

K-3 Essential 7, Bullets 3 & 4 Vocabulary in Content-Area Discussion Sample Video

MAISA Literacy Essentials

<https://youtu.be/eApKCCFGRHI>

Narrator: When teachers engage in intentional and ambitious efforts to build vocabulary and content knowledge, they support students' literacy learning. In this classroom, children have been learning about light and shadow through books and explorations for several weeks. In today's follow-up discussion, the goals are to encourage talk among children and for children to review and use new vocabulary and a meaningful context.

Teacher Nicole: You will see the students using words like shadow and opaque and light source and path of light. I'll often have the students repeat the word to me and then we talk about the meaning of it so that they understand those words and can use them through a discussion practice.

Today what we're going to do is we're going to have a discussion about our observations. Can you say the word observation with me?

Students: Observation.

Teacher: And if you look up here, we have the word, these are our science words. Here's the word observation, things that we notice through doing a science investigation. Things that we notice are our observations.

So the word wall in our classroom, we have a basic word wall, and we also have a science word wall. So those scientific words are on there so they can use that as a resource. And also during lessons I'll often point to the word wall, and so then it becomes more natural for them. And so that resource is always there and it's something that they can access and use throughout their learning. And hopefully those words then become natural in their vocabulary.

So scientists, turn and talk with your team about your observations and the data that you collected from your investigation. Ready Go.

Student: Big thing. Something is something that can go through. Look, if my hand was glass and it see, could the light go through? around? It could shine right at their, it can't shine.

Teacher Nicole: They're learning these new vocabulary words through practice. And then the goal is for them to be able to discuss them in small groups and with each other through a whole group discussion. Since they're really truly understanding the meaning of them, the more practice that they're seeing it, hearing it, understanding those words. They can foster discussions with each other. They're able to add to conversations and that they're forming real conclusions using their data and their practice that they've had.

Student: The light source, the flashlight, it has to be straight, not wobbly and all corrected. It has to be straight to make the shadow.

Teacher Nicole: Okay. Can you explain that to me? So you have two things going on. Could you use this piece of string to show me what you mean? With the light source coming off and the path of light that's coming from the light source, could you use that? What if I hold the light source? Could you show me how the path of light would go? So in a straight line. And then what did it do when you hit the object?

Student: It made a shadow. It made a shadow.

Teacher Nicole: I noticed that when you were doing your investigation, some of you had a light source really close to the object, and others pulled the light source away from the object. Did you notice anything happening? Axel? What? Did your group notice?

Student: That it was making big shadows and little shadows. When you move it apart, it was a little shadow and when he closed it, it was big shadow.

Teacher Nicole: So if we were to do an investigation with shadows and we went outside and it was a sunny day, what do you predict we might see, Madison?

Student: Our shadow. Why? Because it's a light source and light source. When it's a light source and you're an opaque object, it can always make you a shadow.

Teacher Nicole: So you're going to see your own shadow. Yeah. What would be the light source though if we were outside the--

Student: Sunshine?

Teacher Nicole: Natural or manmade?

Student: Natural.

Teacher Nicole: I think it's refreshing that we can incorporate vocabulary practice embedded within their learning. It's not something separate from, because I also think that's not as meaningful to them, and they're not going to learn from that. They're just going to forget it by the end of the day. The goal through this type of practice is that the students are using the vocabulary in meaningful ways. So I believe that incorporating everything within, especially within our science curriculum, is an amazing thing for our kids.

Now though, how would I change my thinking if I wanted to explain the idea of a shadow to a third grader, maybe?

Student: That some things are an opaque kind of thing, and then usually your shadow goes around you and if the light is behind you, it'll go in front of you and if it's in front of you, it'll go behind you.

Teacher Nicole: I think that would really help them to understand that as long as there's a light source, you will have a shadow. I like that you took it one step further, Maya, and you explained how the light will affect where their shadow appears like we just had happen in our classroom. Gibson, do you want to add a thought to that?

Student: Your shadow is just where your opaque object. The shadow. I mean the light can't go through you. It goes around you. And if the light source is in front of you, it's behind the shadows behind. And if it's in front of you, I mean it's in the back of you it's in the front.

Teacher Nicole: How else could you explain it to them? Like a scientist talking to a kindergartner? Noah, what might you say?

Student: Don't be afraid. Your shadow is just like you. It does what you do. If you eat a turkey sandwich, then your shadow is a turkey sandwich.

Teacher Nicole: Emma, what might you add?

Student: Your shadow is from a light source, and it follows where wherever you go and it does what you do. And so you cannot escape from your shadow only when it's dark.

Teacher Nicole: It's truly fascinating. And some days it's just like you sit back and you're just, wow. You are all so capable of doing amazing things. And if we continue to set the bar high for our students and continue to allow them to grow through this, the sky's the limit.

Narrator: Learn more at literacyessentials.org.