

K-3 Essential 7, Bullet 1 Intentional Vocabulary Building Sample Video

MAISA Literacy Essentials

<https://youtu.be/iBgIjz94jc4>

Narrator: When teachers engage in intentional and ambitious efforts to build vocabulary and content knowledge, they support students' literacy learning. In this classroom, the teacher prepares to teach specific vocabulary words by selecting Tier 2 and Tier 3 words from literature, informational text, and from content area curricula.

Teacher Elizabeth: Teaching vocabulary is important because if students don't know what the vocabulary words mean, they're going to have a hard time comprehending what the story is about. And also, if we're doing a read-aloud and they don't understand the concept, then they're going to have a really hard time discussing that concept. So if I want to teach vocabulary, try and find books that have a broad range of vocabulary in them, specifically words that I think students won't already know. And then if I'm teaching an informational text, I find books where they're using those words that have that same content. So I have one book called *Upstairs Mouse Downstairs Mole*. One of the vocabulary words that I thought was important in this text was tidy. One of the chapters discusses a lot about how mouse and mole like their homes tidy, and I thought that since how that whole chapter was about clean and tidy, that students would really need to know what that word means.

So I would teach the word tidy before I read the chapter, and then I also found some other vocabulary words that I would just teach while I'm reading. For example, damp. I would simply just read the word damp, and then I would tell them that damp means slightly wet. Some of the other words that I chose were—one was selfish. I would quickly just define that word within the text and say, selfish means thinking only about one's own self. I'll use vocabulary in the classroom, like if we're cleaning up at the end of the day, I might say, make your space tidy, and then kids will start using that themselves. It's good to figure out your child friendly explanations before you start reading, because sometimes it's very tricky to figure out how you want to explain it right on the spot. I found these child-friendly explanations just by reading the text and then trying to find a simple way to define that.

So when I'm reading informational texts, I pick out the words that I think the students are going to need to know first to be able to comprehend the text. I also pick words that are important to the content of our curriculum and for the book. In my informational book, I chose the word beam, and beam has to do with light, but it also has another meaning. So we would make sure that we discuss what a light beam is compared to what a balance beam might be. I would like my students to use their vocabulary when they're discussing the topic or the content. I'd like them to be able to use it in their writing, and I would like them to use it when they're reading and they come to those words in the book. One word that my students like to use now when they're getting hungry, as they like to use the word famished, it makes it sound very dramatic. When we're on our way to lunch, they tell me that they're famished. I worry about teaching vocabulary right now because it's just going to get trickier as the students get older and the harder books that they start to read. So it's good to start teaching it at this young age so that their vocabulary increases as they increase in age.

Narrator: Learn more at literacyessentials.org.