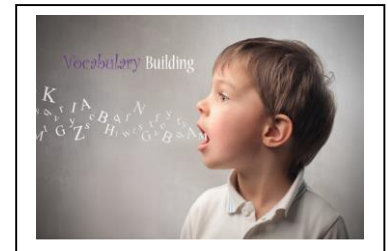


Parent Information Sheet

Help Improve Your Child's Vocabulary

Having a broad vocabulary has huge benefits for children - increasing their confidence as readers, writers and talkers. The more words a child knows, the greater their comprehension will be when reading. The more interesting words a child uses, the more interesting their writing will be. However, this will help them across the curriculum – not just with literacy skills.



- **Talk, Talk, Talk** - Be a talking family. Plan regular times where the family sits down and talks together. Mealtimes are ideal. Use great vocabulary when you speak to your child and move away from 'baby talk'. Talk about the things you see around you, what you've done that day or are planning to do tomorrow/next week/on holiday.
- **Answer Questions about Words** - If your child asks you about a word, take the time to explain its definition and correct pronunciation. Older children can look words up for themselves using a dictionary or alternatives using a thesaurus. If you can, make links between the new word and others which may have the same root, for example telescope, television, teleport.
- **Play Word Games** - Traditional games like Scrabble and Hangman are great for encouraging kids to try out new words or sparking discussions about what words mean. There are also some great 'word finding' games and apps available for use on tablets and phones.
- **Word of the Day** - Have a word of the day / week. This can be a new word you've discovered or shared, a favourite word of yours, or a word you've randomly picked from a dictionary! Challenge the family to use the word at least once during the day / through the week, in context: in other words, they can't just say a sentence with the word in, it has to be part of a conversation or referring to something you've seen or done.
- **Don't Be Afraid of Big Words** - Don't be scared to use and explain longer words with your child. If he can say and understand 'Tyrannosaurus Rex' or 'Optimus Prime', he can cope with 'carnivorous' or 'multi-coloured', for example. In Reception children learn and use the words 'digraphs' and 'trigraphs'.
- **It's Not Just... But...** - When describing something – perhaps the weather, or a meal – try to think of a better descriptive word than the most obvious one. For example, 'It's not just cold outside – but freezing!' 'This sandwich isn't just tasty – but scrumptious!' 'I'm not just happy – but delighted!'
- **Encourage, Don't Criticise** - If your child tries to use a word incorrectly, don't mock or criticise. Instead, praise her for trying out a new word, and talk about the word's meaning, perhaps thinking up a few examples of how it could be better used.