehension (RC) equals the product of decoding (D) and language comprehension (LC).

$$D \times LC = RC$$

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12 Hart & Risley, 1995, 2003; Neuman & Wright, 2014.
13 Biemiller, 2005.
14 Fricke et al., 2013.
15 Lonigan & Phillips, 2016; Storch & Whitehurst, 2002.
16 Farkas & Beron, 2004.
17 Blewitt, Rump, Shealy, & Cook, 2009; Marulis & Neuman, 2013.
18 Gough & Tunmer, 1986; Hoover & Gough, 1990.

Vocabulary Supports Language Comprehension

Vocabulary knowledge has a direct impact on language comprehension, including listening comprehension, because the more words in our mental dictionary, the better our receptive language, or understanding of what we hear. Vocabulary knowledge is necessary for understanding oral language. To understand the speaker's message, we need to know or be able to figure out what the speaker's words mean. Receptive language applies to engaging in conversations as well as listening to texts read aloud.

Vocabulary Supports Decoding

Once a child begins formal reading instruction in later grades, fluent word reading skills, or decoding, support comprehension. Vocabulary is a predictor of decoding skills.[19] The more words children know, the easier it will be for them to read and understand what they read.[20] When children are beginning to read and come to an unfamiliar word, they try to use words they have already heard—words in their oral vocabulary—to make sense of the word in print. If the word is already in their oral vocabulary, they can more easily decode and understand it.[21]

Vocabulary Is Directly Related to Reading Comprehension

Vocabulary is critical because of its strong link to reading comprehension.[22] Understanding printed words requires knowing what words mean.[23] Being able to decode and having adequate vocabulary knowledge do not guarantee high levels of reading comprehension for a child. However, if either decoding or vocabulary knowledge is missing, it will virtually guarantee a low level of reading comprehension.[24] Learning vocabulary will help children become better at understanding what they read when formal reading instruction begins in later grades.

Vocabulary Knowledge Leads to More Vocabulary Knowledge

Once children learn how to read **connected text**, their reading and vocabulary knowledge become mutually reinforcing. As children learn more about and understand the meanings of words, they are likely to read more. Reading more in turn helps increase their word awareness and expands their opportunities to use language in both oral and written forms. Figure 1 shows the mutually reinforcing relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading more.

Figure 1: The Mutually Reinforcing Relationship Between Vocabulary Knowledge and Reading
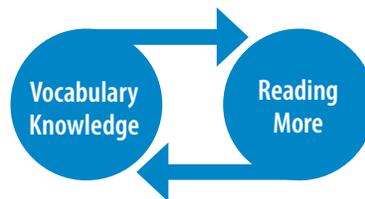
Extensive reading provides children with multiple exposures to words in rich contexts.[25] Reading widely involves children reading a variety of genres about a variety of topics, which lets them acquire words on diverse topics and in varied networks.[26] Vocabulary learning is a lifelong process: the more we read, even as adults, the more our word knowledge grows.[27] This process begins very early in life.

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19 Ouellette, 2006.
20 Blachowicz, Fisher, Ogle, & Watts-Taffe, 2006; Kamil, 2004; National Reading Panel, 2000.
21 Kamil & Hiebert, 2005.
22 National Reading Panel, 2000; Snow, 2002; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998.
23 National Reading Panel, 2000; Stahl & Nagy, 2007.
24 Biemiller, 2005.
25 Kamil & Hiebert, 2005.
26 Learning First Alliance, 1998.
27 Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998.

The more words children learn in preschool—through intentional instruction, read-alouds containing new and diverse vocabulary words, and conversations—the more they will read later. The more they read, the more their understanding of words grows.

Vocabulary Is Included in State Standards

Every state addresses vocabulary in its early learning standards. Locate, download, and review your state standards to see how your state has included vocabulary as a key learning goal for children. If you work with 3 and 4-year-old children, it is important to become familiar with your state's learning standards for both age-ranges. In fact, since children's learning and development are not uniform, it is helpful for all teachers to be familiar with learning progressions so they can build upon the individual and developmental characteristics of each child. When reviewing your state's standards for 3- and 4-year-olds, you may find that they are located within different documents. For example, many states include 3-year-old standards within early learning guidelines for children birth through three. In addition, it can be helpful to familiarize yourself with the kindergarten standards related to language and literacy in your state. These are likely in a separate document as well.

How Is Vocabulary Knowledge Used in Different Contexts?

Receptive and Expressive Contexts

Receptive vocabulary are words we understand when we hear or read (or listen to someone read) them. Receptive vocabulary includes words we receive, either by listening or reading. For example, when you ask children to pick up the red block and they do so, they are demonstrating receptive vocabulary because they understood what you asked them to do.

Expressive vocabulary is what we say or write in appropriate contexts. It includes the words we produce when we speak and write. When children communicate a need, such as saying, "I am thirsty," they are using expressive vocabulary. Receptive and expressive vocabulary are highly related. For children ages 0–4, as well as some children with disabilities, receptive vocabulary is typically larger than expressive vocabulary. Figure 2 summarizes the ideas in this section.

Figure 2: Receptive and Expressive Vocabulary

Receptive Vocabulary	Expressive Vocabulary
Listening	Speaking
Reading	Writing

Oral and Print Contexts

As children get older and learn to read and write, they apply their oral receptive and expressive vocabulary to the print context. The term print vocabulary refers to the set of words children know when, in later grades, they read and write silently.[28] A child with a large oral vocabulary has an advantage when learning to read because reading comprehension relies in large part on knowing the meaning of individual words in a passage.[29]

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28 Diamond & Gutlohn, 2006.
29 Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2001; Hall and Moats, 1999.

How Does Language Interaction Contribute to Vocabulary Knowledge?

Language Interaction Is the Key to Learning Vocabulary

Before beginning school and formally learning to read, children learn most of the words they know through daily oral language interaction with adults and from talking about and listening to stories and books read to them. Language interaction is the vehicle for word learning.[30] By carefully observing and interacting with experienced language users, such as parents and teachers, children learn the meanings of new words and phrases. The more frequent and varied those language experiences are, the greater the child's language ability will be.

Language Represents Knowledge

We use words to think and process so the more words children know, the better they can talk about their experiences, feelings, and the world.[31] Think about experiences you have had, such as participating in these professional learning community sessions. The knowledge you gain from each session, combined with the knowledge and experiences you brought to the sessions, can be communicated to others using language. Language represents knowledge. Children must learn the meanings of many words in order to learn how to use language effectively. When preschool children are exposed to language and engaged in meaningful conversations, they can learn several new words per day.[32]

What Is a Network of Words?

Lexical knowledge, or knowledge of words, is organized in networks of meaning. It might help to think about vocabulary as a spider's web connecting many words that a person has in his or her mental dictionary. Imagine a word toward the center of a web, with connections running out to many other words to create a word web. For example, if *bird* is a word toward the center of a web, it would have links to such words as *beak*, *feather*, *fly*, *robin*, and *nest*. Plus, many of these words connect to one another, creating a big interconnected web of words (figure 3). This idea is often referred to as a network of word knowledge[33] or vocabulary depth.[34] In this module it is referred to as a **network of words**. Networks of words help us more quickly remember and recall words that are associated with the same topic. They also help us readily learn new words that connect to established networks.

Figure 3: Network of Words (Bird)

robin   beak
nest   **bird**   fly
feather   wing

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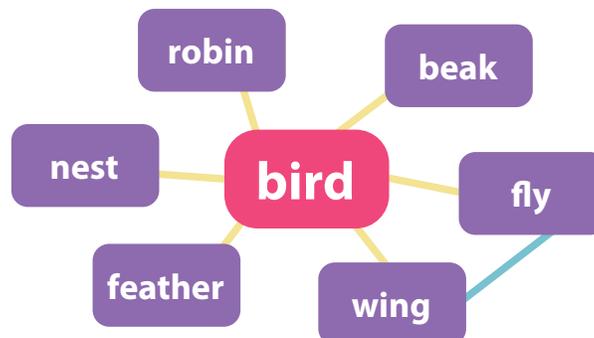
30 Moats, 2000.
31 Stahl, 1999.
32 Moats, 2000.
33 Hadley, Dickinson, Hirsh-Pasek, & Golinkoff, 2019.
34 Oulette, 2006; Roth, Speece, & Cooper, 2002; Tannenbaum, Torgesen, & Wagner, 2006.

The network of words in figure 4 shows another, more complex example of a network of words that began with the word *hear*. Notice the connections linking word to word and web to web. *Hear* is in the middle of the web and is connected to words that are sounds we hear, such as *ring*, *buzz*, and *howl*, and to words that make those various sounds, such as *telephone*, *alarm*, and *wind*. Examine the network for examples of other connections between and among the words.

Figure 4: Network of Words (Hear)
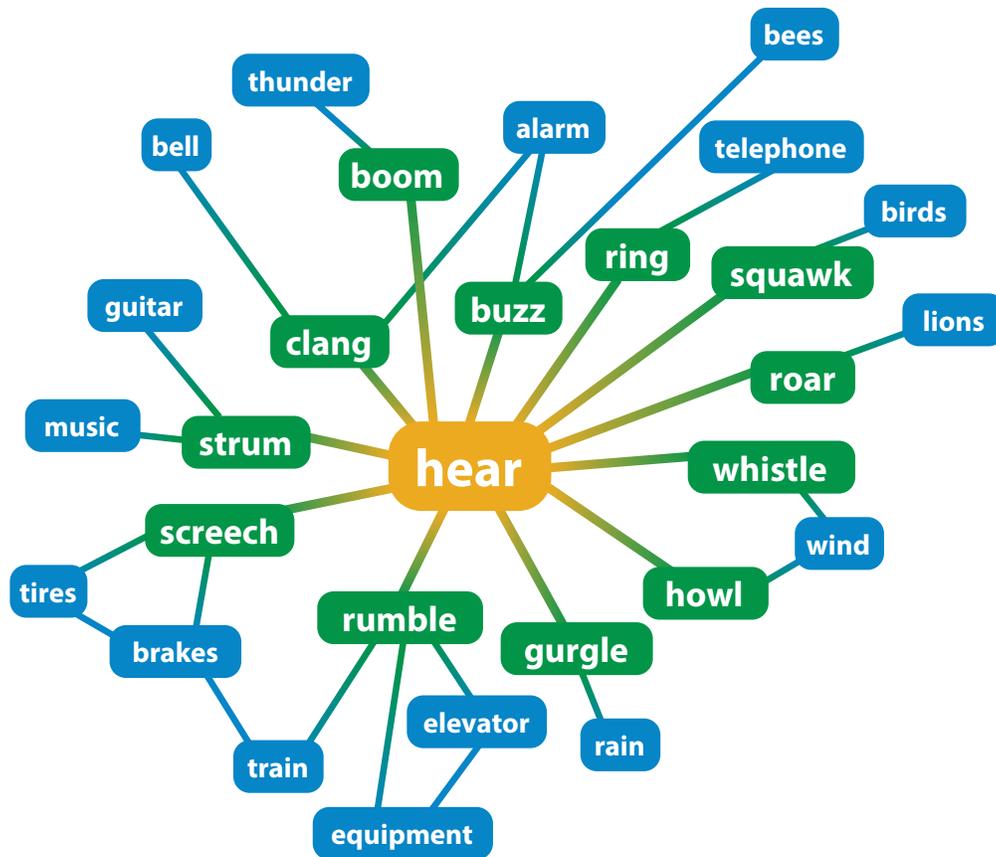
Understanding how we learn and store words in networks can inform how you teach vocabulary. Because new words are remembered and retrieved more easily if they are connected, you should teach networks of words, or words that are related to each other and to a larger topic of interest. You can do this by:[35]

- Making connections among well-known words and less well-known words.
- Deepening and enriching existing knowledge.
- Building a network of ideas around key concepts.

Now you are ready for PLC Session 7.

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35   Moats, 2000.

Activity 1
FAQs About Vocabulary

Directions: Complete the middle column in the table below. You will return to this activity at the end of this module to complete the third column and compare your responses.

FAQ	My Response <u>Before Session 7</u>	My Response <u>After Session 9</u>
What words do I teach the children in my classroom?		
How do I connect vocabulary instruction to other aspects of our preschool day?		
How can I integrate speaking and listening activities with my vocabulary instruction?		
What are the most effective ways to teach vocabulary to young children?		

Building a Network of Words

Directions: Work with a partner to develop a network of words for the theme Weather and Seasons. Use the planning guide below and the Self-Study Reading for Session 7 as resources.

1. Use the provided expository texts and your own knowledge to determine two to five **concepts** children will learn about weather.
2. Create a **network of words** with *weather* as the center word.
3. Select **three to five words** from your network of words you will teach your children.
4. Brainstorm an **activity** you will implement to teach the selected words.

Task	Information to Consider	My Ideas
1. Use the provided expository texts to determine two to five **concepts** children will learn about weather.	Concepts are the building blocks of ideas. Concepts include the topic area and knowledge that we want children to learn. For example, if you are teaching the Nutrition theme, you may have numerous concepts you want children to learn, such as about *food groups*, *healthy eating*, and *food preparation*. Consider two to five things that are most important for children to know about weather when you complete this study. Here are some questions to think about: • What, specifically, do you want children to learn about weather? • What ideas/facts/concepts should children understand when they complete this theme? • How will children be able to apply their knowledge about weather?	Two to five concepts children will learn about weather:
2. Create a **network of words** with *weather* in the center. Use the Network of Words template below.	What are important words to know in order to understand the concepts about weather from step 1? • A network of words represents the ideas and descriptions associated with the concept. Learning words within these networks helps children also learn about the concept and theme. • Instead of teaching random words that are not related to each other, teach a network of words that are connected to each other and support conceptual knowledge building. • For an example, refer to the network of words found in figures 3 and 4 on pages 6 and 7 of your self-study reading.	Create your network of words using the template on the next page.

Activity 2 (continued)
Building a Network of Words

Network of Words for *Weather*

weather

3. Select three to five words from your network of words that you will teach your children:

4. With your partner, brainstorm ideas for activities you could implement to teach your selected words.

Activity 3
Reflect

Directions:

1. Think about the question in the first column.
2. Record your responses in the My Reflection column(s).
3. Turn and Talk to your colleague about your responses.
4. Add any new information or ideas generated from your discussion.

Topic	My Reflection	
Is there anything I learned during this session that either confirmed or contradicted what I already knew about why vocabulary is important?	**Confirmed**	**Contradicted**
Why is it important to teach vocabulary using a network of words?		
What new information or ideas do I want to add to my reflection after my discussion with my colleague?		

Activity 4
Plan and Implement (Self-Study)

Directions: Before our next session, complete the DO, WATCH, READ activities below.

DO ✏️	• Select a narrative storybook related to the Weather theme that includes realistic illustrations of weather. **Bring your book to our next session.** • Select three to five words to teach from the network of words developed in this session. Plan one activity to teach those words. See Activity 2 from this session for ideas. Complete the planning guide below and implement the lesson.

Three to five words from my network of words for Weather:

Activity Description	Questions/Prompts
Materials	
Setting (e.g., small-group, circle time, center)?	

Plan and Implement (Self-Study)

Directions: Before our next session, complete the DO, WATCH, READ activities below.

WATCH ▶	**Video 1: Building a Network of Words** (https://youtu.be/o0cCUj8YPoo). Then answer the questions below.
1. How does our mind store words?	
2. Why is it important to build a network of words prior to teaching vocabulary?	
3. How will you incorporate networks of words into your planning for vocabulary instruction?	
4. What themes might benefit the children in your classroom?	
READ 📖	• Self-Study Reading for Session 8 on pages 14–25.
Questions and comments during or after reading.	

Session 8: How Do Children Learn New Words, Which Words Do I Teach, and How Do I Use Dialogic Reading to Teach Vocabulary?

Key Terms	Definition
basic words	Words that typically do not have multiple meanings. They can be high-frequency words and include nouns, verbs, or adjectives (for example, *in*, *table*, *walk*, *happy*).
child-friendly definition	The use of familiar words to explain a target word (for example, *ecstatic* is when someone is very happy). A child-friendly definition is not a dictionary definition.
Dialogic Reading	An evidence-based strategy to enhance vocabulary and oral language skills through recurrent, interactive book readings with small groups of children. During story reading the teacher/parent asks questions, adds information, and prompts children in order to increase the sophistication of their responses by allowing them to expand on their utterances.
expansion	A scaffolding technique in which the teacher provides a few additional words based on the child's response.
repetitions	A scaffolding technique in which the teacher reinforces the child's response by simply repeating the child's answer.
technical words	Words that are important for a specific topic but do not occur frequently across different contexts.
transportable words	Advanced vocabulary words that connect across networks of words or contexts. Words that transport well include those that are likely to be encountered often during instructional activities or while listening to books being read aloud.

📖 Self-Study Reading

How Do Children Learn New Words?

Children learn words both indirectly and directly. They learn words indirectly through everyday experiences with oral and written language. They learn words directly, for example, when the teacher provides specific word-learning instruction.[36] To learn new words, children need repeated, meaningful indirect and direct exposures to words.[37]

Indirectly

Children learn the meanings of most words indirectly.[38] This means that they learn the meanings of most words through everyday experiences with oral language, such as conversations with parents and teachers, and written language, such as listening to a story read to them. Children learn the meanings of words indirectly in three ways:[39]

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36 Armbruster et al., 2001.
37 Biemiller & Boote, 2005; Hoff, 2003.
38 National Reading Panel, 2000.
39 National Reading Panel, 2000.

1. **Engaging in daily oral language interactions.** Young children gain vocabulary knowledge through conversations with others, especially adults. In your preschool classroom, you repeat words several times and use new and interesting words as you converse with children. These conversations are most effective in supporting vocabulary growth when you encourage children to take multiple turns to talk during a conversation. Providing meaningful feedback on their remarks scaffolds vocabulary and broadens language development.[40] Scaffolding is a feature of effective instruction discussed in Modules 1 and 2. Scaffolding vocabulary instruction is responsive to the child, is flexible, and uses a variety of strategies,[41] discussed later in this Module. The more oral language experiences children have, the more their vocabulary will grow. Ways in which preschool teachers can engage children in daily oral language interactions are covered later in this Module and in Module 4.

2. **Listening to adults read.** Children gain vocabulary knowledge when listening to adults read aloud, especially when the adult pauses to explain an unfamiliar word. Children also gain vocabulary knowledge when adults engage them in conversation while reading aloud or at the end of a read-aloud. Engaging in conversations about a book that is being read aloud helps children learn new words and concepts. It also helps children relate the words to their prior knowledge and experience. Effective ways to engage children in conversations about books that preschool teachers read aloud are shared later in this session.

3. **Reading extensively (for older children).** When children read extensively on their own, they encounter more words and learn more word meanings. Although children in preschool do not yet read on their own, the preschool experiences that build their vocabulary knowledge will help them understand what they read when they begin to read independently.

Directly

Children also learn word meanings directly when a teacher uses explicit instruction. This means that a teacher is explicitly teaching the definitions of new or unfamiliar words, which can increase vocabulary learning.[42] For example, a teacher might share a child-friendly definition or use a word in an interesting sentence to teach a word that is unfamiliar. Explicit instruction includes the I Do, We Do, You Do instructional routine where the teacher first models the use of a new word, then guides the children as they practice using the new word as modeled by the teacher, and then has the children use the new word on their own. Teachers might also explicitly teach certain new or unfamiliar words from texts before or while reading aloud. We explore these concepts in more detail in Session 8 through a Dialogic Reading routine, and in Session 9 where you will practice an explicit instructional routine to teach vocabulary words directly.

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40 Hirsh-Pasek & Burchinal, 2006; Landry, Anthony, Swank, & Monseque-Bailey, 2009.
41 Berk & Winsler, 1995.
42 Biemiller, 2006; Biemiller & Boote, 2005; Weizman & Snow, 2001.

Which Vocabulary Words Do I Teach?

To effectively teach vocabulary in preschool, carefully prepare the classroom environment to support strategic vocabulary instruction. One key aspect of this environment is planning which words to teach. Children are more likely to learn unfamiliar words if they are embedded in the context of more familiar words.[43] That is, children are more likely to learn and remember new words that are connected to words already in their network. Most effective vocabulary instruction for preschool children occurs in meaningful contexts with many opportunities for active engagement, rich conversations, and targeted direct instruction.[44] However, thinking about all the words there are to teach can feel overwhelming! Which words should you teach? The sections below describe four important considerations for selecting words: teaching varied parts of speech, teaching words that will be frequently encountered, teaching base words and how to construct word families, and teaching words as part of networks rather than in isolation.

Varied Parts of Speech

Children should learn new words in different parts of speech (for example, nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs). As you select words to teach, consider the different parts of speech. Doing so will help ensure that children are learning a variety of different parts of speech and not only nouns, for example. Table 5 lists the parts of speech, descriptions, example words, and an example sentence.

Table 5: Parts of Speech

Part of Speech	Description	Example Words	Example Sentence
Noun	The name of a person, place, or thing.	Person: physician, chef, farmer Place: market, restaurant, grove Thing: tractor, peaches, utensils	The *farmer* sells fresh *peaches* at the *market*.
Verb	Shows action or a state of being.	harvest, chop, measure, deliver, digest, prepare	The baker *prepared* a fragrant pie for dessert.
Preposition	Shows the relationship of a noun or pronoun to another word.	at, on, in, from, with, about, beside, for	I left the blueberries *beside* the sink *for* you.
Adjective	Describes, modifies, or gives more information about a noun or pronoun.	crisp, raw, natural, nutritious, gentle	The *amber* wheat blows in the *gentle* breeze.
Adverb	Describes a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. It tells how, where, when, how much, or with what frequency.	greedily, briskly, evenly, rarely, often, less, almost, early, seldom, first, again, hungrily, enough, always	He *hungrily* devoured the salad. (how) After the sun moved *westward*, it was warm *enough* to have a picnic in the backyard. (where, how much) I woke up *early* because I was excited to select a pumpkin for Halloween. (when) The mother was *really* happy her son ate his spinach. (how much) The restaurant *always* serves bread with dinner. (what frequency)

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43 Dickinson, Flushman, & Freiberg, 2009; Hoff & Naigles, 2002; Pan et al., 2005.
44 Beck & McKeown, 2007.

Frequently Encountered Words

Teach words that are, or will be, encountered frequently by children. These may be words used often in the preschool setting, part of instructional practices, or that are part of a theme. These types of words fall into three primary sets:

- **Basic words**, or words that preschool children often already know, such as *happy*, *table*, *in*, and *walk*. These words typically do not have multiple meanings, can be high-frequency words (such as *go*), and include nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Although some children may need assistance learning basic words through explicit instruction (for example, English learner students or students with disabilities), basic words are typically learned through frequent exposure in the context of the child's environment.

- **Transportable words**, or words that connect across networks of words or contexts. Words such as *describe* and *measure* are considered transportable. Words that transport well include those that are likely to be encountered often during instructional activities or while listening to books being read aloud. Other examples of transportable words include *predict*, *together*, *sort*, and *leader*. Learning these "more mature" words in preschool can deepen children's knowledge of concepts and build connections to other words and concepts. Most explicit instructional time should be devoted to words in this set.

- **Technical words**, or words that are important for a specific topic but do not frequently occur across different contexts. Words such as *esophagus* and *nutrients* can be considered technical words that are useful for specific contexts. Some instructional time can be given to these words when they are immediately relevant and needed, such as during a preschool science lesson.

Word Families

Another useful strategy as you consider which words to teach is to select words that have a group of very closely related words, often called a word family. Word families are formed when base words are made plural (*cherry* becomes *cherries*), verbs are conjugated into different tenses (*bake* becomes *baked* or *baking*), and new prefixes or suffixes are added (*use* becomes *unused*, usable, *user*). Teaching base words and some of the members of their word families will help children more readily learn other words in the same family.[45] The added advantage of teaching words in families is that children also can learn to recognize and understand the meaning of common prefixes and suffixes. Some of the prefixes that young children typically are taught include *un-* and *re-*. Some of the suffixes that they can be taught include *-er*, *-est*, and *-ing*. Remember that the goal for preschool is not to teach children how to spell these words, especially because adding a suffix sometimes changes the spelling of the base word. Instead, the goal is to build children's understanding of the idea of word families and of the meaning of the words within families relevant to your chosen themes.

Networks of Words

Preschool teachers often teach around a thematic unit, or a theme. A theme is centered around a specific topic—for example, Insects or Transportation. Once the theme is decided, many of the learning activities are planned around it. When chosen carefully, themes can provide children with meaningful opportunities to learn about the world around them and the concepts and words used to describe the world. Concepts are the building blocks of ideas.[46] Concepts include the topic area and knowledge that you want children to learn. For example, if you are teaching the Nutrition theme, you may have many concepts you want children to learn, such as *food groups*, *healthy eating*, and *food preparation*. Each of these concepts then has a network of words that represent the ideas and

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45 Bowers, Kirby, & Deacon, 2010.
46 Gelman & Kalish, 2006.

descriptions associated with the concept (figure 5). Within a network of words, some of them—usually nouns—can be organized into categories of words that share common features. For example, in the Nutrition theme, *fruit*, *vegetables*, and *desserts* are categories that are connected in the network of related words about food groups. Teaching children the category labels and multiple examples within each category is a helpful way to build their understanding of the word network and of the conceptual knowledge represented by the words.

Figure 5: Theme, Concepts, Words

Word	Word	Word

Concept	Concept	Concept	Concept

Theme: Nutrition
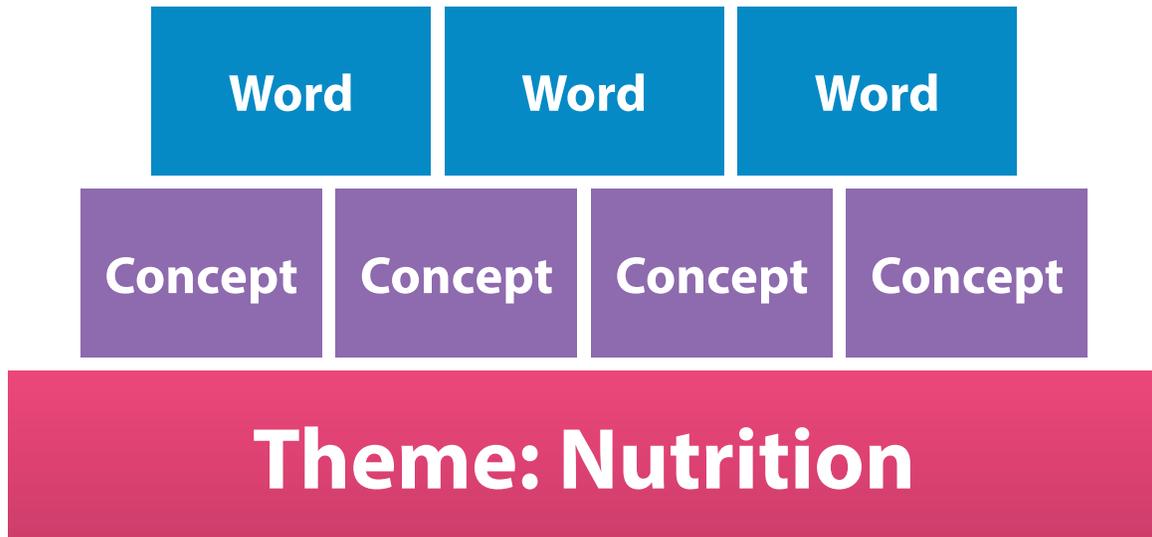
Children learn vocabulary better when words are presented in a meaningful topic or theme.[47] Learning words in these networks helps children also learn about the concepts—or important pieces of information—in the larger theme itself. For example, in the Five Senses theme, knowing that both sense of smell and sense of taste make food taste good is a key concept. So, instead of teaching random words that are not related to each other, teach a network of words that are interconnected and support conceptual knowledge building.

To develop a network of words, select words for the purpose of building children's knowledge about the theme. Identify the categories related to the theme and teach some examples from each relevant category. You should also select some words that allow you to teach and then frequently review the meaning of common prefixes and suffixes.

When selecting words in the target networks, consider those that help convey the main ideas of the concepts and topic. Also, pay attention to the other key considerations by including words that are transportable. Transportable words in the Nutrition theme network include such words as *farmer*, *prepare*, and *flavor*. These words help children understand the topic of growing, cooking, and selecting foods to eat while supporting their knowledge development in other themes such as Five Senses and Community Occupations. In addition, remember to teach all parts of speech in the network.

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47   Harris, Golinkoff, & Hirsh-Pasek, 2011; Neuman & Dywer, 2009.

Steps to Build a Network of Words

Selecting words to teach involves advanced and strategic planning. This section provides a four-step plan that may help as you consider which words to include in a network of words that you will teach. The first step is to consider a theme—for example, Weather, Ocean, or Farm. Once the theme is selected, determine the concepts that children will learn to support the theme. The third step is to build the network of words that are important for learning the concepts. The final step is to select activities and books to support learning the network of words. Table 6 provides an example of this plan.

Table 6: Steps to Build a Network of Words

Step	Questions to Consider	Answers to Questions
1. Select a theme.	What are important themes for preschoolers to learn? What themes will be interesting and engaging for the children in my classroom? What are the interests of the children I teach?	• Transportation • Community Helpers • Animals • Bugs and Insects • **The Five Senses** There are many themes to choose from. The example below uses the Five Senses theme.
2. Determine concepts.	What, specifically, do I want children to learn about the selected theme?	We use the Five Senses to help us: • Understand and make decisions about what is happening around us. • Explore and gain new knowledge about the world. • Increase communication about the world.
3. Build a network of words.	What are important words to know in order to understand the concepts of the selected theme? Do I have a variety of words, including basic words, transportable words, and technical words? Did I include verbs, adjectives, and adverbs? Am I including categories and some examples? Am I including some base words and related members of their word families?	The Five Senses **See:** *eyes, sight, observe, reflection, big, little, dirty, clean, prettiest, uglier, clearly, blurry, blooming, sparkly, transparent, visible*—also include color, number, and shape words **Hear:** *ears, listen, loud, loudest, soft, pleasant, unpleasant, quietly, whispering, whimper, converse, shriek, holler* **Smell:** *nose, scent, strong, faint, nice, stinky, stench, aroma* **Taste:** *mouth, tongue, taste buds, flavor, sweeten, salty, sour, crunchy, bland, delicious, disgusting, juicy, lapping, slurp, swallowed* **Touch:** *hands, feel, texture, temperature, hot, cold, rough, smooth, slimy, soft, hard, wet, dry, sharp, slippery, moisten, chop, slicing, knead, construct, attaching, separate, link, prepare, blend* **Food** (smell and taste): *fruit, strawberry, apple, protein, bacon, steak, vegetables, broccoli, eggplant, desserts, sundae, caramel* **Things with odors** (smell): *flower, toothpaste, carnation, spices, herbs, vinegar* **Materials** (touch): *sandpaper, rough, scratchy, cotton ball, fluffy, stone, smooth, sharp, rubber band, stretchy*

Step	Questions to Consider	Answers to Questions	
4. Select activities and books.	Which books will support understanding of the concepts, include target words from the network of words, and are interesting to the children? Which activities will support children in understanding the concepts and engage them in using words from the network of words?	**The Five Senses Activities** • Apple Science • Five Senses Discovery Table **See Activities** • Brown Bear Class Book • It Looked Like Spilt Milk **Hear Activities** • Blindfold Games • Comparing Sounds **Smell Activities** • What's That Smell? • Scent Search Walk **Taste Activities** • Tasting Graph • Salt and Sugar Test **Touch Activities** • Texture Tray • Identifying 3D Shapes by Touch	**Books About the Five Senses** • Cold, Crunchy, Colorful: Using Our Senses by Jane Brockett • My Five Senses by Margaret Miller • Look, Listen, Taste, Touch, and Smell by Pamela Hill Nettleton **See Books** • Seeing by Rebecca Rismann • Hello Ocean by Pam Munoz Ryan **Hear Books** • The Listening Walk by Paul Showers • Little Ballet Star by Adele Geras • Animal Orchestra by Ilo Orleans **Smell Books** • Smelling by Rebecca Rismann • Fannie in the Kitchen by Deborah Hopkinson **Taste Books** • Good Enough to Eat by Lizzy Rockwell • The Seven Silly Eaters by Mary Ann Hoberman **Touch Books** • Goldilocks and the Three Bears by James Marshall • Feeling Things by Allan Fowler

After completing these four steps, you will have the groundwork from which to strategically plan to teach vocabulary for your selected theme. You can plan your activities and book sharing experiences to support children's vocabulary growth. Children will learn important and useful words that build vocabulary knowledge and oral language skills, preparing them for reading comprehension later.

How Do I Teach Vocabulary?

Although there is more to learn about effective vocabulary instruction, current research suggests principles that enhance oral vocabulary development. For example, be intentional about word selection (as previously described), teach networks of words,[48] and provide repeated exposure through meaningful contexts.[49] This Module discusses three evidence-based ways in which to teach vocabulary in preschool:

√ Dialogic Reading.
√ Explicit instruction for specific words.
√ Play-based interactions with teacher guidance.

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48 Marulis & Neuman, 2010.
49 Harris, Golinkoff, & Hirsh-Pasek, 2011.

What Is Dialogic Reading?

Dialogic Reading is an evidence-based strategy to enhance vocabulary and oral language skills through recurrent, interactive book readings with small groups of children.[50] In Dialogic Reading the book becomes a shared visual and verbal context in which children can learn new words during repeated exposure to the same book over the course of several days. One main focus of Dialogic Reading is to create dialogue about illustrations in the book. Children learn to communicate thoughts and ideas using new words in increasingly complex phrases. Dialogic Reading helps children increase the size and diversity of their knowledge of the world and of the words used to describe the world.[51] Dialogic Reading also supports growth in the complexity of the phrases and sentences that children use when describing the books.[52]

Planning Dialogic Reading Using a Five-Session Routine

Thoughtful planning is an important step for Dialogic Reading because it is implemented in small groups with no more than six children, so you must plan what the other children will do while you conduct a Dialogic Reading lesson. For example, the other children could be involved at independent centers or other small groups with another adult. Alternatively, all the other children could be engaged in a large group activity with another adult. There are many options, which vary depending on the classroom environment.

The books you choose for Dialogic Reading should have rich, engaging pictures with accurately depicted and identifiable objects. The illustrations should be large, colorful, and realistic rather than imaginary. The illustrations should vary from page to page, represent key elements in your network of words, and be useful for building children's broader content knowledge. The words depicted should also apply to various parts of speech, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Both narrative and expository books work well for Dialogic Reading. Photographs, common in expository texts, provide many opportunities for discussion. Expository books also clearly support the conceptual knowledge building that results from teaching words in networks.

After you choose a book for Dialogic Reading, select realistic pictures in the book that depict words that are less familiar to the children, but avoid unusual words that can be used only in limited contexts. A word such as *intestine* would not be the best choice because use of *intestine* is limited to conversations about digestion. Selected target words should be transportable and be useful to children in their everyday conversations. The words do not have to appear in the text. It is more important for the selected words to be well depicted in the illustrations, to relate to each other, and to relate clearly to the network of words chosen for your particular instructional topic.

Once you have selected the words, prepare child-friendly definitions for them. A **child-friendly definition** should be concrete and use simple language that the children can understand. For example, *texture* is how something feels when touched. Child-friendly definitions should also include examples that are relevant to the children's current knowledge. For example, you might say, "The *texture* of this stuffed animal is soft, and the *texture* of the countertop on which we rolled dough into cylinders this morning was smooth."

Dialogic Reading involves five sessions, each of which is discussed below.

Session 1: Read the Book

During Session 1 introduce the book's title, author, and illustrator and define what the author and illustrator do. Next, read the entire book all the way through, with the goal of the children

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50 Lonigan & Phillips, 2007; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998; Whitehurst et al., 1988.
51 Lonigan, Purpura, Wilson, Walker, & Clancy-Menchetti, 2013.
52 Arnold, Lonigan, Whitehurst, & Epstein, 1994.

understanding the story. Session 1 is the only time during the five-session cycle that the children will hear the whole book read aloud. Before Session 2, identify interesting illustrations from the book to discuss. The family picnic scene in figure 6 is an example of an illustration that is appropriate for Dialogic Reading.

Figure 6: Illustration Appropriate to Use for Dialogic Reading: Family Picnic

Session 2: Teach New Words

The goal of Session 2 is for the children to learn the vocabulary of the book by labeling items depicted in its illustrations. The labels do not need to appear in the text. Session 2 may last multiple days, as children learn the vocabulary to describe the objects and actions in the book. Do the following during Session 2:

- Remind the children that you read the book beforehand and that you are now going to talk about the pictures in the book.

- Point to specific, identifiable objects or actions in the illustrations and ask "What" or "Who" (and sometimes "Where") questions as you encourage children to use specific language to label the pictures. These target words should be nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs. For example, point to an object—for example, the picnic basket in figure 6—and ask, "What is this?" This type of question will help children identify nouns. Asking children about what a character is doing (What is this girl doing?) will help elicit verbs (The girl is running). Adjectives can be targeted by asking children to describe nouns (What color is the picnic blanket?). Asking children to describe actions (How is the girl running?) will elicit adjectives (She is running quickly). The label should be a short word or short phrase describing the person, group, or object.

- Follow up with questions about the color, shape, purpose, manner of acting, or function of pictured objects and actions. The function of an object is the purpose for which it is designed or exists and how it is used. For example, the function of a picnic basket is to hold food that will be eaten at a picnic. Follow-up questions could include: "What color is it?", "What shape is it?", "Who is this?", "What is _____ doing?", and "What do we use _____ for?" Follow-up questions for labeled verbs can relate to how, when, and where the action is taking place—for example, "How did he pedal the bicycle?" or "Where is she running?" Follow-up questions present more scaffolding opportunities. Young children and children with very limited vocabulary will be most successful initially with color and shape questions. As children become more familiar with colors and shapes, ask function questions to solidify the meaning of target words and how they relate to the larger content area.

- Gradually challenge children with follow-up questions that connect to their inferences, or own ideas, about what is depicted in the illustrations. For example, "Where do you think the man purchased the newspaper he is reading?" or "How often do you think the man on the bench reads the newspaper in the park?" Avoid asking initial or follow-up questions that require a yes or no answer. For example, "Have you ever been on a picnic?" would not be a good question for Dialogic Reading because children will answer with yes or no. Instead, ask questions that encourage children to talk. For example, after the child says "basket," you could say, "What is in the basket?" or "What is the basket used for?" It is important to call on children both individually and chorally. When children respond chorally, the group responds together. For example, if you call on a child to identify a picture that you point to and it is an unfamiliar word to all the children, ask the whole group to repeat the word.

For Sessions 2 and 3 you will select the pictures to be discussed. However, discuss other pictures if a child shows interest in another illustration. As you move from page to page during Sessions 2–5, summarize or paraphrase sections of the text. But remember that the focus is not on reading the story.

Session 3: Continue to Teach New Words

Session 3 continues the activities of Session 2 with the goal of children learning the vocabulary of the book by labeling items in the pictures. Again, remind the children that you have already read the book to them and that you are now going to talk more about the illustrations. Continue to ask "Wh" questions (who, what, where) and ask for both individual and choral responses to ensure that the children are learning the vocabulary. For example, "What are the tall structures behind the trees?" This will introduce a new word (buildings) not previously discussed. You might incorporate review questions such as "Who remembers what this is called?" Provide the children ample practice with labeling and finding out the function, color, or shape of objects before moving on to Session 4. Children need to know the vocabulary of the book to be successful during Sessions 4 and 5.

Session 4: Ask Open-Ended Questions and Expand Child Responses

During Session 4 continue to ask labeling questions and open-ended questions that allow the children to decide what they want to discuss on the pages. Open-ended questions encourage many different responses and provide children opportunities to practice their language skills. On a page with realistic illustrations including multiple objects, ask questions such as "What do you see on this page?", "What is going on here?", "What else do you see?", and "Tell me more about _____."

The teacher's response to open-ended questions, referred to as scaffolds, should include repetitions and expansions. **Repetitions** reinforce the child's response by simply repeating the child's answer. **Expansions** provide a few additional words based on a child's response. For example, when you ask, "What is this?" and the child says, "Blanket," expand the child's response by saying, "Yes. That is a large, blue blanket." Expansions assist children in developing language that is more sophisticated by connecting what they say to what the teacher adds. The more words children say originally, the more you can expand. As a result, children will likely adopt the expansion either in the moment or later. Other examples of expansions include:

Child: "Bird is flying". / Teacher: "The bird is flying in the sky."
Child: "Squirrel." / Teacher: "The squirrel is leaping."
Child: "Grandpa is reading." / Teacher: "Grandpa is reading a newspaper."
Child: "Here's the sun." / Teacher: "Right, the sun is shining brightly."
Child: "They are having a picnic." / Teacher: "The family is having a leisurely picnic in the park."
Child: "That's water." / Teacher: "Yes, dad is holding a water bottle."

Scaffolding is an important part of Session 4. Responding to open-ended prompts may be challenging for some children. By continuing to ask some labeling questions, as in Sessions 2 and 3 ("What is this?", "What does it do?", "What shape is it?", "What color is it?", "What do we use it for?", and "What is he doing?"), you ensure that all children can participate successfully, and you enable children to continue developing vocabulary while practicing their expressive language skills. An effective technique for supporting responses to open-ended prompts is to model multiword statements as you make open-ended comments about objects in the illustrations. A multiword statement is an oral statement using many words, including new vocabulary words and descriptive words to build children's oral language skills. For example, you could say, "I notice that there is an airplane soaring above the family. What do you notice?" Your comments demonstrate how to talk about the illustrations in complete sentences and give you the opportunity to model more sophisticated vocabulary. You might say, "I see skyscraper buildings in the distance." Remember, too, that Dialogic Reading is a conversation. You can follow a child's interest by asking a follow-up question after your initial comment or expansion.

Session 5: Discuss Narrative, Conceptual, and Personal Connections

During Session 5, after the children have a firm understanding of the vocabulary, ask questions that relate to the story plot (the main part of the story), their knowledge of the newly introduced concepts and the world, and their personal experiences. These are sometimes referred to as distancing or decontextualized questions because they connect to concepts beyond what is visible in the illustrations of the book. Ask questions such as, "What happens next?", "What happens at the end?", "How would that make you feel?", and "Tell us about a time when you _____." For example, looking at the picnic scene, you could say, "The family had apples that look delicious. Where do you think the family got those apples? Where do apples come from?" This will prompt the children to say more than a one-word answer and can elicit the idea of apples coming from orchards but typically being purchased in a grocery store. Continue asking questions from Sessions 2–4 while adding questions that allow children to expand on their personal experiences and recall the story plot.

Summary of Dialogic Reading Prompts

One way to remember the interactive structure and purpose of Dialogic Reading is to learn two acronyms: PEER and CROWD. PEER can help you remember the interactive process of Dialogic Reading. It stands for **P**rompt (ask a question), **E**valuate (provide feedback to the child based on his or her specific response), **E**xtend (model a more complex version of what the child said), and **R**epeat (ask the initial question again to reinforce the learning).

The second acronym, CROWD, can help you remember the types of prompts you can ask children: **C**ompletion, **R**ecall, **O**pen-ended, "**W**h" questions, and **D**istancing (decontextualized). These prompts are most effective in supporting vocabulary and expressive language development when they are used sequentially: begin with prompts that support new vocabulary learning and gradually build to prompts that support expressive language and children's comprehension of the book.[53] Figure 7 illustrates the idea of layering more knowledge and progressively varying the type of questions asked throughout the five sessions with each book. Notice how each arrow begins in a new session and continues throughout the rest of the sessions for that book. Each new type of prompt gets added to the previously introduced prompts. The new prompts are prioritized, but the other prompts remain.

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53   Whitehurst, 2002; Whitehurst et al., 1988.

Figure 7: Sequential Layering of Question Prompts for Dialogic Reading

Session 5 – Discuss Narrative, Conceptual, and Personal Connections

What happens next?
How would that make you feel?
What happens at the end?
Tell us about a time when _____.

Session 4 – Ask Open-Ended Questions and Expand Child Response

What do you see on this page? What is going on here? What else do you see? Tell me more.

Example 1: If the child says, 'There are the three bears,' the teacher can expand with, 'Yes, there are the three bears sitting on chairs.'

Example 2: If the child says, 'Car,' the teacher can expand with, 'The fast red car.'

Sessions 2 and 3 – Teach New Words

What is this?   What do we use it for?
What color is it?   What is he/she doing?
What shape is it?

Session 1 – Read the Book

Now you are ready for PLC Session 8.

Activity 5
Review My Network of Words

Directions: Review the network of words you created for the Weather and Seasons theme for Activity 2. Read the questions and record your answers below. Use information from the Self-Study Reading for Session 8 as a resource.

Topic	My Response
Are there any concepts that you may change or add? Describe.	

Topic	My Response
1. Review your network of words with *weather* in the center. 2. Label each word with an initial for a part of speech: Noun (N), Verb (V), Adjective (A), Preposition (P), Adverb (Adv) 3. What do you notice? 4. What might you change?	

Again, review your network of words with weather in the center. List each word under one of the headings below: Basic, Transportable, Technical.

Basic	Transportable	Technical

What do you notice? What might you change?

Activity 6
Determine Vocabulary Words and Questions for Dialogic Reading

Directions: The following pictures are realistic illustrations that work well for Dialogic Reading. Imagine these pictures are found in children's story books. Use the provided picture to determine vocabulary words to teach and different types of Dialogic Reading questions to ask while referencing the picture. The first one is provided as an example.

Words to Consider	*cloudy, gather, harvest, juicy, ladder, orchard, pluck, reach, shadow, shady*
Sessions 1–5: **Labeling Questions**	"What is the boy climbing?" *ladder* "What do we call this land with all these apple trees?" *orchard* "What are the dark pictures on the grass called?" *shadow*
Sessions 1–5: **Follow-up Questions**	"What do we use a ladder for?" *to get to places that are higher* "What happens on an orchard?" *trees are planted to grow fruit* "What causes this shadow?" *The tree blocking the sun's light causes the shadow to appear.* "What color are the apples?" *red*
Sessions 4–5: **Open-Ended Questions**	"What is happening in this picture?" C: *picking apples* T: The boy is *picking apples* in the orchard. "Tell me what you see in this picture." C: *The boy is climbing.* T: The boy is climbing *a ladder.*
Session 5: **Story Plot Questions**	"What did the boy do before he picked the apples?" *set up the ladder* "What is the boy going to do with the apples he picks?" *bake an apple pie*
Session 5: **Personal Experience Questions**	"Where would you go to pick apples?" "Tell me about a time you had to climb a ladder to reach something." "Tell me about a time when you saw your shadow. Where were you? What caused the shadow?"

Activity 6 (continued)
Determine Vocabulary Words and Questions for Dialogic Reading

Directions: The following pictures are realistic illustrations that work well for Dialogic Reading. Imagine these pictures are found in children's story books. Use the provided picture to determine vocabulary words to teach and different types of Dialogic Reading questions to ask while referencing the picture.

Words to Consider	
Sessions 1–5: Labeling Questions	
Sessions 1–5: Follow-up Questions	
Sessions 4–5: Open-Ended Questions	
Session 5: Story Plot Questions	
Session 5: Personal Experience Questions	

Activity 6 (continued)
Determine Vocabulary Words and
Questions for Dialogic Reading

Directions: The following pictures are realistic illustrations that work well for Dialogic Reading. Imagine these pictures are found in children's story books. Use the provided picture to determine vocabulary words to teach and different types of Dialogic Reading questions to ask while referencing the picture.

Words to Consider	
Sessions 1–5: Labeling Questions	
Sessions 1–5: Follow-up Questions	
Sessions 4–5: Open-Ended Questions	
Session 5: Story Plot Questions	
Session 5: Personal Experience Questions	

Activity 7
Video-Viewing Guide for Dialogic Reading

Directions: After watching **Video 2: Dialogic Reading with Narrative Text**
(https://youtu.be/JWW2iweXJug), answer the following questions.

Question	Answer
1. What kinds of questions does the teacher ask in Sessions 2 and 3?	
2. What does the teacher do when a child responds with an incorrect label for an object?	
3. What were some follow-up questions you heard the teacher ask in Sessions 2 and 3?	
4. What does the teacher do when the children point to a picture in Session 4?	
5. How does the teacher get quiet children to participate?	
6. How does the plot of the story influence the questions asked in Session 5?	

Activity 8
Dialogic Reading Lesson Plan

Directions: Complete the Dialogic Reading Planning Sheet based on the Weather theme using a book that you brought to this session.

SESSION 1 – READ the entire book aloud to the children. Introduce title, author, and illustrator. Briefly introduce two to three words during the reading.

Title	
Author	
Illustrator	

Target Words	Part of Speech	Child-friendly Definition	Page Number

SESSION 2 – TEACH new words by asking "Wh" questions. Follow answers with questions about shape, color, and function. Plan to teach four to five new words. Circle one to two words from Session 1 to review during Session 2.

Target Words	Part of Speech	Child-friendly Definition	Page Number

SESSION 3 – TEACH new words by asking "Wh" questions. Follow answers with questions about shape, color, and function. Plan to teach four to five new words. Circle two to three words from Sessions 1 and 2 to review during Session 3.

Target Words	Part of Speech	Child-friendly Definition	Page Number

Activity 8 (continued)
Dialogic Reading Lesson Plan

SESSION 4 – EXPANSIONS are provided when a child answers open-ended questions. They consist of 2–3 words added to the child's initial answer. Draw a rectangle around two to three words from Sessions 2 and 3 to review during Session 4. Think about how you would expand on each of those target words. Record target words to review, possible expansions, and open-ended prompts in the chart below.

Target Words	Page Number	Possible Expansion

Open-Ended Prompts and/or Questions	Page Number

SESSION 5 – NARRATIVE, CONCEPTUAL, AND PERSONAL CONNECTIONS are made by focusing on story events, characters, plot, or sequence. Use only after sufficient time is spent on Sessions 2, 3 and 4 to develop a vocabulary foundation. Draw a star next to two to three words from Sessions 2 and 3 to review during Session 5. In addition, plan for the new question types in the chart below.

Story Plot Questions	Page Number

Personal Experience Questions	Page Number

Activity 9
Reflect, Plan, and Implement (Self-Study)

Directions: Before our next session, complete the DO, WATCH, READ activities below.

DO	Implement the Dialogic Reading lesson plan you developed for Activity 8. Then answer the reflection questions below.

Question	Answer
What was one positive result that occurred from your implementation of a Dialogic Reading session?	
What was a challenge you encountered when implementing a Dialogic Reading session? How would you overcome this challenge next time?	
What are some improvements you have noticed in the children's responses to your questions and prompts?	
What are some newly taught vocabulary words that you have noticed children using with you and one another outside of Dialogic Reading sessions?	

Activity 9 (continued)
Reflect, Plan, and Implement (Self-Study)

Directions: Before our next session, complete the DO, WATCH, READ activities below.

WATCH ▶	**Video 3: Dialogic Reading with Expository Text** (https://youtu.be/wH3AWoenTBg). Answer the questions below.

Question	Answer
1. What is the teacher's focus during Session 1 of Dialogic Reading?	
2. What should the teacher ask after a labeling question during Sessions 2 and 3?	
3. How is Dialogic Reading with an expository book different from Dialogic Reading with a narrative storybook?	
4. What kinds of questions does the teacher ask in Session 4? If a child just lists objects or items on the page, how can the teacher scaffold instruction to provide language that is more sophisticated?	
5. How does the teacher reinforce target words throughout the five session sequence?	
6. What kinds of questions does the teacher ask in Session 5?	
7. What happens to the children's responses as they progress through each of the sessions?	
READ 📖	• Self-Study Reading for Session 9 on pages 35–50. • Optional: Select and read a resource from the Additional Resources section on pages 48–50.
Questions and one thing learned from the reading(s).	

Session 9: More Ways to Teach Vocabulary, Considerations for English Learner Students and Students With Disabilities, and Additional Resources

Key Terms	Definition
active response	An opportunity for children to be actively engaged, verbally or nonverbally. For example, say "I'm going to show you a picture. Hold your thumb up if you think it is enormous. Hold your thumb down if you don't think it is enormous."
asking questions	An important part of play-based interactions. Begin by simply asking the child to describe what he or she is doing. When you ask a question, listen closely to the child's response. Ask questions about the child's knowledge of vocabulary in the context of the activity.
play-based interactions with teacher guidance	When play is primarily child directed but includes teacher-initiated learning.

📖 Self-Study Reading

Explicit Instruction for Specific Words

Children need both explicit and implicit vocabulary instruction.[54] This section discusses ways to teach vocabulary explicitly. Explicit vocabulary instruction should follow the principles of explicit and systematic instruction introduced in Modules 1 and 2. **Explicit vocabulary instruction** involves intentional design and delivery of instruction for new words.[55] **Systematic instruction** is carefully thought out, builds on prior learning, and moves from simple to complex. One key component of systematic instruction is a carefully planned **scope and sequence**. A scope and sequence for vocabulary instruction includes implementing evidence-based strategies described in this Module, such as selecting a topic area, developing the networks of words connected to that topic, and teaching carefully chosen words from those networks of words. This teaching can take place in Dialogic Reading, with explicit vocabulary strategies, and through engaging children in play-based interactions with teacher guidance.

Implicit instruction is also important for teaching vocabulary words. Implicit vocabulary instruction is providing opportunities for children to practice the vocabulary words in your network of words. For example, if *nibble* is in the network of words for the Five Senses, during snack time, ask children to show you how they *nibble*.

Other key components of systematic instruction are repetition and cumulative review. Children need to have opportunities for repeated exposure to the same words and their meanings on multiple occasions. You should also provide opportunities for children to go back to previously taught words and keep practicing in order to maintain mastery and build toward using those words in appropriate contexts. For example, when explicitly teaching a vocabulary word, you should:

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54   Neuman & Wright, 2014.
55   Spencer, Goldstein, & Kaminski, 2012.

- Plan brief, engaging instructional activities that provide information about the word's meaning.
- Use consistent instructional language to introduce the word, provide opportunities for children to say the word, and make connections between the word and everyday experiences.
- Provide repeated opportunities for children to use the word in a variety of contexts.[56]

Instructional Routine to Explicitly Teach Vocabulary

It is not possible to explicitly teach every vocabulary word that children need to learn. However, you can increase the benefit of the time that you spend teaching by following a systematic instructional routine:

1. **Create a simple, child-friendly definition.** A child-friendly definition is the use of familiar words to explain the target word. It is not a dictionary definition. As part of the child-friendly definition, use a sentence that includes words such as someone, something, or describes. For example, ecstatic is when someone is very happy; a spatula is like a spoon with a long handle and is used for mixing food together or scraping food away from the side of a bowl. Child-friendly definitions can also include familiar synonyms (for example, enormous means big) or antonyms (for example, loud means it is not quiet).

2. **Provide opportunities for children to say the word.** Say the word and ask children to repeat the word in order to provide them an opportunity to pronounce it correctly. Say the child-friendly definition. You may occasionally want to provide opportunities for children to repeat the child-friendly definition.

3. **Engage children in active responses.** Provide opportunities for children to complete an activity related to the word and its meaning where they are actively engaged, verbally or nonverbally. For example, say, "Pretend you are a crab. Show me how you hesitate when you crawl." Short and playful opportunities for children to interact with the word and process its meaning provides them repeated exposures to the word.

Table 7 provides an example of the instructional routine just described.

Table 7: Instructional Routine to Explicitly Teach Vocabulary

Step	Example
1. Create a simple, child-friendly definition.	*Enormous* means really big.
2. Provide opportunities for children to say the word.	"What is a word that means really big?" *(enormous)* "What does *enormous* mean?" (really big)
3. Engage children in active responses.	"I'm going to show you a picture. Put your thumb up if you think it is *enormous*. Put your thumb down if you don't think it is *enormous*."

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction: Word Knowledge Elaboration Activities

The activities in table 8 can be used to work with multiple words in a network at the same time or used as quick transition activities to reinforce and review previously learned words. Multiple activities can be used together for the same word to enrich children's understanding of the word meaning and of the networks and contexts in which the words are most often used. The activities vary in terms of how challenging they are, so ideally you could use them in small groups to differentiate instruction. The same words can be explored in less and more complex ways with different children.

56   Spencer et al., 2012.

Table 8: Word Knowledge Elaboration Activities

Activity Name	Best for…	Primary Goal	Examples
Which one is …?	Nouns	Helping children organize words, particularly nouns, into their overarching categories.	"Which one is a *vegetable*, a carrot or an apple?"
Sort Us!	Nouns	Helping children learn the categories that organize most entities (nouns) in their environment, including learning the superordinate category label.	Use pictures of the four to eight words you want to categorize. "All of these animals are in two categories, animals that live in the *water* and animals that live on *land*. Let's put each animal in the right category."
Odd One Out	Nouns	Helping children learn the categories that organize most entities (nouns) in their environment, including learning the superordinate category label.	"Listen to these four words. Which one doesn't belong with the others: *train*, *bicycle*, *airplane*, *chair*? Why not?"
These are all _____, because….	Nouns	Helping children learn about how words fit into categories and the defining features of those words in each category.	"*Cardinals*, *hawks*, and *pelicans* are all birds because they have feathers and lay eggs. What other birds can you think of?"
If I went searching, where would I find…?	Nouns	Helping children connect object words with the networks of words to which they connect.	"If I went searching, where would I find a *crocodile*?"
What am I describing?	Nouns	Part to whole. Helping children learn that many objects are made of smaller parts and that those smaller parts have labels or names as well.	Provide a picture of target object with complex features, such as an animal or a machine. Help children identify parts of the larger item that have unique names. Pick objects that are closely related to the topic you are exploring. "Let's learn some of the parts of the horse. Here is the *mane*, here are the *hooves*, here is the *muzzle*." Do this for several items. Then, as a later review say, "Listen to my words, *muzzle*, *mane*, *hooves*. What am I describing?" (horse)
Watch Me…. Now You!	Verbs	Helping children connect the label with an action.	"Watch me *balance* on one foot. Now you try to *balance* on one foot."
Where would I find something?	Adjectives	Helping children connect descriptive words with the networks of words to which they belong.	"Where would I find something *towering*?" "Where would I find something *tempting*, at the bakery or at the garbage dump?"

Activity Name	Best for…	Primary Goal	Examples
Some, More, Most	Adjectives	Helping children learn how to use different adjectives to show varying levels of intensity.	Model and practice the word chains for this game first with a word they know, such as big/bigger/biggest, before asking children to provide the words. Be sure to use only adjectives that conjugate in this way. "Let's play a word game with a new word we just learned. I am going to say a word and you tell me how to make it 'more'." "My word is *slimy*. How do I make it more (*slimier*)? How do I make it most?" (*slimiest*).
When would I….	Adjectives and verbs	Helping children learn the appropriate context in which to use specific descriptive words such as adjectives and adverbs. This strategy complements activities in which nouns are sorted into various categories.	"When would I say something is *frightening*, when I hear loud thunder or when I hear a kitten meow?"
Another way to say….	Adjectives and verbs	Helping children learn more and less common synonyms for words.	"Our new word is *gigantic*. This is another way to say really big. What other words also mean really big?"
Synonym Song	Adjectives and adverbs	Helping children learn more and less common synonyms for words.	The teacher and children sing the following song to the tune of Farmer in the Dell: *What is a synonym?* *What is a synonym?* *When two words mean the very same thing, they are called synonyms.* Then sing a line of one word and have the children sing back a line of a synonym for that word. The teacher sings the harder word first, and the children sing the easier synonym back. *Glad, glad, glad. / Happy, happy, happy.* *Quickly, quickly, quickly. / Fast, fast, fast.* *Icy, icy, icy. / Cold, cold, cold.* *Silent, silent, silent. / Quiet, quiet, quiet.* *Gigantic, gigantic, gigantic. / Big, big, big.* *Tiny, tiny, tiny. / Small, small, small.* *Angry, angry, angry. / Mad, mad, mad.* *Gloomy, gloomy, gloomy. / Sad, sad, sad.*

Activity Name	Best for…	Primary Goal	Examples
Mr. Backward Says	Adjectives and adverbs	Helping children learn about antonyms as one way words connect in a network.	Use a puppet with silly features to play this game. "Meet Mr. Backward. Mr. Backward gets words mixed up. When you tell him a word, he thinks of the opposite word. When I say *happy*, Mr. Backward says *sad*. Let's see if we can figure out what Mr. Backward is thinking. If I say *hot*, Mr. Backward says_____?" Start the game with known word pairs. Then, use the game to review and connect new and other less common words. For example, say, "Let's see if we can figure out what Mr. Backward is thinking. If I say *enormous*, Mr. Backward says_____? (*tiny*, *miniature*, *very small*). Be sure to play the game in both directions to encourage children to say both words.
Hi, my name is….	All words	Helping children remember the meaning of words and concepts and developing expressive language by describing the word to others.	Assign each child in a small group of three to six a word within a network. All words should have already been explicitly introduced. Call on the children to take turns introducing themselves by describing what they are or when they are used. Initially prompt children to respond with "My name is_____. Use me when_____" to help them learn the activity. "Hi, my name is *rapidly*. Use me when something is moving really fast. Hi, my name is *caterpillar*. Later in my life I am going to become a butterfly.
Connection Questions	All words	Helping children learn multiple words in the same network and about the ways those words connect.	"Why is a *suitcase* related to a *voyage*?" "Why is *slicing* related to *pie*?"
When I say…, you say….	All words	Helping children learn multiple words in the same network and about the ways those words connect.	Provide children with a target word. Then ask them to tell you other words they think of when they hear the target word. List the words in a circle around the center target word. Review the entire list to wrap up the activity. "When I say *ocean*…I also say *fish* and *sand*. What do you say?"

Activity Name	Best for…	Primary Goal	Examples
Word Webs	All words	Helping children learn multiple words in the same network and about the ways those words connect	Use this as a follow-up to **When I say… you say…** Ask children about the words they provided and how they connect to the target word.

Play-Based Interactions with Teacher Guidance

Children explore their world and build knowledge through play. Free play, which is totally child directed and typically without adult involvement, allows for self-expression, creativity, and self-motivation.[57] During free play, children may talk to themselves or to a peer about what they are doing, ideas they have, or what to do next.[58]

Play-based interactions with teacher guidance is another type of play where play is primarily child directed but includes teacher-initiated learning. You may plan some elements of the play in advance by selecting materials that support the targeted learning goals (such as objects that represent theme-related vocabulary). During play-based interactions, use scaffolding techniques to allow children to acquire new information in the context of activities in which they are already engaged.[59] Play-based interaction with your guidance can help children make sense of the world by increasing their engagement and directing their attention and exploration.[60] Both free play and play-based interactions are important for children's growth and development. This section discusses play-based interactions in which you shape and guide children's language, especially vocabulary, through models, questions, and comments during child-directed play.

Planning for Play-Based Interactions with Teacher Guidance

How you act and what you say during play are critical to children's learning. The goal of play-based interactions is for you to scaffold children's language development during play while allowing children to direct their own play activities. During these interactions you have specific target words that you try to ensure are incorporated or elicited through conversations with children. To do this, determine which words from your network that you want to target; then enhance the classroom environment with specific props or activities to prompt the right language focus. This will ensure opportunities to practice the target words. For example, during the Five Senses theme, the network of words may include descriptive words such as *rough, smooth, sweet, savory, sharp, shrill, deep,* and *rumbling* to go along with verbs such as *breathe, sniff, identify, blare, clatter*, and *perform* and nouns such as *herbs, instruments, commotion,* and *materials.*

To plan for play-based interactions with teacher guidance, you could include props at a science center such as a texture tray with materials of different textures to touch and describe along with jars of spices to smell and discuss their scents while playing "What's That Smell?" A separate comparing sounds center could include bongo drums, triangles, bells, and tambourines for children to shake, play, and create music with while talking about the different sounds. Through your interactions and conversations, you can support children's learning by embedding opportunities for them to learn new ideas and words while allowing them to direct the play.

Four conversational strategies can be used to scaffold children's language during play-based interactions:[61]

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57 McInnes, Howard, Crowley, & Miles, 2013.
58 Wasik & Jacobi-Vessels, 2017.
59 Fisher, Hirsh-Pasek, Newcombe, & Golinkoff, 2013; Wasik & Jacobi-Vessels, 2017.
60 Fisher et al., 2013.
61 Wasik & Jacobi-Vessels, 2017.

- Ask questions that invite extended responses.
- Provide meaningful feedback.
- Introduce new vocabulary words.
- Use wait time effectively.

Ask Questions that Invite Extended Responses

Asking questions is an important part of play-based interactions. Begin by simply asking the child to describe what he or she is doing. When you ask a question, listen closely to the child's response. Ask questions about the child's knowledge of vocabulary in the context of the activity. For example, if the child is cooking at the kitchen center, ask, "What are you making to eat?" When the child responds with, "green beans," ask, "What else is in your *meal*?" This prompt will help the child extend the response and help you determine how well the child understands the vocabulary word *meal*. This prompt also helps model the more sophisticated term *meal* for the child. If the child has difficulty with this open-ended prompt, you could scaffold with a simpler question such as "Are you preparing other vegetables to go with the green beans?" This also gives you the chance to use the category label *vegetables*. Using prompts to extend the child's response during play can support the child in using more language and make connections between the focus vocabulary words (for example, *meal* and *vegetables*) and real-world applications.[62] Other open-ended prompts for the kitchen example might include "What type of food is included in the *meal* you are assembling?" and "Why did you decide to include an apple in your *meal*?"

Provide Meaningful Feedback

Providing meaningful feedback to children's comments can support vocabulary knowledge. Forms of feedback include:[63]

- *Asking more questions*, which prompts children to extend their ideas, put words to their actions, and practice using language. For example, ask the child making the meal at the kitchen center which food is healthy, and then ask why a specific food is healthy.

- *Using more sophisticated* synonyms can help children enhance their vocabulary. For example, at the kitchen center you might comment, "I notice you are preparing a chicken dinner." Preparing is a more sophisticated synonym for making. You might then say, "That chicken is raw, so you better cook it." Raw is a more sophisticated synonym for uncooked.

- *Defining word*s using a child-friendly definition helps children clarify the meaning of words that are encountered during play. Children are more likely to learn a word when they are provided a brief definition, especially when they hear it in a relevant context.[64] Using the kitchen center example, you could say, "You are combining, that means mixing together, sugar and flour to make cookies." Do not assume that children understand the meanings of words. Hearing a child-friendly definition of a word encountered during play is a scaffold that will help children learn the word.

- *Making explicit connections* between children's background knowledge and new information and language can help them learn vocabulary. For example, say, "You made a meal that has two of the food groups we read about in our book this morning! You have an apple from the fruit food group and broccoli from the vegetable food group."

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62 Wasik & Jacobi-Vessels, 2017.
63 Wasik & Jacobi-Vessels, 2017.
64 McKeown & Beck, 2014.

Introduce New Vocabulary Words

Guided by the children's play, you can support vocabulary development by labeling things children are playing with. You could use verbs to describe action and new adjectives to support a description of the child's play. For example, you could ask, "What are you using to stir the vegetable soup?" The child responds, "Spoon." You can say, "Yes, it is a special kind of spoon called a *ladle*. See the end of the *ladle* is shaped like a bowl? A *ladle* is used to stir and serve soup." As the child continues to serve the soup, you can say, "Thank you for being *careful* when you serve the soup. I know you are being *careful* because you are watching what you are doing and serving the soup slowly. By being *careful*, the soup won't spill!" As you use a spoon to "eat" the soup you could say, "I want to *devour* this soup because I'm so hungry! It probably isn't polite to *devour* food because when you *devour* food, you gulp it down very quickly." Introducing new vocabulary words can provide opportunities to hear descriptive language about the activities engaged in during play.

Use Wait Time Effectively

Providing wait time after asking a child a question during play is critical for language development. Children need longer than a couple of seconds to think about words they need to put together to express their ideas. After initiating a conversation, count to 10 in your mind. Pausing like this allows children time to think about the words they need to express their ideas. Wait time lets children know that what they say is important. Be attentive and thoughtful in order to determine whether a child does not know how to respond or needs wait time. If the child does not know how to respond, it is important to provide an answer to teach information that may not be known or to support language skills still being developed. But children also need the opportunity to think about what they know about a question, and wait time provides that opportunity.

Examples of Effective Vocabulary Instruction

Sample Activity: When Would I…

This sample activity is called "When Would I…?" as described in table 8. For this activity, ask children questions that include targeted words from your network. The questions require the children to select which of two possible answers describes the target word. For example, ask, "When would I say something is *sour*, when I eat a cookie or a lemon?" The answer children provide will help you determine whether they understand the meaning of the word *sour*. Preschoolers often repeat the last word they hear so be careful to put the correct answer in different positions. The primary goal of this activity is to help children learn the appropriate context in which to use specific descriptive words such as adjectives and adverbs. This strategy complements the categorization activities (described in the word knowledge elaboration activities in table 8).

The "When Would I…" examples in table 8 include adjectives and verbs of a network of words from a Nutrition theme. The instructional setting could be whole group, transition times, meal times, or even center time.

Table 9: Nutrition Theme Activity (When Would I…)

- When would I say something is *sweet*, when I eat potato chips or chocolate cake?
- When would I say something is *salty*, when I eat buttery popcorn or juicy strawberries?
- When would I say that I use a lot of *energy*, when I take my dog for a walk or when I take a nap after eating a big meal?
- When would I say my meal was *balanced*, when I eat brownies with ice cream or when I eat chicken, broccoli, and rice?
- When would I have a big *appetite*, after I play hide and seek with my friends or after I play video games?
- When would I be *strong*, when I lie on the couch listening to music or when I carry in grocery bags for my parents?
- When would I say something tastes *delicious*, when I eat ice cream or take medicine?
- When would I say something is *crispy*, when I eat crackers or when I eat cheese?
- When would I say a food is *fresh*, when I eat tomatoes from the garden or when I eat frozen pizza?
- When would I say a food is *crunchy*, when I eat blueberries or when I eat carrots?
- If I were hungry, when would I say that I feel *satisfied*, after I eat fish, pasta, and asparagus or after I eat one grape?
- When would I say something tastes *sour*, when I eat a lemon or a cookie?

Once the children are familiar with the content area and vocabulary, you can ask more open-ended questions without two possible choices.

Vocabulary in Action: Ms. Smith's Classroom

The following scenario includes vocabulary instruction in Ms. Smith's classroom throughout the day and over the course of multiple days. These activities might be repeated across several weeks by embedding a different set of target words in the overall five senses network that Ms. Smith has prepared in advance. The words targeted for instruction are from the network developed for a Five Senses theme. The instructional scenario includes:

- Explicit introduction of vocabulary words during whole-group circle time.
- Connection of vocabulary words to an expository book read to the whole group.
- Play-based interactions with teacher guidance at an eye exam center.
- Teacher-directed small-group activity (Odd One Out).
- Review of vocabulary words at the end of the day.

Explicit Introduction of Vocabulary Words

During whole-group circle time, Ms. Smith introduces the words rough and smooth. Over the course of several weeks, she will also introduce the following five senses vocabulary: *colorful, wrinkled, quiet, loud, fragrant, decayed, sweet,* and *sour*.

> **Ms. Smith:** Friends, today we are going to learn two new words. Those words are *rough* and *smooth*. *Rough* means something I touch is bumpy and may scratch my hands. Here is some sandpaper. This feels *rough* when I touch it. Everyone will have a chance to touch this *rough* sandpaper. Everyone say *rough*.

> **Children:** *Rough.*

> **Ms. Smith:** The other word we will learn is *smooth*. Smooth means an even surface. When I touch something *smooth*, my hand easily slides over it. *Smooth* is the opposite of *rough*. Here is a *smooth* rock. I can easily slide my hand over it. Everyone will have a chance to touch this *smooth* rock. Everyone say *smooth*.

> **Children:** *Smooth*.

Connect to Expository Book: Cold, Crunchy, Colorful: Using Our Senses

Ms. Smith reads the book *Cold, Crunchy, Colorful: Using Our Senses* by Jane Brocket to the class during whole-group circle time. As she reads, the class discusses *splashing* water, *crunchy* pretzels, and *grainy* sand. At the end the class tries to name all five senses and tell which senses they are using at that exact moment.

Play-Based Interactions With Teacher Guidance: Eye Exam Center

Ms. Smith prepares the dramatic play area as an eye doctor's office. The area includes a large eye chart, different pairs of eyeglass frames, doctor lab coat, patient forms, diagram of the eye, clipboards, and a chair for the patient. Children are encouraged to take turns being the patient, the eye doctor (optometrist), and the optician (person that helps patient select frames).

After allowing the children to play independently, Ms. Smith joins the children in the center. Her goal is to incorporate vision words in her interactions with the children, while supporting their initiations within the play. The questions she asks will depend on how the play evolves and on the language skills of the children. Remember, the goal is not to turn this into a teacher-led lesson but to incorporate prompts into the natural flow of the play.

Some of her conversation starters might include the following:

- Tell me what type of glasses the patient needs.
- Tell me what type of frames you would like to purchase.
- Tell me about a time when you saw bright lights.
- Tell me about a time when it was gloomy outside.

If the child has difficulty engaging in conversation with the target vocabulary, Ms. Smith scaffolds with additional simple questions like the ones below. These questions elicit choice responses and then Ms. Smith comments on the choice the child made. Ms. Smith's comments model both the key vocabulary and more advanced expressive language.

- Are the letters on the chart *fuzzy* or *clear*?
- Is the picture *colorful* or *drab*?
- Do you like the *square* frames or the *oval* frames?
- Are your eyes *blue* or *brown*?
- Can you see the *bigger* or *smaller* letters better?
- Tell me what letters on the chart you were able to see.
- Tell me what colors you like best.

One child says, "I want pink frames." Ms. Smith then asks, "What shape would you like those frames to be?" After the child says, "Circle," Ms. Smith takes the opportunity to model new words by saying, "Oh, I bet this oval pair of frames would be flattering. They are a little like the circle shape."

Teacher Directed Small Group Activity: Odd One Out

Ms. Smith's goal is to help a small group of children learn how to describe objects in their environment by some of the features that those objects share. In this example the features focus on the Five Senses theme: taste, texture, sound, color, and smell. (Other versions of this activity might focus on the categories that objects belong to, such as vehicles, insects, or mammals.) To achieve this goal, Ms. Smith selects nouns from the network of words and implements the Odd One Out activity. To keep this activity

engaging yet brief, Ms. Smith begins with a review of one or two senses that she will focus on and a review of the most relevant sensory vocabulary words, such as smooth or loud. She then selects four to five questions to complete the activity, with a plan to ask others on a different day. For example:

> **Ms. Smith**: I'm going to say four words, and you tell me which one does not belong with the others. Listen. Which one does not belong with the others in the same category: *seashells*, *pinecones*, *sandpaper*, *silk*?"

> **Children:** *Silk*.

> **Ms. Smith:** Why not?

> **Children:** *Silk* feels smooth, not rough.

Notice how Ms. Smith followed up her initial choice question with "Why not?" This is a *key* part of the activity because it helps children connect their choices to the feature or categories under discussion and provides them with an important opportunity to describe their thinking in their own words. For a Five Senses theme, Ms. Smith could use the same format just described with some or all of the examples in table 10.

Table 10: Odd One Out

Words	Why the bold word does not belong
Touch	
quarter, rock, screw, **cotton ball**	feels soft, not hard
aluminum foil, **sandpaper**, plastic spoon, piece of silk	feels rough, not smooth
Hear	
whisper, drum, whistle, fire alarm	sounds quiet, not loud
mouse, **helicopter**, library, squirrel	sounds loud, not quiet
fireworks, sirens, thunder, **hum**	sounds low and dull, not loud
Taste	
jelly beans, candy bar, **hamburger**, chocolate chip cookies	tastes salty/savory, not sweet
potato chips, **birthday cake**, popcorn, nachos	tastes sweet, not salty
lime, lemonade, vinegar, **blueberries**	tastes sweet, not sour
Smell	
roses, perfume, candle, **skunk**	smells unpleasant, not pleasant
trash in the garbage can, **cookies in the oven**, dirty clothes, rotten eggs	smells pleasant, not unpleasant
bacon frying, popcorn popping, freshly mowed grass, **gasoline for the car**	smells pleasant, not unpleasant
See	
sky, tomatoes, apples, fire engine	blue not red
elephant, rhinoceros, **ladybug**, giraffe	small not big

End of Day Review of Vocabulary Words

As the children prepare to dismiss for the day, Ms. Smith takes another opportunity to reinforce vocabulary. She prompts children to talk about items they touched that are rough and smooth. She prompts the children to tell her what they heard today, tasted today, smelled today, saw today, and touched today. When needed, she models answers first. Examples might include:

- I heard friends laughing.
- I tasted sweet animal crackers at snack.
- I smelled fragrant flowers on the playground.
- I saw friends playing optometrist.
- I touched rough sandpaper during circle time.

Considerations for English Learner Students and Students With Disabilities

This section describes general principles and strategies for English learner students and students with disabilities. These children may need more time to practice with teacher feedback, more explicit instruction, or another modified strategy. All children, including and perhaps especially English learner students and students with disabilities, will benefit from the instructional strategies described above. These particularly beneficial techniques include the implicit and explicit vocabulary instruction that actively engages children in using and talking about new words, the use of visuals and gestures to support understanding, the intentional use of scaffolding and wait time, and the focus on repeated exposures to new words.

For all children, and especially English learner students and students with disabilities, it is important to differentiate instruction. **Differentiating instruction** is matching instruction to meet each child's different needs and abilities.[65] Because vocabulary knowledge varies widely across children, you should strive to provide appropriate instruction to individual children. Providing effective differentiated instruction for English learner students and students with disabilities may require a team approach to capitalize on the expertise of educators who speak other languages, special educators, speech language pathologists, and other educators involved in early childhood.[66]

English Learner Students

English learner students experience diverse instructional contexts. Some may be in a dual-language environment where adults and peers speak their first language and English. In these classrooms robust vocabulary instruction as described in this Module may take place in both languages. In other cases a child may be the only person in the classroom environment who speaks a particular first language. The suggestions below are designed to support English language development in all classroom contexts.

The language skills of young English learner students are highly individualized. Some children have more advanced language and vocabulary knowledge in their first language than in English, while other children's skills may be more balanced or even better developed in English. In addition, children may know words related to some topic areas in their first language, but words connected to other topics areas in English, especially topics they learned about in the school environment.

This diversity of language skill is one reason why differentiating instruction is so important when working with children learning more than one language. Remember, for these children, as for all young children, some words may be entirely new. They need to learn both the word label and the underlying concept. Other words are already known in the child's first language, and the child just needs the new label in English. For example, support English learner students in learning the English labels for objects and actions that are present in the daily classroom environment in order to encourage their verbal engagement during interactions with teachers and peers. For instance, *crayon, marker, draw,* and *erase* may come up often in the art center. You should support children's understanding of both types of "new" words because many children will not automatically transfer their vocabulary knowledge and learn the new labels without instruction. Also remember that vocabulary instruction for English learner students may need to incorporate all parts of speech, including, for some children, words that we may take for granted such as pronouns and number words.

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65 Kosanovich, Ladinsky, Nelson, & Torgesen, 2006.
66 Spencer et al., 2012.

Cognates

One strategy that can support some English learner students' vocabulary acquisition is a focus on **cognates**. Cognates are words in two languages that share a similar spelling, pronunciation, and meaning. The words *dinosaur* (English) and *dinosaurio* (Spanish) are examples of cognates. Children can often connect to words in their native language to figure out the meanings of English cognates. English and Spanish share a considerable number of cognate pairs. For example, *chocolate* has the same spelling and meaning and a similar pronunciation in both English and Spanish. Because English learner students do not automatically recognize and make use of cognates, you can explicitly teach children about the similar words. Select cognates that Spanish speakers likely know from their everyday Spanish use and teach them explicitly. Examples include high-frequency words in both English and Spanish, such as *animal/animal* and *family/familia*. The more familiarity you have with Spanish, the easier it is to point out these connections to children. Keep in mind, however, that for English learner students who do not speak Spanish, the use of cognates to support vocabulary instruction may be more limited. English learner students in the United States speak more than 460 languages!

Transportable Vocabulary Knowledge

Earlier this module discussed transportable vocabulary knowledge, which can be particularly useful for English learner students. Transportable words are words that connect across networks of words or contexts. Words that transport well include those that are useful to children because they are likely to be encountered often during instructional activities or while listening to books. These useful words include verbs such as *describe* and adjectives such as *encouraging*. The benefits of knowing these words apply to all children!

Students With Disabilities

Some children will arrive at preschool with articulation difficulties that make their speech less intelligible than that of their peers. Some children may have a limited vocabulary or use fewer words. Other children may have an identified speech, language, or developmental delay (for example, intellectual disability or autism spectrum disorder). For many of these children, a very important way to support their learning is to provide even more repetitions and opportunities to hear and practice using the new words you are teaching.[67]

Alternative Forms of Communication

For children who are not yet using language, you can use **augmentative and alternative forms of communication**. A child may already have a device, such as a tablet, to aid in communication. Or a speech language pathologist may help select and program a device that works for a particular child. Collaborate with the speech language pathologist to select words relevant to current classroom learning topics so that these children can be included in ongoing activities.

Visuals

If a device is not available, any type of visual that the children can point to in order to indicate their thoughts can be helpful. Search the internet for visuals, such as pictures that depict vocabulary words from your network, then print or display them.

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67   Gray, 2004.

Adjusting Tasks

You can further individualize adaptations for children with more limited expressive language skills by **adjusting tasks** from expressive to receptive. For example, instead of asking a child to name each picture, ask the child to point to the picture of the nose or point to the picture of what we use to smell things. Children with more limited expressive language skills can sort visual images or three-dimensional objects into categories (such as all the vegetables versus all the dairy foods, or animals that live in the ocean) or can select them in response to a question about word meaning ("Which picture shows someone who just ate something that tasted delicious?"). Activities such as these provide children opportunities to demonstrate their understanding while also being exposed to repeated models of new vocabulary words.

Additional Resources

Additional, evidence-based instructional resources and articles can enhance your vocabulary instruction and extend your knowledge of effective early childhood instruction. The resources and articles in this section were free and readily available when this document was finalized.

Vocabulary Instructional Resources

- *Voluntary Prekindergarten Learning Center Activities* developed by a team of teachers and researchers at the Florida Center for Reading Research: Language and Vocabulary
  https://fcrr.org/student-center-activities/pre-kindergarten

  - Language and Vocabulary/Word Knowledge/Synonyms: Another Word
    https://fcrr.org/sites/g/files/upcbnu2836/files/media/PDFs/student_center_activities/vpk_language_and_vocabulary/LV6-1_color.pdf

  - Language and Vocabulary/Word Meaning Relationships/Describe and Drive
    https://fcrr.org/sites/g/files/upcbnu2836/files/media/PDFs/student_center_activities/vpk_language_and_vocabulary/LV9-1_color.pdf

  - Language and Vocabulary/Word Categorization/Category Blast Off!
    https://fcrr.org/sites/g/files/upcbnu2836/files/media/PDFs/student_center_activities/vpk_language_and_vocabulary/LV13-1_colored.pdf

- *Office of Early Learning at the Florida Department of Education* provides information and resources for early learning education.

  - *Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program Teacher Toolkit – Language and Vocabulary*
    http://flbt5.floridaearlylearning.com

- *Reading Rockets* (readingrockets.org) provides free, evidence-based resources and information about reading.

  - Dialogic Reading: An Effective Way to Read Aloud With Young Children
    https://www.readingrockets.org/article/dialogic-reading-effective-way-read-aloud-young-children

  - Taking Delight in Words: Using Oral Language to Build Young Children's Vocabularies
    http://www.readingrockets.org/article/taking-delight-words-using-oral-language-build-young-childrens-vocabularies

- *American Speech and Hearing Association* (https://www.asha.org) provides free, evidence-based resources and information about making effective communication accessible and achievable.

- Language in Brief: A summary of language
https://www.asha.org/Practice-Portal/Clinical-Topics/Spoken-Language-Disorders/Language-In--Brief/

  - Typical Speech and Language Development
  Charts include when most children reach each speech and language milestone
  https://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/chart/

- *Center on Literacy and Deafness* provides an evidence-based intervention, Foundations for Literacy, designed specifically for preschool- and kindergarten-age children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Foundations for Literacy targets vocabulary, narrative skills, alphabetic knowledge, phonological awareness, and reading decodable words and short connected text.
https://clad.education.gsu.edu/foundations-literacy-home/

Related Articles

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- Silverman, R., & Crandell, J. D. (2010). Vocabulary practices in prekindergarten and kindergarten classrooms. *Reading Research Quarterly, 45*(3), 318–340. Retrieved from http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.917.1130&rep=rep1&type=pdf

- Wasik, B. A., & Jacobi-Vessels, J. L. (2017). Word play: Scaffolding language development through child-directed play. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 45*(6), 769–776. Retrieved from https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10643-016-0827-5

Now you are ready for PLC Session 9.

<div align="center">

Activity 10

Explicit Instruction for Specific Words Lesson Plan

</div>

Directions:

1. Select a word from your network of words with weather in the center.
2. Develop a lesson to explicitly teach the word using the first table below. We will practice this during today's session.
3. Develop a second lesson using another word (using the second table) to implement with your children.

WORD_____

Instructional Routine Steps	Lesson Plan
1. Create a simple, child-friendly definition.	
2. Create questions to provide opportunities for children to say the word and/or the child-friendly definition. For example, ask, "What is a word that means really big?" (*enormous*)	
3. Engage children in active responses. Select an appropriate activity from table 8: on page 37. Describe how to implement the activity using your word.	

WORD_____

Instructional Routine Steps	Lesson Plan
1. 1. Create a simple, child-friendly definition.	
2. Create questions to provide opportunities for children to say the word and/or the child-friendly definition. For example, ask, "What is a word that means really big?" (*enormous*)	
3. Engage children in active responses. Select an appropriate activity from table 8: on page 37. Describe how to implement the activity using your word.	

Activity 11

Video-Viewing Guide for Play-Based Interactions With Teacher Guidance

Directions: Watch **Video 4: Play-based Interactions With Teacher Guidance** (https://youtu.be/93K68UIBa7w). Then answer the questions below.

Question	Answer
1. Provide specific evidence of how the teacher prepares the centers to facilitate the use of the target words.	
2. How does the teacher phrase questions or comments to prompt the child to say the target word in the answer? Provide an example.	
3. What does the teacher do to ensure each child gets multiple opportunities to use the target word?	
4. What does the teacher do when a child does not say the target word spontaneously?	
5. How does the teacher ensure that the interactions stay play-based?	
6. How do play-based interactions differ from explicit instruction?	

Activity 12
Reflect, Plan, and Implement (Self-Study)

Directions: Before our next session, complete the DO, WATCH, READ activities below.

DO	Implement the lesson plan to explicitly teach a specific word developed during this PLC session (Activity 10). Then, answer the reflection questions below.

Question	Answer
How were you able to determine child-engagement in the lesson? Describe.	
How did you incorporate the word throughout the day(s)?	
What prompted children to use the word outside of the lesson?	
What would you do differently next time?	

WATCH	**Video 5: Explicit Instruction for Specific Words** (https://youtu.be/k43FasPgojA). Then answer the questions below.

Question	Answer
Describe evidence of explicit instruction.	
How did the teacher prompt the children to say the word multiple times?	
How did the teacher keep the children actively involved to learn each word?	
Describe one example of how the teacher scaffolded instruction.	

READ	Self-Study Reading for Module 4 (Oral Language) Session 10 on pages 1–12.

Questions and comments during or after reading.	

Slides

Modules and Sessions

Module	Topic	Session	Minutes
1	Print Knowledge	1	90
		2	90
		3	60
2	Phonological Awareness	4	90
		5	90
		6	60
3	Vocabulary	7	90
		8	90
		9	60
4	Oral Language	10	90
		11	90
		12	60

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Five-Step Process for PLC Sessions

STEP 1
Debrief

STEP 2
Define and Discuss Session Goals and Content

STEP 3
Learn and Confirm

STEP 4
Collaborate and Practice

STEP 5
Reflect, Plan, and Implement

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STEP 1
Debrief

Activity 10: Plan and Implement (Self-Study)

DO
- Review Considerations for English learner students and students with disabilities. Record three strategies you have used.

WATCH
- **Video 9: Phonological Awareness and Considerations for Intensive Instruction** and record evidence of effective strategies.

READ
- Self-Study Reading for Session 7 located in the Participant Guide for Module 3: Vocabulary (Sessions 7–9).

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Activity 1: **FAQs About Vocabulary**

- Record your responses in the middle column of the table.

- We will return to this activity at the end of the Vocabulary module to compare responses.
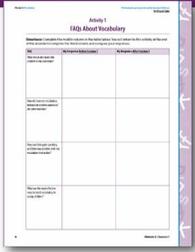
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STEP 2

**Define and Discuss
Session Goals and Content**

✓ Understand vocabulary and why it is important to teach.

✓ Understand how vocabulary is used in different contexts.

✓ Understand how language interaction contributes to vocabulary knowledge.

✓ Understand how to create and use a network of words.

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📖 **Self-Study Reading for Session 7**

- What Is Vocabulary and When Does It Develop?

- Why Is Vocabulary Important?

- How Is Vocabulary Used in Different Contexts?

- How Does Language Interaction Contribute to Vocabulary Knowledge?

- What Is a Network of Words?

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Turn and Talk

- What is vocabulary?

- When does vocabulary develop?

- Why is vocabulary important?

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What Is Vocabulary?

- Knowledge of words and word meanings including pronunciation.

- Words that make up speech (what we say) and text (what we read).

- Essential for listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Listening

Speaking

Reading

Writing

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Why Is Vocabulary Important?

- Communication: vocabulary is part of oral language.

- Reading Comprehension
  - The Simple View of Reading $\quad$ **D x LC = RC**
    - ✓ Vocabulary supports language comprehension.
    - ✓ Vocabulary supports decoding.
    - ✓ Vocabulary is directly related to reading comprehension.

- Vocabulary knowledge leads to more vocabulary knowledge.

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Vocabulary Is Included in State Standards

Look at our state's standards and notice how vocabulary is included as a key learning goal.

State Standards

Highlight key words related to vocabulary.

How Is Vocabulary Used in Different Contexts?

- **Receptive context** Words we understand when we hear or read (or listen to someone read to us).

- **Expressive context** Words we say or write.

- **Print context** As children get older and learn to read and write, they apply their receptive and expressive vocabulary to the print context. Children's print vocabulary include those words they know when reading silently or writing.

Receptive Vocabulary	Expressive Vocabulary
Listening	Speaking
Reading	Writing

Language Interaction Is Key to Learning Vocabulary

- Children need vocabulary-learning opportunities.

- Early language experiences in preschool play an important role in children's vocabulary development.

- The language that children acquire from birth through the preschool years is foundational for future vocabulary development.

The Importance of a Network of Words

- Understanding how words are learned and stored can inform how you teach vocabulary.

- Because new words are remembered and retrieved more easily when they are connected to already known words, teach words that are related to each other and to a larger topic of interest.

STEP 3

Learn and Confirm

Activity 2: **Building a Network of Words**

1. Use your knowledge and the provided texts to determine two to five **concepts** that children will learn about weather.
2. Create a **network of words** with weather as the center word.
3. Select three to five **words** to teach.
4. Brainstorm an **activity** to teach the words.

Learn and Confirm

Activity 2: **Building a Network of Words**

- **Concepts** are the building blocks of ideas. Use your knowledge and the provided texts to determine two to five concepts about weather.

- What knowledge about weather do you want children to gain at the end of the theme or unit?

Learn and Confirm

Activity 2: Building a Network of Words

- Create a network of words with weather in the center. Use the template.

- What are important words to know in order to understand the concepts about weather?

weather

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Learn and Confirm

Activity 2: Building a Network of Words

Example Concepts for Weather
- Identify the four seasons and their characteristics.
- Develop an understanding of the water cycle.
- Identify extreme weather conditions.
- Observe the weather to make decisions.
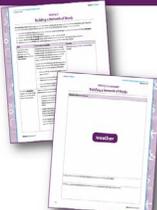
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Example Network of Words
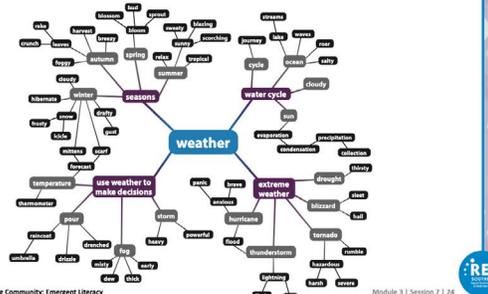
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STEP 4

Collaborate and Practice

Activity 2: Building a Network of Words

- Select three to five words that you will teach your children.

- Brainstorm ideas of an activity you could implement to teach the words you selected.

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STEP 5

Reflect, Plan, and Implement

Activity 3: Reflect

- Is there anything you learned during this session that either confirmed or contradicted what you already knew about why vocabulary is important?

- Why is it important to teach within a network of words?

- What new information or ideas do I want to add to my reflection after my discussion with my colleague?

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Reflect, Plan, and Implement

Activity 4: Plan and Implement (Self-Study)

DO
- Bring a book about weather to the next session.
- Plan and implement your vocabulary lesson.

WATCH
- **Video 1: Building a Network of Words**
  Answer the reflection questions.

READ
- Self-Study Reading for Session 8 on pages 14–25.

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We have completed
Session 7

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Professional Learning Community
EMERGENT LITERACY

Module 3: Vocabulary

Session 8

How Do Children Learn New Words, Which Words Do I Teach, and How Do I Use Dialogic Reading to Teach Vocabulary?

Professional Learning Community: Emergent Literacy

Purpose of This
Professional Learning Community (PLC)

To engage in **collaborative** learning experiences to support preschool teachers in applying **evidence-based language and literacy strategies**.

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Module 3 | Session 8 | 30

Norms For Our PLC

Cell phones on silent

Pay attention to self and others

Presume positive intentions

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Module 3 | Session 8 | 31

STEP 1
Debrief

Activity 4: **Plan and Implement (Self-Study)**

DO
- Bring a book about weather.
- Plan and implement your vocabulary lesson.

WATCH
- **Video 1: Building a Network of Words**
  Answer the reflection questions.

READ
- Self-Study Reading for Session 8 on pages 14–25.

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STEP 2
Define and Discuss
Session Goals and Content

✓ Review main ideas from Session 7.

✓ Goals for Session 8:
  ✓ Understand how children learn new words.

  ✓ Learn which words to teach by taking a closer look at building a network of words.

  ✓ Learn how to implement Dialogic Reading.

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Module 3 | Session 8 | 33

How Do Children Learn New Words?

Indirectly
- Engaging in daily oral language interactions.
  - ✓ Adult facilitates multiple turns and provides meaningful feedback.

- Listening to adults read.
  - ✓ Talk about the book, explain unfamiliar words, relate to prior knowledge

- Reading extensively.

Professional Learning Community: Emergent Literacy   Module 3 | Session 8 | 34

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How Do Children Learn New Words?

Directly
- Implement the **I Do, We Do, You Do** instructional routine.

- Use a **child-friendly definition**.

- Use the word in an **interesting sentence**.

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Which Vocabulary Words Do I Teach?

- Varied parts of speech.
  - ✓ Noun, verb, adjective, preposition, adverb

- Words that will be frequently encountered.
  - ✓ Basic, transportable, technical words

- Base words and word families.

- Words as part of networks.

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A Closer Look at Building a Network of Words

1. Theme
2. Concepts
3. Network of Words
4. Activities and Books

Word	Word	Word
Concept	Concept	Concept	Concept

Theme: Nutrition

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Theme Sort

1. Opportunities to learn vocabulary?
2. More opportunities to learn vocabulary?

All About Me
Glitter
The Five Senses
Nutrition
Turkeys
Insects
Pumpkins
Stickers

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STEP 3

Learn and Confirm

Activity 5: Review My Network of Words

With a partner, review the network of words you developed in Activity 2:

• Are there any concepts that you want to change or add?

• What do you notice about the parts of speech? Is there anything you might change?

• What do you notice about basic, transportable, and technical words? Is there anything you might change?

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What is Dialogic Reading?

An evidence-based strategy to enhance vocabulary and oral language skills through repeated, interactive book readings with small groups of children.

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Planning for Dialogic Reading

• Implement with small groups (six children maximum) over five days.

• Select a book.
  • Rich, engaging pictures that accurately depict identifiable objects.
  • Large, colorful, and varied illustrations.
  • Represent key words from your network of words and varied parts of speech.

• Select pictures that represent words that are new to children and prepare child-friendly definitions.

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Defining Texture

Dictionary Definition
The visual and especially tactile quality of a surface.

Child-Friendly Definition
The way something looks or feels. The top of this table has a smooth texture. This sandpaper has a rough texture.

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The Five Sessions of Dialogic Reading

Session 1 Read the Book

Session 2 Teach New Words

Session 3 Continue to Teach New Words

Session 4 Ask Open-Ended Questions and Expand Child Responses

Session 5 Discuss Narrative, Conceptual, and Personal Connections

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Sessions 2 and 3 of Dialogic Reading:
Teach New Words

1. Remind the children that you already read the book and that you will now talk about the pictures.

2. Point to specific, identifiable objects/actions and ask "What" or "Who" (and sometimes "Where") questions.

3. Follow-up with questions about color, shape, purpose, manner of acting, or function of the pictured objects and actions.

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Session 4 of Dialogic Reading: Ask Open-Ended Questions and Expand Child Responses

- Continue to ask labeling questions while adding **open-ended questions**.
  - What do you see on this page? Tell me more about _____.

- Respond using **repetitions** by simply repeating the child's answer.

- Respond using **expansions** by adding a few additional words to the child's response.
  - Child: Bird is flying. Teacher: The bird is flying in the sky.

- **Model multiword statements** that include new vocabulary and descriptive words.
  - I notice that there is an airplane soaring above the family, what do you notice?

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Session 5 of Dialogic Reading: Discuss Narrative, Conceptual, and Personal Connections

- Ask questions that relate to the story plot. *What happened first? What happened at the end?*

- Ask questions that relate to knowledge of the concept depicted in the book. *The family had apples that look delicious. Where do you think the family got those apples? Where do apples come from?*

- Ask questions related to children's personal experiences. *Have you been on a picnic? Can you describe it?*

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Dialogic Reading Prompts: PEER

- **P**rompt the child to say something about the book. *What is this? (while pointing to the blanket) Child says, "Blanket."*

- **E**valuate the child's response. *That's right!*

- **E**xpand the child's response by rephrasing and adding information to it. *It's a blue picnic blanket.*

- **R**epeat the prompt to make sure the child has learned from the expansion. *What is this?*

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Dialogic Reading Prompts: CROWD

- **C**ompletion: Ask child to complete a sentence or a phrase. *While pointing the airplane say, "This is a _____."*
- **R**ecall: Ask about details of what you read. *Who was flying in the airplane?*
- **O**pen-ended: Ask about a picture in the book. *What is happening in this picture?*
- **W:** Ask *wh* questions that begin with Who, What, Where, When or Why. *What is this? Why would you use this?*
- **D**istancing: Ask about something from the book that relates to a child's life. *When grandma visited last month, how did she get here? What did she tell us about her airplane ride?*

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Sequential Layering of Question Prompts for Dialogic Reading

Session 5 – Discuss Narrative, Conceptual, and Personal Connections
What happens next?
How would that make you feel?
What happens at the end?
Tell us about a time when _____.

Session 4 – Ask Open-Ended Questions and Expand Child Response
What do you see on this page? What is going on here? What else do you see? Tell me more.
Example 1: If the child says, 'There are the three bears,' the teacher can expand with, 'Yes, there are the three bears sitting on chairs.'
Example 2: If the child says, 'Car,' the teacher can expand with, 'The fast red car.'

Sessions 2 and 3 – Teach New Words
What is this?   What do we use it for?
What color is it?   What is he/she doing?
What shape is it?

Session 1 – Read the Book

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STEP 4
🛠 Collaborate and Practice

Activity 6: **Determine Vocabulary Words and Questions for Dialogic Reading**

Work in pairs:
- Use the provided picture to determine vocabulary words to teach and different types of Dialogic Reading questions to ask while referencing the picture.

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Collaborate and Practice

Activity 7: Video-Viewing Guide for Dialogic Reading

▶ Video 2: Dialogic Reading With Narrative Text

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Collaborate and Practice

Activity 8: Dialogic Reading Lesson Plan

• Use the book you brought based on the theme, weather.

• Complete the Dialogic Reading Lesson Plan.

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STEP 5 **Reflect, Plan, and Implement**

Activity 9: Reflect, Plan, and Implement (Self-Study)

DO • Implement the Dialogic Reading lesson you planned. Answer the reflection questions.

WATCH • Video 3: Dialogic Reading With Expository Text
Answer the reflection questions.

READ • Self-Study Reading for Session 9 on pages 35–50.
• Optional: One resource of your choice from the Additional Resources section.

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We have completed
Session 8

Professional Learning Community: Emergent Literacy

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Professional Learning Community
EMERGENT LITERACY

Module 3: Vocabulary

Session 9

More Ways to Teach Vocabulary, Considerations for English Learner Students and Students With Disabilities, and Additional Resources

IES Institute of Education Sciences

Professional Learning Community: Emergent Literacy

Purpose of This
Professional Learning Community (PLC)

To engage in **collaborative** learning experiences to support preschool teachers in applying **evidence-based language and literacy strategies**.

Professional Learning Community: Emergent Literacy

Module 3 | Session 9 | 60

Norms For Our PLC

Cell phones on silent

Pay attention to self and others

Presume positive intentions

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STEP 1

Debrief

Activity 9: Reflect, Plan, and Implement (Self-Study)

DO
- Implement the Dialogic Reading lesson you planned. Answer the reflection questions.

WATCH
- **Video 3: Dialogic Reading With Expository Text** Answer the reflection questions.

READ
- Self-Study Reading for Session 9 on pages 35–50.
- Optional: One resource from the Additional Resources section.

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STEP 2 **Define and Discuss**
Session Goals and Content

✓ Review main ideas from Sessions 7 and 8.

✓ Goals for Session 9:
  ✓ Understand how to implement explicit instruction for specific words.
  ✓ Learn how to implement play-based interactions with teacher guidance.
  ✓ Learn about considerations for English learner students and students with disabilities.

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STEP 3   **Learn and Confirm**

Explicit Instruction for Specific Words

• Intentional planning and delivery.

• Systematic following of a scope and sequence.

• Repetition and cumulative review.

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To Explicitly Teach a Word…

• Plan brief, engaging instructional activities that provide information about the word's meaning.

• Use consistent instructional language to introduce the word, provide opportunities for children to say the word, and make connections between the word and everyday experiences.

• Provide repeated opportunities for children to use the word in a variety of contexts.

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Instructional Routine To Explicitly Teach a Word

1. Create a simple, child-friendly definition.
    Enormous means really big.

2. Provide opportunities for children to say the word.
    What is a word that means really big?

3. Engage children in active responses.
    When I show you a picture, put your thumb up if you think it is enormous. Put your thumb down if you don't think it is enormous.

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Tips to Create Child-Friendly Definitions

• Use familiar words to explain the target word.

• Use a sentence that *describes* the target word and includes words like *someone or something.*
  • Ecstatic is when someone is very happy.
  • A spatula is like a spoon with a long handle. It is used for mixing food together or scraping food away from the side of a bowl.

• Use familiar synonyms: enormous means big.

• Use familiar antonyms: loud is not quiet.

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Child-Friendly Definition or Not?

Consume
• To destroy or expend by use.
• To eat.

Predict
• To say ahead of time that something will happen.
• To declare or tell in advance.

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Word Knowledge Activities

Activity 2: Building a Network of Words from Session 7

1. Review pages 37–40. Circle two to four activities that are new to you and that you'd like to implement in your classroom.

2. Discuss with a shoulder partner.
   • Which words from your network of words are appropriate for the activities you circled? Why?

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STEP 4

Collaborate and Practice

Activity 10: Explicit Instruction for Specific Words Lesson Plan

1. Select two words from your network of words (Activity 2) that you will teach explicitly.

2. Use the lesson plan templates to create a lesson for each word. For #3, select an appropriate activity from table 8 on pages 37–40.

3. Implement one lesson in a triad.

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Activity 10: Explicit Instruction for Specific Words Lesson Plan

1. Which of the three activities would be better for children that need more support? Need more of a challenge? Why?

2. Did you find that some activities would be more engaging for the word you selected? Why?

3. Would any of the three activities require more advanced planning than others?

4. How would you incorporate the word you taught throughout the day?

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Play-Based Interactions With Teacher Guidance

- Primarily child-directed but includes teacher-initiated learning.
- Helps children make sense of the world by increasing their engagement and directing their attention and exploration.
- Shapes and guides children's vocabulary through models, questions, and comments during child-directed play.

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Planning Play-Based Interactions With Teacher Guidance

1. Determine which words from your network you want to target.

2. Enhance the classroom environment with specific props or activities to trigger the target words.

3. Through your interactions and conversations, support children's learning by embedding opportunities to learn new ideas and words, while playing.

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Conversational Strategies to Scaffold Children's Language

• Ask questions that invite extended responses.

• Provide meaningful feedback.

• Introduce new vocabulary words.

• Use wait time effectively by silently counting to 10 before responding.

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Activity 11: **Video-Viewing Guide for Play-Based Interactions With Teacher Guidance**

▶ **Video 4: Play-Based Interactions With Teacher Guidance**

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Vocabulary in Action: Ms. Smith's Classroom

1. Highlight an example of a child-friendly definition.
2. How did Mrs. Smith connect a read-aloud to the classroom theme?
3. Highlight examples of play-based interactions with teacher guidance?
4. What is the goal of the teacher directed small group activity: Odd One Out?
5. How does Mrs. Smith incorporate review of the words throughout the day?

Professional Learning Community: Emergent Literacy

Module 3 | Session 9 | 76

Considerations for English Learner Students

- Differentiated instruction.

- Cognates *(for example, doctor* in English and *doctor* in Spanish).

- Transportable words.

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Module 3 | Session 9 | 77

Considerations for Students With Disabilities

Describe to a shoulder partner how you use or plan to use any or all of these strategies:

- Alternative forms of communication

- Visuals

- Adjusting tasks

Professional Learning Community: Emergent Literacy

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Revisit Questions From Session 7

Activity 1: **FAQs About Vocabulary**

• Record your responses in the third column.

• How did your responses change from Session 7?

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STEP 5

Reflect, Plan, and Implement

Activity 12: **Reflect, Plan, and Implement (Self-Study)**

DO • Implement a lesson plan to explicitly teach a word. Answer the reflection questions.

WATCH • **Video 5: Explicit Instruction for Specific Words** and answer the reflection questions.

READ • Self-Study Reading for Session 10 located in the Participant Guide for Module 4: Oral Language (Sessions 10–12).

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We have completed

Session 9

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Reproducible Materials

Examples of Networks of Words From Session 7 (Hear)

Examples of Networks of Words From Session 7 (Weather)

weather

seasons
- spring
  - bloom
    - bud
    - blossom
    - sprout
- autumn
  - harvest
  - rake
  - leaves
    - crunch
  - breezy
  - foggy
- winter
  - cloudy
  - hibernate
  - snow
    - frosty
    - icicle
  - drafty
  - gust
  - scarf
  - mittens
- summer
  - sunny
    - sweaty
    - blazing
    - scorching
  - relax
  - tropical

water cycle
- cycle
  - journey
- ocean
  - streams
  - lake
  - waves
  - roar
  - salty
- sun
  - cloudy
  - evaporation
  - condensation
  - precipitation
  - collection

use weather to make decisions
- temperature
  - thermometer
- forecast
- pour
  - raincoat
    - umbrella
  - drizzle
  - drenched
- fog
  - misty
  - dew
  - thick
  - early
- storm
  - heavy
  - powerful

extreme weather
- drought
  - thirsty
- blizzard
  - sleet
  - hail
- tornado
  - rumble
  - hazardous
    - harsh
    - severe
- hurricane
  - anxious
    - panic
    - brave
  - flood
- thunderstorm
  - lightning
    - flash
    - bolt

Planning Play-Based Interactions With Teacher Guidance

Theme	
Week Of	
Explicitly Taught Target Words	

Weekly Center Planning for Play-Based Interactions with Teacher Guidance

Plan the activities for each center in your classroom in the table below. What vocabulary words will be reinforced during these activities? How will you ensure those words are reinforced?

Center	Activity
Art	
Blocks	
Science	
Writing	
Dramatic Play	

Remember to use wait time when a child responds. After initiating conversation, count to ten in your mind. This allows children time to think about words they need to express their ideas. Appropriate wait time sends the message that what the child says is important.

Session 9:

Planning Play-Based Interactions with Teacher Guidance (continued)

Weekly Plan for Play-Based Interactions with Teacher Guidance

- Child: Determine which children need vocabulary review. Match your feedback to each child's language skills by adjusting your questions to be simpler or more complex.
- Target Words: Plan the list of potential target words that you will use with the children.
- Location or Center: Determine the location where interactions may occur.
- Conversation Starters: Think of ways to initiate a conversation using the target words.
- Potential Feedback: Consider feedback you will give to extend the conversation.
- Network Words to Introduce: List other words that could be introduced during these play-based interactions.

Child	Target Words	Location or Center	Conversation Starters	Potential Feedback	Network Words to Introduce
Sam Smith	*weather* *seasons* *chilly* *windy* *rainbow*	*outside / playground* *art center*	I see you are wearing a jacket today. Why did you wear a jacket today? I see you are making a rainbow. When do rainbows appear?	It is chilly today. What season are we in for it to be chilly? Rainbows do appear after the rain. In what time of year, do we get the most rain?	*breeze* *spring* *summer* *fall / autumn* *winter*

Vocabulary: Key Instructional Practices

Vocabulary: Knowing words and word meanings. Expressive vocabulary refers to words a child says or produces. Receptive vocabulary refers to words a child hears and understands.

Lexical Knowledge and Network of Words: Knowing about words and about the relationships among words. Building a Network of Words guides vocabulary instruction.

1. Select a theme, or topic area, in which to teach.
2. Determine 2–5 concepts children will learn about selected theme.
3. Create a network of words using the theme.
4. Select 3–5 words from the network of words to teach.

Child-Friendly Definition: Using familiar words and language to explain a word.

Explicitly Teach Vocabulary

1. Create a simple, child-friendly definition.
2. Provide opportunities for children to say and use the word.
3. Engage children in active responses.

Dialogic Reading: Repeated, interactive book readings with small groups that follows this instructional routine:

- Session 1: Read the book.
- Sessions 2 and 3: Teach new words.
- Session 4: Ask open-ended questions and expand child responses.
- Session 5: Discuss narrative, conceptual, and personal connections.

Play-Based Interactions: A type of interaction where play is primarily child-directed, but includes teacher-initiated learning.

1. Ask questions that invite extended responses.
   "What are you making to eat?"
2. Provide meaningful feedback (ask questions, use synonyms, define words).
3. Make explicit connections.
4. Introduce new vocabulary words.
5. Use wait time effectively.

Glossary

Active response is an opportunity for children to be actively engaged, verbally or nonverbally. For example, say "I'm going to show you a picture. Hold your thumb up if you think it is enormous. Hold your thumb down if you don't think it is enormous."

Adjusting tasks from expressive to receptive is a way to individualize adaptations for children with more limited expressive language skills.

Asking questions is an important part of play-based interactions. Begin by simply asking the child to describe what he or she is doing. When you ask a question, listen closely to the child's response. Ask questions about the child's knowledge of vocabulary in the context of the activity.

Augmentative and alternative forms of communication is an umbrella term that encompasses the communication methods used to supplement or replace speech or writing for those with impairments in the production or comprehension of spoken or written language. Augmentative and alternative communication can be unaided or aided, using objects or devices.

Basic words are words that typically do not have multiple meanings. They can be high-frequency words and include nouns, verbs, or adjectives (for example, *in, table, walk, happy*).

Child-friendly definition is the use of familiar words to explain a target word (for example, ecstatic is when someone is very happy). A child-friendly definition is not a dictionary definition.

Cognates are words in two languages that share a similar spelling, pronunciation, and meaning. The words *dinosaur* (English) and *dinosaurio* (Spanish) are examples of cognates.

Connected text includes words in sentences, phrases, and paragraphs (as opposed to words in isolation as in a list).

Dialogic Reading is an evidence-based strategy to enhance vocabulary and oral language skills through recurrent, interactive book readings with small groups of children. During story reading the teacher/parent asks questions, adds information, and prompts students in order to increase the sophistication of their responses by allowing them to expand on their utterances.

Differentiated instruction is matching instruction to meet each child's needs abilities.

Emergent literacy includes the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are developmental precursors to conventional forms of reading and writing.

Expansion is a scaffolding technique in which the teacher provides a few additional words based on a child's response.

Explicit instruction is teacher-led, interactive instruction where the teacher makes the children aware of the skill or concepts being studied, provides guided practice with feedback, and allows children to engage in independent and cumulative review.

Expressive vocabulary are words we can produce to communicate, either orally or in writing.

Lexical knowledge is information known about words and about the relations among words.

Network of words is an interconnected web of words. Networks of words help us more quickly remember and recall words that are associated with the same topic. They also help us readily learn new words that connect to established networks.

Oral language is the system of words and word combinations used to communicate with others through speaking and listening. We use oral language to express and comprehend knowledge, ideas, and feelings.

Play-based interactions with teacher guidance is when play is primarily child directed but includes teacher-initiated learning.

Receptive vocabulary is the words that we understand when we hear or read them.

Repetition is a scaffolding technique in which the teacher reinforces the child's response by simply repeating the child's answer.

Scope and sequence is a "road map," or overview, of instruction that shows the full range of content (scope) to be taught and the order (sequence) in which the content is taught.

Simple View of Reading is presented by reading comprehension (RC) equals the product of decoding (D) and language comprehension (LC), or D x LC = RC.

Systematic instruction is carefully thought out, builds on prior learning, and moves from the simple to the complex. The planning of instruction takes place before activities and lessons are implemented.

Technical words are words that important for a specific topic but do not occur frequently across different contexts.

Transportable words are advanced vocabulary words that connect across networks of words or contexts. Words that transport well include those that are likely to be encountered often during instructional activities or while listening to books being read aloud.

Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings. It includes the words that make up speech (what we say) and text (what we read and write).

Word gap is the difference in vocabulary-learning opportunities among children.

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