Visual Vocabulary: Engage Students with Critical Thinking Instead of Memorization

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Boys Latin Sponsor: Stephanie McKew, M.Ed.
Disclosure Statement

• Beth Lawrence and Deena Seifert are speech-language pathologists and co-founders of Communication Apptitude, Inc. They created *InferCabulary* and *WordQuations*.

• Communication Apptitude, Inc. benefits financially from sales of these products.
Welcome!

Participants will:

- Describe best practice vocabulary instruction
- Demonstrate understanding of Semantic Reasoning
- Create InferCabulary and WordQuations lessons
Importance of Vocabulary
Students who enter kindergarten with low vocabulary perform poorly academically. (Loftus et al., 2010)
For academic success, 12th graders need to know

Proctor, Silverman, Harring, & Montecillo, 2012
High-achieving 12th graders know (only 4% of students)

Eide, 2011
Why is vocabulary important?

- 2/3 of students in the U.S. struggle with reading comprehension and vocabulary is the building block for comprehension.

- Students need to understand 95-98% of the words in a given text independently to comprehend text.*

- It’s one of the 5 pillars of reading.**

*Hu & Nation, 2000
**Reading First (Title I, Part B, Subpart 1), 2000 National Reading Panel
Breadth vs. Depth

- Semantic representations for each known word (predicts comprehension) - Walley, Metsala, & Garlock, 2003

- Number of lexical entries (predicts decoding) - Ouellette & Beers, 2010
A child’s ability to learn a new word or concept with minimal exposure to it
the number of words—at any given time—an elementary/middle school student is in process of learning "deeply"

Carey & Bartlett, 1978
Vocabulary Struggles
The Problem

Using language to teach language to students who struggle with language…
Why do kids struggle?

- Kids are not reading as much or have reading disabilities
- Not everyone is using instruction that incorporates best practices
- Students have limited exposures to words in a variety of contexts
- Learning words is a neurological process
- Language disorders/learning disabilities
Vocabulary Instruction Must Emphasize

1. Active engagement
2. Multiple contexts
3. Using visuals
4. Morphology (parts of words)
5. Semantics (graphic organizers)
6. Kinesthetic (drama)
7. Repetition

Beck & McKeown, 2013
Another Best idea
## Two Vocabulary Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>InferCabulary®</th>
<th>WordQuations®</th>
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<tr>
<td>nouns and adjectives</td>
<td>verbs</td>
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<td>uses Semantic Reasoning</td>
<td>formula for determining subtle</td>
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<td>character motivation and verb</td>
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Using features of verbs to understand verb synonyms
Inspiration For WordQuations

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Examples of glance from *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry

“Her mother shook her head quickly, and glanced at the open window covered only by the sheer curtain. Annemarie understood.”

“Another man arrived: an old man, bearded. Quietly he went to the living room and sat down, saying nothing to the others, who only glanced at him.”

“Annemarie did instantly as she was told. The basket. The packet, at the bottom. She covered it with a napkin. Then some wrapped cheese. An apple. She glanced around the kitchen saw some bread and added that. The basket was full.”
Break down the synonym into an equation

\[ \text{glance} = \]

Base word + speed + degree + emotion or motive

look + quickly + short + curious hurried unimportant
Look quickly short curious

to look quickly at something because you are curious

glance
Now for a little practice
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Base Word</th>
<th>Speed</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Motive \ Emotion</th>
<th>Synonym</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>walk</td>
<td>slowly</td>
<td>gently powerfully</td>
<td>to explore Feeling relaxed</td>
<td>meander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>talk</td>
<td>quickly</td>
<td>Loudly quietly</td>
<td>worried confused oblivious</td>
<td>babble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>touch</td>
<td>slowly</td>
<td>gently powerfully</td>
<td>to comfort show love greet</td>
<td>embrace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>look</td>
<td>quickly</td>
<td>short</td>
<td>anger</td>
<td>flash</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Low tech method using sticky notes or index cards
Using Semantic Reasoning Skills to Learn Word Meanings
prudent

[prood-nt]

directive

Wise or judicious in practical affairs; sagacious; discreet or circumspect; sober

Process: Rote memorization of 11th grade words in definition to “learn” a 6th grade word

Results: Students forget definition after test
Visuals with Verbal
The Inspiration for InferCabulary®
We devised InferCabulary® as a method to avoid using language (the students’ primary weakness) as the initial method to teach vocabulary meaning for nouns, adjectives, and adverbs.
Demonstration
Copies of this presentation, handouts and research are available on

InferCabulary.com

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