



Teaching and learning update Friday 10 September 2021

KEY DATES & REMINDERS

Governing Council Meeting (Zoom) - 7pm Monday 13 September (W9)

Sports Day - Thursday 23 September (W10)

Student Enterprise Day & Casual Day - Friday 24 September (W10)

Supporting vocabulary development in children

Create and nurture 'word detectives'!

As students develop their ability to read they shift from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn'. In this shift, students begin to read lots of new and unfamiliar words. As they become older, it becomes increasingly important for students to use developed strategies to work out what a word means.

Parents need to **encourage children to be aware of when they do not understand a word** by...

- ★ Narrating and modelling when they have not understood a word - e.g. "I don't know what this word means?!", or "I Wonder what this word means?"
- ★ Stopping at the end of a page and asking the child if there were any words that they did not understand. You might have to select a couple that you think they would not know - e.g. "were there any words you didn't understand!?", "I don't know what this word means, do you!?"

You also need to **encourage a positive 'I can try and work out what this word means!' attitude** by...

- ★ Talking about the word types, including nouns (people/places/objects), verbs (doing words), adjectives (describing words) - e.g. "I don't know what this word is but I wonder what type of word it is!?" and "Oh, it's a verb, so I know it is describing what the person is doing!"
- ★ Modelling and encouraging use of 'context' to figure out the word - e.g. "I don't know what this word means but I can tell it's an action and describes what this person is doing".
- ★ Talking about word parts, for example:
 - Finding out what the 'root' of the word is - e.g. "I've never seen this word 'maleficent'. Let's look up what 'mal' means. Oh 'mal' means evil. This word must mean something about being evil."
 - Look for and talk about any prefixes (beginnings of word) or suffixes (ends of word) - e.g. "I've seen part of this word but it starts with 're-' which I know means 'do something again'".

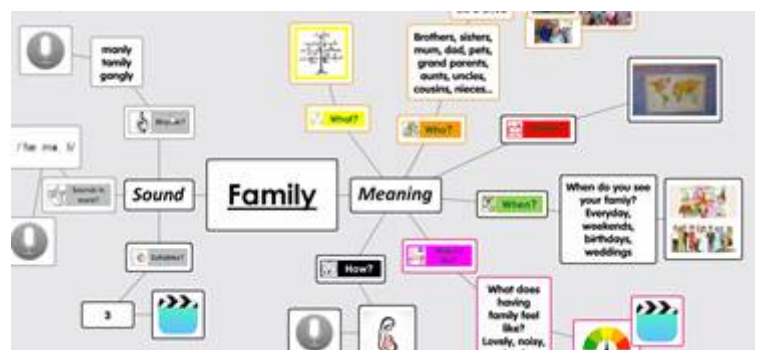
Finally, you need to reinforce a mindset and **encourage children to 'look up' new words or 'ask for help'** by...

- ★ Modelling how to look up words in an online dictionary (preferably one that has student friendly definitions such as the '*Collins Cobuild Dictionary*').
- ★ Supporting your child to understand words with multiple meanings when using this strategy - e.g. "This word has multiple meanings, I wonder which one would best suit this sentence?"

Usual visual methods for reinforcing vocabulary learning

A lot of students need to be provided with different modes of teaching so that they can best understand and remember taught content (e.g. written, visual, spoken). Vocabulary is no different, so **it's important to create visual links** by...

- ★ Creating/drawing a symbol for new words - e.g. for family drawing a stick figure family
- ★ Watching a video of someone doing an action you are teaching - e.g. watching a video or a family such as 'The Simpsons'
- ★ Creating an action for the word where possible - e.g. for family acting out a big family hug
- ★ Creating word webs of new words (you might like to do this for words you know the teacher is focussing on in the classroom)
- ★ Using the free 'Popplet' word-web application for apple/android/computer is a great way to make vocab teaching interactive
- ★ Select a target word (e.g. family) and then make a word-web and discuss the following features of the word: the sounds (e.g. rhymes, individual sounds, syllables), the meaning of the word (e.g. what does it look like/what is it made of, who, where, when, how).
- ★ The students can find pictures online or draw their own quick pictures to put into the word-web to make it more engaging, or on the iPad version can even put recordings of themselves in it for clapping out the syllables.
- ★ The student can then export this as a pdf and share this with the class or take home to their family



I hope you've enjoyed this 'crash course' in teaching vocabulary! Across the remainder of the year I will be working in a number of the classrooms to support vocabulary development including pre-teaching subject specific vocabulary and creating a 'working word wall'. Feel free to ask your teachers about this as it may give you some words that you can focus on at home!

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