

Engaging the Reluctant Reader

Vocabulary Module

By: ReLeah Lent

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary Overview

This module provides participants with a working definition of vocabulary and outlines skills that are needed by readers for increased vocabulary. In addition, instructional practices and strategies are infused throughout the module to guide teachers in helping their students attain proficient reading skills. Participants should be seated in groups to facilitate dialogue and encourage collaborative learning.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Research conducted over the past several years has shown that vocabulary is the “single most important factor contributing to reading comprehension” (Billmeyer, Barton, p.19). It is an essential component of all learning in content area subjects, especially since so many vocabulary terms involve *concepts* rather than simple definitions. The dictionary or thesaurus will not be much help in providing students with a deep understanding of *prejudice*, for example, or *terrorism*. Students must have in-depth vocabulary instruction, meaning instruction that takes students beyond defining words in isolation. According to Beck, McKeown, and Kucan in their book *Bringing Words to Life*, “By “rich” instruction, we mean instruction that goes beyond definitional information to get students actively involved in using and thinking about word meanings and creating many associations among words”(p. 73). In other words, vocabulary should be seen as word study, a type of word immersion where students pay attention to words and the way they are used.

For years, many teachers delivered vocabulary through a process similar to the following: provide students with a list of words (sometimes, but not always, related to the area of study), have them look the words up in a dictionary, and test students by way of a pen and paper test. We now know that such a practice will not significantly increase vocabulary skills. Students must develop strategies that will help them learn concepts, apply concepts and see the connections between these concepts. Rote memorization does not help students build connections.

The goal of vocabulary instruction for students, especially for adult learners, is to develop strategies that will help them facilitate vocabulary study in all areas of their lives, allowing them unlock the meaning of new words they encounter in text. As students come to see word study as a lifelong practice instead of the means for passing a test, they will become better readers, writers, and thinkers.

TRAINING WORKSHOP PROCEDURES

This Comprehension Module may be presented in two formats:

- Half Day (3-4 hours)
- Full Day (6+ hours)

For either training the following materials and equipment will be needed:

- Vocabulary PowerPoint Presentation on CD or loaded onto hard drive
- Computer with Microsoft PowerPoint program
- Screen for PowerPoint presentation
- Flip Chart with Markers
- Copies of handout materials included in this training manual (see below)

Printed Materials:

- Copy of PowerPoint with presentation dialogue for the presenter
- PowerPoint handout with note-taking space provided for each trainee
- Copies of Handout Materials:
 - Handout # 1 Vocabulary Prediction Guide
 - Handout # 2 How I Learn New Words
 - Handout # 3 Effective Vocabulary Study
 - Handout # 4 New Vocabulary – Do you Know It?
 - Handout # 5 Vocabulary Log
 - Handout # 6 A Closer Look at Everyday Natural Learning
 - Handout # 7 How Do You Unravel Meanings?
 - Handout # 8 Where the Sea Used to Be
 - Handout # 9 What if You Just Don't Know the Word?
 - Handout # 10 List-Group-Label
 - Handout # 11 Open-Ended Concept Map
 - Handout # 12 Shades of Meaning
 - Handout #13 Word Analysis
 - Handout #14 Sensory Language Chart
 - Handout #15 Ways to Reinforce Vocabulary Development

VOCABULARY MODULE AGENDA

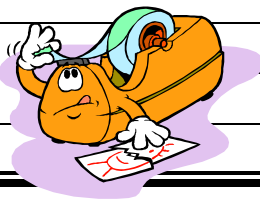
Segment 1	.....Introduction: What Do We Know About Vocabulary?	30 minutes
Segment 2	.....Vocabulary Instruction for All Adult Learners.....	15 minutes
Segment 3	.....Increasing Vocabulary Before Reading.....	30 minutes
Segment 4	.....Vocabulary Instruction During Reading.....	45 minutes
Segment 5	.....Practices that Support Vocabulary Instruction	45 minutes
Segment 6	.....Vocabulary Reinforcement After Reading.....	10 minutes
Segment 7	.....Conclusion	5 minutes

This workshop can be extended to a full day by having participants bring content area textbooks and create vocabulary instructional practices for students by utilizing the handouts provided. Content area teachers should work together in groups and share with whole group at the end of the session.

NOTES



A series of horizontal lines for writing notes, starting below the title and ending above the cartoon character.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Cambourne, B. 1995. "Toward Educationally Relevant Theory of Literacy Learning: Twenty Years of Inquiry." *The Reading Teacher* 49 (November): 182-190
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