

Who Is Responsible for Teaching Vocabulary?

Every teacher is responsible.



Vocabulary instruction should be an integral part of all instruction because every discipline has a specialized vocabulary.

Vocabulary instruction may begin with the major concepts or "big ideas" of the content, but it should also be expanded to include words identified from:

- Literature in texts
- Class discussions
- Videos and newspapers
- Other information sources

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How Can Vocabulary Development Strengthen Comprehension and Memory?



When Students:

- Relate the content/words by experiencing it, by visualizing it, and by using other sensory experiences
- Represent words by brainstorming, identifying associations, comparing/contrasting words, structured mapping, visual organizers, drawing, writing about the words or using them in conversations.
- Reason with words/concepts by developing their definitions, identifying cluster associations, classifying words, discussing words, acting them out, using them in creative writing.

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What Are the Challenges for the Teacher?

- Model word associations by teaching the meanings in a variety of ways—using similar words, stating explanations in a variety of ways, and using "tell, show and do" methods of teaching.
- Provide vocabulary instruction using word clusters and involving students in associations and classifications.
- Use visuals and graphic organizers—teacher examples and student-created examples.
- Post important words on the walls or using other means to keep the words before the students.
- Use word journals where students identify unknown words, write their definitions and illustrations on a regular basis.
- Review and reinforce words on a regular basis.
- Include writing activities in which students use the vocabulary words.
- Provide multiple sources or contexts for encountering new words.
- Use clear images or concrete objects, either visual or auditory or both.
- Include authentic opportunities that require active participation for students to use words being studied.
- Integrate oral and written language across all content areas and throughout the whole day.

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