



**Vocabulary Development  
for  
English Language Learners**  
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**Vocabulary is...**

**the ability to understand  
words and their meanings.**

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**Vocabulary is...**

**also the ability to use words  
across many contexts.**

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## Research

**Vocabulary is an area where ELLs lag behind their peers.**

English-language learners do well acquiring word-level skills like decoding.

The majority of ELLs with reading difficulties struggle with text level skills such as: fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and writing.

(National Literacy Panel, 2006)



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## Research

- Many ELLs arrive at school with a more limited English vocabulary than English-speaking students.
  - ELLs may lack labels in English for concepts they know and have labels for in their first language.
  - ELLs and English speakers may have different concepts for the same label.
  - ELLs may have labels and basic knowledge of concepts but lack the depth of conceptual knowledge required for academic success.



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## Selecting Appropriate Words

- It is important to know a student's level of proficiency in the native language and English.
- Students may know the concept and the word in native language but, not in English.
- Many words in English are common words used in Spanish so, learning cognates can be helpful.
- Sixty percent of the English language is derived from Latin and thus learning word parts or morphemes is a word learning strategy that is helpful for English learners .



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## Strategies for Vocabulary Instruction

- Tier 1 words are described as common, basic, every day words.
- Tier 2 words are academic words used in texts across multiple contexts.
- Tier 3 words are academic words that are discipline specific and very narrow in their usage.

(Beck, McKeown and Kucan, 2002)

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### Examples

Tier 1	Tier 2
big	gigantic
tasty	delicious
happy	content
Tier 1	Tier 2
grande	gigantesco
rico	delicioso
feliz	contento

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## Multiple meanings of the word run




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## What Does it Mean to Know a Word?

- A student's maximum level of reading comprehension is determined by his or her knowledge of words. This word knowledge allows students to comprehend text.
- Knowing a word does not mean simply knowing its definition. Knowing a word means knowing about the word and its usage as well as how to build on this knowledge to learn about additional words.

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## Successful Vocabulary Instruction

### Steps for Explicit Instruction

- Say and write the word
- Provide definitions (with familiar terms)
- Discuss what is known about the word
- Provide examples (and non-examples)
- Engage in extended discussions/activities with the word
- Create sentences with the word

August et al., 2005

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## Successful Vocabulary Instruction

### Steps for Explicit Instruction

- Say and write the word. Have students repeat and pronounce the word.  
gigantic      delicious      content
- Provide definitions (with simple terms)  
Gigantic means something or someone is very big.  
Delicious means something tastes very good.  
Content means happy.
- Discuss what is known about the word
- Provide examples (and non-examples)
- Engage in extended discussions/activities with the word
- Create sentences with the word and provide sentence starters when necessary

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EXAMPLES		NON-EXAMPLES	
			
			
			
			

**gigantic**

**delicious**

**content**

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**Engage in extended discussions with the word:**

- Do you think a turtle is *gigantic*? Why or why not?
- Do you think spinach is *delicious*? Why or why not?
- Do you think the girl is *content*? Why or why not?

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**Create sentences with the word:**

- The ball is *gigantic*.
- The food is *delicious*.
- The girl is *content*.




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## Receptive and Expressive Vocabulary

- Introduction of Theme and Cognates
- Components of Language and Vocabulary Instruction
- Divergent Naming
- Verbal Fluency
- Rapid Automatic Naming
- Describing
- Divergent Naming
- Convergent Naming

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## Receptive and Expressive Vocabulary

- Introduction of Themes
- Examples may include transportation, health, school life, foods, hobbies, sports, shapes, colors, math, science, and social studies.
- Many words are cognates and can be used during instruction.
- Cognates are words that are similar in spelling and meaning across languages.

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## Examples of Cognates

- Transportation Theme

Spanish	English
auto	auto
tractor	tractor
tren	train
canoa	canoe
helicóptero	helicopter

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### Components of Language for Vocabulary Instruction

- Phonology  
(Examples include knowledge of sounds within words)
- Semantics/Morphology  
(Examples include understanding word meaning, its synonyms, antonyms and knowledge of word parts)
- Grammar  
(Examples include understanding word's part of speech)
- Pragmatics/Use  
(Examples include understanding formal and informal use, idioms and sayings)
- Orthography  
(Examples include letter and spelling pattern knowledge)

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### Cross-Language Example

- The word is canoe in English. Say the word.
- The word in Spanish is canoa.
- How many syllables are in the Spanish word? How many are in the English word.
- How many morphemes or meaning units? One. Let's discuss the meaning of the word canoe. Let's describe and compare and contrast it with a ship.
- Is the word a noun? Can it be used as a verb?
- Can you use the word in a sentence?
- Can you describe the similarities and differences in the spelling of canoe in English and Spanish?

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### Verbal Fluency

- Each student is given 60 seconds
- The teacher names a category
- The student names as many items as he or she can
- An adult should be able to name 15 items
- A young child should name 6-8 items
- Teach word retrieval plans
- Provide exercise in native and second language



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## RAPID AUTOMATIC NAMING

Research demonstrates that Rapid Automatic Naming skills are linked to successful and fluent readers. English Learners can practice in native language and English.

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## Rapid Automatic Naming

1	5	8	7	6	4
4	8	5	6	7	1
5	4	6	8	1	7
6	1	7	5	8	4
8	6	1	4	7	5

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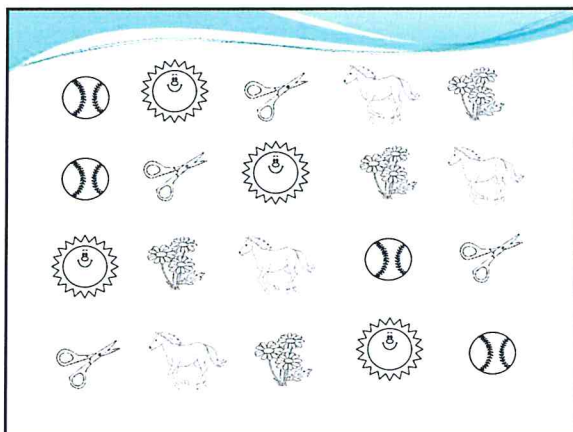
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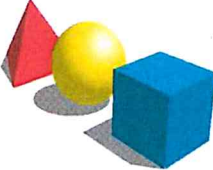
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## Describing

- Name
- Categorize
- Shape, Feel, Size, Color
- Make a Simile
- Make a comparison




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## Divergent Naming

- Divergent naming is the ability to generate many words that are related to a general topic.
- Ex: Name as many animals as you can
- Ex: Name as many sports as you can
- Ex: Name as many foods as you can




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## Convergent Naming

- Convergent naming is the ability to synthesize
- The teacher names three related items which are considered the parts
- The student synthesizes and names the whole
- Ex: eyes, nose, lips = face




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## Some Spanish Prefixes and their English Correlations

Spanish Prefixes	Meaning	English Prefixes	Meaning
anti-	contra	anti-	against
ex-	afuera de	ex-	outside of
extra-	más	extra-	above
in-	no	in-	not
inter-	entre	inter-	between
multi-	mucho	multi-	many

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## Some Spanish Roots and their English Correlations

Spanish Roots	Meaning	English Roots	Meaning
audi	oír	audi	to hear
auto	solo	auto	by itself
fin	final	fin	final
fono	sonido	phono	sound
graf	escribir	graph	written
kilo	mil	kilo	one thousand

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## Spanish Suffixes and their English Correlations

Spanish Suffixes	Meaning	English Suffixes	Meaning
-ista	alguien que	-ist	one who
-itis	inflamación	-itis	inflammation
-ivo	causa de	-ive	causing
-lento	en relación de	-lent	related to
-oso	lleno de	-ous	full of
-sión	estado de	-sion	state of being

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It is important to make the connections and apply the knowledge from the native language to the second language.

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### Affix Deck

<b>-able</b> (able to) adorable (capaz de) adorable	<b>anti-</b> (against) antifreeze (contra) anticongelante
<b>audi</b> (to hear) audiophones (oir) audífonos	<b>bi-</b> (two) bilingual (dos) bilingüe
<b>-ción</b> (state of) celebration (estado de) celebración	<b>ex-</b> (outside of) export (afuera de) exportar

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### Picture Cards




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## Vocabulary

Introduce new words and use  
graphic organizers to  
explore word meanings and  
determine the relationship to  
other words

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## Graphic Organizer

Definition:

Word in native language:  
Word in English:

Synonyms:

Antonyms:

Sentences:

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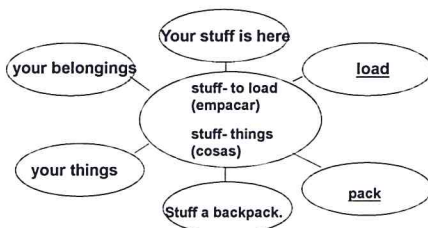
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stuff

noun/verb



Can you stuff the clothes in your bag? My stuff is missing.

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## Vocabulary Notebook

VOCABULARY NOTEBOOK

PREFIX \_\_\_\_\_ ROOT \_\_\_\_\_ SUFFIX \_\_\_\_\_

KEYWORD: \_\_\_\_\_

MEANING: \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER WORDS: \_\_\_\_\_

SENTENCE: \_\_\_\_\_

CUADERNO DE VOCABULARIO

PREFIJO \_\_\_\_\_ RAÍZ \_\_\_\_\_ SUFIJO \_\_\_\_\_

PALABRA CLAVE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNIFICADO: \_\_\_\_\_

OTRAS PALABRAS: \_\_\_\_\_

ORACIÓN: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Student Glossaries

Word	Usage	Picture	Word in Native Language
Miracle	It's a <i>miracle</i> to see a flower blooming.		Milagro
Ancestor	This is a picture of someone's <i>ancestors</i> .		Antecesor
Marvelous	The island is a <i>marvelous</i> place to visit.		Maravilloso

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## Language Strategies for Mastering Academic English

• **Using description**

- Characteristics
- Locations
- Dimensions

• **Asking and answering questions**

- What
- When
- Where
- Who
- Why

• **Signal words**

- **Sequence**
  - After, before, finally, now, then, while, etc.
- **Restatement or synonym**
  - Also, for example, just as, too, etc.
- **Contrast and compare**
  - Like, similar to, etc.
  - But, unlike, yet, etc.

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## Additional Tool: Sentence Starters

- Help students with limited English language skills "get started" on a response.
- Teacher models appropriate academic language structure by starting a sentence that students will finish.
  - I think the word means \_\_\_\_\_
  - When I listen to the word, it reminds me of \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_
  - Some other words that are similar in meaning are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

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## SUMMARY



- English learners do not learn words with one simple encounter.
- English learners need much practice with words.
- English learners need various facets of information about a word.
- They also need to integrate a new word into their existing knowledge.

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## The Language-Literacy Connection

When teachers have a strong understanding of the essential language systems and the development of vocabulary....

...they can apply this knowledge to instruction....

... so students have more opportunities to become proficient in language and in literacy.

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## Wrap-Up



- English language learners can benefit from explicit vocabulary instruction that will assist them in applying their word knowledge in the primary language for the development of second language vocabulary.
- It is necessary for instructors to have knowledge of the shared and unshared components of the two languages in order to provide English language learners with sufficient opportunities to develop their language and literacy skills.

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