Specialized Training in Early Childhood Education

June 20, 2017

Developed by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE)
in partnership with North Mississippi Education Consortium (NMEC)

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Week 1
Monday, June 19
Jill Dent
Office of Early Childhood
Mississippi Department of Education
Updates from the Office of Early Childhood
Effectiveness Evaluation Plan

Joyce Greer
Office of Early Childhood
Mississippi Department of Education
Teaching Strategies

Candice Taylor
Office of Early Childhood: Special Education
Mississippi Department of Education
Special Education Referral Process

Stacey Donaldson
Office of Professional Development
Mississippi Department of Education
National Board Certification and the Early Childhood Teacher

Tuesday, June 20
Susan Neuman
School of Education
University of Michigan
Foundations for Oral Language and Vocabulary Development

Wednesday, June 21
Nicole Briceno & Alicia Westbrook
Mississippi Early Childhood Inclusion Center
University of Southern Mississippi
Reaching and Teaching All Children in the Inclusive Classroom

Lydia Boutwell
Office of Elementary Education and Reading
Mississippi Department of Education
Early Learning Standards and Lesson Plans

Thursday, June 22
Cathy Grace
The Graduate Center for the Study of Early Learning
North Mississippi Education Consortium

*Brain Development: Grounding Our Practice*
*Read Right from the Start - The Power of Language Part I*
*Equipping the Classroom on a Shoe String Budget*

Bryan Fulton & Natalie Rapp
Kaplan Early Learning Company

*Room Arrangement*

**Friday, June 23**

Lee Anne Grace Barnes
Oxford School District
*Music/Movement*

Larry Calhoun
Office of Healthy Schools
Mississippi Department of Education
*Move to Learn*

Joyce Greer
*Office of Early Childhood*
*Mississippi Department of Education*

*Scheduling*

Monica May
Office of Early Childhood
Mississippi Department of Education
*Pre-K to Kindergarten: Transition Activities and Folders*
Week 2
Monday, June 26
Karen Ponder
Build Initiative
Alliance for Early Success
Community & Family Engagement

Gena Puckett & Monnie Vail
The Graduate Center for the Study of Early Learning
North Mississippi Education Consortium
Solar Eclipse: Lesson Planning for the Big Event

Cathy Grace
The Graduate Center for the Study of Early Learning
North Mississippi Education Consortium
Power of Language Part 2
Parent Conferences and Working with Adults in the Classroom

Tuesday, June 27
Shenikia Robinson
Atlanta Speech School
Read Right from the Start
Building Language through Meaningful Conversations

Wednesday, June 28
Sharon Boudreaux
The Autism Center of North Mississippi
Reducing Common Problem Behaviors in the Classroom

Gail Lindsey
Mississippi State University
Looking at the Classroom Environment: What Does the Research Say?

Thursday, June 29
Laura Dickson
Office of Early Childhood
Mississippi Department of Education
CLASS Overview Training

Friday, June 30
Jill Dent
Office of Early Childhood
Mississippi Department of Education
Early Learning Guidelines and Project Guidance
Gena Puckett & Monnie Vail
The Graduate Center for the Study of Early Learning
North Mississippi Education Consortium

*Technical Assistance with Projects and On-line Classes*
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Tuesday, June 20, 2017

8:30 – 10:00  Susan Neuman  
School of Education  
University of Michigan  
*Foundations for Oral Language and Vocabulary Development*

10:00 - 10:15  Break

10:15 – 12:00  *Foundations for Oral Language and Vocabulary Development* continued

12:00 - 1:00  Lunch

1:00 – 3:00  *Foundations for Oral Language and Vocabulary Development* continued

3:00 – 3:15  Break

3:15 -4:15  *Foundations for Oral Language and Vocabulary Development* continued

4:15 - 4:30  Wrap up
Getting to know you…

- Reflection on a ‘word’
- Please introduce yourself, tell us what you do.
- Give me your take on the words ‘early literacy’—what does it mean to you?
Words associated with early literacy
- Oral language
- Vocabulary
- Phonological awareness
- Alphabetics
- Listening comprehension

Oral Language and Vocabulary Development: Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Areas</th>
<th>Our focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why Words are Important</td>
<td>Research base Children’s Oral language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Rich Classroom</td>
<td>Environmental supports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Talking, playing, singing, writing, reading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Oral language development

Children learn language as they interact with responsive adults and peers and experience language use in meaningful contexts.

Vocabulary Development

- Learning new words that may be outside of everyday contexts
- Often involves a level of abstraction that is beyond the here-and-now
- Often includes ‘academically’ related words, and literacy language
Research on oral language and vocabulary

- Oral language proficiency is the single best predictor of kindergarten readiness
- The number of words children know prior to kindergarten predicts children’s success at the end of kindergarten

What We Know

- Preschool years = highest rate of vocabulary development
  (Farkas & Baron, 2004)
- Effective vocabulary intervention can even the playing field
  (Marulis & Neuman, 2013)
- Quality, quantity & responsiveness of teacher/parent talk can mediate socioeconomic status
  (Mol & Neuman, 2012)
Why Words are Important

Tip of the iceberg
Introduction:  
A Tale of Two Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Addison</th>
<th>Maci</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 years old</td>
<td>4 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hears 3 books at bedtime and throughout the day</td>
<td>Likes to look at books. Has a few around the house. Occasionally has one read to her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mom and Dad describe what they see her doing, “Addie, you just toppled your skyscraper!”</td>
<td>She hears a lot of, “Maci, play with your toys,” or “Go get that.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field trips to museums, state parks, zoos, farms, festivals in other cities</td>
<td>Dinner is usually alone, in front of the TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much family dinner conversation</td>
<td>Sometimes Maci stays with relatives in another town, but she doesn’t go on vacation or visit any place that costs to get in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacations to the beach, mountains, historical places, cities, other countries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hart & Risley (1995)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Words heard per hour</th>
<th>Words heard in a 100 hour week</th>
<th>Words heard in a 5,200 hour year</th>
<th>Words heard in 4 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Income Families</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>62,000</td>
<td>3 million</td>
<td>13 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Class Families</td>
<td>1251</td>
<td>125,000</td>
<td>6 million</td>
<td>26 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Families</td>
<td>2153</td>
<td>215,000</td>
<td>11 million</td>
<td>45 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Try this:

- **Group 1:** “Teacher, look at my picture.”
  “Oh that’s wonderful; it’s just beautiful.”

- **Group 2:** Teacher: “I see. That’s a picture of a horse. How pretty.”

- **Group 3:** Teacher: “Stop pushing him. Use your words.”

Volunteer activity

- What do you do to support children’s oral language?
Supporting oral language development

- Attention
- Respond and clarify
- Extend the conversation and encourage a return

Think About It

It’s circle time in this early childhood classroom, and the teacher is reading a favorite storybook, *Rainbow Fish and the Whale*. As she reads, she stops and points to the picture of the whale. “Look,” she says to the children, “Here’s a whale and its baby. A baby whale is called a calf,” as she continues on to the next page. The word is never repeated.
**Think about it…**

- Boys and girls, today one of our parents is visiting today. She’s a veterinarian. That means she takes care of animals. We’re going to meet some of her animals, a guinea pig, a kitten, and a ferret during her visit with us.

---

**How do children learn words?**

- They need to become ‘word conscious’
- Frequency of encounters
- Word learning needs to be connected to developing knowledge networks
Activity #1

See Activity #1 sheet

The Five Essentials
These are the 'to-do' you can do all day.
The Five Essentials

- Supportive learning environment
- Songs, rhymes, and word play
- Storybook Reading
- Developmental writing
- Literacy and play

Organizing the
A Language-Rich Environment
What’s Wrong with this Picture?

Activity #2

See activity #2 sheet
Creating cozy spots for reading
Child Related Displays
Eye to eye instruction

Take a look at this office setting. Working with a partner, talk about the ways such a setting might promote good language interactions.
The Vocabulary Dilemma

**Discuss Together:**

If students need to know about 80,000 words in order to be ready for college/careers by the end of high school and, realistically, we can only teach about 300-500 words per year – how do we get there?
Time for Reflection

Share Together:

What do you intentionally do to build children’s vocabulary?

Songs, rhymes and word play

Why are songs, rhymes, and word play such a powerful learning tool

Let’s Share!!
Songs, rhymes and word play

Activity: Share your own

- Spend a few minutes sharing your own favorite rhymes, rhythms and poems with us.
Why are they so powerful?

- Memorable
- Focus on sounds of language
- They help children develop phonological awareness
- Break down words into its constituent parts
- Build important routines for children

Shared book reading

- What are some things to think about in selecting books for children?
Things to think about

- Colors
- Illustrations
- Amount of print
- Repetitive phrases
- Children’s interests

What are Text Sets?

“Collections of different genres to support our vocabulary teaching sequence.”

“Collections of books that focus on a concept or a topic”
Text Set Progression

- Start with a predictable book
- Rhyming books
- Introduce storybooks (narratives)
- Informational books

Text Set Example: Insect Topic
Activity #3

See handout
Marine Mammals Topic
February 27-March 8, 2015

Marine Mammals: WOW Lesson

Jen's Classroom
Marine Mammals: WOW Video Clips

Pam’s Class – Watching the WOW content video clip about whales

Marine Mammals: Picture Cards

Martha’s Class – Using WOW picture cards for a small group lesson
Marine Mammals: Picture Cards

Pam’s Class – Pocket chart with WOW picture cards

Marine Mammals: Small Group

Ice water for the blubber glove experiment

Martha’s Class – Learning about blubber
Marine Mammals: Small Group Lesson

Martha’s Class – Blubber Glove Experiment

Marine Mammals: Discovery Centers

Martha’s Class – Marine Mammals have backbones; investigating bones

Serena’s Class – Sorting, feeling, & learning about camouflage
Jen’s student explaining what is and isn’t a marine mammal.

Serena’s Class – Sorting marine and non-marine animals
Marine Mammals: Discovery

Jen’s Class Exploring the Blubber Glove

Pam’s Class – Sorting sea animals, exploring how marine mammals might look and feel, and learning about camouflage
Marine Mammals: Discovery Center

Pam’s Discovery Center Areas

Marine Mammals: Arrival Work

Martha’s Class – Working in the WOW Take-Home Booklets
Marine Mammals: Written Expression

Molly’s Classroom – Depiction of a whale drawn by a student and posted in the hallway for all to enjoy

Parent involvement

WOW Refrigerator Note

WOW! We are reading and learning about matter right now. During the next several weeks you can help your child by asking them about matter and helping them discover new things about insects.

- Read the attached page with your child. Ask them to tell you something they learned about one of the things.
- Go to the library and check out some books about matter. Read the book with your child and discuss some of the information you read about.
- The kitchen is a great science lab for learning more about matter. As you are preparing meals or work in the kitchen point out to your child how matter can start out in one state, but when it gets hot or cold it can change. For example, water can change into an ice-cube when placed in the freezer. It can change back into a liquid when heated. If water is boiled, steam is formed as a gas.
- Bake a cake or something with a batter. Ask your child if the batter is a solid or a liquid. Ask them to prove it by listing the properties they see. When the batter is done baking, ask your child if the batter has changed states. Ask them to describe the properties for proof of their thinking.

Thanks!
Parent involvement

Properties of Matter Tolley Walk: FAMILY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

- Child’s Name
- Date

Talk Together:
- Ask your child questions about matter before you begin this activity.
- What are the properties of a solid?
- What are the properties of a liquid?
- How are materials special together in different states of matter?

Play Together:
- Take a piece of paper and draw three columns, labeled “solids,” “liquids,” and “gases.” Tell two children who are in different states of matter. Label each column with a label of either the liquid or solid state. If the child can’t tell which state it is, you’ll need to help them identify it.

Advantage of This Approach

It teaches words in meaningful clusters so it creates a “self-teaching device” that supports independent learning.
+ Integrating instruction

+ Fun math activities
Integrating math and literacy

How Do You Assess Vocabulary Development?

How do you know when children are progressing in vocabulary development?
Activity #4

- See activity sheet

Features of Effective Assessments

- Monitor & document children’s specific progress on standards over time
- Ensure that instruction is responsive & appropriate for children’s current levels
- Personalize instruction to meet children’s strengths and needs
Assessment Tips to Consider

- One measure can’t do it all; each measure should focus on one particular aspect of vocabulary.
- Use a game-like format.
- Use different formats to account for children’s linguistic and background diversity.
- Use measures which are simple, easy to use, and can yield quick results.

Sample: Task for Measuring Vocabulary Growth

Have students identify target words through using picture cards.

Teacher: “Point to the picture that shows the dolphin.”
“Point to the centipede.”

Sample: Task for Measuring Concept Knowledge

Simple Yes-or-No Questions

Teacher: Is a dolphin a marine mammal?
Child: Yes
Teacher: Why?
Assessing Topic Knowledge

Ask each child to draw and write about the topic. Encourage children to:

- Add details
- Label/write about drawing
- Tell about their work
  (assist children with writing down their words)

The importance of play

- Imagination
- Abstraction
- Clarification about roles and relations
- Fun
Pretend Play
Supportive learning environment

Setting up of a literacy play area

- Principles
- Definition
- Adaptation
- Familiarity

- Types of props
  - Appropriate
  - Authentic
  - Useful
Developmental Writing

- Allows children to connect sounds and letter names
- Focuses on phonological awareness – the alphabetic principle
- Combines different types of symbol-making numbers, letters, pictures
  - Writing center
The sun comes out.

I stand in the sun.
In conclusion

- We foster young children’s development when we talk, sing, and interact with them throughout the day.

- The variety of language that children experience as well as the quantity matters not just in the early years, but throughout their schooling.

In conclusion

- Nothing is more crucial than our responsiveness to what children do and say. At every opportunity, we must make a point of talking, reading, and introducing children to a steady flow of new words, concepts and knowledge!
Handout 1

1. **TRUE** Teachers have to be intentional about choosing words to teach in order for children to build their vocabulary. There are only so many words we can teach and so we have to be smart about the words we plan to teach. We need to choose words that are specifically related to the concepts we are teaching (insects, plants, etc.) but also words that are subject related words – for science and math we would teach words like “compare” and “contrast. For Language Arts we might teach “predict” and “narrative.” (pp 11-12)

2. **FALSE** There is a vocabulary explosion period in a child’s language development. We hear that around the age of 2 children have a word spurt or explosion where they use a lot more words than before. In reality it’s that not that their rate of learning has changed but they now know how to integrate those words accurately into the talk. They understand the meaning long before they can express them. (p. 7)

3. **FALSE** Reading storybooks is sufficient for oral vocabulary development. We are now learning that book reading alone isn’t significant to boost their oral language. There are small difference for 2-3 year olds almost none for 4-5 year olds. This means reading stories isn’t enough to bridge the gap for children at risk for reading difficulties. Teachers will need to add additional strategies along with read alouds so that children process words at deeper levels. (pp. 8-9)

4. **FALSE** Teachable moments are a good use of time and are sufficient for explaining word meanings. We are learning that teachable moments are not enough either to accelerate word learning. Usually, it only involves a couple of children during independent play and so the rest of the class misses out. Plus, the explanation is given only once and not repeated throughout the week. We’ve also found that teachers with less oral language PD give less explanations overall. (pp 8-9, 16)

5. **FALSE** The vocabulary scope and sequence in core reading programs generally have a good selection of words for oral vocabulary instruction. We’ve found that the Scope and Sequence in most reading curriculum are random and lack depth. In a unit about insects you might have the words “cricket, house, marathon, around, & arachnid.” Other curriculum used words from the storybooks. It’s a mystery as to how they were chosen. (pp 9-10)
6. **TRUE** Children need both explicit and implicit instruction to learn the meaning of words.

For example, before you read a story you might introduce several words that are important to the story and what they mean. Then you tell the children, “Listen for these magic words as we read the story. When you hear one of the magic words, raise your hand!” Then as you read the words in the story and they raise their hands, ask “What word did you hear? Yes, the word, voluminous means large and baggy.” This is an example of explicit, on purpose instruction. The implicit instruction is them listening to the story and inferring word meanings by looking at the pictures. We found greater gains with teachers who both used explicit and implicit instruction together. (p. 10-11)

7. **FALSE** Children are word sponges.

Children don’t learn by being told a word and then just getting it. They learn the relationships between words and different objects or concepts and become more accurate over time. It takes many exposure of words over time. We learn a little bit of a word at a time, but the more experience we gain the deeper we understand until we fully get it. Think of a cow. All we may know at first is that it is an animal. Later we learn it’s on a farm and gives us milk or meat. Then we learn that some are useful for pulling plows. (pp 6-7)

8. **TRUE** Words should be taught in categories, based around their inclusion in a larger category (abdomen = body part = living thing).

If you know the word **oar**, you probably also know something about paddling and rowboats. Teaching words within a category helps children remember and retain those words. We want to choose words that fit in larger categories. Think of folders on your computer. I put a document in a folder that is within another folder that is in an overarching folder. For instance my teaching outline is in the big folder called AFT Summer Institute. In there is a folder called Workshops. Inside that folder is Why Words Are Important and this fits inside that one. Words should be able to do the same thing. An oar is a machine used to propel a row boat. Rowboats are means that help us go places. Other means that help us go places are cars, canoes, planes, and bikes. Some of these means use wheels, sails, oars, and wings. (pp 12-13)

9. **FALSE** A child only needs to hear a word 3 times in order to learn that word.

We did a study where 12 children heard a nonsense word repeated 3 times while playing a game. Some heard it 6 times and so forth for 8, 18, & 24 times. Only 20% of the children who heard the word 3 times remembered it. It wasn’t until children heard the word 24 times that most of them remembered the word. This tells us that children need many, many more repetitions of words than we normally thought. Not only do they need to hear the word a lot, but they need to hear the explanation. (pp 13-14)

10. **TRUE** A teacher needs ongoing professional development in oral vocabulary instruction in order for children to make significant, accelerated gains.

Of course you know you do! Otherwise you wouldn’t be here! Here’s what’s scary. Many of our teachers are untrained. Or they got a CDA or AA years and years ago and refuse to go to other trainings unless they are forced and then the go to the classes that are “fun” or one they can sleep through. It’s not a surprise then that we found that these teachers were not effective in helping children making significant gains in vocabulary. (pp14-16)
Activity 1

Myth or Fact!

Read through each statement and decide if it is a myth that has been perpetuated about oral vocabulary development or if it is a fact (key principle) about the characteristics of vocabulary instruction. Circle your response.

1. Myth  Fact Teachers have to be intentional about choosing words to teach in order for children to build their vocabulary.

2. Myth  Fact There is a vocabulary explosion period in a child’s language development.

3. Myth  Fact Reading storybooks is sufficient for oral vocabulary development.

4. Myth  Fact Teachable moments are a good use of time and are sufficient for explaining word meanings.

5. Myth  Fact The vocabulary scope and sequence in core reading programs generally have a good selection of words for oral vocabulary instruction.

6. Myth  Fact Children need both explicit and implicit instruction to learn the meaning of words.

7. Myth  Fact Children are word sponges.

8. Myth  Fact Words should be taught in categories, based around their inclusion in a larger category (abdomen = body part = living thing).

9. Myth  Fact A child only needs to hear a word 3 times in order to learn that word.

10. Myth  Fact A teacher needs ongoing professional development in oral vocabulary instruction in order for children to make significant, accelerated gains.
Debunking Myths and Understanding Key Principles

Myths about Oral Vocabulary Development

•
•
•
•
•
•

Key Principles for Teaching Oral Vocabulary Development

•
•
### Activity 1: Myth or Fact!

**(ANSWER KEY)**

Read through each statement and decide if it is a myth that has been perpetuated about oral vocabulary development or if it is a fact about the characteristics of vocabulary instruction. Circle your response.

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fact</strong></td>
<td>Teachers have to be intentional about choosing words to teach in order for children to build their vocabulary. P. 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Myth</strong></td>
<td>There is a vocabulary explosion period in a child's language development. P. 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Myth</strong></td>
<td>Reading storybooks is sufficient for oral vocabulary development. P.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Myth</strong></td>
<td>Teachable moments are a good use of time and are sufficient for explaining word meanings. P.8-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Myth</strong></td>
<td>The vocabulary scope and sequence in core reading programs generally have a good selection of words for oral vocabulary instruction. P.9-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fact</strong></td>
<td>Children need both explicit and implicit instruction to learn the meaning of words. P. 10-11</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>7.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Myth</strong></td>
<td>Children are word sponges. P. 6-7</td>
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<td><strong>Fact</strong></td>
<td>A teacher needs ongoing professional development in oral vocabulary instruction in order for children to make significant, accelerated gains. P.15-16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Handout 2
Organizing the Vocabulary Environment

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**
- Smaller spaces encourages conversation
- Display the alphabet only where children will actually use it – writing areas
- Reduce the stimuli in the classroom (too much stuff on the walls, too many toys)
- Organize materials conceptually, labeling it with photos and words so that it is appealing
- Displays relate to current investigations – not from months ago

**TECHNOLOGY**
- E-books, iPads and smart boards give access to materials children might not otherwise have
- Use video clips from YouTube or other websites
- Show interesting websites (PBS, How Stuff Works, National Geographic Kids)

**CLASSROOM LIBRARY**
- Display books like you are selling them at a book store
- Throw out torn, written in, old musty books – even if they are free
- Display books from your current investigations
- Include information books, story books, predictable, ABC, rhyming
- Look for diversity – that your books don’t just reflect your children and their family cultures.
- Range in text complexity
- Check out system – even for in the classroom – want to promote a library habit (chart system with pockets. Place book card in pocket with their name, return book to where they found it.
- Include books in science, art, blocks, math, house, etc. areas
Activity 2
Vocabulary Rich Environment

Organizing the Vocabulary Environment Review

Physical Environment:

Classroom Library:

Technology:

Organizing the Verbal Environment

What kinds of activities best support children’s talk and conversations?

What activities do you do that children most enjoy?
Handout 3
Building Children’s Vocabulary
5 Step Teaching Sequence/Ideas

Step 1: Identify Two or Three Exemplar Words Relating to Your Topic
Exemplars are words that children already know something about relating to your topic.
Examples:
Insect Unit: Ant or Fly
Pet Unit: Dog or Cat

Step 2: Provide a Child-Friendly Definition, Description, and Explanation of the New Word
➢ Start with a simple explanation
➢ Use a succinct description

Try Using:
pictures with the new word, guessing games & riddles, games with synonyms & antonyms, video clips, categories to help children make connections and linking new words to key concepts or “Big Ideas”

Step 3: Give Children Many Opportunities for Guided Practice
➢ Use questions, responses, and conversations involving the new word(s) in multiple contexts
➢ Use questions that gradually lead the children from fairly easy/familiar examples to more applied examples
➢ Be responsive and provide immediate and sufficient feedback to deepen understanding.
➢ Start with brief recall questions and then move to questions that require a more open-ended response.

Step 4: Distributed Review
➢ Provide a variety of books that use the same key topic words
➢ Provide picture cards of the new words in a pocket chart (for the children to use)
➢ Revisit the same words in future topics
➢ Include small group activities relating to the words with home-school connections

Step 5: Monitoring Children’s Progress
➢ Listen for the children using the new words; keep notes and use checklists
➢ Have children explain, draw or write about topics; collect and date samples
➢ Use small group times for engaging children in conversations revolving around key topic words; record their descriptions of words & concepts
➢ Use picture cards for talking about what they know about the topic; involve them in labeling and sorting activities; record progress
Activity 3
Building Children’s Vocabulary

Reflect on your current practice relating to building children’s vocabulary and discuss with others.

What do you intentionally do to build children’s vocabulary?

How much class time is spent intentionally building children’s vocabulary?

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Passage Exploration

Read the passage below from All About Words (Neuman & Wright, 2013, pp 37-38). Circle the words that children might stumble on in the passage. Circle words that may be easy to read, but hard to understand.

A space probe is an unpiloted spacecraft that leaves Earth’s orbit to explore the Moon, planets, asteroids, comets, or other objects in outer space as directed by onboard computers and/or instructions sent from Earth. The purpose of such missions is to make scientific observations, such as taking pictures, measuring atmospheric conditions, and collecting soil samples, and to bring or report the data back to Earth. Numerous space probes have been launched since the former Soviet Union first fired Luna 1 towards the Moon in 1959. Probes have now visited each of the eight planets in the solar system. (Engelbert, 2009, p. 209)

What do you notice about these words? Are they content-related? Discuss together.

Building Children’s Vocabulary
(continued)

Words Clustering Around Common Topics

Write down a typical preschool topic/theme: _______________________

What are some key words relating to your topic?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

What are some activities that would support your topic?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

What are some ways that you would integrate other subjects in the topic?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
Handout 4
Using Assessments for Instruction
Assessment Ideas for Measuring Vocabulary Growth

**Picture Cards**
Have students identify target words through using picture cards (identifying, comparing, contrasting, sorting, etc.)

**Simple Yes-or-No Questions with Rationale**
Adult: Is a fly an insect
Child: Yes
Adult: Why?

**Telling, Drawing or Writing**
Ask each child to tell, draw and/or write about the topic. Encourage children to add details, label/write about their drawing and tell about their work.

Get additional vocabulary assessment ideas at:
http://www.readingrockets.org/article/classroom-vocabulary-assessment-content-areas
Activity 4
Using Assessments for Instruction

How do you currently assess, record and document children’s vocabulary progress and development?

What happens with this information?

How is this information used to modify instruction?

How have you included multiple ways to assess the vocabulary development of children in your classroom?

☐ One-on-one tasks
☐ Portfolios
☐ Observations/checklists
☐ Samples of work/photo documentation/video or audio recordings
☐ Anecdotal notes
☐ Other _______________________

What new way of assessing would you like to include?

What is your plan for using this information to modify your instruction?