Vocabulary

Children with large vocabularies understand more of what they read and hear. Reading is the best way for your child to develop vocabulary.

- Read all sorts of books, signs on the walls, directions, recipes…a wide range of reading material will expose them to a wide variety of new words.
- Read aloud - Continue to read aloud to your child even after he/she is able to read independently. Choose books above your child's level because they are likely to contain broader vocabulary. This way, you are actually teaching him/her new words and how they are used in context.
- Preview words - Before reading to or with your child, scan through the book, choose two words that you think might be interesting or unfamiliar to your child. Tell your child what the words are and what they mean. As you read the book, have your child listen for those words.
- “Hot Potato” (version 1) - Play hot potato with synonyms. Choose a word, and then your child has to think of another word that means the same thing. Take turns until neither player can think of another word. For example, you may say, "Cold," and your child might say, "Freezing." Then you could say, "Chilly," and so on. Try the game again with antonyms (opposites).
- “Hot Potato” (version 2) - Play hot potato with prefixes or suffixes. The prefixes dis-, ex-, mis-, non-, pre-, re-, and un- are common. Common suffixes include -able/-ible,-ed, -er, -est, -ful, -ish, -less, -ly, -ment, and -ness. • “Hot Potato” (version 3) - Play hot potato with categories. For younger children, the categories can be simple: pets, clothes, family members. For older children, the categories can be quite complex: The Revolutionary War, astronomy, math terms.
- “Word Collecting” - Have each family member look for interesting words that they heard that day. At dinner or bedtime, have everyone share the word they collected and tell what they think it means. If the child shares an incorrect meaning, guide him/her to the correct meaning. Try to use some of the words in conversation.
- Discuss positional words such as beside, below, under, over, etc. Make it into a game at dinner by asking your child to place his/her fork in different places in relation to his/her plate. Ex: Put your fork above your plate.
- Use the language of books such as author, title, illustrator, title page, etc. Discuss ordinal words such as first, last, beginning, middle, etc.

Resource- *The Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide*