

THE
10

Build Vocabulary

THE 10 series offers a multi-faceted approach to building vocabulary knowledge, focusing on students learning two types of words that are essential for reading comprehension. Content-area words are defined in context within each high-interest book.

In addition, the Teaching Cards list and give context sentences for five words per book that students can use and apply across subject areas. Knowing these words helps students converse more broadly about topics in various subjects as well as comprehend different kinds of texts they encounter. The goal is for students to build a rich lexicon of words that they can draw upon in varied contexts. Flexibly use the routine below for direct vocabulary instruction of these words. (See Feldman, K. & Kinsella, K. (2005) *Narrowing the language gap: The case for explicit vocabulary instruction*. Scholastic Professional Paper. New York: Scholastic, Inc.)

Include as many of these as apply in your modeling:

1. **Pronounce the word.** Involve students in repeating the correct pronunciation several times.
2. **Convey the meaning of the word.** Present the meaning clearly in everyday language students can understand. Use the context sentences on the Teaching Card and expand, refine, or recast them in your own words if needed. Give students a synonym or known phrase so they make the connection with their prior knowledge. Antonyms are also useful. For instance, suppose you are preteaching the word *shattered*. Relay the meaning on the Teaching Card: badly damaged or ruined. Bring out that this can mean something literally broken into many tiny pieces or that someone's belief or hope has been destroyed. Synonyms include smashed, crushed, broken. Antonyms include fixed, mended, repaired.
3. **Give examples and non-examples**, using the word in sentences that refer to a variety of contexts. For instance, suppose you are working with the word *credible*. Give example sentences such as: I thought the witness was very credible because he had seen the entire crime and had a great memory for details. Or, The discovery that the world was round was the first credible explanation of why boats didn't fall off the edge. Then give non-example sentences such as: I didn't find his excuse very credible that he was late because the dog ate his clock.
4. **Elaborate word meanings** by having students work with the words in various ways.
 - Have them generate example sentences of their own.
 - Students can create "word squares" that include definitions, characteristics, non-examples, and examples.
 - Have students create a symbol or sketch to help them remember the meaning of the word.
 - Put the word and its antonym at opposite ends of a line and fill it in with words that fall within a continuum of meaning. For instance the word *doubtful* would fall between credible and incredible, closer to incredible.
5. **Assess** student knowledge with tasks that demonstrate their understanding, such as answering focused questions, for instance: Which would you find formidable when swimming, low tide or giant waves? Generative tasks, such as having students create example sentences, can provide you with a nuanced evaluation of student understanding.