

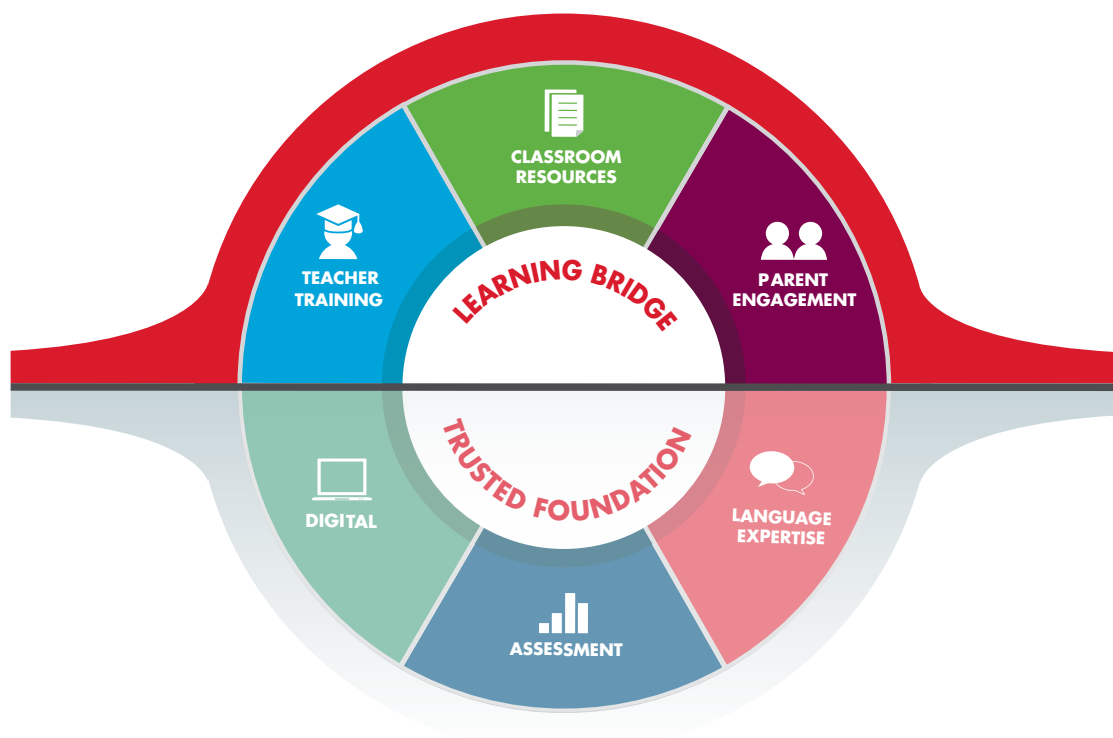
# VOCABULARY MATTERS

A talk and vocabulary-focused approach for rich guided reading

*By Anna Hasper*

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# WHAT IS READING?

Reading is something that most of us do every day without thinking about it, but reading and understanding what we read is not as simple as it seems. Our brain needs to learn to recognise each letter, link a sound to this letter and to combine all the sounds to make a word – a process we call decoding (See glossary on page 15). However, some words – often high-frequency words – cannot be decoded like this and learners need to memorise these words by sight. For example, the sentence 'I like my mother' contains only so-called sight-words.

Reading involves a variety of active thinking processes and even in English-speaking countries, learners at primary level need to be taught these processes explicitly. Teachers often use guided-reading sessions because our brain does not develop reading skills without direct instruction. And in guided-reading lessons, teachers can offer activities that help learners develop the skills and strategies to read with comprehension and develop their language.

The Simple View of Reading model (Gough & Tunmer, 1986), highlights that both print-level processes (decoding and recognising sight words) and meaning making processes (vocabulary, fluency and comprehension strategies) are equally important to learners' reading success. Many studies have highlighted the importance of having good vocabulary knowledge because being able to transform letters into words is no use if learners do not know what those words mean!

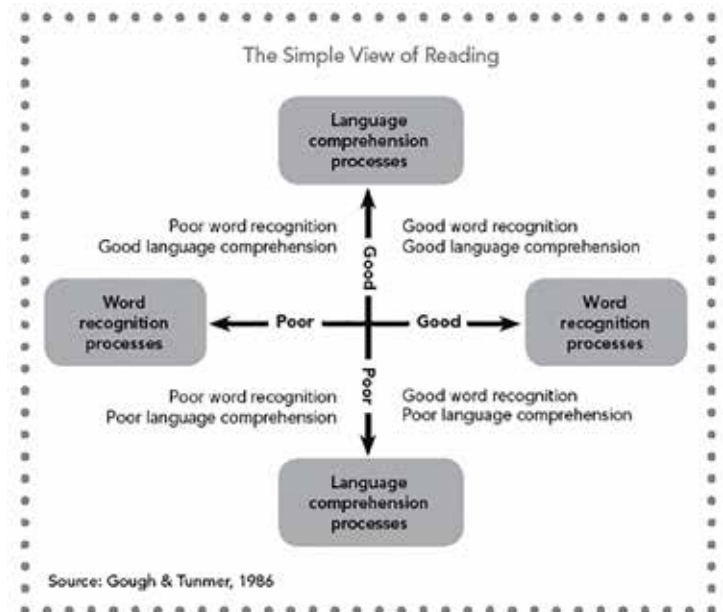
Richards (2015) describes reading as making meaning from text – but what processes do learners need to be able to do this?

In order to be an effective reader and to understand the text, we need to know the meaning of words. Additionally, learners need to be able to:

- Recognise the shape of letters and know which sounds they represent (decoding)
- Segment words into sounds and blend these sounds into a word
- Recognise the word by sight (sight words)
- Link the word to their vocabulary knowledge to make meaning of the word
- Link several words together at rapid rate and use comprehend strategies to understand the message

*'My learners love counting the new words they have learned in class at the end of the week and playing games with these words. And the more vocabulary they learn, the more they want to read together and show what they know by talking about the stories'*

*– EAL Mohammed, YL primary school teacher in the KSA*





## WHY DOES VOCABULARY MATTER SO MUCH?

While many may think that learning a language is about mastery of 'grammar', without vocabulary knowledge, we can understand, say and write very little! Knowing the words in a text helps readers to understand more of the text making reading less challenging and more motivating.

Research has shown that when learners have good word recognition processes and vocabulary knowledge, only 1% showed reading comprehension difficulties (Spencer, Quinn and Wagner, 2014). Hirsh (2003) and Nagy & Scott (2000) state that for learners to understand a text when reading independently, they need to know 90-95% of the words in that text. Both Willingham (2015) and Nation (2001) believe that students need to know 95-98% of the words to enjoy extensive reading, meaning that no more than approximately 1 in 10 words at maximum should be difficult for the reader.

The ability to read with understanding is critical because many schools choose to teach other subjects – such as science and maths – in English. If we want learners to understand the text we need to work on developing their English vocabulary as early as possible. It is obvious that learners who experience difficulty in understanding a text may be less motivated to make an effort to read and thus fall behind which can affect both their enjoyment of reading as well as their self-esteem. Therefore, focusing on building English vocabulary knowledge within our guided-reading sessions is very important to enable our learners to develop reading comprehension strategies (see glossary) in order to better understand English texts and to enable them to find their voice and have a say in our global world.

*'Reading is a most important activity in any language, not only as a source of information but also as a means of consolidating and extending knowledge of the language.'*

*– Smith & Conti (2016)*





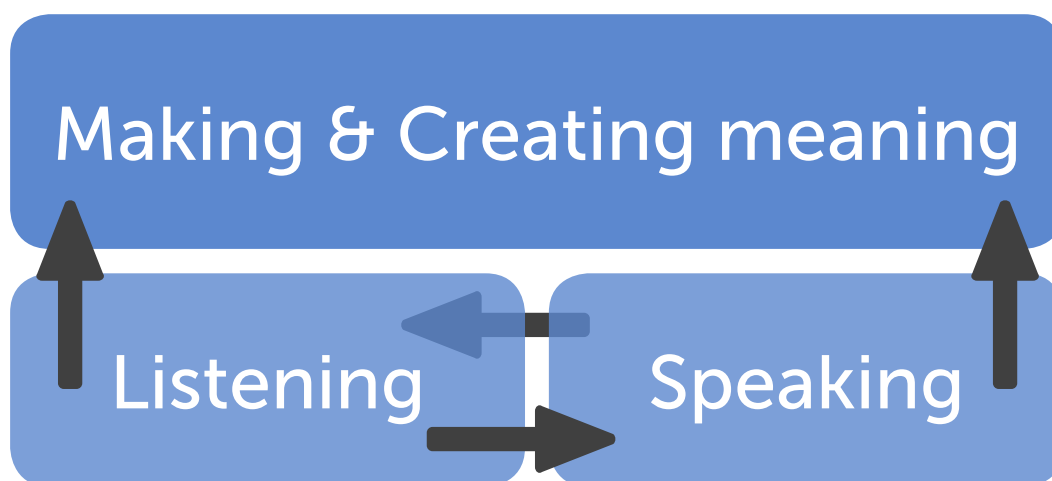
## EMBEDDING TALK INTO GUIDED-READING SESSIONS TO DEVELOP VOCABULARY

Oral language skills and the process of listening and speaking to create meaning, is the first skillset a child develops, laying the foundations from which reading and writing skills develop.

Focused talking and thinking about a text during, while and post-reading is essential because one of the main aims of guided-reading is to deepen each learner's understanding of what is being read. This aim is achieved through talk; they talk in their head (thinking) and then share their ideas to create more understanding (McCandlish, 2012). For a large part, learning new vocabulary takes place through the oral mode; hearing it being used in context and then talking about the text together.

*'Talk plays a central role in learning; in learning how to think and in talking your way into meaning'*

– Edwards-Groves, Anstey and Bull, in Cameron & Dempsey, 2016



English Language Learners (ELL - see glossary) in a non-native-speaking environment often have less exposure to the English language and may therefore have a restricted range of words available. Talking about a text together with a teacher or talking buddy can help them to build their vocabulary and understand more. The Teacher's Edition of *Talk about Texts* offers *Predict, Talk and Let's Talk About It* activities to encourage learners to talk about what the text means – before, during and after the guided-reading session.

Enhancing ELLs' understanding of written text means that we need to move them to progress from using social, everyday vocabulary to more abstract vocabulary used in writing. Learners need extensive vocabulary building, multiple exposures to the new vocabulary and plentiful opportunities to speak in sentences, using the new vocabulary. This is important because if we want them to write with rich vocabulary in the future, they need to first speak with rich vocabulary, as a word is only understood when it becomes part of a learner's oral vocabulary (Cameron, 2001).





## INTRODUCTION TO TALK ABOUT TEXTS

Talk About Texts integrates the teaching of reading, vocabulary and oral language into one rich and effective programme to help achieve more in guided-reading time.

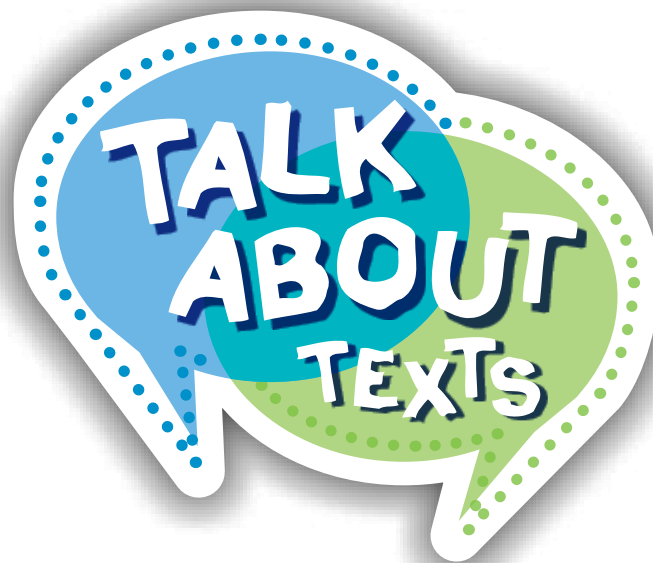
Research shows that robust vocabulary and oral language instruction is essential for positive reading comprehension outcomes. *Talk About Texts* embeds a range of strategies to teach students the four elements of oral language:

- Listening and responding
- Building vocabulary
- Having conversations
- Questioning

At the end of each reader, learners get an opportunity to formulate their oral responses and are encouraged to use the focus vocabulary in full sentences, with the help of downloadable sentence frames. This is followed by a writing activity which also embeds the key vocabulary.

The series includes:

- 160 Student Books
- 160 Teacher's Editions corresponding to each Student Book
- Teacher Guide, including Digital Teacher Resources and Flashcards for each year level from Foundation to Year 3 (Reading Levels 1-30+)



**'A TALK AND VOCABULARY FOCUSED  
APPROACH TO GUIDED-READING'**

## At a glance

TALK ABOUT TEXTS COMPONENTS	STUDENT BOOKS	TEACHER'S EDITIONS	TEACHER GUIDES + DIGITAL TEACHER RESOURCES + FLASHCARDS
<b>FOUNDATION</b> READING LEVELS 1-8	<p>45 titles</p>	<p>45 titles</p>	<p>1 Teacher Guide</p>
<b>YEAR 1</b> READING LEVELS 9-16	<p>40 titles</p>	<p>40 titles</p>	<p>1 Teacher Guide</p>
<b>YEAR 2</b> READING LEVELS 17-23	<p>40 titles</p>	<p>40 titles</p>	<p>1 Teacher Guide</p>
<b>YEAR 3</b> READING LEVELS 24-30+	<p>35 titles</p>	<p>35 titles</p>	<p>1 Teacher Guide</p>

### TEACHER GUIDES

These focused support resources include sample lesson plans, reading strategies and talk strategies.

- Quality professional development is integrated in quick and easy to digest formats to save you time
- Each guide comes with access to Digital Teacher Resources, including videos of best practice classroom footage and advice
- Neat Flashcards containing Vocabulary for Talking and key sentence frames to teach and embed the academic vocabulary which is systematically introduced in the Teacher's Editions
- Practical assessment resources including rubrics, tracking grids and student activity sheets.

- Levels 1-8** • 9781420242003
- Levels 9-16** • 9781420242416
- Levels 17-23** • 9781420242829
- Levels 24-30+** • 9781420241181

Each Teacher Guide comes with Digital Teacher Resources and Flashcards





# WORDS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The main aim of a guided reading session is to guide learners in using comprehension strategies and skills that help them to independently make meaning from texts. To make sure learners have the capacity to think about using these new strategies, we need to select a reader that adequately challenges them. Select a text that is of a slightly higher level of challenge than your learners can read independently, making sure they know about 90-94% of the words.

There will still be many unknown words and we need to make sure that they know the key vocabulary before they start reading, so that they can focus on applying their reading strategies and keep motivated. However, one concern – with limited time for guided-reading in the classroom – is often which of all the key words in the story to select for pre-teaching. To make this decision, consider the learners' level, needs and cultural context, selecting words that make a difference to your learners. Pre-teach key vocabulary that you feel your learners do not yet know the meaning of and need in order to understand the text.

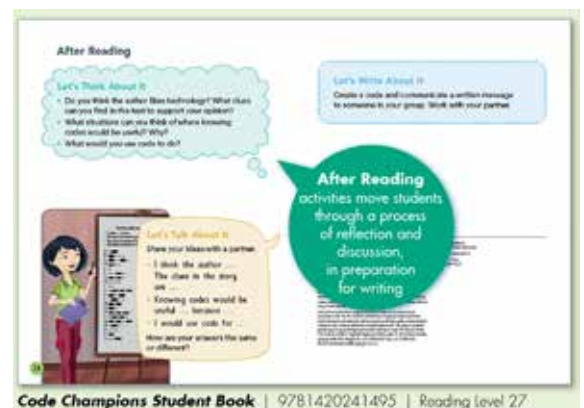
Talk About Texts suggests vocabulary to focus on for each reader in the Teacher's Edition. Through focusing on select words before, during and after reading, this helps to build learners' knowledge of words that:

- Are often found in printed text
- Are used when reading and writing
- Are not frequent in everyday conversations when listening and speaking

Some words that we consider basic and of everyday usage might be unfamiliar to the learner for a number of reasons such as cultural context. Therefore, it is important to have a look through the reader prior to the guided-reading session and check if you need to pre-teach some of the words.

<b>Tier 1</b>	words are basic, concrete words e.g. (book, sun, sad etc.) that students are often exposed to when listening and use in speaking. Most ELLs are already familiar with these in their first language. Tier 1 words form approximately 80% of the texts we read.
<b>Tier 2</b>	words that are more abstract and frequently used in writing (e.g. unfortunate, manufacture, maintain). They are 'Big Brain words' and are not commonly used in daily conversations and can cause challenges to learners when used in a text.
<b>Tier 3</b>	words are not frequency used, only in specific context (e.g. peninsula, omnivore, asphalt etc.) These words are best taught when they come up during the reading

In the Teacher's Edition, you will find a focus on *High Frequency Words* – often basic words and sight words – so that you can check if learners can read them with fluency and accuracy. It also focuses on essential and frequently used words in writing that learners need before they can understand the text that they are reading in *Vocabulary for Reading*. Finally, it introduces *Vocabulary for Talking*, which focuses on language that – in the form of sentence starters – learners can use to orally respond to the text post-reading, which encourages use of the newly-learnt words.







## CONSIDERATIONS FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY

For young learners, new vocabulary is mostly acquired holistically, indirectly and often incidentally, through repeated exposure to meaningful contexts. This is often gained through conversations within meaningful contexts, such as teacher-talk, stories, songs, poems, videos and when teachers and learners engage in conversations.

Research has shown that with explicit vocabulary teaching, 39.9% of the new vocabulary introduced was learnt in three months. Contrastingly, without explicit teaching, learners only gained 14.8% of the new vocabulary. (Trelease, 2013). This shows that learners are more likely to learn and grasp new vocabulary when attention and focus is deliberately placed on it in the lesson. When teaching English Language Learners it becomes even more important that we provide direct instruction of essential, big-brain words (tier 2) that learners will neither hear in the classroom or at home, but that they will need for future success.

*'As students strengthen vocabulary and oral language skills, their reading and writing skills are more likely to improve.'*

– (ILA, 2017)

Therefore, it is important that we intentionally plan for age-appropriate ways to teach essential words explicitly in the guided-reading session. We should also create thought-provoking, playful and interactive follow-up opportunities for learners to internalise and reuse the newly learnt vocabulary in their speech. This can be done within the supportive setting of a guided-reading lesson by:

- Telling learners the aim of the session e.g. to learn X new words for our story (pre-reading)
- Focusing on the words learnt in the text (during guided-reading)
- Providing rich talk opportunities which focus on using the new vocabulary (post-reading)





## HOW TO GO ABOUT IT?

There are many possible ways to teach words and the amount of time spent on explicitly teaching words will depend on your learning context. However, below is an example of a structure that may help your learners build their vocabulary in guided-reading lessons.

<b>Select key words</b>  (Before the guided-reading lesson)	<b>Select a reader</b> of interest and of the right level for your guided-reading group. Read the reader. Read the teacher edition and check <i>vocabulary for reading</i> ; select words that are key to understanding the text and answering questions about the text. Consider your learners' needs and cultural context. Check if they need any of the basic words. Select your pre-teaching words, limit to about 5-6 words; adapt the questions if needed and talk about the story (predict) before the reading.
<b>Notice</b> (Pre-reading)	<b>Make learners notice</b> the new vocabulary in a memorable way; present visuals, mime, act out, use sounds or bring in realia and try to elicit the new words in English. Give the words if needed.
<b>Elaborate</b> (Pre-reading)	<b>Establish the meaning</b> of the words, if needed give a student-friendly definition of the words in English. Avoid directly translating words into their first language - also referred to as their L1 - as talking about meaning gives more exposure to English. (L1 could be used to explain complex concepts or to quickly check understanding if needed.) Show the word (spelling) and model <b>what the word sounds like</b> . Then get learners to say the new word to their buddy and ask them to show/explain the meaning to each other.
<b>See in use</b> (During guided-reading)	Learners will read the story and <b>meet the new words in context</b> in the reader and are asked to recall its meaning during the story (can you remember what x means? What's another word with the same/opposite meaning?) And answer questions to develop understanding of the text. See <i>check understanding</i> questions in the teacher edition. Learners talk about the story using the new words.
<b>Use it yourself</b> (After guided-reading)	Recall the meaning of the new words and give learners time to <b>use them in a new way</b> , in a conversation or writing. Check <i>Let's Think About It, Let's Talk About It and Let's Write About It</i> and download from online the sentence frames to support them talking about the text with the new words in full sentences.
<b>Revisit</b> (Anytime)	Learners need <b>plenty of opportunities to</b> incorporate the new language with previously learned language (an important principle). If we want them to consolidate the meaning they need to <b>encounter the words again and again</b> in listening, reading, speaking, writing or vocabulary games and activities.



## ACTIVITIES

### Some practical ideas

Young learners require vocabulary teaching in a way that is age appropriate. This means that they should be actively involved in each stage of the guided-reading session and the presentation of new vocabulary needs to be short and varied in order to maintain their attention. To learn new, big brain words it is a good idea to provide multi-sensory input (see glossary), which will help young learners remember new words in different ways.

Depending on the word that you pre-teach, encourage learners to see the word e.g. draw, use a picture, a real object, make action or mime. Or, you could allow them to hear the word e.g. making the sound, using [soundible.com](https://www.soundible.com)) or get them to do an activity with the word. Think about making the session meaning-focused, multi-sensory and above all, memorable!





## ACTIVITIES FOR NOTICING

Below are some activities that you can use to introduce new words in the pre-reading stage of the guided-reading session or in a word-building slot. There are many different ways to make them notice new words such as through role play, making the sound or through describing. Below are some of our favourites:

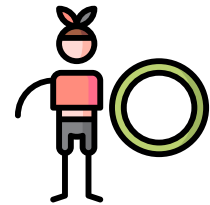
**My Magic Eye:** Useful for tier 1 words that are more concrete and/or actions (tier 1) for young learners.



**How:**

- Draw or collate images of the key words
- Prepare a dark piece of card - larger than a flashcard – with a small circle cut out in the middle.
- Gather the learners in a circle around you
- Move the keyhole card over the flashcard and have learners guess what is on the flashcard
- If they give the word in their first language, acknowledge and build on this
- Provide the English word and get them to repeat it after you

**Categorise it:** Works well when introducing abstract words and can be done as a whole class or in small groups (to revisit vocabulary at a later stage)



**How:**

- Provide two circles (hula hoops are great)
- Hand out pictures or word cards that relate to the abstract concept that you want to teach and that the learners are already familiar with
- Get learners to help you organise the cards into classified groups, using the hula hoops to separate the groups
- Link the new abstract and big brain word to this

**Matching:** This works well with learners who are quite fluent readers and/or when you have 9-10 words to pre-teach.



**How:**

- Write the words on cards and give these to small groups
- In groups, learners divide the words into 3 categories which are *Words We Know*, *Words We Don't Know Yet* and *Words We Aren't Completely Sure About*.
- Then hand out simple and student-friendly definitions of the words (see [www.macmillandictionary.com](http://www.macmillandictionary.com)) and let learners match the word with the definition
- Monitor and if needed, check understanding of complex concepts

**Give it to me!:** This works well with older learners, when not all vocabulary is totally new.

**How:**

- To encourage learners to be active participants, start by asking: 'What words do you already know about...?'
- You can even set them homework the night before the new topic is read, i.e. to find any English words related to the topic of the reader. In this way, we encourage them to be 'word detectives'





## REVISITING KEY WORDS

According to Nation (2016) learning new words is a cumulative process. Learners need to meet words in various contexts before they can quickly recall the meaning and use them, because our brain will easily forget words – and any information – that is only encountered once.

The more often learners meet new words, the more likely they are to remember these, so frequent activities that revisit or recycle newly-learnt words are essential. Spacing exposure and recycling of the new words will help consolidate learning even more. Nation (2001) highlights that spending 15 minutes across several days on new words will lead to longer retention than spending 15 minutes at a time on new words.

### Activities for Revisiting and checking meaning

**Below are some activities for revisiting words that have been read after the guided-reading session, to check students can recall meanings. (Remember to space out these revisiting activities!)**

#### What's Missing?

- Learners sit in a circle with flash/word cards face up in the middle
- All learners close their eyes and the teacher removes one of the cards
- The learners open their eyes and guess which card is missing. They shout out the word
- Keep removing cards or remove multiple cards at one time
- In the end the whole set is removed but learners keep recalling all the vocabulary. Once the learners are confident with both the language and the activity they can take it in turns to be 'the teacher.'



#### Abacadabra!

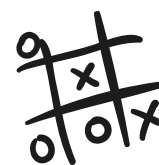
This activity works particularly well with younger learners and words you can link to movements or actions. The actions are introduced when elaborating on the words (after the noticing stage).

- You can first demonstrate the action, which will help them recall the word as a warm-up saying "Abacadabra, look at me, I'm... (do the action so learner can shout out the word) 1,2,3!"
- Or you can directly move on to "Abacadabra, listen to me, you are ... (you say the word) 1,2,3 (learners show the action)!"
- Once the learners are confident with both the language and the activity they can take it in turns to be 'the teacher.'



#### Tic Tac Toe

- Divide the class in 2 groups and call one team 'X' (crosses) and the other team 'O' (noughts)
- Draw a grid with 9 boxes on the board and if possible, put nine chairs in three rows
- You can use flashcards, drawings or just give a simple definition of the new word but don't say the word as learners need to guess it
- The first team to name the word correctly chooses a learner to sit on a chair. Draw an 'X' or 'O' (depending on the team) on the board in the same position. Play the game until one team has three of their team in a row horizontally, vertically or diagonally



#### Vocabulary box

Collect all new words you have taught or get learners to write their favorite new words on cards at the end of the week (integrating some spelling practice).

- Put the words in a vocabulary box (an old tissue box does the trick)
- Pull out a word card and ask learners to tell their buddy the definition, or the other way around
- You can get them to spell the word, draw the word, write the opposite, use it in sentences (orally or written) or ask learners to talk about the story using the word
- There are limitless activities to be done with the vocabulary box, either as a whole class or in small groups and is a great way to fill up 5-10 minutes at the end of the day!





## ACTIVITIES FOR USE-IT-YOURSELF

Responding to the text helps learners deepen their comprehension of the text and consolidate new language. After the guided-reading session, through *Let's Think About It* and *Let's Talk About It*, learners move from factual questions such as 'where is?' and inference questions such as 'How do you think... feels?' to more evaluative and personalised questions such as 'Do you think it is a good idea to...?' The focused opportunities to think and discuss their ideas – particularly through the need to recall the meaning of new words to respond to the task – prepares them for the writing in *Let's Write About It.* Below are some activities that you can use to get learners to re-use the language in oral or written form after the reading:

**Follow the leader** - This activity works well in a lower-level language class

- Assign each learner an animal, fruit or item
- Get one learner to sit at the front or in the middle of your circle and ask him/her a question about the story using the reader
- Other learners need to find the correct answers in their reader too so they can shout out the answer when you ask for it (integrating the need to listen to your question)
- The learner at the front whispers the answer to you and then asks the class to shout out the answer
- The learner at the front confirms if the answer is correct or not. Then change the learner

**Staged retelling**

- Copy some of the image pages from the story onto A4 paper and hang these so all learners can see them
- In pairs or small groups, learners list (integrating a focus on written form) words they remember from each page
- Based on what you notice when monitoring give feedback (on meaning, pronunciation of form) before asking the learners in pairs/small groups to retell the story together
- If your learners are of a higher-level you could give them chapter titles to work from. You can even repeat the re-telling by asking learners to recall the story 3 different times to 3 different talking-buddies, reducing their talking time from 4 to 3 to 2 minutes
- Do make sure you change partners after every go and change roles after that so both learners get to speak

**Dice sentences**

- This is an activity where students work independently in pairs or small groups. You need to have one die for each pair/group and prepare 1 or 2 grids with 6 words (it depends on what you want to practice)
- One of the grids has the key words you want learners to use in their sentence and the other grid can contain language that supports the talk e.g. verbs, conjunctions or sequencing words
- Learners roll the die, select the matching key vocabulary and make a sentence (it could be a statement or question for their talking buddy)
- If you want to integrate writing, you can get the other learner in the pair/group to write the statement (integrating listening and spelling) or write an answer to the question



**Writing a summary tweet**

- After finishing the reader, elicit some of the newly learned vocabulary items to the board or your modeling book
- Ask learners to select 3 words and use these to write a tweet of 140 characters that describes what happened in the story, what they have learnt about the topic or what links the topic to their local context
- If you want to integrate reading and discussion, get two learners to combine the information in their tweets to create a shared tweet



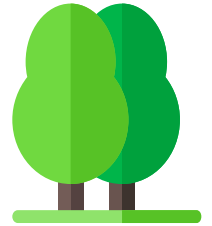


# RECORDING NEW VOCABULARY

It is important to keep a record of new words as we teach and learn them. This is so that we have an idea of what we can expect learners to know but also so that learners can begin to record vocabulary in meaningful ways, which helps aid their memory of the words. There are many different ways to record new words but below are some ideas you might like to try out:

## Word trees or a Big Brain Words Wall

- You or a learner can write the new words on a leaf-shaped card and stick it on the appropriate tree or word wall
- You can sort words by topic or by parts of speech or by words that have a similar meaning, such as 'happy, delighted, pleased, thrilled, ecstatic, etc.'
- Keeping these words visible provides learners with a wider variety of words to use while speaking and writing in class. You could also collect the sentence starters on a separate tree so learners can support their talk



**Copy and Define and Draw** - This is a really simple way of recording big brain words to enable learners to take them home at the end of the week.

- All you need is an A4 piece of paper which you fold into 4 even pieces lengthwise and then turn around so it is in a landscape position
- In the first column learners copy 4 or 5 big brain words from the story (you can let them choose if you feel this is appropriate because this enhances motivation)
- In the second column, write a student-friendly definition in English. In column 3 they draw the meaning and in column 4 learners can glue the task you want to give them to take home. For example: what do you know about the word? Can you put one in a sentence? Can you put 2 or 3 words into one sentence? Can you think of a word that means the same/opposite? Can you retell the story these words were in?

**Making word maps** - A graphic organizer like the one below will give students a structured approach to recording new words so that they can learn to record new language and organize this information in a logical way.

- Learners can use drawings but it also gives them the chance to talk about the concept with a talking-buddy and write 3 questions or statements based on what they have read in the reader



Define it PM15

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Word/concept

What is it?

What are some examples?

Share ideas with your partner/group and record three questions.

- 
- 
-

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Cameron & Dempsey (2016)



## PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

### Noticing - Categorising

- Collect images of familiar winter and summer clothes (or seasonal fruits if appropriate to your context) and get learners to categorise these words (revisit what the words are) into 2 different groups
- Don't tell learners how to group - any grouping is welcome as long as they can explain why, even if it is in their first language
- Once you have established clothes for warm weather and clothes for cold weather, elicit what we call those seasons. If they give this in their first language, acknowledge and build on this
- Get the school calendar out and establish the name of the seasons and the meaning of 'winter' and 'spring' etc.



### Use it yourself - hot seats:

- Ask learners which animal they are, using a flashcard or page of the book to establish this
- Get all learners to say "I'm a hedgehog." Ask one learner to stand or sit at the front or in the middle of your circle and ask him/her again which animal he/she is
- The whole class answers "I'm a hedgehog."
- Then ask the learner a question about the story "When do you wake up, hedgehog? or "When do you sleep..?" All learners need to use their readers to find the answer (integrating the need to listen to your question)
- After 30 seconds invite the learner at the front to come over and whisper the answer to your question e.g. "I wake up in spring."
- Then ask the class to shout out the answer and check with the learner at the front if he/she agrees
- Change learner and repeat the procedure with the bat, tortoises, frog and bear
- Add images on the board of animals in their local context, e.g. a snake or mouse or camel
- Then ask learners to turn to their buddy and repeat the conversation, taking turns asking and answering



Exemplars with  
Endangered Animals, Level 20



## Noticing - Elicitation

- Present the cover and elicit the word 'endangered' and/or establish the meaning
- Open the content page and in pairs ask learners which animal they know
- Have images of the animals ready to show if you think they are unfamiliar (e.g. the black-footed ferret)
- Encourage learners in pairs to talk about what they already know about endangered animals
- After 3-4 minutes elicit some words to the board and get them to open their readers and check if these words are in the text. Ask if they have seen some words that they do not yet know the meaning of and feed-in key words as needed

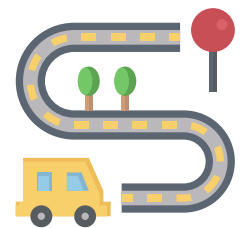


## Use it Yourself - Staged retelling

- Show images of all the animals so they are visible to all learners
- Ask learners if they can list in pairs which key words they learned before the reading
- After 1-2 minutes get these onto the board
- Together, using the key words, they retell or summarise what they have learned
- On the board write sentence starters to support their talk such as "I now know that..." "An endangered animal I know of is.... and I know that..." "We can help protect endangered animals by..." "One way to study endangered animals is...."
- Then regroup learners, and divide each pair into A and B. A will start retelling for 3 minutes, then moves on to the next. B talks for 2 minutes then moves on again and A talks for 1.5 minutes. Give feedback after this stage as needed then swap roles so B can talk

## Our role in the reading journey

Supporting the development of learners' reading skills from learning to read to reading to learn in English is possibly the most important job any teacher can have. Enabling them to read independently in English opens the door to their future and for this, building vocabulary is essential. We need to select appropriate readers for our learners, teach big brain words deliberately in an age-appropriate way and create plenty of opportunities for learners to use new language orally in a communicative context and do all this with enthusiasm so we instil a love for reading. The more young learners read, the better they get at it; the better they get at it the more they enjoy it and the more they enjoy it, the more they read and learn (Trelease, 2013). We hope *Talk About Texts* enables you to achieve this.





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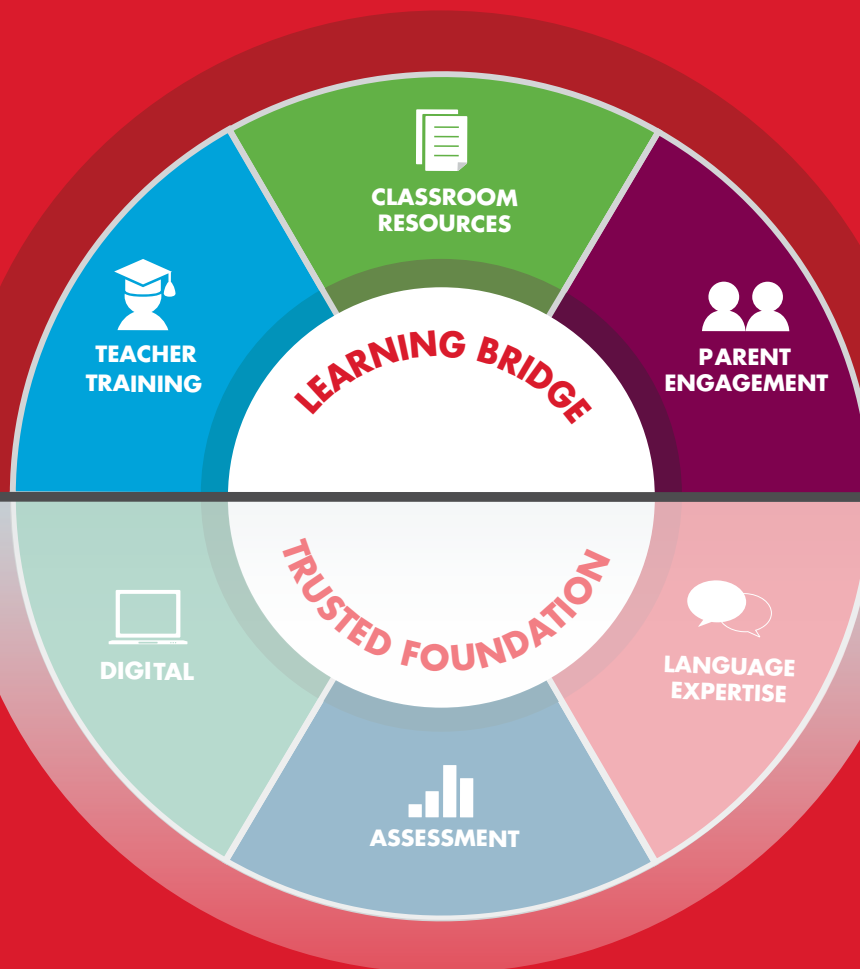


## GLOSSARY

- **Blending** – when learners can sound out the individual letters and combine these individual sounds into a word. For example, moving on from saying letter sounds only /c/ /a/ /t/ to saying the whole word /cat/.
- **Decoding** – Decoding helps learners sound out most words they are not familiar with. It is partly an auditory process and partly a visual one. Decoding starts with the ability to match letters with their sounds which a phonics approach teaches. It also involves being able to take apart the sounds in words (segmenting) and combining (blending) the sounds together to hear the word. When learners can do this, they can sound out the word and link it to the meaning if they know the word already.
- **ELL**– English language learners. A term used in some English-speaking countries to describe someone who is learning the English language in addition to his or her native language or any other languages they may speak. This can be an adult or young learner.
- **Guided-reading** – In guided-reading the teacher works with small groups of learners of a similar level and provides guidance and scaffolding, based on the learners' identified needs, to make meaning of a text. It is a way of providing differentiated teaching of reading as learners are working on reading processes and strategies that are right for their level. The teacher supports the learners by focusing on teaching the strategies which learners do not yet use well to help them create an understanding of texts.
- **Multi-sensory input** – describes teaching in a way that involves the different senses. Multi-sensory teaching can involve the use of visual, auditory and kinesthetic-tactile activities. The main reason is that using a variety of activities to remember vocabulary - e.g. seeing the picture, hearing the sound and doing an action for the word - helps store the new information in different areas of the brain and thus deepens the memory and aids recall.
- **Segmenting** – is the action of breaking a word up into separate sounds, for example saying /c/ /a/ /t/ for 'cat.' Splitting words up into sound is not only a key skill for being able to sound out the word - it is also a key skill in learning to spell because it helps learners write the word based on the sounds they hear.
- **Reading comprehension strategies** – the strategies we need to teach our learners to use in order to make meaning of the text e.g. activating prior knowledge, visualising, questioning, inferring, summarising. If you want to know more about these, see our *Guided Reading booklet*.
- **Sight words** – words that mostly cannot be "sounded out." Children are expected to learn these words by sight and recognising these words without any attempt to sound words out. Often highly frequent words like 'and', for example, are also called sight words.

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