CHAPTER

2

# Language and Vocabulary Development

## Understanding Language Development

Not only is language learning a social function, it is essential to becoming an effective thinker, reader, and writer. Halliday (1975) notes that one function of language is to help discover meaning from the world around us. This is essential for emergent readers and writers as well as for the continued development of literacy through adulthood. The important relationship between language development and emergent reading is documented by Morrow (2005). Students need an adequate language foundation to begin learning to read, therefore teachers and parents need to talk and read with children in order to help expand their language. Research has shown that early readers come from homes where rich language and a great deal of oral language are used (Dickinson & Tabors, 2001). In addition, early readers demonstrate an awareness of story language and can retell stories using literary conventions such as "Once upon a time" and "They lived happily ever after." When telling stories, early readers also tend to use the delivery and intonation like those of an adult reading aloud (Morrow, 2005), which is related to fluent oral reading. Although language plays an important role in reading comprehension, it is crucial to communicating in general (Johnson, 2001). In reference to teaching intermediate and older students, Fountas and Pinnell (2001) explain that using language orally to discuss, share opinions, question, criticize, describe, and perform is the precursor to sharing thinking in writing.

There are two types of language: (1) **receptive language** is the language that the students understand and (2) **expressive language** is the language that the students produce. Although a speech-language pathologist generally assesses language difficulties, it is often the classroom teacher or literacy specialist who refers students for further evaluation and supports the speech-language pathologist in language instruction. Therefore it is important that the literacy specialist have a foundation in language development. There are three aspects of language: form, content, and use or pragmatics.

### Language Form

Language form describes the structure of language and is also concerned with rules for segmenting and combining linguistic symbols in order to produce meaningful utterances. These symbols are typically expressed orally (phonemes), graphically (letters), or manually (signs). The categories of language form are phonology, morphology, and syntax.

**Phonology.** **Phonology** involves the study of the **phonemes** of a language (the smallest unit of sound that can change meaning, such as changing /p/ in *pat* to /b/ in *bat*) and the combination of phonemes to build larger units such as syllables and words. Phonology

encompasses articulation, pronunciation, and intonation. **Articulation** is the process of producing speech sounds in the mouth and throat and is classified by manner, place, and voice. There are seven places of articulation for English consonants: bilabial (made with both lips in contact), labio-dental (made with contact between the lower lip and upper teeth); lingual-dental (tongue and teeth), lingua-alveolar (tongue against the ridge behind the teeth), lingua-palatal (tongue against the palate or hard roof of the mouth); velar (base of the tongue and the soft back of the mouth), and glottal (unrestricted airflow through the larynx or vocal cords). These places of articulation are cross-referenced with the manner in which the sounds are produced.

The manner of articulation describes how the tongue, lips, vocal chords, and other speech organs are involved in making a sound, primarily consonant sounds. Voicing in articulation refers to whether the sound produced in the vocal chords vibrates or not: /th/ in *then* is voiced, while /th/ in *thin* is voiceless. In English, there are eight manners of articulation, ranging from the greatest amount of constricted airflow to the least amount. There are **stop consonants** in which the airflow is stopped abruptly: /p/, /t/, and /k/ (voiceless) and /b/, /d/, and /g/ (voiced). **Fricative consonants** are partially blocked with turbulent airflow: /f/, /th/ in *thin*, /s/, /sh/, and /h/ (voiceless) and /v/, /th/, /z/, and /zh/ (voiced). **Affricate consonants** start like stops and end like fricatives: /ch/ (voiceless) and /j/ (voiced). Manners with very little obstruction and voiced are approximates and they include **nasals**, as in /m/, /n/, and /ng/, when air flows through the nose, not the mouth; **liquid lateral**, as in /l/, when the tongue touches the teeth and air flows from the side of the tongue, and **liquid rhotic**, as in /r/, where sound is made with the blade of the tongue and air flows from the sides is a vowel-like consonant; and **glides**, as in /w/ and /y/ (voiced) and /hw/ (voiceless), which are also vowel-like consonants with the tongue closer to the roof of the mouth with slight turbulence. The last part of diphthongs, /ow/ and /oi/, are also glides. **Vowels**, on the other hand, have unrestricted airflow, and the lips are retracted. Vowels are categorized by tongue height, tongue advancement, and whether the tongue is tense or lax. Vowels also differ in how much the mouth is open: /ĭ/ (closed), /ĕ/ (half-closed), /ŭ/ (half-open), /aw/ (half open), /ŏ/ (mostly open), and /ă/ (open).

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is a standardized set of graphic symbols including Latin and Greek symbols for transcribing speech sounds in any language. A speech therapist would use the IPA to transcribe and then classify students' articulation of phonemes. The consonant chart shown in Table 2.1 has been adapted from the International Phonetic Association (2005) to include speech sounds written with the English phonetic spelling so that it is more understandable to professionals other than speech-language pathologists. In this chart you will see the manner, voice, and place of articulation for English consonants. Understanding these elements of articulation is important to the literacy specialist in interpreting students' speech or spelling and when planning subsequent instruction. Developmental spelling assessments give credit for substituting letters that have the same place and manner but differ in voice. For example, students may write *budado* for *potato*. This spelling is not random; rather it represents substituting /b/ for /p/ and /d/ for /t/, which are similar sounding phonemes but should be voiceless, not voiced. You can help students say the

**Table 2.1  Consonant Sounds of English**

| | Manner | Voicing | Place of Articulation | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | **Bilabial** | **Labio-dental** | **Lingual-dental** | **Lingua-alveolar** | **Lingua-palatal** | **Velar** | **Glottal** |
| **Obstruents** | Stop | Voiceless | p | | | t | | k | |
| | | Voiced | b | | | d | | g | |
| | Fricative | Voiceless | | f | th (thin) | s | sh | | h |
| | | Voiced | | v | th (then) | z | zh | | |
| | Affricate | Voiceless | | | | | ch | | |
| | | Voiced | | | | | j | | |
| **Approximates or Sonorants** | Nasal | Voiced | m | | | n | | ng | |
| | Liquid Lateral | Voiced | | | | l | | | |
| | Liquid Rhotic | Voiced | | | | r | | | |
| | Glide | Voiced | w | | | y | | | |
| | | Voiceless | | | | | hw | | |

International Phonetic Association (2005). *The international phonetic alphabet* (Revised). Retrieved March 26, 2008, from www.arts.gla.ac.uk/ipa/ipachart.html

correct sound, feel the vibration difference by putting their hand to their throat as they say these two words, and then write the correct letter.

The vowel sound chart pictured in Table 2.2, also adapted from the IPA categorizes the English vowel sounds, by tongue height, tongue advancement, and whether the tongue is tense or lax. Keywords are provided for each of the vowel phonemes. This chart is important to understand how different vowels are produced. In some regions of the country, /ĕ/ and /ĭ/ often sound similar, such as in *pen* and *pin*. Students who confuse these sounds need to be taught that the difference is in the tongue height and how wide the mouth is open.

Phonology also includes examining the pronunciation of words and intonation. **Pronunciation** is the ability to pronounce words. Students may mispronounce words such as *libary* for *library*, or *pŭskĕtē* for *spaghetti*, and listeners may still understand the word; however if students say *affect* when *effect* is meant, it does have an impact on meaning. **Intonation**, conversely, is the patterns of pitch, stress, and juncture that affect the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences. Pitch is the rise and fall of the voice, such as the difference in the voice for a statement, command, or question. **Stress** is putting more emphasis on a syllable, such as the differences in the word *dessert* and *desert*, or on a word, such as "*I* wouldn't say that" versus

**Table 2.2  Vowel Sounds of English**

| Vowel Phoneme | Keyword | Tongue Height | Tongue Advancement | Tense/ Lax | Lip Rounding |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| /ē/ | key | high | front | tense | retracted |
| /ĭ/ | win | high-mid | front | lax | retracted |
| /ā/ | rebate | mid | front | tense | retracted |
| /ĕ/ | red | low-mid | front | lax | retracted |
| /ă/ | had | low | front | lax | retracted |
| /o͞o/ | moon | high | back | tense | retracted |
| /o͝o/ | wood | high-mid | back | lax | retracted |
| /ō/ | okay | mid | back | tense | retracted |
| /aw/ | law | low-mid | back | tense | retracted |
| /ŏ/ | cod | low | back | tense | retracted |
| ə | about | mid | central | lax | retracted |
| ŭ | bud | low-mid | central | lax | retracted |
| /er/ | butter | mid | central | lax | retracted |
| /ir/ | bird | mid | central | lax | retracted |

*Note.* Some consonant and vowel phonemes have been adapted from the Latin symbols in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) to help relate sounds to known English graphemes.

"I wouldn't say *that*." **Juncture** is the flow and pauses between the sounds within and between words. This includes appropriately blending sounds or pausing within a word such as *a note* or *an oat*. Juncture also includes taking appropriate pauses between words, for example, "My dad coaches soccer" and "Peter, my dad, coaches soccer."

Once the incorrect speech has been identified, you can assist the students in properly articulating the sounds or pronouncing the words. You can reinforce the correct articulation, pronunciation, or intonation by demonstrating and verbalizing how to make the sound or pause. The students can be given a mirror to practice the correct articulation and use an audiotape to practice the pronunciation or intonation. It is beneficial to place these sounds in the context of words and sentences in the students' vocabulary.

**Morphology. Morphology** of a language is based on minimal units of meaning called **morphemes**. **Free morphemes** may be nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, or prepositions, which are the words that make up our vocabulary. **Bound morphemes** often involve affixes (prefixes, infixes, suffixes) that are attached to free morphemes. Brown's 14 grammatical morphemes (Brown, 1973) are important in understanding and supporting students' language acquisition and vocabulary development. Morphological awareness is related to students' reading of derived words and more generally to their decoding skills. The relations of sounds, spelling, and meaning of morphemes in words is complex, and it influences word reading. Carlisle and Stone (2005) agree with other morphological studies (Nunes, Bryant, & Bindman, 1997; Rubin, Patterson, & Kantor, 1991; Treiman & Cassar, 1996) that explicit instruction be provided in word reading and spelling that links phonological, orthographic (spelling), syntactic, and morphemic elements. Instruction on linking base words and affixes to their meanings helps students analyze unfamiliar words that contain familiar morphemes,

| Table 2.3 | Examples of Brown's 14 Morphemes |
|---|---|
| **Morpheme** | **Example** |
| Present progressive (-*ing* with no auxiliary verb) | Mommy driving |
| In | Ball in cup |
| On | Doggie on sofa |
| Regular plural (-*s*) | Kitties eat my ice cream. (forms: /s/, /z/, /ez/) |
| Irregular past | Came, fell, broke, sat, went |
| Possessives | Mommy's balloon broke. |
| Uncontractible copula (verb *to be*) | He is. (response to "Who's sick?") |
| Articles | I see a kitty. I throw the ball. |
| Regular past (-*ed*) | Daddy pulled the wagon. (all three sounds: /ed/, /d/, /t/) |
| Regular third person (-*s*) | Kathy hits. (forms: /s/, /z/, /ez/) |
| Irregular third person | Does, has |
| Uncontractible auxiliary | He is. (response to "Who's going home?") |
| Contractible copula | Man's big. (for "Man is big.") |
| Contractible auxiliary | Daddy's drinking juice. (for "Daddy is drinking juice.") |

therefore expanding their vocabulary. The chart in Table 2.3 shows examples of Brown's 14 morphemes and can be used to identify the presence or absence of these morphemes in students' speech and to plan instruction to support the students' use of these morphemes. Brown (1973) reports that these morphemes are mastered between 19 and 50 months of age, although I have found that some school-age children receiving reading support, including English-language learners (ELL), need specific instruction in using these morphemes correctly.

**Syntax.** The third aspect of language form is **syntax**, which is based on the grammatical structure of a sentence and describes the rules for combining words into phrases and phrases into meaningful sentences. Syntax includes sentence patterns (noun phrases, verb phrases), sentence transformations (question, negative, passive versus active voice), and embeddings (adding modifiers, compounding, conjoined or embedded clauses). By supporting students in their understanding of the syntax of Standard English, they will be able to use this knowledge to make predictions and comprehend while reading and they will be able to write coherent and complete sentences.

## *Language Content*

Language content is often analyzed by content categories (Bloom & Lahey, 1989). The semantics of a language deals with the vocabulary or meaning of words and the use of content and function words. Table 2.4 identifies, defines, and gives an example of each of the content categories. Bloom and Lahey (1978) report that children are able to communicate these content categories between 10 and 40 months of age, although I have found that many

school-age children still have difficulties with them. Table 2.4 also gives an approximate age of when students are able to communicate these categories. Because all of the age ranges are before school age, students who are unable to demonstrate these categories will need support in developing these content categories. This chart can be used to identify the content categories students use or do not use in speech.

| Table 2.4 | Language Content Categories | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Content Category** | **Age (in Months)** | **Briefly Defined** | **Example** |
| Existence | 10–18 | Object in environment | "Doggie." |
| Nonexistence | 14–30 | Object no longer present | "All gone." |
| Recurrence | 20–40 | Reference to reappearance | "More milk." |
| Rejection | 24–48 | Opposing action or refusal | "No!" "I don't want that." |
| Denial | 24–48 | Negates identity, state, or event | "Not a kitty." |
| Attribution | 34–38 | Often includes the use of adjective | "Big man." |
| Possession | 34–38 | Object is associated with a person | "Mommy's car." |
| Action | 34–38 | Refers to movement but not change of location | "Eat cookie." |
| Locative action | 38–40 | Movement with change of location | "Come here." |
| Locative state | 38–40 | Spatial relationships | "Doggie outside." |
| State | 38–40 | Refers to state of affairs: Internal state External state Attributive state Possessive state | "He's tired." "It's cold." "It's broken." "That's mine." |
| Quantity | 38–40 | Number or plural | "Two baby." "Birdies." |
| Notice | 40+ | Attention to person, object, or event | "I see Mommy." |
| Dative | 40+ | Use of indirect object | "Give cookie to me." |
| Additive | 40+ | Joining objects, events, or states, often by *and* | "I got a truck and a bear." |
| Temporal | 40+ | Reference to time | "It broke yesterday." "I'm gonna get it." |
| Causal | 40+ | Cause and effect | "I go 'cuz I got shoes on." |
| Adversative | 40+ | Two events/states are in contrast | "I want to go but I can't." |
| Epistemic | 40+ | Mental states of affairs (with verbs such as *know*, *think*, *remember*, *wonder*) | "What does this mean?' "I don't know." |
| Specification | 40+ | Distinguishing one from another and later involves joining two dependent clauses | "I want that one." "It looks like a fishing thing, and you fish with it." |
| Communication | 40+ | Contains communication verbs | "Tell Mommy I want this." "Mommy said not to do this." |

## *Language Use and Pragmatics*

Language use and pragmatics examine how people use language to communicate. **Language use** categories are function categories that have been developed to describe the basic intentions a language user has for making an utterance. For example, people may want to make a request, make a statement, comment on information being discussed, regulate their environment, or just maintain communication (Fey, 1986; Halliday, 1975; Lahey & Bloom, 1988). Language use categories can be divided into assertive functions in which a person expresses a request or an assertion and responsive functions in which a person responds to a request or assertion (Fey, 1986). **Spontaneous language** occurs when we initiate speaking, such as selecting the subject, organizing our thoughts, and finding the correct words before opening our mouths. **Demand language** occurs when someone else creates the circumstances in which communication is required. For instance, when a question is asked we must simultaneously organize our thoughts, find the right words, and answer. A child with a language disability may speak normally when initiating conversation but respond hesitantly in demand situations—pausing, asking for the question to be repeated, giving a confused answer, or failing to find the right words.

**Pragmatics** is examining the language choices people make in social interactions and the effects of these choices on others (Crystal, 1987). This variety in language is called a **register**, which is determined by the social circumstances. Most people use several registers. For example, the way in which students talk with their teachers or principal should be a more formal register in comparison with the way they talk to their friends. This formal register should be taught and reinforced in school so that students will be comfortable using it when talking with employers, business people, and professionals, because the language people choose to use could positively or negatively affect the way they are perceived by others.

Understanding language form, content, and use helps the literacy specialist to be a better observer of language development and be able to adapt instruction to meet the needs of students who have difficulties with their receptive or expressive language. The major aspects of form, content, and use can be added to Tompkins's (2002) four language systems, shown in Table 2.5, which summarizes the phonological, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic language systems; defines basic terms; and explains how those terms are used in school.

## *A Note on English-Language Learners*

Although this book focuses on native speakers of English, an increasing number of ELLs are entering the U.S. school system. A basic understanding of language acquisition can help teachers to better serve ELLs. According to Young and Hadaway (2006), there are several factors that affect English-language acquisition, including the age at which the child enters the school system; the child's level of first-language literacy; and the similarities of the first language to English in terms of type of script, directionality of text, syntax, phonology, and punctuation.

Young and Hadaway (2006), citing Collier (1995), offer the following suggestions to enhance English-language acquisition:

| Table 2.5 | Overview of the Four Language Systems | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **System** | **Description** | **Terms** | **Uses in Grades K–8** |
| Phonological System (Form) | The sound system of English with approximately 44 sounds and 70 graphemes | Phoneme: the smallest unit of sound<br><br>Grapheme: the written representation of a phoneme using one or more letters | Pronouncing words<br><br>Detecting regional and other dialects<br><br>Decoding words when reading<br><br>Using invented spelling<br><br>Reading and writing alliterations and onomatopoeia |
| Syntactic System (Form) | The structural system of English that governs how words are combined into sentences | Syntax: the structure or grammar of a sentence<br><br>Morpheme: the smallest meaningful unit of language<br><br>Free Morpheme: a morpheme that can stand alone as a word<br><br>Bound Morpheme: a morpheme that must be attached to a free morpheme | Word order<br><br>Adding inflectional endings to words<br><br>Adding prefixes and suffixes to root words<br><br>Combining words to form compound words<br><br>Saying/writing simple, compound, and complex sentences<br><br>Combining sentences<br><br>Using capitalization and punctuation to indicate beginnings and ends of sentences |
| Semantic System (Content) | The meaning system of English that focuses on vocabulary | Semantics: meaning | Learning the meanings of words<br><br>Learning multiple meanings of words<br><br>Studying synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms<br><br>Using a dictionary and thesaurus<br><br>Reading and writing comparisons (metaphors and similes) and idioms |
| Pragmatic System (Use) | The system of English that varies language according to social and cultural uses | Function: the purpose for which a person uses language.<br><br>Standard English: the form used in textbooks and by television newscasters.<br><br>Nonstandard English: other forms of English | Varying language to fit specific purposes<br><br>Reading and writing dialogue in dialects<br><br>Comparing standard and nonstandard forms of English |

From Tompkins, G.E. (2002). *Language arts: Content and teaching strategies* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson. Reprinted with permission.

- Model academic language and make connections between language and content concepts;

- Focus on strategic thinking, problem solving, and comprehension techniques that students can use;

- Emphasize activation of students' prior knowledge, respect for their native language and culture, and ongoing assessment using multiple measures.

Once teachers have a better understanding of their learners in terms of family, cultural, and language background, they can focus their attention on selecting and implementing the most effective instructional strategies. (p. 13)

# Objectives for Language Development

Although most objectives are written in terms of what students are able to do, receptive language objectives are difficult to observe, and therefore those objectives are written in terms of what the literacy specialist provides to help students develop receptive language.

To develop receptive language students will do the following:

- Be surrounded with rich language and quality literature

- Associate language with pleasure and enjoyment

- Have opportunities to classify sounds, such as phonemic awareness activities

- Hear a rich supply of new words in context

- Have opportunities to listen and respond

- Have opportunities for following directions

- Be provided Standard English and family language models

To develop expressive language students will do the following:

- Pronounce words correctly

- Articulate speech sounds correctly

- Speak fluently without repetitions, revisions, unusual pauses, or fillers

- Use a variety of long, complex, and compound sentences

- Use formal or Standard English grammar

- Use a wide variety of vocabulary words in the correct context

- Produce statements and questions that are clearly understood

- Respond to request for information, action, and clarification

- Communicate appropriately in a variety of settings and situations

# Language Development Assessments

Literacy specialists are valuable in identifying students who may have potential language difficulties, monitoring the progress of those students already identified, and continuing to support their language development. Two oral language assessments are included in this book: the Language Observation Scale (see Appendix) and the Oral Presentation Assessment (see Appendix). The speech-language pathologist can use this information to determine if additional assessments are needed. Transcribed language samples and standardized language assessments are needed to analyze specific elements in a student's expressive or receptive language to plan intervention that develops the student's language proficiency. The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III (PPVT-III) is a test of receptive vocabulary for Standard English and a screening test of verbal ability for 2-year-olds through adults (Williams & Wang, 1997). Literacy specialists can better support a student's language learning if they have a better understanding of student's language form, content, and use. The literacy specialist, the speech-language pathologist, and the classroom teacher work together to assess the student's language development and identify appropriate strategies.

## Language Observation Scale

**Purpose:** This expressive language observation scale was developed using some of the ideas from the Language Development Checklists (Allen & Marotz, 1994) for 3- to 5-year-olds and the Loban Oral Language Scale (Loban, 1961) for elementary-grade children. It is designed to evaluate the language development of students who may exhibit a language delay or language processing disorder (all grades).

**Procedure and Analysis:** After observing the student over time, circle the number on each of the scales in the following example that best describes the student's communicative behavior. Using a scale of 1–4, *1* indicates almost no evidence of this behavior and communication is significantly interrupted and *4* indicates the student predominantly exhibits the correct behavior with almost no interference with communication. Write down specific examples for areas of need.

Identify the strengths and needs in language areas such as articulation, pronunciation, fluency, sentence complexity, grammar, vocabulary, and assertive and responsive communication. If the student scores a 1 or 2 in any language area or scores a 3 in several areas, the child should be referred to a speech-language pathologist for further language or speech evaluation. Explicit or implicit instruction and modeling should be provided for these areas of need.

**Example and Analysis:** Language Observation Scale, grade 2

| Articulation, Pronunciation, and Fluency | Score | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Articulation: Correctly produces speech sounds | 1 | ② | 3 | 4 |

2. Pronunciation: Correctly pronounces words and does not add or delete sounds          1     2     ③     4

3. Linguistic fluency: Speech is fluent and not disrupted by repetitions, revisions, unusual pauses, and fillers such as *um* or *like*          1     ②     3     4

The student correctly articulates most sounds, except he says the /d/ sound for /th/, (*dis* for *this*) and deletes /s/ with blends such as *tar* for *star*. The deletion of /s/ does affect communication. The student does not pronounce the past tense *-ed*. It should be noted that he also does not spell words with past tense *-ed*. He is generally fluent but sometimes pauses and says *um* when he's figuring out what to say, not only in pressure-induced situations such as talking in front of the class but in casual conversations as well.

**Instructional Implications:** Refer to speech-language evaluation for the /th/ and /s/ sounds because the student is now in grade 2. The child can work on the /th/ sound by sticking his tongue out between his teeth and the /s/ sound by closing teeth and rapidly putting his tongue to the front of his teeth. Then practice words with /s/ blends (/st/, /sp/). Use kinesthetic strategies such as placing a finger on the wrist and sliding the finger up the arm as the student says each sound, /s-s-t/, stopping at the shoulder for /t/. Read and write words and sentences with /th/ sounds and /s/ blends. Also read and write words with past tense *-ed*. Discuss language fluency concerns with the hesitations and the filler *um* and provide opportunities for the student to plan out what to say prior to being asked to speak out in class. Continue classroom support in these areas.

# Oral Presentation Assessment

**Purpose:** This assessment evaluates oral presentations in terms of language, organization, content, visual media, manner, and audience participation. It can be used by the teacher, by peers, or by the student as a self-assessment (grade 3 and above).

**Procedure and Analysis:** Provide the assessment in the following example to the student before planning her presentation. Model both positive and negative examples of each element. During the presentation, write down specific observations under each heading and score it. After the presentation, the student completes a self-evaluation and then you give the student specific feedback on the effective elements of the presentation and suggestions for improvement. After the initial assessment, provide constructive feedback and a group discussion can follow. Then, for future presentations, this assessment can be used by peers or for self-assessment.

During the presentation, evaluate each element with a plus sign (+) if all of the descriptors were clearly observed, a checkmark (✓) if most of them were, or a minus sign (−) if they were rarely or never observed.

**Example and Analysis:** Oral Presentation Assessment, grade 6

Presentation Topic: Country Reports—Cuba

| Score | Did the presenter... |
|---|---|
| | **Language:** |
| ✓ | Use appropriate language for the audience? |
| + | Convey the information clearly to the audience? |
| ✓ | Use appropriate and specific vocabulary? |
| + | Pronounce words correctly? |
| + | Use grammatically correct sentences? |
| – | Use complex and compound sentences with adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions? |

The student's language was generally appropriate, grammatically correct, and clearly communicated. However, she referred to the people as *Spanish*, not *Cuban*. She started many of her sentences with the word *Cuba* and used a limited number of different sentence structures.

**Instructional Implications:** Provide instruction on varying sentence structures. Have the student watch and listen to her videotaped presentation. She or you can write each sentence on a separate line and examine the first word and the sentence structures. Rewrite to vary the structure of the sentences. Discuss the difference in vocabulary between language, ethnicity, and national origin.

# Language Development Strategies

Although specific articulation; pronunciation; and syntactic, pragmatic, and semantic language strategies can enhance both the receptive and expressive language of students, language can often be developed through more general strategies or activities. Because language is used to communicate ideas, work on those objectives that significantly interfere with communication first. Do not wait until language objectives are met before working on reading and writing objectives and vice versa. These processes are interrelated and may be enhanced by using them in the context of another process. Students' language is often a reflection of the language they hear in their home and their community. However, school plays an essential role in language development and learning a more formal language register. Johnson (2001) asserts that teachers should provide opportunities for children to engage in many kinds of talking, intentionally plan for oral language development, and provide a classroom context and environment that is conducive to oral development because "oral

language is not only a means to gain understanding but is also a way to display [students'] competence" (Johnson, 2001, pp. 20).

General language development strategies begin by being a good listener during conversations with students. Respond and show interest in what the students are saying. Ask the students questions to learn more information or to clarify information. Encourage the students to speak in complete sentences and to use language to express feelings and needs. Frequently use and explain the meaning of words with which the students are not familiar in order to expand their vocabulary. Finally, encourage the students to participate in appropriate adult and formal English conversations.

Education must be viewed as a social activity in which students are engaged in sharing ideas with and learning from others, not an individual activity in which teachers attempt to transmit knowledge and students simply regurgitate that knowledge. Talking and reading with students are the two most important activities teachers can do to enhance students' language development. Because talking requires no materials, it can be done not only in the classroom but also anywhere—in the hall, at lunch, or during activities off school grounds. Students who have many conversations with adults and peers learn the words and ideas they need to understand when reading and writing. Reading to students of all ages builds the desire to read, gives an educational advantage, and develops vocabulary and reading strategies. This can be an enjoyable experience for both the listener and the reader. Reading aloud to students develops lifelong readers and learners. (For specific strategies for reading to students refer to Chapter 5, Reading and Listening Comprehension.) Language can be promoted through conversations in a variety of situations: structured question-and-answer periods, the use of aesthetic talk (an emotional response), efferent talk (to inform and persuade), and dramatic talk (telling stories). The following are more specific strategies for articulation, pronunciation, syntax, pragmatics, and semantics.

# Articulation Strategies

**Purpose:** To improve the articulation of specific sounds (all grades).

**Procedure:** Identify the sounds to be worked on and use the consonant and vowel articulation charts in Tables 2.1 and 2.2 on pages 22 and 23 to determine the manner, place, and voice of articulation. Using modeling, demonstrate and describe how to articulate the sound or phoneme. Give students a mirror so they can practice. Provide a picture of a known object that preferably begins with or contains that sound. Provide examples of the phoneme in the initial placement in a word, then in the final and medial placements. Whenever possible, have students practice the articulation of sounds in sentences. It is not necessary for students to be able to correctly articulate a sound before they are able to differentiate it, so continue instruction on phonics in context. For more specific strategies, see the speech-language pathologist.

# Pronunciation Strategies

**Purpose:** To improve the pronunciation of words including word endings (all grades).

**Procedure:** Identify the words students have difficulties pronouncing. Ask for clarification of the word and model the Standard English pronunciation of each word. When students mispronounce a word, simply say the word correctly in a new or rephrased sentence using a friendly tone. Remember, do not expect perfection! Some pronunciation differences are caused by dialects; therefore, you must first determine if it is important to change the students' pronunciation to Standard English. If the students' pronunciation greatly affects communication, model the pronunciation and ask the students to repeat it in isolation and then in context of a sentence. If the students do not correctly repeat your pronunciation, you can break the word into syllables or phonemes or write the students' phonetic pronunciation above the correct pronunciation. Point out the similarities and differences in the two pronunciations. Then have the students practice saying the word in the context of a sentence.

# Syntactic Language Strategies

**Purpose:** To improve the students' sentence structure in regards to missing parts of speech, incorrect word order, or incorrect inflection such as verb tenses, plurality, possession, or suffixes added to adjectives and adverbs (all grades).

**Procedure:** Identify the syntactic elements with which the students are having difficulties. When students' natural speech is nonstandard, restate the content of what the students said using standard sentence grammar. Evaluate the students' syntax to determine if it is a repeated pattern and if it is important to correct. Help students by writing down what they said in context and rewriting it using standard formal English. Then have students create a new sentence verbally or in writing using the formal syntactic structure. In the future, point out examples of this structure in text.

# Pragmatic Language Strategies

**Purpose:** To improve the language choices students make during social interaction and the effects of these choices on others (all grades).

**Procedure:** The teacher demonstrates a formal register and helps students to identify when they are not using a formal register. Explain to the students that there are many different registers in the English language. How students speak at home may be different from how they speak to their grandmother and how they speak with their friends. Students should be

taught in school to use a formal register, also referred to as Standard English, so they can be clearly understood by people from a variety of communities. Because students may not be aware of the differences in syntax between their natural speech and Standard English speech, it is important for you to teach it explicitly. Also, because writing is usually a formal form of communication, it is beneficial to use writing to point out differences between Standard English and students' natural English. Write common statements that students say and then help students rewrite it using Standard English.

# Semantic Language Strategies

**Purpose:** To provide opportunities for students to have meaningful communication with others by connecting ideas to themselves, their environment, literature, and media (all grades).

**Procedure for Connecting Ideas to Themselves:** Ask students to talk about themselves—their family, friends, feelings, likes, and dislikes—during sharing time or show-and-tell. Provide opportunities for make believe or role playing, including pretending about home living, jobs, and travel. Providing puppets, stuffed animals, action figures, and dolls to talk with often encourages reluctant speakers.

**Procedure for Connecting Ideas to Their Environment:** Ask students to talk about their experiences inside and outside of the school environment. Take students on field trips to the supermarket, post office, bank, zoo, park, museum, library, or hospital, and discuss what they learned. While there, ask for or give explanations of what is happening and what might happen next. Play games such as "I spy with my little eye something _____" (describe it and see if they can find it); or play the alphabet game, in that the students need to come up with adjectives or adverbs for each letter. Ask students questions about the world around them. How, why, and "tell me" questions encourage students to think more deeply and answer with more than one word. Plan experiments, art, music, and food preparation activities that encourage discussion and vocabulary development.

**Procedure for Connecting to Literature and Media:** Share and discuss ideas and themes from a variety of fiction and nonfiction literature and media. Plan thematic units and provide numerous opportunities for discussion and language development. Gradually increase the complexity of ideas and vocabulary in the texts. Talk about the content, graphics, and connection to other texts. Ask a variety of questions beginning with *who*, *what*, *when*, *how*, and *why*. Ask students what the most important message was. Have students retell the story or text by looking at the pictures or from memory using the language from the text. Students can even make up stories together based on common story structures such as "Once upon a time I met..." or older students can write limericks such as "There once was an old man from...." Provide opportunities for students to express themselves orally through retelling stories, puppetry, drama, songs, finger plays, nursery rhymes, jokes, riddles, or poetry readings. It is also beneficial for students to share a summary of what they learned each day or after each

lesson. (For more specific directions for using puppets and giving oral presentations see the following sections.)

## Oral Language and Retelling Strategies Using Puppets

**Purpose:** To enhance oral language development of all ages and connect the development of oral language to reading books; to develop creative expression of characterization, voice inflection, storyline, and so forth; to enhance language development; to improve comprehension skills of main idea, details, sequence, setting, plot, and so forth; to promote cooperative learning strategies; to develop the performance or audience connection; to integrate social studies, science, health, and math with language arts; to involve parents with the learning process through project-based lessons; and to apply art concepts and skills in the student creation of puppets and props (grades K–3).

**Procedure for Creating Puppets:** There is a variety of puppets and stages available for purchase. Better yet, students can create puppets and stages. Teachers can have puppets that go with specific characters in books or children can use more generic puppets and create their own original dialogue. Puppets can be many sizes and forms: stick puppets, finger and hand puppets, puppets in a cup, big-mouth puppets, sock puppets, and glove puppets. Stuffed animals can even be made into puppets by removing stuffing from their hind ends and sewing in a glove or mitten. Stages can be created using a variety of materials, such as by pinning a sheet across a doorway, making a hedge with green paper scrolled between two dowels, or creating a television stage from a cardboard box.

**Procedure for Retelling:** Puppets can be used to retell a written or oral story or to act out a favorite part. When you demonstrate reading with a puppet, read the story with expression, pretending that the puppet is talking. Familiar stories could be revised or students could create their own story and act it out with puppets.

**Procedure for Using a Story Map:** Fill in Characters, Setting, Problem, Event 1, Event 2, Event 3, and Solution on a story map. Make puppets (finger, hand, or stick) of the main characters then ask students to act out the story with puppets. Adaptations include creating a new story with the same characters and acting out the new story for the class or families.

## Language Development Through Oral Presentations

**Purpose:** To develop an effective oral presentation with the six major elements of language, organization, content, manner, visual media, and audience participation in order to share information with their peers (grade 3 and above).

**Procedure:** Provide opportunities for students to express themselves through oral presentations on a topic they are familiar with or have researched. A familiar topic would include family stories, a favorite book, or a favorite activity. Students could also research science, social studies, math, literature, arts, or sports topics. Discuss each of the following elements with the students: language, organization, content, manner, visual media, and audience participation using the Oral Presentation Assessment (see Appendix). Provide students with both appropriate and inappropriate examples of each element of language, such as the following:

**Language**—Use appropriate language for the audience. Convey information clearly to the audience. Use formal grammar structures. Questions to consider include Who is my target audience? and What do they already know about the subject?

**Organization**—It is important to have a clear structure so that your audience can understand the information easily. Include an introduction that captures the interest of the audience and tells why they would want to know about your topic. Tell the audience exactly what you want to say, say it, and then summarize the main ideas of what you said. Leave enough time for questions.

**Content**—In a 10-minute presentation you should keep to approximately three main ideas; for example, The background of the family and the historical period; the key events; and the effects, memories, and reflections of the events.

**Manner**—Practice the presentation in front of a mirror until you are comfortable with the material and are able to speak clearly, audibly, and at an understandable pace. Practice correctly pronouncing difficult words. Use notes with major headings, keywords, and a few choice sentences. Try to maintain eye contact with the audience, looking throughout the room, not just at one or two people. Also be aware of and avoid nervous gestures.

**Visual media**—It is helpful to present visual material that is relevant and enhances the content. Consider showing a computer presentation, web links, transparencies, video, photographs, slides, charts, or objects such as clothing or family treasures. Be sure to present the visuals at the appropriate time when you talk about them.

**Audience participation**—Provide an opportunity for the audience to interact. This can be done by asking or answering questions during or after the presentation. It is important to allow time at the end for the audience to ask you questions.

Feedback is important to enhancing oral presentation skills. Use the five major elements to give feedback using a peer group evaluation such in as the Oral Presentation Assessment detailed earlier in this chapter.

Strategies for articulation, pronunciation, syntax, pragmatics, and semantics enhance language development. Additional strategies for using text to enhance language and comprehension are described in Chapter 5, Reading and Listening Comprehension. Strategies for developing vocabulary, which are closely related to semantic strategies, are described in the next section.

# Understanding Vocabulary Development

One aspect of language is vocabulary development. Learning vocabulary is a generative process going from the known to the unknown, from simple to complex, and from the literal to the metaphorical. According to Blachowicz and Fisher (2006), there are two dimensions of vocabulary knowledge: depth and breadth. **Vocabulary depth** is how much you know about the word, such as whether you recognize the word, can use the word, and can define the word. **Vocabulary breadth** is how the word is connected to other words, for example: heart, lungs, and stomach are all organs in the body.

Nilsen and Nilsen (2004) describe two kinds of words: limited (closed) and infinite (ever-expanding). **Limited words** are the most common function words such as conjunctions, auxiliary and linking verbs, and pronouns. These closed sets of words are among the words that most 5-year-olds know and that have stayed basically the same for thousands of years. **Infinite words** include nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. These types of words are ever-expanding because they change and grow and combine with other words to create new meanings. Infinite words are the vocabulary words that we want students to continue to learn. Many English words were borrowed long ago from Latin, Greek, French, and more recently, Spanish. Helping students see the connections between words helps them expand their knowledge of words.

Vocabulary needs to be taught, not just tested (Nilsen & Nilsen, 2004). Because language is a social activity it is important that students work together to negotiate multiple meanings, rather than copy or recite dictionary definitions. Help students understand vocabulary by presenting sets of words that have similar root words. Discuss similarities and differences in words. Help students make predictions about word meanings by comparing phonological (sound) similarities, orthographical (spelling) similarities, semantic (meaning) similarities, and pragmatics (common sense and knowledge about historical connections between the users of both words).

The students' concept knowledge needs to be developed in addition to vocabulary. A **concept** is the category or class into which events, ideas, and objects are grouped. It may be further clarified by examples and characteristics common to members that belong to the same class (Crank & Bulgren, 1993). Identifying examples and nonexamples enhance students' understanding and remembering of concepts (Bos & Anders, 1990).

# Objectives for Vocabulary Development

To expand their vocabulary development, students will do the following:

- Use context and sentence structure to figure out the meaning of words
- Figure out words by their prefixes, suffixes, and root words
- Use Latin roots and affixes to expand their knowledge of new vocabulary words
- Identify how English is enriched by words from other languages
- Define multiple meanings of basic words
- Demonstrate how words follow regular patterns as they acquire new meanings

- Expand knowledge of word meanings through identifying synonyms, antonyms, and examples
- Group and organize vocabulary words to learn their meanings
- Provide examples of how the meanings of words move from literal to figurative
- Interpret figurative language
- Identify characteristics, examples, and nonexamples of concepts

# Vocabulary Development Assessments

Because it is impossible to assess the full extent of a person's vocabulary knowledge, vocabulary tests are difficult to construct. However, being able to identify synonyms or antonyms of a word can be indicators of basic language understanding. The synonym and antonym vocabulary assessments measure students' vocabulary knowledge by determining if students can identify the synonym or antonym of words on graded word lists. These tests can be administered by reading the words to the students, thereby measuring their listening vocabulary, or the tests can be administered by students reading the words on their own, thereby measuring their reading vocabulary. These assessments were developed by Laster and McAndrews (2004); the original idea for this type of assessment came from an unpublished manuscript by Gutkoska in 1982.

In a study conducted by Laster and McAndrews (2004), it was found that there was a significant correlation between the grade level on reading the antonym test and the highest instructional grade level for comprehension on the Qualitative Reading Inventory-3 (QRI-3; Leslie & Caldwell, 2001). Because some students are successful at reading words in isolation yet have poor passage comprehension, the beginning passage level based on the QRI word lists is often too low, resulting in one or more additional passage readings. This synonym and antonym screening tool could be used to determine the starting grade level for administering the QRI. In addition, if students were found to be a grade level or more below their actual grade level then intervention with vocabulary building strategies would be needed.

## Synonym and Antonym Vocabulary Assessments

**Purpose:** To screen for reading or listening vocabulary (Laster & McAndrews, 2004). These tests are used to identify the students' reading or listening vocabulary level (all grades).

**Procedure and Analysis:** The Synonym Vocabulary Assessment and the Antonym Vocabulary Assessment (see Appendix) can be administered to groups or individuals as a listening vocabulary test in kindergarten and higher and as a reading vocabulary test for grade 1 and higher. Administer the tests separately. Students reading at or below third-grade level will read orally and begin on level 1, which equates to grade 1. Students reading above the third-grade level can read silently if you do not want to assess word recognition. To minimize

assessment time for older students, you can begin testing three grade levels below their actual grade level. Go to a lower level if they score less than 60% or at the frustration level.

Write the examples listed on the assessment form on the board first, and do the examples together. Tell the students to read each line of words and circle the word that means the same or almost the same as the first word in each line. (For the antonym test, instruct students to read each line of words and circle a word that means the opposite as the first word in each line.) Students can use a blank bookmark to help keep their place. Throughout the assessment, in front of each line number put a plus sign (+) if correct and a minus sign (−) if incorrect. Write the total correct and calculate the percentage to determine the student's functioning level: Independent (90%–100%), Instructional (70%–80%), Frustration (60% and below).

Continue until students reach the frustration level or become frustrated and then repeat that grade level by having students listen as you read the words. To determine students' listening vocabulary level, begin testing at the students' frustration level. Instruct the students to follow along as you read the words in each line and have them circle the word that means the same or almost the same as the first word in each line. (For an antonym test, give the same directions, but replace "a word that means the same," with "a word that means the opposite.") Use a different colored pen to mark and score listening responses. Continue the listening vocabulary testing until the students score 60% or below, their frustration level.

The highest grade level at which students score 70% or above is the students' reading or listening vocabulary level. Identify whether the students' reading vocabulary is below, at, or above their current grade level. If their reading vocabulary is below their current grade level, assess their listening level. Students who score below their grade level may require more attention to vocabulary development before and during reading a new text.

**Example and Analysis:** Synonym Vocabulary Assessment: Reading

LEVEL 1 Functioning Level: Instructional      Score: 8/10 = 80%

| +/_ | | A | B | C | D |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| + | **1. see** | run | more | (look) | us |
| + | **2. little** | come | long | away | (small) |
| + | **3. say** | (talk) | goes | like | just |
| + | **4. mom** | dog | (mother) | many | with |
| − | **5. start** | begin | (last) | round | slow |
| + | **6. big** | door | right | fun | (large) |
| − | **7. hop** | hard | (ball) | dark | jump |
| + | **8. alike** | grew | pot | (same) | most |
| + | **9. glad** | (happy) | sail | rope | hold |
| + | **10. street** | time | thin | very | (road) |

LEVEL 2 Functioning Level: Frustration      Score: 5/10 = 50%

| +/_ | | A | B | C | D |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| – | 1. go | anything | leave | (rest) | summer |
| + | 2. pair | read | should | (two) | middle |
| – | 3. cut | last | (round) | slow | slice |
| + | 4. thin | shout | (skinny) | live | under |
| + | 5. hear | kind | magic | help | (listen) |
| + | 6. car | secret | chew | (automobile) | juice |
| + | 7. fear | (afraid) | lunch | yellow | welcome |
| – | 8. stir | hospital | (stood) | mix | know |
| – | 9. below | live | (place) | under | took |
| – | 10. all | this | every | (find) | lunch |

This second-grade student was instructional at the first-grade level and reached frustration at the second-grade level for identifying synonyms while reading. There was no particular pattern to the incorrect responses. The Level 2 test should be readministered as a listening test to see if the student knows the synonyms orally.

**Instructional Implications:** Provide word card pairs to match synonyms, cloze sentences that can be completed with several synonyms, and a thesaurus to find other words during writing.

# Vocabulary Development Strategies

Verbal interaction and vocabulary instruction result in an increase in word knowledge, concept knowledge, and reading comprehension. According to Nagy (1988), the most effective methods of vocabulary instruction include providing information about word meanings and etymology (the history of the words), showing vocabulary in a variety of contexts, and exposing students multiple times to the new word. Learning words in context of reading, experiences, and discussion have been found to be most effective, but memorizing long lists of isolated words has been found to be relatively ineffective (Nagy, 1988). In general, when introducing students to new vocabulary words, it is beneficial to use visual, auditory, and kinesthetic methods of instruction. Specifically point out individual word parts such as affixes and roots. Have students read or use the word in context, practice pronouncing it, and then provide their own definition or examples. The vocabulary strategies are divided between those that are appropriate for younger and older students and those that are more applicable for upper elementary and above students. In addition, there is a section on concept strategies that examines the categories into which events, ideas, or objects are grouped.

# Personal Dictionaries

**Purpose:** To place newly learned words in a dictionary to be used for future reference (grade 1 and above).

**Procedure:** After learning new vocabulary words, students can write the word, definition, and an example or picture clue under each letter of the alphabet.

**Example:** On the "A" page, write the word *Antonym*, its definition ("A word that means the opposite") and an example (stop and go).

**Adaptation:** Make a class vocabulary chart with the same information.

# Act Out, Visualize, or Draw

**Purpose:** To demonstrate the meaning of vocabulary words (all grades).

**Procedure:** Make up rules similar to games such as charades or an adaptation of Milton Bradley's board game Pictionary, in that others have to guess the word you act out or draw. For instance, on a card write the sentence(s) that the vocabulary word came from and underline it. Then act out that word and have students try to guess what it is.

**Example:** *Holes* (Sachar, 1998): "The warden got a <u>pitchfork</u> out of the back of the pick-up. She poked it through X-Ray's dirt pile, to see if anything else might have been buried in there as well" (p. 69). A student will act out poking a pile with a pitchfork. The other students will then try to guess the word.

# Cloze Procedure

**Source:** Taylor, 1953; Walker, 2004

**Purpose:** Originally used to measure readability and comprehension of a passage, this strategy can be used to help develop students' vocabulary development (grade 2 and above).

**Procedure:** Words are omitted or covered in the text and students supply the missing words. This modified cloze technique uses semantic and syntactic clues to determine the missing or covered vocabulary word. Graphophonic cues can be provided, such as the beginning letter or letters, to enhance the students' prediction of the word.

**Example:** *The Mitten* (Brett, 1989):

> 1. He wanted mittens made from _____ as white as snow. (wool)

2. "If you drop one in the snow," she _____, "you'll never find it." (warned)

3. Baba did not want to _____ white mittens. (knit)

4. A hedgehog came _____ along. (snuffling)

5. A big owl, _____ by all of the _____, swooped down. (attracted; commotion)

6. They saw the owl's _____ _____. (glinty talons)

7. Just the sight of the _____ mitten made him _____. (cozy; drowsy)

8. A great bear _____ by. (lumbered)

9. The bear gave an _____ sneeze. (enormous)

10. It was the mitten _____ against the blue sky. (silhouetted)

# Compare and Contrast Vocabulary Words

**Purpose:** To identify the similarities and differences between two words (grade 2 and above).

**Procedure:** Select and write two words, and then write how they are different, how they are similar, and a summary statement comparing the two words.

**Example:** *Excited* versus *nervous*

| **Word 1:** *excited* | | **Word 2:** *nervous* |
|---|---|---|

| **Differences:** generally happy, thrilling, looking forward to (Fun carnival ride) | | **Differences:** uncomfortable, uneasy, apprehensive (Speak to a crowd) |
|---|---|---|

**Similarities:** feelings you have, body may make movements

**Summary of comparison:** They are both feelings you have, but when you are excited you are happy and when you are nervous you are uncomfortable.

# Contextual Processing

**Source:** Walker, 2004

**Purpose:** To learn how to identify word meanings by the context (grade 1 and above).

**Procedure:** Select a paragraph from the text in which the meaning of new vocabulary is apparent from the surrounding context and write it on an overhead or type it on a computer. Ask students what the paragraph tells them. After the students reply, ask "Why did you think that?" The students write down what they think the word means. Then the students think of how the word can be used and identify words with similar meanings.

**Adaptation:** For individual learning, the students copy the sentence and page number in which the word is used. They predict what the word means and then check with a dictionary or discuss meaning with the teacher. Finally, they write their own meaning.

# Homonym Vocabulary

**Purpose:** To identify words with the same spelling and different meanings, or different spellings and different meanings (grade 1 and above).

**Procedure:** Select and write two words that are homonyms, write their definitions, draw the words, and then use them in a sentence.

**Example:**

| **Words:** *there* | *their* |
|---|---|
| **Definition 1:** in or at that place | **Definition 2:** of them: belonging to them |

| Draw it: | Draw it: |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| **Use it in a sentence:** The dog was told to go out there in the yard. | **Use it in a sentence:** I wrote a letter to my grandparents and put their address on the envelope. |
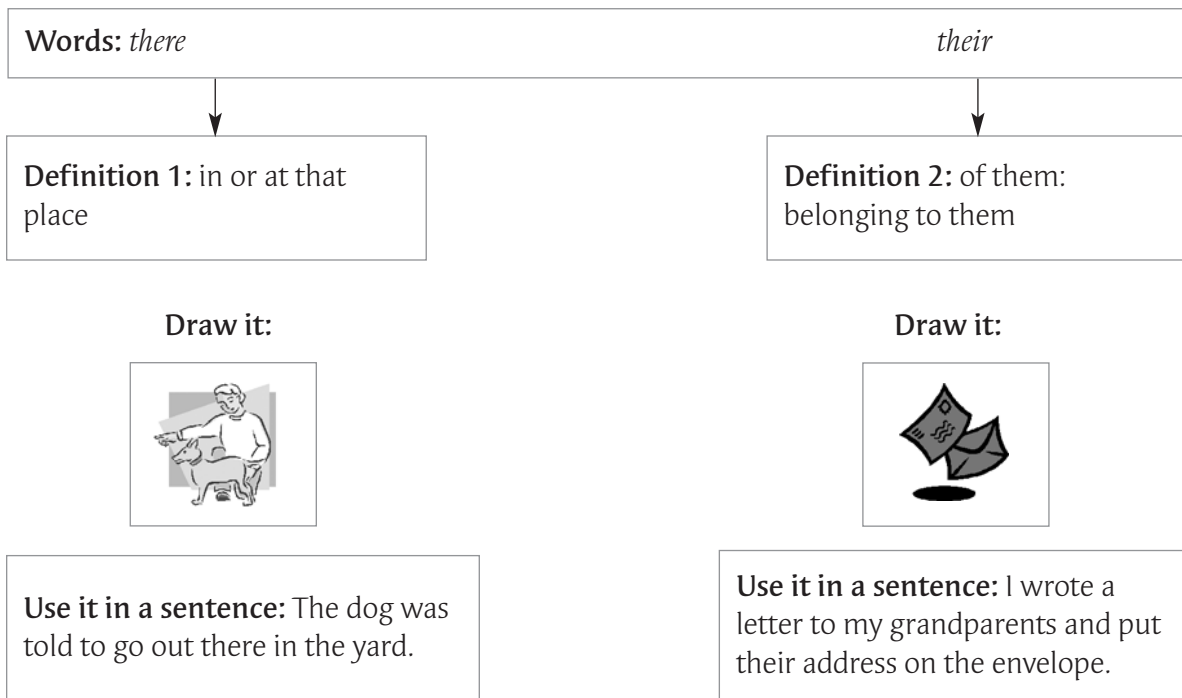
# Identifying Affixes

**Purpose:** To identify word meanings by defining affixes (grade 2 and above).

**Procedure**: The students or teacher writes prefixes, suffixes, and root words on separate index cards. Help students make, pronounce, and define the parts of the words.

**Example:** Add the prefixes *re-* or *pre-* or suffixes *-ing*, *-er*, or *-ed* to root words. In the students' personal dictionary, make a page for common definitions of affixes and Latin roots. Practice covering up parts of words in text to read unknown multisyllabic words.

# Illustrating Compare and Contrast Affixes

**Source:** Nilsen & Nilsen, 2004

**Purpose:** To learn the difference between affix meanings (grade 6 and above).

**Procedure:** The teacher or the students select prefixes that are opposite. Students then fold an 11" × 17" sheet of paper in half and on the left side illustrate words that have one prefix and on the right side illustrate words for the opposite prefix.

**Example:** Nilsen and Nilsen (2004): super—Superman, superscript, supercilious, superior; sub—submit, subdivision, subservient, subliminal, submerge. Other examples of comparing only two words are maximum–minimum, inductive–deductive, and accelerate–decelerate.

# Latin Root Family Sentence Completion

**Source:** Nilsen & Nilsen, 2004

**Purpose:** To learn new words with the same or similar Latin roots (grade 3 and above).

**Procedure:** Make sentences for words that contain similar roots. Delete the specific word and provide a word box for students to choose a word to complete the sentences.

**Example:** *Sonus*—Latin word referring to sound

**Word box:** | resonates   resounding   sonata   sonnets   sonorous |

1. A _____ is a musical composition.

2. If an idea _____ with you, it "sounds right."

3. A person who speaks in _____ tones has an imposing and effective voice.

4. _____ are poems that sound almost like music because of their rhythm.

5. All speakers long for their ideas to be met with _____ applause.

## Latin Root Lessons

**Purpose:** To identify meanings of words with similar Latin roots (grade 3 and above).

**Procedure:** Select a Latin root that is used in multiple words. Write the words and the definition.

**Example:**

**Root:** *fin*     **Meaning:** *end*

| Word | Definition |
|------|------------|
| definite | clear or exact, not vague, having settled limits |
| confine | keep within limits, restrict, keep in, shut in, boundary, border, limit |
| finale | the concluding part of a piece of music or a play, the last part, end |

## Morphology of Words

**Source:** Ogle & Correa, 2007

**Purpose:** To use as a pre- and a posttest to assess and learn vocabulary by chunking words into parts, which students can then use to figure out word meanings (grade 2 and above).

**Procedure:** Select vocabulary words from a text or from concepts in an instructional unit. Provide students with a box for each word part. As a pretest, ask students to divide the word into word parts and write what each part probably means and what the word probably means. Afterward have students revise the first part if needed, write the definition, write a quote from the text, and write related words.

**Example:** *Entomologist* from the text *Buzz* (Bingham, Morgan, & Robertson, 2007).

Entomologist

| word parts | entom | olog | ist |
|---|---|---|---|
| part meaning | insect | study | person |

Probably means: A person who studies insects

Dictionary definition: A scientist who studies insects. Some study the classification, life cycle, distribution, physiology, behavior, ecology, or population dynamics of insects (Dunn, 2007).

Quote from text: "Forensic entomologists may be called to the scene of a crime to gather evidence, or may be sent samples by a police forensic scientist" (Bingham et al., 2007, p. 131).

Related words: entomology: the study of insects; biologist: a person who studies life

# Vocabulary Building

**Purpose:** To define and use vocabulary words (grade 1 and above).

**Procedure:** Write a vocabulary word, predict its definition, write the dictionary definition, and draw it. Predict synonyms and antonyms, and then use the thesaurus to write the actual synonyms and antonyms. Write three sentences for the word, and then replace the vocabulary word with the synonyms to see if the sentences still make sense.

**Example:** *Reveal*

---

**Word:** *reveal*  **Guess the definition:** to show something
**Use it in a sentence:** Her smile revealed her white teeth.

---

**Dictionary definition:** To make known; to display or to show

**Draw it:**



---

**Predict synonym:** to show
**Actual synonyms:** to show, display

**Predict antonym:** to hide
**Actual antonyms:** to hide, to cover up

---

**Use the word in three different sentences to show the meaning:**

1. The magician revealed the rabbit to the crowd.

2. She took off her hat and revealed her new haircut.

3. He asked his friend to never reveal his secret to anyone.

**Write one of the sentences with a synonym and another with an antonym.**

1. The magician showed the rabbit to the crowd.

2. The magician hid the rabbit from the crowd.

**Did it change the meaning of any of the sentences?** Yes

## Vocabulary Grid or Four-Block Vocabulary

**Purpose:** To expand word meanings (grade 1 and above).

**Procedure:** For individual words, divide the paper into four quadrants. Put the word in a circle in the center. In the four rectangles, write the definition, the sentence where it was found, a new sentence demonstrating an understanding of the word, and draw a picture or a memory clue.

**Adaptation:** For multiple words, fold the paper in five columns and put headings on each column such as Vocabulary word; Definition; Word that makes you think of it; Sentence you can use it in; and Antonym, synonym, or example of it.

## Vocabulary Jeopardy

**Purpose:** To identify the parts of speech, spelling, or meaning of vocabulary words (grade 3 and above).

**Procedure:** This group participation game is similar to the U.S. game show *Jeopardy*. Use the following categories: Part of speech (identify what part of speech a word is after hearing it used in a sentence); Spelling (spell the word correctly); Use it (use the word in an original sentence); Synonyms (name the vocabulary word after hearing synonyms for it); and Antonyms (name the vocabulary word after hearing antonyms for it). Place answers in each of the boxes and have the students ask the correct questions.

**Example:**

**Title:** *Hitler's Daughter*        **Author:** Jackie French (2003)

| Part of speech | Spelling | Use it | Synonyms | Antonyms |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| verb (scrunched) | s-q-u-e-l-c-h-e-d | Her face was animated when she talked. (animated) | continued (persisted) | fact (opinion) |

| noun (parka) | p-e-r-m-i-t-t-e-d | Anna is enthusiastic when she tells exciting stories. (enthusiastic) | sad (mournfully) | minimum (maximum) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| adverb (obligingly) | g-e-s-t-u-r-i-n-g | She put ointment on the wound. (ointment) | gloomily (dismally) | agreed (objected) |
| adjective (mournful) | n-e-g-o-t-i-a-t-e-d | Mark acted defensively when he thought that Hitler really had a daughter. (defensively) | pasture (paddock) | purposefully (offhandedly) |

## Vocabulary Knowledge Rating

**Source:** Blachowicz & Fisher, 1996

**Purpose:** To rate understanding of a word (grade 3 and above).

**Procedure:** List each vocabulary word from the reading on the chart. The students rate their knowledge for each of the words by placing a checkmark (✓) under the correct category: Can define it, Think I know it, Have heard or seen it, or Have no clue. Read the text and then discuss the word meanings. Once the students learn the word's meaning, they can write each word in a sentence to show the word meaning.

**Example:**

**Title:** *Wanted...Mud Blossom*     **Author:** Betsy Byars (1991)

| Word | Can define it | Think I know it | Have heard or seen it | Have no clue |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| accusation | | | | ✓ |
| excavation | | | ✓ | |

**Sentences:**

1. They made an accusation that the girl took the cookie because there were crumbs on her face.

2. After they dug the hole to the gold, the excavation was done.

# Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy

**Purpose:** To identify unknown words in text and then define them (grade 1 and above).

**Procedure:** While reading, students write down words that they cannot pronounce or understand or that are particularly interesting, along with the page number where the words can be found. This can be done on sticky notes. The class or group discusses the words in the context of the story until its meaning is understood.

**Example:** *terns and noddies* in *The Tale of Rabbit Island* (Ching, 2002). Have the students read the sentence: "Every chance he got Hapa would spend time with the birds and help them with their chores. He gathered twigs for the sooty terns and noddies to build their nests" (p. 3). Terns and noddies are birds.

# Vocabulary Wheel

**Purpose:** To expand word meanings (all grades).

**Procedure:** Write a vocabulary word and the part of speech in the center of a sheet of paper. In circles around it write synonyms, antonyms, examples, and other forms of the word. Also write the word in a sentence and illustrate the word.

**Example:** *Liquid*

**Write word in a sentence:** The ice in the bottom of my cup melted into a liquid.

**Synonyms**

Fluid

**Antonyms**

Solid

**Word**
Liquid
**Part of speech**
Noun

**Examples**

Water
Juice
Pop

**Other Forms**

Liquidate
Liquefy

**Illustrate word:**
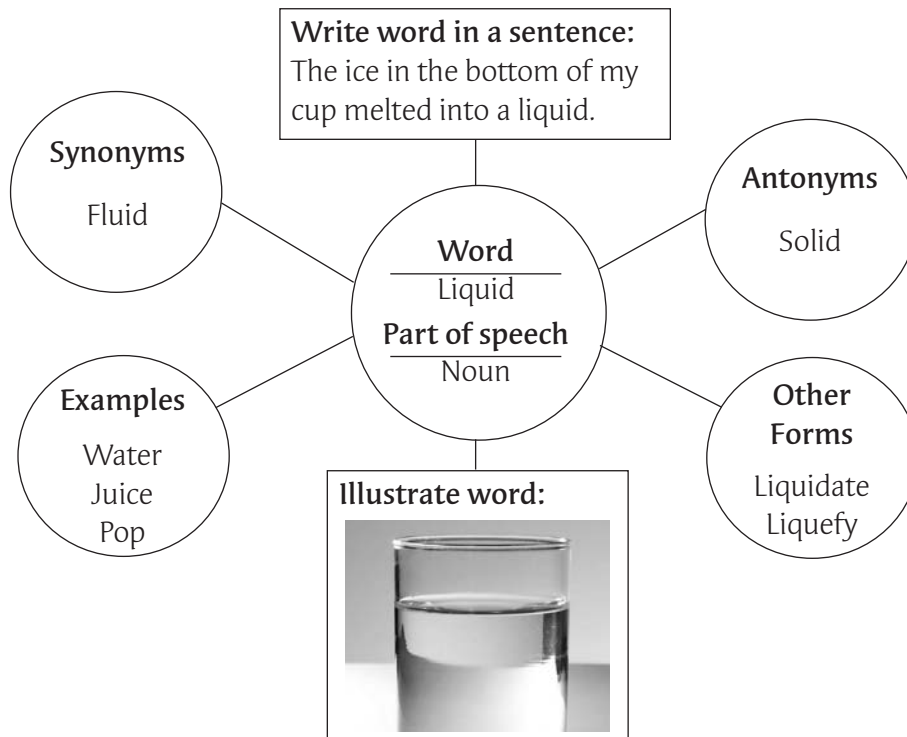
# Word Hunt

**Purpose:** To find and define vocabulary words in context (grade 2 and above).

**Procedure:** On index cards write the following headings for each word: Vocabulary word, Where I found it, Sentence where the word was used, My definition, and Dictionary definition. Students then fill in the information on each card. Students could also identify words with affixes or Latin roots in the text.

**Example:**

Vocabulary word: *Palfrey*

Where I found it: *Crispin* (Avi, 2002, p. 162)

Sentence where the word was used: It was there I saw a woman riding sidesaddle astride a great black palfrey whose saddle and harness were trimmed with gleaming silver.

My definition: A horse.

Dictionary definition: A small saddle horse, especially for a lady.

# Word Sort by Meaning

**Source:** Walker, 2004

**Purpose:** To categorize words on the basis of similar letter patterns, word meanings, or grammatical functions (all grades).

**Procedure:** Students or teacher identifies keywords from a text and writes them on index cards. Then the students sort the words by the aforementioned patterns. For higher order development the students provide the reason that the words are grouped together.

**Example:**

Word cards: run, dog, cat, walk, hop, jump, girl, boy

Sort: dog, cat, girl, boy = nouns

run, walk, hop, jump = verbs or things they can do

# Concept Development Strategies

A concept is a mental representation, image or idea of tangible and concrete objects and intangible ideas and feelings. Visual and auditory information facilitates the development of

concepts. The following strategies not only help develop a broader sense of a concept, but also develop important mental processes by identifying associated objects or ideas, analyzing and discriminating between ideas, grouping and regrouping them based on their similarities and relationships, and synthesizing information by summarizing and forming generalizations.

## Concept of Definition

**Source:** Schwartz & Raphael, 1985

**Purpose:** To identify word meanings on the basis of categories, properties, and illustrations (grade 2 and above).

**Procedure:** Write the word to be defined in the center of the map. Using context and a dictionary fill in the three main parts of the map, including What is it? (category), What is it like? (properties), and What are some examples? (illustrations). You could also fill in some comparison words.

**Example:** *Gas*

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│   What is it? (category)     │         ┌──────────────────────────────┐
│      type of matter          │         │  What is it like? (properties) │
└─────────────────────────────┘         │                                │
                                         │  • Occupies containers uniformly│
                 ╭─────────╮             │    and completely              │
                 │   gas   │─────────────│  • Easier to compress than     │
                 ╰─────────╯             │    liquid or solid because     │
         ╭──────────────╮                │    molecules are far apart     │
         │ (comparison  │                │  • Doubling pressure reduces   │
         │   words)     │                │    volume by half              │
         │ liquid, solid│                │  • Doubling mass in a closed   │
         ╰──────────────╯                │    container doubles its       │
                                         │    pressure                    │
         ┌─────────────────────────────┐└──────────────────────────────┘
         │ What are some examples? (illustrations) │
         │  oxygen      hydrogen      carbon dioxide │
         └─────────────────────────────┘
```

## Idea Web

**Source:** Ogle and Correa, 2007

**Purpose:** To gauge students' prior knowledge when used as a pretest, or to determine knowledge learned when used as a posttest (all grades).

**Procedure:** Students choose words from a list of terms to be learned and place them under the appropriate category or concept. They can use as many words as they know, and they can use each word only once. Some categories will have blank spaces even though you used all of the words.

**Example:** *Arthropods*

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| antennae | exoskeleton | mantises | entomologist | arachnid | molting |
| thorax | cephalothorax | crayfish | abdomen | wasps | myriapod |
| entomology | scorpion | crustacean | migration | metamorphosis | invertebrate |
| beetles | insecta | pollination | centipedes | compound eye | |

```
        Classification                            Body Parts

  myriapod                                  exoskeleton
  invertebrate                              thorax
  arachnid                                  abdomen
  insecta          Arthropod               cephalothorax
  crustacean                               antennae
                                           compound eye


        Example                              Study and
                                             Behaviors
  beetles                                   pollination
  centipedes                                migration
  scorpions                                 entomology
  crayfish                                  metamorphosis
  wasps                                     molting
  mantises                                  entomologist
```
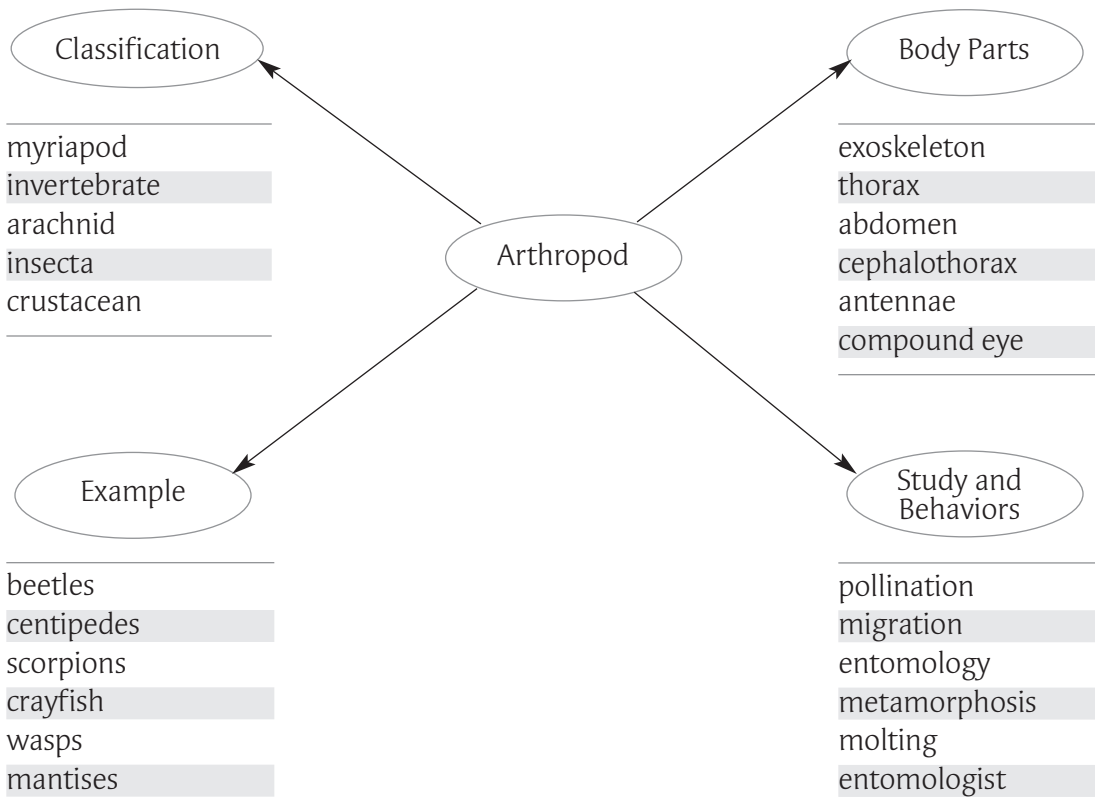
# Concept Ladder

**Source:** Gillet & Temple, 1994

**Purpose:** To identify hierarchical concept relationships (grade 3 and above).

**Procedure:** Using context, background knowledge, a dictionary, and the Internet, complete each step of the concept ladder by answering the questions about the concept to show how it is related to other concepts.

**Example:** *Guitar*

| |
|---|
| Concept: guitar |
| Kind of? musical instrument |
| Part of? string family or band |
| Made of? wood and strings |
| Kinds of it? electric, classical, folk |
| Parts of it? neck, strings, body |
| Used for? making music |
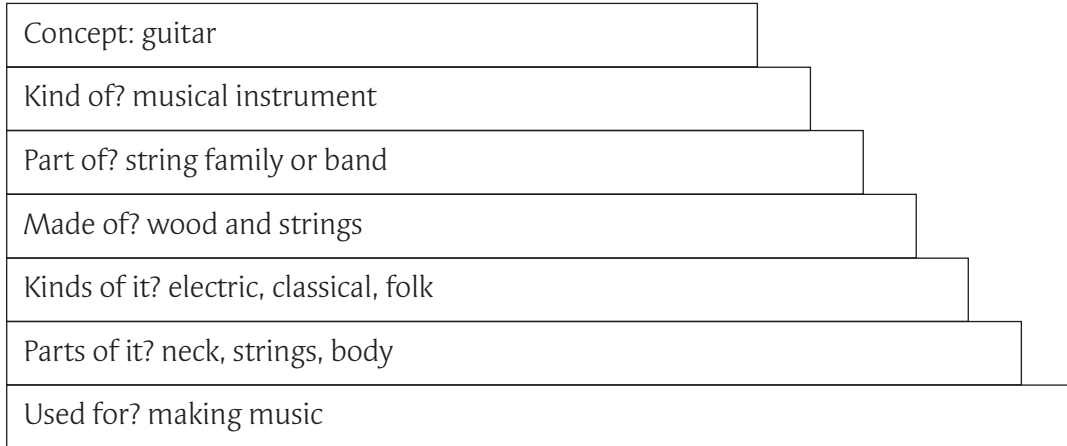
## Label Diagrams

**Purpose:** To use diagrams to identify word meanings (all grades).

**Procedure:** Add vocabulary labels to drawings.

**Example:** The skeletal system of the human body, the water cycle, or the life cycle of a butterfly.

## Linear Array

**Source:** Nagy, 1988

**Purpose:** To show linear relationships of degrees of variation in words (grade 3 and above).

**Procedure:** Draw an array in a line with points marked with words in sequence.

**Example:** *Water temperatures*

| water temperature | tepid | warm | hot | scalding |
|---|---|---|---|---|
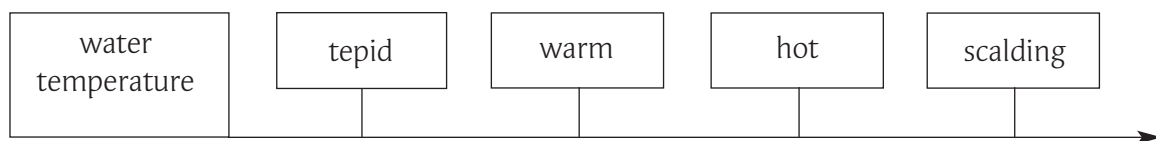
# List-Group-Label

**Source:** Taba, 1967, in Tierney & Readence, 2000

**Purpose:** To organize words on the basis of their relationship to one another and to label the relationship (grade 2 and above).

**Procedure:** Students or teacher identifies keywords from a text and writes them on index cards, and then the students group the words by their relationship to one another. For higher order development, the students provide the label.

**Example:** *Body systems*

| Digestive system | Circulatory system | Respiratory system |
|---|---|---|
| esophagus | heart | trachea |
| stomach | blood vessels | lungs |
| intestines | arteries | alveoli |

# Mnemonic Devices

**Purpose:** To assist students in remembering concepts or the order of concepts (grade 3 and above).

**Procedure:** Identify the topic with several subtopics that the students need to remember in order. Identify the first letter of each word. Create a sentence or a phrase using these first letters.

**Example:** Classification of living things: kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus, and species. The mnemonic sentence: "*K*athy *p*lays *c*hess *o*n *f*ather's *g*reen *s*hirt."

# Schematic Word Map

**Source:** Tierney & Readence, 2000

**Purpose:** To identify key concepts using lines to show how words are hierarchically related (grade 3 and above).

**Procedure:** Develop the target concept. Define the concept, present the concept, and begin constructing the hierarchy. Guide students to relevant and irrelevant attributes, and complete the map with additional examples and nonexamples.

**Example:** *Reptiles.* The supraordinate concepts would be cold-blooded, vertebrate, and animal at the top of the hierarchy. A coordinate concept at the same level would be amphibians, while subordinate concepts would be examples such as alligators, snakes, and lizards.

```
                              ┌──────────┐
                              │  Animal  │
                              └──────────┘
                             /            \
              ┌───────────────┐      ┌───────────┐           ┌────────────────┐
              │ Nonvertebrate │      │ Vertebrate│           │ (Supraordinate)│
              └───────────────┘      └───────────┘           └────────────────┘
                                      /         \
                        ┌──────────────┐    ┌──────────────┐
                        │ Warm-blooded │    │ Cold-blooded │
                        └──────────────┘    └──────────────┘
                          /         \          /          \
                ┌──────────┐  ┌────────┐ ┌────────────┐ ┌──────────┐   ┌──────────────┐
                │ Mammals  │  │  Aves  │ │ Amphibians │ │ Reptiles │   │ (Coordinate) │
                └──────────┘  └────────┘ └────────────┘ └──────────┘   └──────────────┘
                                                       /     |      \
                                          ┌────────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌─────────┐  ┌───────────────┐
                                          │ Alligators │ │ Snakes │ │ Lizards │  │ (Subordinate) │
                                          └────────────┘ └────────┘ └─────────┘  └───────────────┘
```
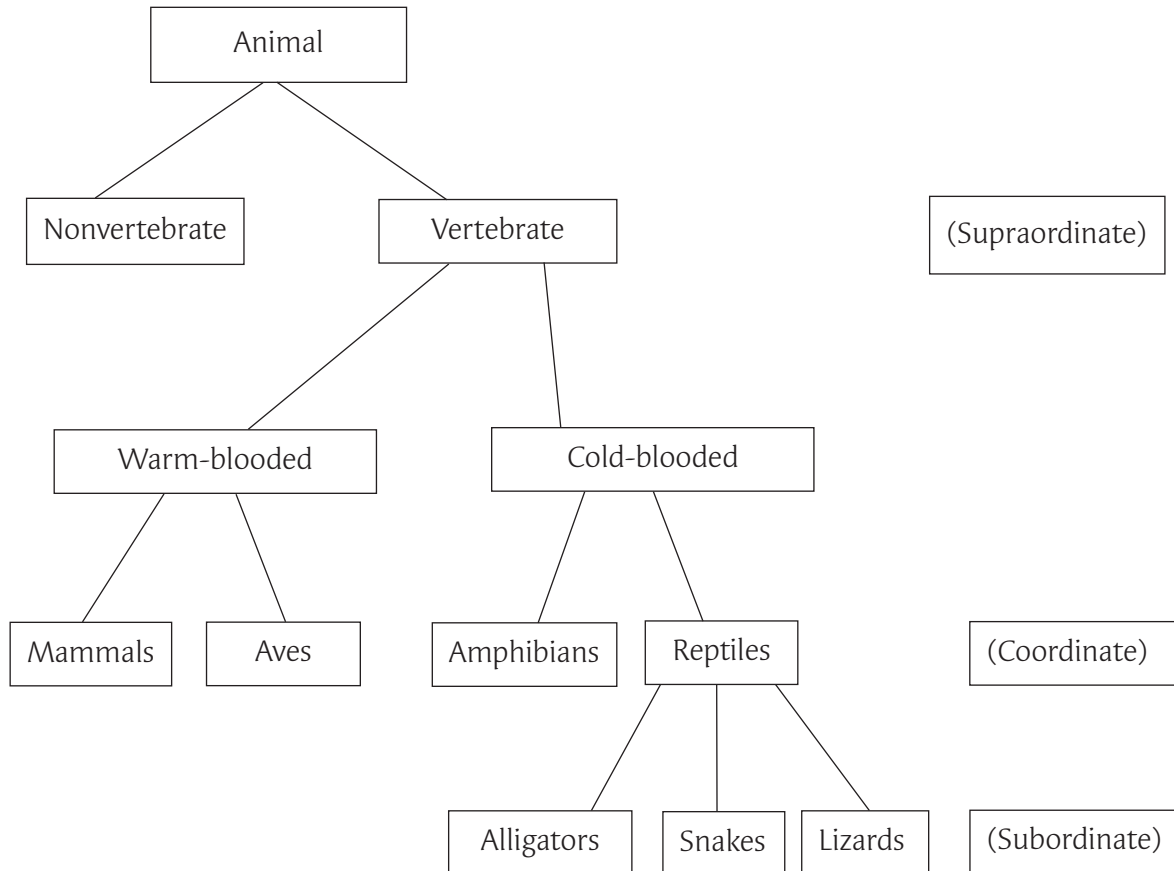
## Semantic Feature Analysis Matrix

**Source:** Johnson & Pearson, 1984, in Walker, 2004

**Purpose:** To sort out the similarities and differences among a group of events, people, objects, or ideas (all grades).

**Procedure:** Identify items to be classified and attributes that make them similar and different. Classify each animal by the attribute, by putting a plus sign (+) or a minus sign (−) in each box indicating the presence of each feature.

**Adaptation:** Use a schematic word map.

**Example:** *Animals*

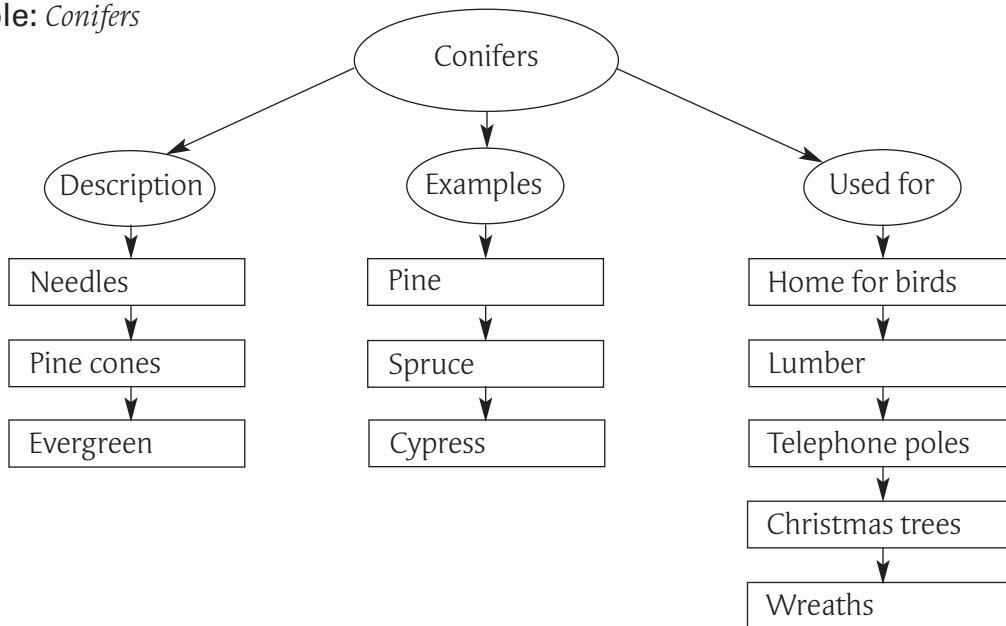|  | Lives in water | Breathes air | Lays eggs | Has fur |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Whales | + | + | − | − |
| Seals | + sometimes | + | − | + |
| Sharks | + | − | + | − |
| Fish | + | − | + | − |
| Bears | − | + | − | + |

# Semantic Mapping

**Source:** Johnson & Pearson, 1984, in Walker, 2004

**Purpose:** To expand and develop a definition of a word by using a graphic organizer in which ovals represent concepts, and the arrows and words boxes represent the relationships or properties of the word (grade 2 and above).

**Procedure:** Write the concept in the center oval. Students then supply descriptors, examples, and what it is used for with arrows connecting them.

**Example:** *Conifers*

```
                          Conifers
          ┌──────────────────┼──────────────────┐
          ▼                  ▼                  ▼
     Description          Examples           Used for
          │                  │                  │
          ▼                  ▼                  ▼
     ┌─────────┐        ┌─────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
     │ Needles │        │  Pine   │      │ Home for birds│
     └─────────┘        └─────────┘      └──────────────┘
          │                  │                  │
          ▼                  ▼                  ▼
     ┌─────────┐        ┌─────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
     │Pine cones│       │ Spruce  │      │   Lumber     │
     └─────────┘        └─────────┘      └──────────────┘
          │                  │                  │
          ▼                  ▼                  ▼
     ┌─────────┐        ┌─────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
     │Evergreen│        │ Cypress │      │Telephone poles│
     └─────────┘        └─────────┘      └──────────────┘
                                                │
                                                ▼
                                        ┌──────────────┐
                                        │Christmas trees│
                                        └──────────────┘
                                                │
                                                ▼
                                        ┌──────────────┐
                                        │   Wreaths    │
                                        └──────────────┘
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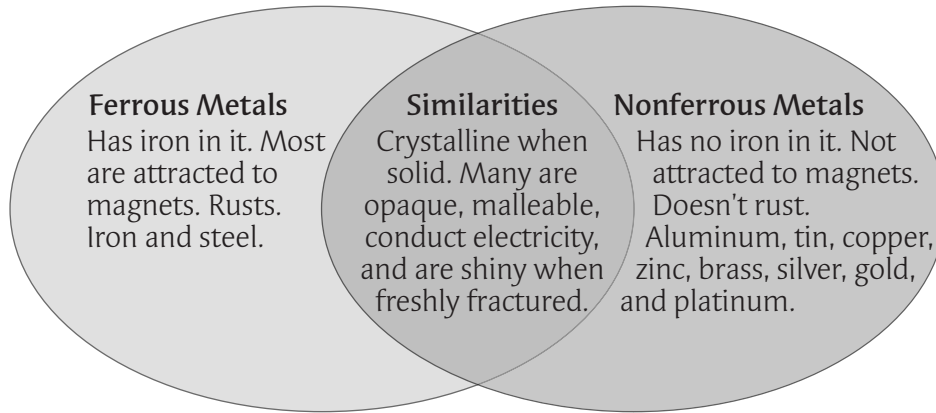
# Venn Diagram

**Purpose:** Comparing and contrasting two or three concepts (all grades).

**Procedure:** Draw two or three interlocking circles. Label each with the concepts. In the center write the attributes they have in common.

**Adaptation:** H-Diagram. Attributes of one concept are written in the left and attributes of the other concept on the right side of the H. Similarities are in the crossbar of the H.

**Example:** Ferrous and Nonferrous Metals

**Ferrous Metals**
Has iron in it. Most are attracted to magnets. Rusts. Iron and steel.

**Similarities**
Crystalline when solid. Many are opaque, malleable, conduct electricity, and are shiny when freshly fractured.

**Nonferrous Metals**
Has no iron in it. Not attracted to magnets. Doesn't rust. Aluminum, tin, copper, zinc, brass, silver, gold, and platinum.

## Figurative Language Strategy

**Purpose:** To identify and describe the meaning of figurative language such as simile, metaphor, and irony as it is used in text (grade 3 and above).

**Procedure:** Discuss the meaning of figurative language. Then draw a picture of the literal meaning and a picture of the implied meaning.

**Example:** In *Amelia Bedelia Helps Out* (Parish, 1963) Amelia Bedelia takes everything literally. For example: Miss Emma says, "'Now I want you to stake the beans. Here is the string to tie them. You can use this saw to cut the stakes.' She took the saw and cut the steak into fifteen pieces. 'Now hold the steak while I tie it.'" Amelia Bedelia and Effie Lou steaked those beans. The students can draw two pictures: one depicting a woman tying steak to the beans and one depicting tying the beans to a stake. Students should then label each picture with a sentence and underline the homophone or figurative language. Other examples of literal and figurative language in *Amelia Bedelia Helps Out* include Amelia stealing—or taking—all of the bases and then literally running home to her house when she was playing baseball and putting money in the river bank, not in the bank building.

## Vocabulary Strategies on Your Own

**Purpose:** To figure out the meanings of unknown words, when the student is reading and no one is around to help (all grades).

**Procedure:** Instruct students to select one or more of the following strategies to help predict the word meaning:

- Read or reread the sentence or paragraph to see if the meaning of the word can be figured out by the context.
- Make a prediction about the part of speech of the word.
- Break the word into word parts: prefix, root, and suffix. Ask yourself if you know the meaning of the word parts or if you know the meaning of words with the same or similar word parts.
- Determine if the word is important to your understanding of the text. If you think it is important, look the word up in the glossary or dictionary. After reading the definition or definitions, reread the sentence to see if it makes sense. Write down the word, the definition, a sentence, or a drawing to help you remember it.
- If you determine that the word is not important to the meaning of the text, make a prediction and read on. You might write the word down to learn its meaning later.