

Note of the Week

Five Ways to Build Students' Vocabulary



Helping students build a rich vocabulary isn't always on the top of educators' priority list. However, the recent New York Times article "[Language-Gap Study Bolsters a Push for Pre-K](#)" expresses the need for language development in early childhood and elementary school education. Children who build a rich, extensive vocabulary are often able to think more critically, express themselves better and learn new things more quickly.

Building vocabulary goes beyond memorizing a list of words and their definitions; it's about using language to effectively describe feelings, express intentions and understand the ideas of others.

Here are five [research-tested ways](#) to build students' vocabulary:

- **Read to them.** Children can learn new words from books being read aloud to them. Choose a variety of books to read, such as storybooks, information books and magazines, to introduce new words.
- **Encourage students to read.** Research shows that children who read more tend to have richer vocabularies. Fill your program with interesting books and stories that will challenge and improve students' vocabularies.
- **Engage them in rich oral language.** Listening and participating in high-level conversations are more ways students learn new words. Involve them in rich, meaningful conversations whenever possible.
- **Teach important words.** When necessary, introduce new words that will deepen understanding of the unit, text or situation at hand. Select the word carefully and consider its relevance and usefulness.
- **Relate new words to known words.**
- This helps students to better understand the concept around a word to figure out word meanings.

For more information, visit teacher.scholastic.com

For vocabulary building games, visit <http://www.vocabulary.co.il/vocabulary-building-games/>