



TRANSCRIPT

Webinar: Language and Literacy Development in PreK-1st Grade: Words and More

[Slide: Language and Literacy Development in PreK-1st Grade: Words and More]

[Slide: Framing the session: What we've heard from teachers...]

PAMELA SPYCHER

So. Here we go. So today, we're going to focus on some problems of practice and some questions that have come to us over the years regarding vocabulary learning and language... language development in general, but more specifically around words.

So, one, one question that often comes to us is, "Will our young multilingual children, including our dual language learners, and English learners, will they be confused if we try to teach them some more academic vocabulary? Shouldn't we just stick with the basic vocabulary first like *chair* and *table* and wait until they've mastered a lot of that until we get to those higher-level words?" That's a question we're asked often.

Another question that we're asked is, "I don't really know how to help our young children use this type of vocabulary, this type of higher-level vocabulary when they're speaking and writing. Maybe they understand it, but how do I help them to use the vocabulary?" Another question is, "I'm really focusing on teaching a lot of vocabulary, but I'm not hearing them, I'm not hearing them or seeing them in the classroom. What can I do? What more can I do?"

And another one is, "One of the things we really want is for all of our children to be really curious about language, curious about words, curious about what they mean and how they can use them and play with them and excited about them, because that's one of the best ways to develop language is to be excited about it and curious about it and word nerds like we are." So that's kind of what we're going to dig into. You may share some of these questions, you may have similar questions, different questions.

[Slide: The Teaching and Learning Cycle (TLC)]

Everything that we're talking about today is contextualized in sort of these broader efforts at developing content knowledge, language, and literacy. So we would never advise anyone to sort of teach vocabulary in isolation or just kind of like a vocabulary list of words that don't have anything to do with what you're learning. That's not super helpful to kids, so all of the vocabulary learning that we're talking about is contextualized in a language and literacy and content-rich classroom.

Thea and I have been working on for a number of years together in partnership with teachers, and that is the Teaching and Learning Cycle. And in the Teaching and Learning Cycle, we're not just exposing young children to wonderful language through beautiful, beautiful books like Last Stop on Market Street, which is the book we talked about, one of the books we talked about last time. We'll talk about it again today. But we are also scaffolding their language and literacy development by talking about the language that's in the books, by co-creating some stories or science explanations or whatever the case may be.

So today we're going to zoom in on one, just one part of the Teaching and Learning Cycle, and that is really delving into vocabulary and more of the...since we're talking about stories, more of the general academic vocabulary that you find a lot in stories, where it's like *surrounded* or *appreciate* or *encounter* or *furious* or *marvelous* or *magnificent*—lots of those types of words. And we'll also talk about how important it is to have an abundance of exposure to new vocabulary. So that's what we're talking about today, brief recap, and now we're going to delve into, kind of zoom in on vocabulary.

[Slide: Evidence-Based Practices in Focus Today]

So the evidence-based practices that we're going to be focusing on today...and remember from last time, we talked about many other evidence-based practices that need to be in place, but today, we're really going to be staying the course with providing lots and lots of interactive book reading experiences with complex texts so that children can not only be exposed to beautiful, wonderful language that we would like to see in their stories and in their discussions, but also those higher-order questions that complex texts afford.

So, we want our children to be talking about these bigger themes and these kind of meatier ideas that they're going to find in those complex text. So that's...and it needs to be interactive, the children really need to be involved in that, not just sort of passive listeners. That's how you develop thinking and that's how you develop language.

And we're especially going to be talking about teaching vocabulary words explicitly and intensively over time so that the children can have repeated exposure and intensive exposure in lots of different ways, not just one way. We're going to talk about lots of different ways and we're going to zoom in on one particular way, but it's really important that we kind of build our teaching repertoire so that we can have lots and lots of different ways to build vocabulary over time.

And then as I talked about earlier, you know, vocabulary learning has a lot to do with using the vocabulary. So we not only are focusing explicitly on the vocabulary learning of the children, we're also creating contexts for the children to use the new words in authentic context. So how can we expose them more to hearing the words and using them with their friends and using them in their writing? So we're going to be talking about that.

And these all come from various documents that you can find online. The references are cited below. All of the Institute of Education Sciences Practice Guides are wonderful, wonderful resources for that. There's a new National Academies document that is also cited there, and then, of course, "Transforming the workforce for children birth through age eight" is a great document to reference.

[Slide: Comprehensive Vocabulary Learning in PK-1]

So let's jump in. As I said, vocabulary learning happens in a lot of different ways. So one of the main ways is exposure. Lots and lots of exposures, and that's why we want to use a variety, a variety of different types of books, informational text, stories, recipes, whatever the case may be, and especially culturally relevant books so that the children can leverage their assets that they're bringing from their homes and communities and connect with the books, and also books that children are very interested in. So if children are interested in a particular science topic, let's pursue that; that's a really good thing and that creates motivation. So that's a great way to expose children to a lot of vocabulary.

And last time we talked about wide reading, so those frequent interactive read alouds using complex text so children can start learning, hearing new types of words and integrating them into their linguistic repertoires.

Lots and lots of using. So just to kind of reiterate what I talked about earlier, we do create opportunities for children to use the words authentically in speaking and in writing, and then we need to remember to use these new words over time so that that repetition is really, really important. So we don't just focus intensively on a word and then leave it behind. No, we need to keep up that exposure.

Word consciousness down here in the right-hand corner. That is, I don't think I need to convince any of you because this is the early childhood learning group. It's really fun to play with language and guess what? It's really great for language learning, especially vocabulary learning. So lots of singing and chanting using the new words, playing silly games with the words...I just can't encourage that enough. Plus, it's fun. And who doesn't want to have fun in the early childhood classroom?

And today in the middle, we're talking about that explicit vocabulary instruction. So all of that exposure is fantastic, and we can also boost children's vocabulary knowledge by focusing on a select set of words. Can't teach all the words explicitly, but we can select a few words to really kind of dig into and then...and then, which is very validating, see the children use them in their speaking and writing over time.

And I just wanted to add one more thing here, because we are talking about multilingual children, is it's so critical to cultivate and promote the vocabulary development of children's home language because we want bilingual children, we want children who are sustaining and developing their primary language as they progress through the grades starting in early childhood. So if you have a bilingual classroom, that's great, you're already doing that. If you are in a primarily English-dominant teaching milieu, that you can still promote that vocabulary development in the home language by cultivating it, promoting it, just posting it. There's lots of different ways. We're not talking about that this time, but maybe another time we could talk about how to do that.

And the other thing I was going to say is, Thea and I are going to be talking about vocabulary instruction in English, but everything we do in English, because we work with a lot of bilingual schools and bilingual teachers, everything that we're talking about can be done in students'

primary language, or the partner language if they're an English-dominant child and learning another language like Spanish.

So this the context that we're looking at. Lots and lots of different ways to develop vocabulary.

[Slide: Vocabulary development through interactive read alouds]

So the reason we are talking so much about interactive read alouds is, it is a fantastic way to develop vocabulary. It's probably the best way to develop vocabulary is reading a lot, reading a lot to children, reading a lot of variety of books, and last time, we talked about how I think Thea may have modeled this during our interactive read alouds—we are stopping strategically and you can see, we have, we put post-its in our books to remind us where we want to stop and ask questions and focus on vocabulary, but you can see here an example of a post-it for *appreciate*.

So when we get to that word *appreciate* in the book, we stop and we say, "Oh, let me explain to you what that word means. When you *appreciate* something, we feel happy or lucky to have it," and then we move on. We don't stop and do a vocabulary lesson right there because that would break the flow of the...the enjoyment of the book and the higher-level comprehension questions, but we do stop and we draw attention to those words. Sometimes we show a picture that illustrates what it means. Sometimes we have them say the word just quickly, but the focus is really on the comprehension of the text as we are reading it. And when we are asking some of those questions and getting kids to talk about them as we're reading the book, we are going to use some of those words.

So, for example, *encounters* is a word that we are using a lot with this book because in this book, one of the main characters, CJ, this little boy CJ, he and his Nana go through their neighborhood, they take the bus through their neighborhood, and on the bus and in their neighborhood they encounter a lot of new things and a lot of really interesting people that...and Nana helps CJ appreciate the people in their community on the bus, people who are not always appreciated. I think they're people who are often underappreciated, and that's one of the reasons we love this book.

So, and then during the read aloud as we talked about last time, the teacher might be charting some of the words that come up so that they can refer to them over time, the children can go find them when they want to go write or talk.

So that is all happening through the interactive read-aloud process, and that's really important to do because it's just raising children's awareness of the words and it's also giving them an opportunity to use the words authentically when they're discussing the text and also to see the words when they're charted.

[Slide: After repeated readings...]

The other reason why this five-day process that we talked about last time is so important is with that exposure, and with the explicit vocabulary instruction that we're going to talk about in just a second, then the children when... By the end of the week, when the teacher—here's a picture of Thea here—is jointly constructing some responses to questions or the story, the

children can actually use the words. And here, you can see a jointly constructed response to a question by the end of the book and the children are actually offering these words, which is really wonderful to see.

So that's what we're looking for. We're looking for very authentic, meaningful use of the very strategically selected words that we are teaching children.

[Slide: Comprehensive Approach]

So, just to kind of recap, a comprehensive approach includes wide and lots of incidental exposure to new words. We're just immersing children in new language, new beautiful language and beautiful words, and we're also providing explicit instruction in a small set of words and giving children opportunities to authentically use the words both orally and in writing or drawing or labeling, whatever the case may be. Whatever their developmental writing stage is, scribbling one letter, whatever they're ready to do is fine.

[Slide: Explicit Vocabulary Instruction: 3-Step Teaching Routine]

I'm going to talk you through this because this is basically how we start, how we start choosing words because as I said before, there's so many words that we could choose to teach, how do we choose them? It can be kind of overwhelming.

As we're reading aloud, we're stopping on many words to just kind of briefly explain or show a picture, but for the explicit instruction that occurs after we've been exposed to the book at least once, we're only choosing maybe a few, maybe two or three words from the book to teach explicitly throughout the week. And I wanted to just give a recap of the type of words that we're choosing for this explicit instruction because I think some people may be very well versed in this, but this might be a new concept for people.

So when we think about different types of words, the way we talk about it with teachers is, there are three basic categories that we want to be thinking about. Some researchers have more categories, but we just think three is, three works for us for now.

So there are...and they're talked about in different ways. So in our Common Core standards, for example, for K-12, they're talked about in one way and then in some schools, they talk about it in a different way; they may have been engaged in different learning from different researchers, so I put them both here. So under the different types of words box you see in the left-hand column, we basically say, "Well, you have everyday words, you have general academic words, and you have domain-specific words."

Everyday words, or words like *chair*, *go*, *happy* that generally...young dual language learners and English learners generally are going to pick up in use. These are very frequently used words and it's not to say that we don't focus on them, but we're not going to focus on them the same way as these other two types of words.

So the next tier, Tier 2 words, these are the general academic words, and these are words that you might find across many different disciplines. Like you might find them in English language arts, you might find them in science, you might find them in mathematics, so you're going to find them a lot. They're very high-utility words, and these are words like *search* or *describe* or

appreciate or *surround*, words like that. So we're advocating for focusing explicitly on these words because they have high utility; kids are going to be able to use them in a lot of different contexts.

And then we have domain-specific words, which we also need to focus on. These are words that are discipline-bound, words that you would really only find in science or really only find in math or English language arts, for example, words like *pollen* or *metamorphosis*. That's not to say you're not going to see them in other disciplines, but typically, you're going to see them in one or another discipline because they carry the content knowledge, they really carry that content knowledge.

So that was just a brief recap in case you needed it. So how do we choose those general academic vocabulary words? Because that's what we're focusing on when we're teaching words from stories. We...the words from the text...and it's really important that children have already had a chance to interact with the book ahead of time. So they've been exposed to it, maybe it's been explained already, they've already...at least heard some kind of explanation and they have a context to put it in.

So that's really important. We're not just pre-teaching or randomly teaching words that don't have anything to do with what children are learning about. They need something to attach it to.

So that's important. The other way we decide upon words that we're going to teach, because when we have to be judicious and selective is, these are words that we feel are going to be really useful for better understanding the book or the themes that are in the book or for talking about the book. So that's really important.

And then another criteria that we use is, our success criteria is...these are words that we feel that over time are going to be really useful for effectively communicating about both this text and other texts moving forward, and topics, not just the text, but other topics.

So that's sort of a...that's how we start. And a lot of thinking goes into which words to choose. So in the planning process, we're reading the book, we're finding all the words that could be selected, and that might be 10 words or 12 words, and then we're having discussions about which two or three words or four or five words, depending on how many you're teaching during the week, are we going to choose from this one book? So that's the first complex thing that you're doing, but it's time well spent.

[Slide: Some Words We Might Consider...]

So here's an example of some of the words from Last Stop on Market Street that we might consider. And I kind of gave you a very short recap of the book, but I want to just make sure everybody has a good understanding of what this book is about. This is a book about CJ, who travels with his Nana through his neighborhood, and at the beginning of the book, CJ is...he's kind of complaining like, "Well, how come we have to walk when it's raining? How come my friends get to drive in a car?" And at each time he starts complaining, his Nana is teaching him to appreciate the things that are in their neighborhood because there are things that are

perhaps underappreciated, and there are a lot of things that we can learn from the people in our neighborhood and the things in our neighborhood that will benefit us.

So these are some of the words that go along with some of the lessons that Nana is teaching CJ throughout the book. And the word that I chose to share with you, let you in on how we might teach this word, is *encounter*. Now, *encounter* is actually not a word that appears in the actual text, but we were finding that when we were talking with children about the book, we were talking about all the things that CJ encounters. And so we thought, well, that's a great word for children to be able to discuss the book and write about the book later on.

[Slide: General Academic Vocabulary Teaching Routine]

So what I want to do is just very briefly, I am going to show you how we would teach this word explicitly. And once you get the hang of this routine that we use, it should only take about 7 to 10 minutes to teach your word. So it's not taking a huge amount of time out of your classroom day, but it is an investment of time.

Now I have to say, the first time you try this routine, it's obviously not going to take 7 to 10 minutes or 8 to 10 minutes, it's going to take probably 20 minutes because the kids are getting used to all the different routines like think-pair-share and choral response and all those things, but don't get discouraged. We've worked with teachers for a number of years using this routine and when kids get the hang of it, when you get the hang of it, it actually, it's just kind of a shorter, smoother process. And there are basically three main phases.

The first phase is telling the kids what word you're going to be learning that day. It's introducing the word, kind of reminding them where they saw it. The second phase—and that's for me the heart of the lesson, that's really helping the kids to use the word meaningfully with their peer—so creating a good question, perhaps a sentence frame that will help them use the word meaningfully. And then the third phase, we just want check for understanding, make sure everybody's on the same page before...make sure nobody's confused about the meaning and then let the kids know that we're going to be working on this word over time, and you do.

I want to just very briefly...I'm going to do an abbreviated version of what this looks like with kids just so you can see. Now after I do...I'm just going to give you the feel of what this feels like for a child to go through this lesson. Then we're going to...I'm going to break it down into the steps and then Thea is going to actually talk about how she plans a lesson with teachers and to teach herself.

So, children, today we are going to learn a new word and that new word is *encounter*—say *encounter*. Hopefully you said *encounter*. Let's clap the syllables in *encounter*, ready? *En-coun-ter*. How many syllables? Three. You're right. Three. You are so, so amazing kindergarteners.

So, boys and girls...or children, I should say, sorry. You might know of a word...if those of you who speak Spanish, and there are many children in our class who speak Spanish, *¿que suerte ser bilingue, verdad?* There's a word in Spanish that sounds almost the same as *encounter* and that is *encontrar*. Right? You know that word *encontrar*. It sounds almost the same as *encounter*. So those words, that's a cognate. They mean basically the same thing. So what's our word? *Encounter*. That's right.

So in our book that we read today, and we're going to be reading all week, remember CJ? Encounters lots of interesting people and things in his neighborhood. You find some interesting people and things.

So let me tell you what this word means. I'm going to give you a definition. So listen carefully. "When you *encounter* things or people, you find or meet them when you're not expecting it. It's kind of a surprise!"

Listen one more time. "When you *encounter* things or people, you find or meet them when you're not expecting to. It's kind of a surprise!"

So remember how we do this? I'm going to have you say it, I'm going to say part of the definition and then you're going to repeat it so we can all remember it together, ready?

"When you *encounter* things or people (*encounter* things or people), you find or meet them when you're not expecting to (you find or meet them when you're not expecting to). It's kind of a surprise (It's kind of a surprise)!"

I have to tell you, this is really weird doing this without a bunch of kindergarteners around me, but I hope you're participating because that's the fun part.

So boys and girls...or children, sorry—I'm just trying to say children more and I just have my first grade head and saying boys and girls...children.

Remember when we read in Last Stop on Market Street how when they got onto the bus, CJ encountered lots of people he wasn't expecting to? Remember, he encountered the sunglasses man and he learned how to close his eyes and listen? And remember when he encountered the man playing the guitar, how he was plucking his strings and beginning to sing, he was feeling the magic? Remember when he encountered that? He wasn't expecting to, but he did—he was kind of surprised.

So, I want to tell you just a few more ways you might use this word when you're out there in the world.

[Slide: Image of a fluffy dog]

This is something you might *encounter* when you're walking through your neighborhood: When I got home, I encountered this big fluffy dog and it was kind of a surprise. I was so excited to encounter this dog.

[Slide: Image of people on a bus]

When I get on the bus, when I take the bus to school, I *encounter* all sorts of interesting people and sometimes I like to talk to them and learn their stories. It's really interesting.

[Slide: Image of a child with a large stack of books in their hands]

Oh my gosh, sometimes you might *encounter* this problem. When you're carrying something heavy, you might *encounter* a challenge because, you know, you might drop them if it's too heavy. So those are some ways you might use *encounter* when you're out there in the world.

So, children, are you ready to use the word? I think so, I think we can do it. I'm going to help you, don't worry, I'm going to help you. So, oops, one more picture.

[Slide: Various images of examples for encounter]

I want you to take a look at this picture. This is a picture from my neighborhood. And I want you to just put your thinking caps on and think about this. Who would you like to encounter in this neighborhood and why? Just look at the picture. Just think in your head with your thinking cap on.

Who would you like to encounter in this neighborhood and why? Do you have an idea? If you can't think of an idea, you could use mine. I'm looking at that person painting a mural. I would like to encounter that person because I'd like to know what they're painting.

You don't have to use my idea, but you can if you want to. So when you turn to your partner to share your idea, and remember, keep sharing all the ideas you can, don't stop, but I want you to use this sentence frame.

"I would like to encounter *hmm* because *hmm*." Let's all say that together: "I would like to encounter *hmm* because *hmm*." I'm going to give you a chance to practice in your microphone. Putting your idea that you had into that sentence.

"I would like to encounter that woman over there painting the mural because I want to know what she's painting." Okay, so...and sometimes children need more time to practice, but I just gave you a minute because you're adults. And then I would have students, the children share with each other and I'm encouraging their...I have lots of pictures up here because I want them to share as much as they can.

[Slide: Images of children doing various activities to discuss encounters]

Before we move on, I have a few questions for you. If this is an example of encounter, say "encounter." If this isn't an example of encounter, say "not an encounter." Are you ready? Encounter, not an encounter. Let's practice saying encounter: "encounter." Let's practice saying not an encounter: "not an encounter." It's kind of hard to say—"not an encounter."

Okay. I meet a new friend on the playground, ready? "Encounter." Right! Right, we said that when we find or meet somebody, when we're not expecting it, that's an encounter. So, yeah, if I meet a new friend, that's an encounter.

Here's another one. I go for a walk by myself, and I don't see anybody. Ready? One, two, three: "Not an encounter." Right! If I don't meet anybody or see anything new, that's not an encounter because we said an encounter is when you find or meet somebody when you weren't expecting it.

So I might give a few more examples, but I think you get the idea.

So, children, today we learned a new word, a new exciting word, and that new word is *encounter*. That's right. So when you go home today, I want you to teach your mom or your dad or grandma or grandpa or brother or sister this new word and see how many examples you

can make with this new word and we're going to be using this word a lot as we progress through kindergarten.

[Slide: Anatomy of a Lesson Plan]

All right, so that is basically it. And it's basically in large part just a conversational tone that you would have with children, and you don't have to do all of those steps that I did, you could just do some of them. That's okay. I like to do all the steps because it just feels like a routine that I get used to, but you do what is comfortable for you.

So I just want to very briefly, before I pass the baton over to Thea...you just experienced what it would feel like to be in the lesson, and I would just want to break it down and tell you what we just did. So here's the anatomy, it's kind of like the CSI of teaching. Here's the anatomy of a lesson plan.

[Slide: General Academic Vocabulary Teaching Routine]

So remember, I told you that there are three main phases, this is sort of the high-level overview of the lesson—you introduce the word, make sure the children are like, "Oh, yeah, I remember seeing that. Okay, yeah, that's what it means."

And then the heart of the lesson is, you get children to use the word. I only gave you one think-pair-share example, but usually I use two or three because I want the children to actually use the word more in that lesson. And then you check for understanding, make sure...sometimes all of the children will answer the opposite that you're expecting, then you have to stop and say, "Okay, let me...something went wrong there. Let me regroup and see if I can explain this word so I don't set you off with the kind of a misunderstanding after this lesson."

And then you would use the word over time as much as you can, just bring it into daily conversation, encourage the children to use it. Using a big kid's word wall is a great way to do that. That's the overarching.

[Slide: Phase 1: Introduce the Word]

And here is kind of like broken down in more detail what those three phases are. So in introducing the word, in the first part of that lesson, I said the word and I had you say it right away and I briefly told you where you found it. Usually, I would write the word, too; I like to write the word, but I don't have a whiteboard around me.

And then I tell them where they found...where we heard the word in Last Stop on Market Street. And then I provide a student-friendly definition. I think using complete sentences is a great idea and just normal talking, just explaining it like you would if a child came up to you. So don't get too technical, but it's really important that the word is in that definition. And then I might spend a little more time like showing the children like I did, I showed them, I showed you some pictures of where CJ encountered new people. And then I gave you just a few examples of where you might use the word in different contexts.

[Slide: Phase 2: Have the Children Use the Word Meaningfully]

I didn't go on forever on that because I really wanted to get to this part of the lesson where the children use the word meaningfully. And this is where I often like to show them a picture or I'll just ask them a question, give them lots of think time so they can generate their own ideas, but then I give, I say, "You can use my idea if you want to," because I don't want them to feel lost. And often, they will use the idea the first time we try this routine; that's okay.

And then, I set them up for success where they can really use the word with one another, and that's why having lots of pictures up there is great because then they don't just say, "Okay, I said my one thing. I'm done." Well, you have lots of things that you might say.

[Slide: Phase 3: Check for Understanding...]

And then I check for understanding. I used...I asked short-answer questions. It's not a test, I don't expect them to master the word this first lesson. And...but I want to know, did you kind of get the main gist? And then we say the word again and I challenge them to go teach it to somebody else, and I tell them we're going to use it a lot because it's a really great word.

[Slide: Image of students writing together]

And then, guess what? They use it. I have a teaching friend who said she was in her classroom and the child said...somebody bumps...I don't know, a loud noise. There was a loud noise and the child said, "Oh, that scared me." And then they said, "Wait, that startled me," because they had just learned the word *startled*.

[Slide: Example of student writing]

And you see it all the time in their writing. Here you can see some kindergarteners using the word *encounter*. So "CJ encounters the music on the bus, the music lifts CJ off the bus," and that's really exciting. It's very validating to see it.

[Video: Kim Austin]

KIM AUSTIN

Thanks, Pam, that was great. We do have one question from Theresa that Thea responded to a little bit, but you might like to elaborate on.

PAM SPYCHER

Sure.

KIM AUSTIN

Which is, "What does this look like for older students?"

[Video: Pam Spycher]

PAM SPYCHER

Oh, great question. Yeah, I forgot to mention that we actually use this type of routine in age-appropriate ways through, typically through middle school; it could be through middle school, certainly in all grades in elementary.

With upper elementary, for example, we actually have the children write the word and we talk about what part of speech it is briefly because we want them to be thinking about that and we want them to develop that morphological knowledge, too.

Sometimes we point out word endings, like if it has a prefix or suffix, and then we also have them, with that student-friendly definition, we'll do like a cloze. So we'll write most of the definition and we'll leave out two or three key words for them to write. We don't want them copying the whole definition because that just wastes time. And then when we're at the end of the lesson, we might actually have them use the word in a sentence and do a drawing or something like that.

So we have a note taker and maybe in our follow-up materials, we can actually send that, too, for older kids. Great question.

[Video: Kim Austin]

KIM AUSTIN

Thank you. Another one from another Pam is, "How often do you do this routine? Is it daily? Do you introduce a new story each week?"

[Video: Pam Spycher]

PAM SPYCHER

That is a great question. So we are saying for early childhood, start with one or two words a week. Maybe start with one. But we've seen teachers teach four or five words a week like this, maybe one word a day. And if you want to do two words a day, do that. It kind of depends on how much time you have, but if you can do four or five words from the same book that you're reading throughout the week, that's fantastic.

[Slide: A book chock full of general academic vocab...]

THEA FABIAN

So my name is Thea Fabian, and as it was stated in the introduction, I work as a Teacher on Special Assignment with Fresno Unified School District. And part of my role in past years has been to provide coaching support for teachers who are helping their English learner and dual language learner students to accelerate their learning and excel in their language development.

So what I'm going to focus on is the planning process. What Pam presented was a great model of how the lesson is executed with children and going step-by-step through the planning

process can be really helpful, taking time to think through all of the pieces that need to be really firm, and the teacher needs to know how to do so that it becomes a very fluid process.

So I wanted to start with the book that I selected. One of the things that teachers have to do is they have to make choices as to which books they're going to be reading with their students. And sometimes this has to do with looking at the curriculum that's adopted by the district and maybe if there's room in there to combine with some other resources that teachers may have or different curriculum that are being used interchangeably.

So the book I selected for this is the book Wolf. And I selected this book partly due to the fact that it combines a lot of Tier 2 academic vocabulary.

[Slide: Selecting general academic words...]

So looking at the book Wolf, here are some examples of my selection of academic vocabulary in Wolf. So we have the word *concentrate* popping up. This book is about a wolf who wants to become more of a civilized animal and he realizes that in order to become more civilized, he really needs to learn how to read, and that's because he encounters a farm of literate animals and he realizes in order to be part of their club, he really needs to learn how to read. So this is a great book for early learners who are getting exposed to the idea that part of their development is learning how to read.

So I selected *concentrate*, *peered*, *my eyes are playing tricks on me*, and I also selected the word *improved*. So those are some of the candidates, but I wanted you to see how I highlight the words in the text. That is partly to identify them, but it's also because I will be referring to those words during the interactive read aloud. As Pam stated, when we read interactively with kids, we will stop at the word during at least the first two reads of the book and we will give a quick definition and have the kids perform an action that's connected to the word.

[Slide: Going through my candidates...]

So as I went through this text, I got together my list and I'm showing you exactly what this would look like. If I were teaching it, I would have a little sticky with my candidates. I wouldn't have a PowerPoint that I was going to do with my kids. Although I'd like to point out that for the upper grades, a lot of teachers have done that.

So I selected *peered*, *concentrate*, *educated*, *satisfied*, *impressed*, *improved*, *admire*, and *emerging*. And on the side there, I wrote "pause and punch" during interactive read aloud because the pause and punch, that's that short definition that we offer for the students during the first couple of reads and the opportunities for the students to say all of these words and do an action with them so they can start integrating those words into their vocabulary.

[Slide: One of my winners: admire]

Okay, so one of my winners in my evaluation of what words I was going to teach is the word *admire*. I really like the word *admire* because it had a lot to do with important meanings of the

text. The wolf really wanted the other animals to admire him and I also thought that was a really high-leverage word that students would be able to use.

So in this sentence, we have “he was going to read it day and night,” talking about a book he selects at the bookshop, “every letter and every line, he would read it so well that the farm animals would *admire* him.”

And I think for this one, I chose to do jazz sparkly fingers around the face every time we encountered the word *admire* so the kids would get to integrate that knowledge of when you admire someone, you really think that person is great.

[Slide: Writing my script...]

Okay, let’s look at the beginning of the planning process. When we are beginning to plan, it’s hard to just go through the steps without knowing what it’s going to look like, and part of the process for teachers in knowing what it’s going to look like is being able to script information for yourself.

So here I have scripted this lesson, and I do typically script my lessons when it’s a new practice for me for the first several lessons because I want to know exactly what I’m going to say and that helps me to integrate the process into my practice.

So I have here the first phase of the lesson. “We’re going to learn a new word today and the word is *admire*. Say *admire*.” And you see my hand by my face and when I say “Say *admire*,” that’s because I have a routine with the kids that when my hand is up, I’m speaking and then when my hand releases, they talk. And that helps me to make sure that every student is going to be practicing the word. So I say, “Say *admire*.” And then when I released my hand they say, “*admire*.” And I wrote out “clap the syllables *ad-mire*.”

“In Spanish, this word is *admirar*, which sounds almost the same.” So they get a little bit of exposure to the Spanish.

“The word *admire* comes from the book that we read this morning called Wolf. In the story, the wolf was going to read the book every day and every night and he would read it so well that the other farm animals would *admire* him.”

So you see that I’m scripting myself, but in this phase, I’m taking the portion of the text where the word is referred to and I’m just highlighting that. And something that Pam said is really important, which is that we don’t teach a random list of words and we don’t teach these lessons prior to reading the book, and that’s because the word lives in a little cabinet in the brain that’s associated with this wonderful book Wolf.

So when I say to the kids that the word *admire* comes from the book we read this morning, they’re able to go into their little brains and open up that Wolf cabinet and say, “Okay, this word *admire*, that goes there.” It gives them something to stick the word to so that the word won’t be lost.

[Slide: Gosh “student-friendly” ...]

And then I just pointed out that it's super fun to do elements of this exercise standing up and moving around, but that you would have to put that into your planning process, like remind yourself, "Okay, this part I want to do standing up."

The next phase, I wanted to point out some tips in writing a student-friendly definition. In my experience with teachers, this is really hard, and I think it's really hard because in the past, in the past, we have given dictionary definitions to students in many different contexts and we are not giving a dictionary definition.

We're giving a definition that is close to the dictionary definition, but a definition that is going to be something that the kids understand easily because our main job is to learn the meaning of the word. And you can see we're not really getting into the part of speech, different conjugations of the verb, or whatever word we're teaching. We are just really focusing on meaning.

So one tip I have is that...on the right-hand side. If it's a verb, I will start my definitions with "when *you*..." so it puts it in the context of the student. "When *you* pounce, when *you* concentrate, when *you* demonstrate something..."

If it's an adjective, I will often start with:

"Someone who is impressive is..."

"Someone who is considerate, does something..."

"Someone that...something that is disruptive..."

So I have those set forms for myself and that helps me to not struggle so much, to think of what a student-friendly definition is.

On the left-hand side, I have some tips regarding the execution with students that I also write out for myself. So I write out for myself, especially in the beginning, a reminder to use the gesture with my hands around the face. "When you *admire* someone, you think they are really great or wonderful...*admire*."

And I have to say that the template includes all the steps, but I'll tell you that one thing that I do in between the steps is I get the kids to say *admire* as much as possible. I probably end the lesson with the kids saying *admire* at least 20 or so times. So even after all these little steps, I would say, "Say *admire, admire*."

And the other thing that is happening, too, is that I'm writing out in the beginning everything that I want the kids to say, and that's a reminder to me that they need time to have the sentences chunked for them and to be able to repeat it. From the beginning, I'll even script out what I want the kids to say and that's a reminder for me that I'm watching for their interaction.

[Slide: Show them where you found it...]

So when we find the definition, a really important step is, also, I point out where I got it in the text. After you read a story interactively with kids, what they do is they go find that same book on the bookshelf so that they can read it as independently as they can. So here I have,

"Remember when we read the story earlier? In the story, the wolf wanted to be like the farm animals and wanted them to like him."

So I'm reminding them of the background of the content of the book that they're familiar with. "He thought if he learned how to read, they would think he is wonderful, or they would *admire* him. Say *admire*."

So, you can see I built in an extra little definition into the...situating the word in context. So I said, "They would think he is wonderful or would *admire* him." That's giving them a little bit more time to process what admiring someone means.

And then I note it for myself; I'm going to gesture to the students to repeat *admire*: "Say *admire, admire, admire*." And we get more practice with the word while we're practicing.

[Slide: I admire my teacher because...]

Here are my examples:

"I admire my teacher because she helps everyone to learn."

"I admire my grandma. She's 85 years old and she takes salsa-dance lessons."

"I admire my friend Pablo because he always helps everyone."

and

"We admire people who do kind things for other people in need."

So when planning this, I tried to think of and write examples that the students can connect with quickly because that's our role; is not something that you have to figure out and it takes you a long time to do that. I really want them to connect quickly. So the examples are student-friendly, too, and that they reinforce the meaning.

I speak very intentionally and ask them to show me their thinking faces. So while I'm speaking, I'll say, "Students, I'm going to give you some examples of *admire*. While you're listening to me, I'd like you to show me your thinking face. It may be like this, or it may be like this, but I really want to see in your face that you're listening to me."

And usually after each one of the examples, I'll also have them say, "*Admire! Admire!*" and that gives us four more touches on the word.

I watch their faces for signs of listening closely and processing. So that's the work that I'm doing as a teacher during the lesson.

When students are familiar with the routine, I'll prompt them with the gesture during or following the example for them to say the target word to add miles on the tongue. And so this phrase "miles on the tongue" is what I was talking about. We might do 22 or more touches on that word during this short 7-minute lesson and that gives the kids miles on the tongue in using this word, and you can also apply that concept, miles on the tongue, to any language processes you're offering the kids to get those miles on the tongue.

[Slide: Selecting visuals...]

What about selecting visuals? You could see my visuals. There's my 85-year-old grandma...she's not really my grandma, but a great picture I found. Students who we admire because they help each other, a teacher who we admire because she's helping her children to learn.

[Slide: Why might you admire rescue workers?]

And now we get to the questions. So after the kids have seen the examples, we are looking at the types of questions we are going to give the kids. So here's what I'm doing here. When I say, "Hmm, I admire them because they help people. Hmm, I admire them because they save people's lives."

So what I'm trying to do here is to show the kids how to think and how to be comfortable thinking. And I'm thinking out loud and sometimes what I do is that I will look off into another direction and that somehow makes the kids a little bit more comfortable watching me think because if they're not so much on the spot, now I'm on the spot, and they get to see their teacher thinking. "Hmm, I admire because they really help people. They work so hard and they save people's lives."

And then you can see we're practicing the sentence frame. "I admire them because... I admire them because..." Let's practice that together. "I admire them because... I admire them because..." And like Pam said, we can take out our mini microphones or you could go into your secret cave to practice for privacy, and we can practice how we want to respond.

So this is the moment that takes a little bit of finesse because you have different learners in your classes and some of them are going to think of an original example right away and then some of them are going to wonder if it's okay to use your example or they want to think of one, but they haven't thought of it quite yet. So this step takes a little bit of finesse because you're making sure everyone gets the chance to practice before they go ahead and turn to their partner and share their responses.

[Slide: Notice how this second question...]

Depending on how you set up the question, it will make your students use a type of structure in the sentence, and it's a great opportunity to build their language.

[Slide: Why might you admire rescue workers?]

So you can see that in this first example I used, "I admire them *because...*" So they're getting to use that *because* to give a reason why.

[Slide: Notice how this second question...]

But I decided for my second question that I was going to ask them...I wanted to use some modal verbs. So I'm using the verbs *would* and *might* that we would use with the verb *admire*: "Why *would* you admire a friend? Why *might* you admire a friend?"

Modal verbs are not very easy for English learners and many dual language learners to learn, incidentally, and in fact, you may see kids in the upper grades who struggle to use modal verbs effectively in their writing. And so what I did here is I chose *would* or *might* because I know

that's something that kids need practice with and that early learners, they can absolutely do this.

"I *would* admire a friend if he helped the teacher in class." "I *might* admire a friend if she's very kind." I've written these examples for myself because I know that I will need them in instruction to offer as examples to my kids. So I've written these because I know that I will use them.

[Slide: Play the game well!]

Okay, so when we get to the game portion of the learning experience, I say, "Play the game well." Train your kids to hold their thoughts while your hand is held by your face or at your chest or some people like to hold their hand at their mouth, and then when you release, the kids are going to say "admire."

So this is the stage of the lesson where we give examples and non-examples of the word, and kids really look forward to this part of the lesson because they have to hold their thoughts and even if they know it before their peers, they have to wait for their peers. It's also really important for equity because some of the kids may take a little bit longer to process the example or the non-example, but they need the same opportunity as the kids who get it right off the bat, right?

So we have "A boy who helps his teacher clean up the classroom every day. Hmm. Admire? Not admire?" Now when I release my hand, the expectation for the students is that they say either "admire" or "not admire." So we have practiced the expectation that we do the action with the word also, and if it's a non-example we say, "not admire." But I give lots of thinking time to make sure every kid has that opportunity to work through the example or the, or the non-example.

[Slide: Some things to keep in mind...]

So some things that are really important to keep in mind are that this routine will feel pretty slow at first. So some teachers, they go through the routine after they have started to learn it and write the lessons for themselves or with their group and they say, "Gosh, this is just taking so long! I'm not sure I'm doing it right, or I'm not sure that this is the right thing to do because this takes a big chunk of time."

And then...so what I want to encourage is just that idea that you do probably need some time to be able to work through the steps at your own pace, but it will increase with speed. Also, once the kids get used to the routine, they can handle a fast...a pretty fast speed.

So what Pam said is that the lesson is 7 to 8 minutes...it is, but at the beginning, it may be slower, and it may feel slow to you because basically you're just learning how to do it and the students are learning how to do it.

Now when this is done schoolwide, of course it goes really fast because the school, the kids may be traveling from grade level to grade level and they're used to this routine being one of the different routines that their teachers use, and when they come into that second grade class after doing this in kindergarten and first grade, they're kind of experts at the process and

that's also good for you to know because that means that the kids have a strategy that they consistently can go to with their teacher in order to learn words well and quickly.

The kid-friendly definitions are hard to write at first. So on your teaching teams, you may have somebody who's kind of like talented at writing these definitions and others who are like, "I just can't think of how to write this definition." So that's a completely normal thing to happen and in teaching teams, it's a good way to share individual teachers' different strengths in writing lessons.

Importantly, keep interacting with the kids. So today, we didn't show you an interaction with the kids, although I think we have a couple of videos posted, but interacting is the main thing that you're doing in this lesson. So everything in the lesson is a conversation. So I would say that's really the target you're trying to achieve. You're trying to have a conversation with your kids about this word and do a lot of examples, and then you're also trying to have the kids share their knowledge with you about what they're learning. So it's all an interaction.

Have fun and don't worry too much about doing it the right way. Like Pam said, we're offering you a step-by-step process that you can follow and get really good at, but the main thing is to just get the major components in there and get learning with your kids. It's not necessary to criticize too much about doing things perfectly. It's really important just to get in there and get learning these words.

Don't underestimate the power of miles on the tongue. Your kids saying the word as much as possible, using it in context of the story, using it in other contexts. One of the participants said "use that as like a word of the day, as a signal word, make a word wall." Getting miles on the tongue in a lot of different ways to interact with these words is key. And look for many opportunities to do this. And I put once a day, but we had already discussed that you might be doing this two to five times a week for early learners and then I noticed that...I noted that for older kids, especially long-term English learners, you might be doing it actually a lot more because they need increased opportunities.

[Slide: Working Smart]

So what about working with our teams? So one thing that I wanted to share with you is that we're all on a journey of how to work smarter and work more collaboratively in our teams.

So working smart. It's a good idea to make a plan for your shared work from the start that everyone can access and add to. On the right-hand side of the screen, I have how I have my vocabulary lessons filed. I chose to file them alphabetically and not by the text title. The reason I did that is because if I find the word *admire* in another text, I'm not very likely to remember where all these words are under the text, but I am able to see the word *admire* in another text and then say, "Oh, I want to see if somebody has a...if somebody has a lesson on that. I'm going to look in the A's." So this is how I choose to file my lessons and the templates that I use, and it also makes it really easy to share with other people. So you can imagine at a school site or a few schools collaborating together, they can share files together. It lightens the load for everyone.

And so that's my comment on the left—share the load. Divide and conquer as a work team, but create several together first and help each other figure it out. It's important to create some together first, because it helps everybody to be aligned in the thinking process.

So like we said, some people may be really fast at writing these definitions and other people may not be because that's not...they don't come to them really quickly, but that other person may have a strength in another area. Initially, it's really good to combine strengths and talk through everything so when you go to execute in the classroom, everybody's on the same page about what's happening. Not that all the lessons have to look identical, but when you're working in a team, you want to at least know that you all have the same intentions and that your planning process has helped you to align those intentions and keeps everybody on the same page rowing together.

Now, after you've worked together with several, you can definitely divide different aspects of the lesson and share with each other, and it's a very smart way to work. You wouldn't want every individual teacher on a team writing every lesson by themselves because it takes a while, but it's really good to share those strengths with each other.

[Slide: Pause and Ponder]

PAM SPYCHER

One thing that I just want to reiterate, something that I'm really glad that you dwelled on for a second, is that step five when we're having the children turn to one another and use the word meaningfully. I wrote a little bit in the chat about how important the planning is for that because what we don't want is a sentence frame where the children are just filling in the blank with the word.

That doesn't really help them to learn the word. So when we write the sentence frames, the word is always in the sentence frame and it's always open-ended. That's why you see a lot of our sentence frames ending with *because* or—I don't know, can't think of anything off the top of my head—because we want children to talk more and use the word more.

So the question is really important and the sentence frame is really important. That's probably the...in addition to writing the student-friendly definition, that's probably the most challenging part of planning; that's why it's so important to do it with others.

THEA FABIAN

Yeah, and I'll tell you a common pitfall is that the teacher or team may come up with the sentence frame, "Admire means..."

PAM SPYCHER

Yeah.

THEA FABIAN

So that's an example of a closed frame because there's really just one answer to it. You're just asking for a definition. So I like what Pam said, and then the common pitfall would be to set up a sentence frame that just asks the kids to define it. So that's not what you're after.

PAM SPYCHER

Yeah. Or to fill in the blank with the word *admire*. So that's, so the word...we're really trying to provide an opportunity for them to explore the meaning of the word, not just to say the word. We want them to say the word a lot, not robotically, but in meaningful ways.

The other thing I wanted to point out, too, is we've been talking a lot about pulling words from stories, but remember when I talked about where how...one of the reasons for choosing general academic vocabulary to focus on is because they're high-leverage across disciplines.

So I just pulled out one of my favorite books on bats. Anybody who knows me knows how much I love bats and bees and other keystone species, but I was just looking, flipping through and this has words like *curious* and *explorers*, and those are wonderful words to dwell on with children. So it's not exclusively in the domain of storybooks that we're talking about. Pull words from all different types of books that you're using.

THEA FABIAN

Now, it also reminded me that when you are teaching another kind of vocabulary, discipline-specific, this lesson is not such a good thing. So, for example, the word *proboscis*, like from a bee—this lesson is not good for that and the reason is because we can't apply the word *proboscis* to a lot of different situations. It's not a general academic vocabulary term.

That's also a pitfall sometimes in planning is that you have to keep in mind that what we're trying to do is really amplify the use of these general academic terms that can be used across disciplines and that you might be doing other kinds of vocabulary instruction, especially hands-on and otherwise for disciplinary words.

PAM SPYCHER

I also wanted to reiterate some things that you said, Thea, and I might have alluded to them and Mary Diaz is commenting on it, how we do emphasize doing this as a team. A team of two people, a team of three people, four or five, however many you want, because especially as you're first learning how to do this, this is complex teaching.

I mean, we call this a routine, but there are many different routines embedded within the lesson and there are new things for everyone and it can be challenging, and sometimes you teach a lesson and it flops. And so you want to have people to debrief with and laugh with and have fun with and it actually is really fun planning these lessons together.

So we always encourage collaboration in planning and going in and watching one another teach or co-teaching it the first few times you do it. I mean, we're just so much better when we're doing this work in partnership. So we definitely...thank you for calling that out so that I could dwell on it on my soapbox a little bit longer.

KIM AUSTIN

It seemed like in the chat there's high interest in the gestures as well. So Thea, could you comment and explain a little like, how do you come up with them? Does it matter if they're the same from classroom to classroom?

THEA FABIAN

Absolutely.

KIM AUSTIN

In addition, since that's a visual cue, what about word walls? What recommendations do you have?

THEA FABIAN

Yeah. Okay, so I think those are two really good questions. So first, regarding gestures, I try to come up with a gesture that if the kid went home and repeated it or if they were writing, they would be like, "*Admire. Admire.* Oh, yeah, that's when you think someone's really great."

Or maybe the word is *lumbered*—and you can't see me walking around, but for a different text, we had the word *lumbered*—and we walked around, we had to get up for that one. So whenever the kid thought of the word *lumbered*, they really thought of that movement, that action.

So this is total physical response. This has been around forever, and so the key is to come up with a gesture or a movement for me that's going to help remind the kids what it means and also, of course, it adds to the fun and adds to the movement which all kids need for it to be engaged in the lesson and to have school be enjoyable for them.

Regarding the word wall, I want to say that sometimes, on occasion, I have encountered situations where I only see high-frequency words in early learning classrooms or words that are associated with early decoding.

So I wanted to encourage people to think about the importance of having academic word walls. When we do open writing with students on the text that they are reading, we accept their spellings of the words and them having reminders in the classrooms of what those words are that they've studied are really critical for them. The fact that they can look up to the wall and see "*admire*, I know that word, I can use it." It's a huge part of building the language-rich environment for students.

So if you don't see a lot of academic word walls for students, I would encourage you to think about what that might look like in your specific context.

KIM AUSTIN

Thanks, Thea. I think this will be the last question.

PAM SPYCHER

Okay, we have a great question that...about—and this could be a whole webinar itself—is, “How to connect this work with parents and what kids do at home?” That’s a wonderful, wonderful question.

I’ll just share that I think the classroom-family collaboration is critical primarily because children are at home most of the time, they’re in school a very little time, and so however we can partner with parents in this endeavor the better off we’ll be.

I will say that one thing I always recommend for dual language learners and students who are English learners is to encourage parents to continue discussions using the primary language, using the home language, because we want to, again, foster that bilingualism. And at home, children can actually talk about the stories that they’re learning about, they can retell the stories in their primary language and in English. They can go home and they can teach that...the word they learned in English, for example, or whatever the language was to their parents, and they can actually do some comparing like, “Oh, how would you say that in our other language that we speak here?”

We can send home manipulatives so the children can...to support the children. I’m using hand puppets because I love popsicle hand puppets. So the children can have support in retelling the stories using the new vocabulary that they’re learning. And we can actually send the actual book. So I think that’s a great investment to have children actually taking home books that they’ve used and loved at school so they can enjoy them at home, and Thea has a plethora of ideas, too.

THEA FABIAN

Well, one thing I’ll just add to that is that at the end of the lesson, we do say, “Now, when you go home today, it can be your older sister or your little brother or your mom or dad, but I want you to teach them the word *admire* and make sure to give them a really good example.”

And so I want to say that that’s very empowering for kids, too, because a lot of our kids are actually developing their language, their English language, with their parents, too, and so it’s a great way to start dialogues about language in the household and empower the student to have ownership of what they’re learning and bring that as a leader into their own house. Even a three-year-old leader, even a four-year-old leader, kids can do it.

PAM SPYCHER

And parents can learn to use this routine at home, too, if they want.

THEA FABIAN

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

PAM SPYCHER

So that’s another idea.



THEA FABIAN

Yes, we can train parents to do that because parents are really smart.

[Slide: Want to learn more?]

PAM SPYCHER

Super smart. So if you want to learn more, there are lots of resources. Visit our Leading with Learning website. We do have lots of resources there already and some articles that Thea and I have worked on together with our colleague Danielle Garegnani, and then I have also an article that talks all about this type of vocabulary develop...actually in the context of science, these are both in the context of science, which I think is funny because we've talked about stories, but it's similar. So please do visit us there.

[Slide: About REL West]

KIM AUSTIN

Thanks, Pam and Thea. I just want to thank you for your presentation and your depth of knowledge and your engagement. I would love to be a student in each of your classrooms so...

THEA FABIAN

Yay!

KIM AUSTIN

Thank you so much.