Module 5: Developing Vocabulary

Module Description

This module starts by taking a look at the research on how students develop vocabulary. Through the lens of development, we look at vocabulary, its language components, and how it contributes to reading comprehension. We explore the language demands inherent in learning vocabulary and the challenges it poses for English Learners.

We then explore the meaning of academic language and see how it differs from social language. Next, we turn our attention to the types of vocabulary instruction and explore direct and indirect ways of teaching vocabulary.

Our dive into direct vocabulary instruction begins with how words are chosen for instruction in Selecting Words for Explicit Instruction. In this subsection, we also review the three tiers of words and three criteria for selecting words for explicit vocabulary instruction and practice selecting words to teach.

The subsection Explicit and Direct Vocabulary Instruction provides an introduction to the importance of direct vocabulary instruction and presents a six-step instructional routine for explicitly teaching vocabulary. We study the types of morphemes and how they help students unlock the meaning of words in the subsection Supporting Vocabulary Development.

We then review what teachers can do every day from bell to bell to increase vocabulary. We examine strategies such as how sentence stems and semantic gradients can be used to clarify word meanings to make learning permanent. Additionally, we turn our attention to what it really means to know a word, as a deep and multifaceted understanding of a word is a crucial facet of vocabulary knowledge.

Finally, we look at independent strategies for acquiring vocabulary through morphemic analysis, context clues, and independent reading.

*Note for educators who took the K–3 Building a Strong Foundation: Developing Early Literacy Skills training: Content additions are embedded throughout the new K–12 Building a Strong Foundation for Lifelong Literacy Success course, including the addition of examples, videos, and resources. The text in green font indicates where significant updates have been made.

Module Objectives

In this module, participants will learn the following:
- Understand the progression of skills needed for students to develop a rich vocabulary.
- Define and identify environmental and cultural factors that are causally related to vocabulary

growth.
- Understand the relationship between vocabulary and comprehension.
- Understand how students learn words through direct instruction, indirect instruction, and independent word-learning strategies.
- Learn to link explicit instruction in prefixes, roots, and suffixes to build knowledge of word meaning.
- Learn how to select appropriate words to teach.
- Learn a direct six-step approach to teaching vocabulary.
- Learn varied techniques for vocabulary instruction before, during, and after reading.
- Understand how to help students acquire deep word meaning by presenting the many facets of word knowledge.
- Explore the challenges of struggling adolescent readers.
- Learn how to assess vocabulary growth.

Module Outline

Section 1: Introduction

Introduction

Welcome to Developing Vocabulary! This module is the fifth of six online modules in Colorado's Building a Strong Foundation for Lifelong Literacy Success, a professional learning series aimed at supporting teachers' efforts to promote reading achievement in kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Here are the modules in this course:
- Module 1: Understanding the Science of Reading
- Module 2: Building Oral Language and Phonology
- Module 3: Exploring Phonics and Word Study
- Module 4: Creating Fluent Readers
- Module 5: Developing Vocabulary
- Module 6: Increasing Reading Comprehension

Pre-Assessment

Section 2: Introduction to Vocabulary Development

Section Overview

In this section, we will start by reviewing the Simple View of Reading, Scarborough's Reading Rope, and research on how students develop vocabulary. We will look at the connections between the foundational skills, oral language and vocabulary development, and the relationship between vocabulary and comprehension. We will explore the role early oral language development plays in reading success well into the upper grades. Next, we will look at vocabulary and its connection to

language components and comprehension, as well as language demands inherent in the ELA Standards and the challenges for English Learners. We will also look at characteristics of successful and struggling readers. We will then explore the meaning of academic language and see how it differs from social language. In the second subsection, we look at the connections between vocabulary and language.

Reviewing the Simple View of Reading and Scarborough's Reading Rope for Language Comprehension
This subsection begins with an introduction to vocabulary by reviewing Scarborough's Reading Rope model and how it relates to vocabulary. Then you will learn about how vocabulary knowledge is acquired and the role foundational skills and oral language play in vocabulary development and comprehension.

Vocabulary and Language Connections
This subsection starts with a multimedia presentation that provides an introduction to vocabulary and the connection between oral and written language and considers the demands of the standards on our English Learners. Then you will watch a video with Dr. Diane August that explores the needs of EL students. This subsection explains the differences between academic and social language, as well as the characteristics of successful readers and struggling readers in the area of vocabulary. It also briefly addresses the challenges of adolescent learners with low vocabulary skills.

Check for Understanding

Section 3: Effective Vocabulary Instruction

Section Overview
This section focuses on direct and explicit vocabulary instruction. It first reviews the types of vocabulary and what vocabulary instruction should look like in the classroom. The section then reveals how teachers determine specific words to directly teach and offers a six-step process for directly teaching words. It next explores morphemes and their importance to helping students unlock meaning. It provides guidance on how to directly instruct students in the use of morphemes and specifies activities such as word webs to reinforce the learning and to provide students with the ability to independently figure out words they do not know in the text. Finally, we look at the use of sentence stems to reinforce vocabulary and look at before, during, and after strategies for creating readers.

Types of Vocabulary Instruction
This subsection provides an introduction to how students acquire new words and the importance and meaning of direct and explicit vocabulary instruction, indirect vocabulary instruction, and independent word learning strategies. An article, "Vocabulary Development for English Learners," is also included for your review.

Three Tiers of Words

This subsection teaches how to select words to teach by understanding the three tiers of words and how frequently the word can be used, whether it can be used across multiple domains, and how useful the word would be in discussions and in writing. You will watch a multimedia presentation and review literature to determine what words you would select to teach.

Introduction to Explicit and Direct Vocabulary Instruction

In this subsection, you will gain an understanding of how vocabulary influences comprehension and that teaching vocabulary is most effective when direct and connected to text. You will watch a video to look for explicit vocabulary instruction. Then you will have an opportunity to test your knowledge of the six steps of vocabulary instruction and apply it while watching a video, looking for specific steps of the instructional routine.

Developing Vocabulary: Instructional Implications from Research

In this subsection, you will learn about the four primary linguistic dimensions of word knowledge: pronunciation, spelling, meaning, and morpho-syntax. You will watch a video demonstrating the Lexical Quality Hypothesis and then test your knowledge of those linguistic dimensions.

Before, During, and After Vocabulary Strategies

In this subsection, you will explore evidence-based practices to reinforce words that you can teach during and after reading, giving students multiple opportunities to practice and use words. You will also view a multimedia presentation that provides information on sentence stems and how to use them for vocabulary development, then you will get to select sentence stems to go with a specific vocabulary word.

Making Connections and Integrating Prior Knowledge

In this subsection, you will learn effective strategies including teaching keyword mnemonic strategies, using word sorts, categorizing words, and using mapping techniques.

Graphic Organizers to Support Vocabulary Development

In this subsection, you will view a multimedia presentation to learn how graphic organizers can be used to support vocabulary development. Then you will have the opportunity to watch a video about using a specific graphic organizer, the Frayer Model, and complete a reflection.

Check for Understanding

Section 4: Teaching Morphemes for Meaning

Section Overview

In this section, you will take a deeper look at morphemes and their importance for vocabulary

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development and as a strategy explicitly taught to help students independently unlock the meaning of words as they read.

Morphemes

This subsection provides you with a deeper look at morphemes and their importance for vocabulary development. You will learn effective instructional practices for teaching morphemes for vocabulary development, engage in an activity that explores prefixes, suffixes, and roots, and learn how to teach words using morphemes by word families. You will see how to start with base words and use suffixes and prefixes to make new words. You will also view a multimedia presentation about using word webs for vocabulary development and view a video about morphemes being introduced in a science class.

Check for Understanding

Section 5: Multifaceted Vocabulary Knowledge

Section Overview

This section will help you understand the multifaceted aspects of word knowledge, including semantic properties, semantic features, nuances, multiple-meaning words, and figurative language such as idioms, similes, and metaphors. Understanding these allows teachers to provide deep word knowledge instruction to their students. In this section, we will explore what it really means to know a word. Words have properties and features that can determine how they are used in sentences.
In this section, you will learn ways to help students make distinctions among words and increase word knowledge through semantic gradients, semantic feature analysis, semantic maps, and look at the role that idioms and figures of speech play in vocabulary development.

Semantic Gradients

In this subsection, you will view a presentation that describes how semantic gradients can be used to help students explore the nuances of word meaning. You will have an opportunity to complete three semantic gradients, learn more about how to prepare and teach a semantic gradients lesson, and learn how to use a specific graphic organizer called a semantic feature analysis.

Idioms and Figures of Speech

In this subsection, you will make distinctions between literal and nonliteral vocabulary, learn how to teach nonliteral words, and learn how similes and metaphors are used to enhance the description.

Check for Understanding

Section 6: Supporting Vocabulary Development

Section Overview

In this module, you have learned about how students develop vocabulary, the importance of direct and explicit vocabulary instruction, and ways to reinforce vocabulary learning before, during, and after instruction. In this section, we explore indirect practices that help students acquire vocabulary, such as rich and varied oral language and print language experiences. We examine the importance of classroom language, effective Read Alouds, planning instruction, and monitoring for vocabulary growth. Finally, we look at assessing vocabulary in the classroom.

Introduction to Supporting Vocabulary Development

In this subsection, you will view a brief presentation and focus your attention on how teachers can support vocabulary development beyond the direct vocabulary lesson to teach indirect vocabulary strategies as well as independent word-learning strategies.

Rich and Varied Oral Language Experiences

In this subsection, you consider ways of developing your students' oral language and vocabulary through carefully planned interactions. You learn about how to model elevated language, use language facilitation strategies, structure discussions, and monitor students' use of rich words.

Planning for and Monitoring Vocabulary Usage

In this subsection, you learn strategies to assess your students' understanding of new vocabulary words. You are provided with examples of questions you can ask to clarify meaning and check for understanding and a template for gathering evidence of vocabulary use and how to monitor the usage of newly learned vocabulary words classwide. Then you will plan your approach to teaching vocabulary in your own classroom.

The Value of Read Alouds

In this subsection, you will read an article, "Using Read-Alouds to Help Struggling Readers Access and Comprehend Complex, Informational Text," that demonstrates how a teacher purposefully selects multiple thematically linked informational texts for use in small-group Read Alouds, and use a 3-2-1 Protocol to summarize the article. You will then learn specific steps to prepare teaching the vocabulary related to a Read Aloud, such as presenting vocabulary before reading, reviewing vocabulary during reading, and reinforcing vocabulary after reading. Finally, you will view a video and note the different ways the teacher provides multiple opportunities for students to hear, say, and understand the words.

Word Learning Strategies and Activities

In this subsection, you learn how teaching independent word meaning increases vocabulary and independent reading. You also learn how to use cognates to support English Learners.

Check for Understanding

Section 7: Assessing and Supporting Vocabulary Growth

Section Overview

In this section, you will learn about the challenges of assessing students' vocabulary. You will then explore considerations for improving classroom-based vocabulary tests, in addition to techniques that teachers can adapt to gather evidence of vocabulary knowledge and to track vocabulary growth over time. You will learn how the intricacies of word knowledge make assessment difficult, particularly with disciplinary vocabulary. Next, we address some considerations in improving teacher-made vocabulary tests, and we introduce a collection of techniques that teachers can adapt to provide evidence of student vocabulary knowledge and growth in the content areas.

Assessing and Supporting Vocabulary Growth

In this subsection, you will explore how vocabulary growth is typically assessed and cautions for assessing.

Challenges of Vocabulary Assessments

In this subsection, you discuss difficulties finding measures for vocabulary assessment and watch a video that reviews the research on assessment.

Traditional Approaches to Vocabulary Assessment

In this subsection, you will review traditional approaches to vocabulary assessment in the classroom and discuss their implications.

Less-Traditional Approaches to Vocabulary Assessment

In this subsection, you will learn about two types of less-traditional approaches to assessing vocabulary in the classroom—self-directed, and extended formats—with a variety of examples for each. You'll also read an article about vocabulary assessment, "Contemporary Classroom Vocabulary Assessment for Content Areas."

Check for Understanding

Section 8: Closing Activities

Section Overview

Section 8 includes instructions for you to put some of what you learned in the module into practice. You have learned many instructional practices.

Put It into Practice

This activity is to plan and implement a lesson using one of the graphic organizers described in this module. After implementing the lesson, you will answer guiding questions to reflect on what worked well and what you would have done differently.

Post-Assessment

Module Feedback

Module Completion