



ULIT Coach News

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Five Pillars of Literacy

Phonics, Phonemic Awareness, Vocabulary, Fluency, and Comprehension make up the five pillars of literacy. Proficiency in each of the five pillars help children develop as readers. When children are learning how to read, they need to first learn to recognize letters and their corresponding sounds within the alphabetic writing system **(PHONICS)**. They begin to identify and manipulate the smallest unit of sound known as phonemes **(PHONEMIC AWARENESS)** and build meaning **(VOCABULARY)**. As they continue to understand how language works, they become better at reading with accuracy, reading at appropriate speed, and prosody **(FLUENCY)**. With The help from a teacher or parent, he or she gains better understanding **(COMPREHENSION)** of what they read.



Spotlight on Vocabulary

What is Vocabulary?

Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings. As Steven Stahl (2005) puts it, "**Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of a word not only implies a definition, but also implies how that word fits into the world.**" Vocabulary knowledge is not something that can ever be fully mastered; it is something that expands and deepens over the course of a lifetime. Instruction in vocabulary involves far more than looking up words in a dictionary and using the words in a sentence. Vocabulary is acquired incidentally through indirect exposure to words and intentionally through explicit instruction in specific words and word-learning strategies.

Why is Vocabulary Important?

Vocabulary plays an important part in learning to read. Beginning readers must use the words they hear orally to make sense of the words they see in print. Children who hear more words spoken at home learn more words and enter school with better vocabularies. This larger vocabulary pays off exponentially as a child progresses through school.



For tips speak with Mrs. Christopher
In the Library:

Tips to Building Your Child's Vocabulary Skills at Home

1. **Have Conversations** - Talk with your child every day. By talking and listening, your child will build oral language and vocabulary.
2. **Involve Your Child** - Cooking, gardening, or other activities around the house provide opportunities for children to learn new vocabulary words.
3. **Use Big Words** - You don't always have to use "easy" words when speaking with your child. Show him there are different, fancier ways of saying words he already knows.
4. **Go for a Walk** - The great outdoors provide many opportunities for children to discover and learn. Going for a simple walk around your neighborhood can help your child learn and use new words.
5. **Talk About Books** - While reading with your child, make sure to discuss the story.
6. **Tell Stories** - Telling stories is an engaging way to get your child talking and asking questions, which is also strengthening her vocabulary.
7. **Sorting and Grouping Objects** - By putting objects in groups, children can learn new words that label the category. You also can discuss the ways in which items in the groups are similar or different. Toys are great for sorting and grouping.
8. **Keep Track of New Words** - Help your child be aware of learning new words, by keeping track of them at home.
9. **Make Meaning of Words through Art** - Use drawing, painting, or acting to help your child learn new words.