



Building Vocabulary for Reading Success, Grades K-3

Course Description

Building Vocabulary for Reading Success, is an interactive, online, and in-person professional development course designed for teachers of grades K-3. The seven sessions of the course focus on building students' vocabularies and word-learning strategies. Large vocabularies and a store of strategies for learning new words are essential elements for reading comprehension.

- **Session 1** discusses the role vocabulary plays in primary-grade students' reading success, provides a brief overview of language history and structures and how they affect vocabulary instruction, and details the various kinds of vocabularies that must be developed in students.
- **Sessions 2 and 3** examine key influences on vocabulary development and discuss vocabulary monitoring and assessment.
- **Sessions 4, 5, and 6** provide research-based techniques for vocabulary instruction. Session 4 focuses on direct, explicit instructional strategies for building vocabulary. Session 5 discusses independent word-learning strategies. Session 6 provides information about how to teach "academic," or content-area vocabulary.
- **Session 7** focuses on building vocabularies for English language learners.

Lesson plans and classroom resources support all online sessions. The plans and resources ensure that the course content can be seamlessly integrated into classroom reading programs or subject-specific curriculum.

Course Objectives

On completing this course, you will be able to:

- Understand the strong relationship between vocabulary size and depth and reading comprehension.
- Use research-based instructional methods to build first- and second-language learners' vocabularies and knowledge of word-learning strategies.
- Select appropriate words from both literature and content areas for instruction.
- Use explicit and implicit means of vocabulary instruction appropriately.
- Select and use a variety of appropriate and engaging books that will support students' continued vocabulary development.
- Select and use developmentally appropriate methods for monitoring and assessing vocabulary development and use results to differentiate instruction.
- Model the use of rich, complex vocabulary and encourage and influence students' interest in and use of words for lifelong vocabulary growth for students.

Course Outline

1. Understanding Words for Reading Success

- 1.1 Why Vocabulary Matters
- 1.2 Understanding Language: An Essential for Vocabulary Instruction
- 1.3 Understanding Students' Different Levels of Word Knowledge

2. Understanding Key Influences on Vocabulary Growth and Development

- 2.1 Vocabulary Development and Its Key Indicators
- 2.2 Characteristics of Proficient Word Learners
- 2.3 Identifying Vocabulary Levels and Monitoring Growth
- 2.4 Screening to Establish Student Profiles

3 Assessing Vocabulary Needs to Differentiate Instruction

- 3.1 Classroom-Based Assessments
- 3.2 Assessing Content-Area Reading Vocabularies
- 3.3 Implementing Ongoing Assessment to Monitor Growth
- 3.4 Using Assessment Results to Plan for Instruction

4 Direct, Explicit Vocabulary Instruction

- 4.1 Teaching New Vocabulary: When and Why
- 4.2 Assessing the Vocabulary Demands of Texts
- 4.3 Word Selection for Explicit Teaching
- 4.4 Presenting and Practicing Words
- 4.5 Introducing New Words
- 4.6 Creating In-Depth Word Knowledge and Productive Levels of Word Usage

5 Student Strategies for Independent Word Learning

- 5.1 The Importance of Independent Word Learning
- 5.2 Strategies That Support Students' Independent Vocabulary Growth
- 5.3 Promoting Incidental Learning of New Words
- 5.4 Fostering the Development of Word Consciousness

6 Teaching Content and Academic Words

- 6.1 Academic Vocabulary: The Benchmark for Success
- 6.2 Choosing Words for Instruction
- 6.3 Effective Strategies for Teaching Academic Vocabulary

7 Building Vocabularies for English Language Learners

- 7.1 Building Oral language to Support English Language Learners' Reading
- 7.2 Building on Students' First Language Vocabulary
- 7.3 Adapting Instruction to Address the Needs of English Language Learners
- 7.4 Recognizing and Including Families and Cultures
- 7.5 Course Wrap-up

Building Vocabulary for Reading Success, K-3
Scientifically Based Reading Research

All content in *Building Vocabulary for Reading Success, K-3*, is grounded in scientifically based research.

COURSE RESEARCH BASE	COURSE IMPLEMENTATION
Session 1	
<p>1.1 Vocabulary knowledge is related to reading comprehension, intelligence, content area knowledge, and reasoning (Stahl, 1999).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In this session leading experts in reading and vocabulary explain the role of vocabulary development in reading and academic achievement. ✓ Best practice videos depict teachers encouraging students to understand and apply concepts such as using words in content areas.
<p>1.2 What is missing for many children who master phonics but don't comprehend well is vocabulary, the words they need to know in order to understand what they're reading. Thus vocabulary is the "missing link" in reading/language/instruction in our school system (Biemiller, 2001).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This session offers methods to help students master vocabulary in whole-class, small-group, partner and individual vocabulary instruction.
<p>1.3 No matter what subjects teachers are teaching, no matter what materials they are covering, they must give some attention to language every single day and on each and every subject which is being taught (Wong-Fillmore, 2001).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This lesson features everyday strategies that focus on the features of language that can be used to develop work knowledge.
<p>1.4 Differences in work-knowledge levels begin to appear early in children's lives and is related largely to the amount and richness of language to which the children are exposed in their homes and communities. The existence of this "language gap" emphasizes the importance of providing all children with more vocabulary-building activities from their earliest days of school (e.g., Hart & Risley, 1995).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This session speaks in-depth about the difference between oral vocabulary and reading vocabulary, and an informative RedTV reinforces the distinction between the two. ✓ This session discusses how teachers can incorporate a variety of vocabulary-building activities into daily classroom routines.

Session 2	
2.1 Word learning is incremental; this is, it proceeds in a series of steps (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2002).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In this session, experts break down the ways that we understand words and pinpoints classroom practices to promote work learning.
2.2 The high rates of vocabulary growth seen in many children occur only through immersion in massive amounts of rich written and oral language (Nagy & Scott, 2000).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This session describes how to create a classroom environment conducive to improving vocabulary knowledge through increasing exposure to words and provides downloadable lists of words as resources.
2.3 The best solution to the problem of reading failure is to allocate resources for early identification and prevention (Torgensen, 1998).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Experts present evidence supporting the importance of identifying the vocabulary level of each student and tracking individual student growth. ✓ Experts emphasize the need to tailor instruction based on individual student progress and this session provides practical methods of monitoring student growth to inform instruction.
2.4 The primary purpose of screening is the early identification of students who need additional instructional intervention. Identification is not enough, however. Screening is only valuable when it is followed with appropriate instructional interventions that are designed to help students achieve specific learning goals (Kame'enui et al., 2002).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ RedTV provides ways to gauge students' vocabulary development against others', to access vocabulary demands in the classroom, and to document development over time. The strategies shown help teachers identify students who are functioning at the struggling, on-target, and proficient levels of vocabulary development.
Session 3	
3.1 Using more than a single measure of vocabulary is critical for sound evaluation (National Reading Panel, 2000).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Experts discuss the importance of using methods other than standardized tests to identify problems in reading achievement.

<p>3.2 What is central to word-learning assessment is a process, such as thinking aloud or self-evaluation, that reveals students' metacognitive thinking (Blachowica & Fisher, 2002).</p>	<p>✓ RedTV focuses on easy-to-use classroom assessment tools, such as “yes-no” and cloze tests, classifying, sorting, writing assignments, and observation. A four-step process to assess background knowledge is outlined and can be easily employed as an assessment tool.</p>
<p>3.3 The most valuable kinds of assessments are those that help both students and teachers. Students benefit from consistent feedback about their progress since it allows them to set goals and to maintain motivation. Teachers benefit from knowing what is working so that class time can be spent on tasks that appropriately challenge students (Curtis & Longo, 2001).</p>	<p>✓ The online course explains several ways to implement ongoing assessments and to review methods in order to assure continuous development.</p>
<p>3.4 Students will make greater gains if instruction and assessment are integrally related (Pelegrino, Chudowsky, & Glaser, 2001).</p>	<p>✓ Practical classroom strategies for tracking student growth are described, as well as methods of tailoring instruction based on assessment results.</p>
<p>Session 4</p>	
<p>4.1 Comprehension of text depends crucially on knowledge of specific words that may not be familiar to some students (Nagy, 1988).</p>	<p>✓ Experts emphasize the importance of explicit vocabulary instruction, particularly for English language learners and students with limited exposure to academic English.</p>
<p>4.2 Approximately 150,000 words appear in the school texts students use from kindergarten through college (Zeno et al., 1995).</p>	<p>✓ RedTV explains three techniques for developing vocabulary words that merit explicit instruction- using read alouds, reading practice, and independent practice.</p>
<p>4.3 Given that students are learning vocabulary in subject areas as well as in language arts and reading lessons, teachers need some basis for limiting the number of words to teach so that students will have opportunities to learn some words well (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002).</p>	<p>✓ This session offers guidelines for selecting words for explicit instruction.</p> <p>✓ RedTV shows practical demonstrations of teachers using strategies to help students gain understanding of important vocabulary.</p>
<p>4.4 For students to incorporate new words into their vocabulary base, they must continue to use the words after initial</p>	<p>✓ RedTV shows methods for explicitly teaching new words, such as teaching words individually in specific contexts</p>

instruction (e.g., Beck, Perfetti, & McKeown, 1983).	and teaching words in groups based on share attributes.
4.5 In a successful vocabulary program, words do not appear as part of a classroom exercise and then drop from sight (McKeown & Beck, 2003).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Downloadable resources help students reinforce and retain their knowledge of words. ✓ Best practice videos in RedTV serve as models for instruction before and during reading.
4.6 One of the strongest findings about vocabulary instruction, whether direct instruction or learning words from context, is that multiple exposures are required before a word is really known (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The online course describes easy-to-use methods to make the vocabulary instruction fun and varied. A wealth of ideas from charades to pictionary can be seamlessly integrated into classroom routines.
Session 5	
5.1 Research indicates that independent word learning accounts for the greatest proportion-in the neighborhood of 80 percent-of the words a student acquires throughout schooling (e.g., Baker, Simmons, & Kame'enui, 1998; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998; Nagy & Anderson, 1984).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The online course discusses ways to create multiple, varied opportunities in the classroom for students to independently learn words.
5.2 If students have the task of learning tens of thousands of words and we can only teach them a few hundred words a year, then they have to do a lot of word learning on their own (Graves, 2000).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ RedTV best practice videos demonstrate ways to help students develop skillful independent word learning strategies, particularly through the use of dictionaries, morphology, and context.
5.3 If most vocabulary is acquired incidentally, then the only opportunities for students to acquire new word meanings occur when they are exposed to new words in oral or written language that is outside their existing vocabulary (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The online session encourages the use of read-alouds and independent reading to expose students to new words and to foster opportunities for students to master such vocabulary.

<p>5.4 Fostering word consciousness is something to be achieved across the elementary school years and beyond, but it is something that needs to start kindergarten and be kindled each year children are in school (Graves, 2002).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ RedTV suggests ways to instill a love of words, as students become word watchers, use figures of speech, develop word plays, and note relationships among words.
Session 6	
<p>6.1 A large portion of vocabulary words taught directly should be derived from content-area learning materials both to help readers deal with specific reading materials that contain the content-related information and to provide them with vocabulary that they will encounter sufficiently often to make the word-learning effort worthwhile (National Reading Panel, 2000).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Experts discuss examples of the academic vocabulary children encounter when they read textbooks and how to understand and address the specific difficulties these words pose for children.
<p>6.2 Vocabulary words should be those that the learner will find useful in many contexts. When vocabulary items are derived from content learning materials, the learner will be better equipped to deal with specific reading matter in content areas (National Reading Panel, 2000).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The focus of this online topic is on identifying key vocabulary based on recognizing the three tiers of words, which are described in-depth.
<p>6.3 Vocabulary instruction should teach with the text rather than teaching from it. Words to be taught should match the important content of text (Tierney & Pearson, 1994).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ RedTV shows teachers how to identify the three word tiers within a content-area text. ✓ RedTV emphasized the importance of encouraging students to discuss topics in the content-area texts they are reading, as well as to explore the content, clarify concepts that may be confusing, and allow time for reviewing to ensure mastery.
Session 7	
<p>7.1 Children who are successful in acquiring English interact directly and frequently with people who know the language well. Such expert speakers not only provide access to the language, they also provide clues as to how to combine and communicate ideas, information, and intentions (Fillmore & Snow, 2000).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ An expert in the field examines the differences between first-language vocabulary development and word learning for English language learners. ELL students may have an understanding of the concepts but lack the English words for those concepts. Ways of tailoring instruction to meet the needs of the ELL students are outlined.
<p>7.2 Because large numbers of words used in academic English have Latin-based</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ RedTV gives an in-depth definition of cognates and provides opportunities

<p>roots that are common to both English and Spanish, directly teaching English/Spanish cognates can help Spanish-first students shift the emphasis of learning English from the problems of being a Spanish speaker to the benefits of knowing the Spanish language (e.g., Bravo, Hiebert, & Pearson, 2005).</p>	<p>for teachers to test their own knowledge of cognates and the typical struggles for students when they encounter them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Downloadable resources are provided for students to practice identifying cognates.
<p>7.3 Students have a great advantage when they read words like ancient and enormous and are able to understand them because of their Spanish cognates anciano and enorme. However ELLs and their teachers should be aware that some words appear to be related but are not. The English word pie (a dessert) and the Spanish word pie (a foot) are examples of such false cognates. (e.g. Garcia, G. E., & Nagy, W. E. 1993)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ RedTV shows teachers working with English language learners in defining and identifying cognates.
<p>7.4 Parents can have a positive effect on their children’s learning and school achievement through a supportive home environment and by serving as confident, successful learner models. We believe that successful family literacy is achieved through being sensitive to the social, linguistic, and cultural context of families. (Project FLAME, University of Illinois, Chicago 2003).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ RedTV provides ideas to send home for parents to use to continue children’s literacy development. ✓ Downloadable resources support the strategies for encouraging literacy development provided in RedTV.
<p>7.5 Our words are life-long companions. When you work with your students in vocabulary instruction, you give them a tremendous legacy. The words and word-learning strategies you help your children learn today will be tools that they use and apply for the rest of their lives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The online course provides in-class demonstrations, varied opportunities to test knowledge, and a multitude of relevant downloadable resources to assist both teachers and students in developing children’s word knowledge vocabulary.

Building Vocabulary for Reading Success, K-3
Professional Development Course Hours

Description	Estimated Time	Participation Hours
Self-paced instruction includes the relevant reading research base. Participation in interactive simulations for practice of research-based strategies. Video modeling by teachers.	1 hour per session plus additional time to revisit concepts and key activities for ongoing practice.	7
Reflection on learned and applied skills; sharing of ideas and student work; lesson planning; facilitator modeling, in-person instruction and in-class coaching.	2 hours x 4 workshops; 3 hours in-class coaching	11
Personal journal writing in response to session-specific topics and prompts.	10 minutes per session (Excluding Course Introduction – Session 1)	1
Collaborative discussions with colleagues and advice/feedback from reading specialist.	10 minutes per session (Excluding Course Introduction – Session 1)	1
Relevant articles to read study and connect to learning and classroom application.	1 hour per session	7
Print and review online resources (lesson plans, management tools, graphic organizers, etc.) – for planning and application in classroom.	1 hour per session	7
Preparation for application of learned skills and strategies utilizing tested lesson plans and student resources	1 hour per strategy; 1 strategy per week	7
Preparation and presentation of course learning.	1 hour	1
Setting goals and incorporating into Professional Improvement Plan.	1 hours	1
Review online correlations to standards and reading programs. Use online correlations in preparing lesson plans for classroom application.	2 hours	2
Total Hours		45