

Building Your Student's Vocabulary at Home

A rich vocabulary helps students understand complex reading materials, express themselves clearly, and succeed across all subjects. Words become part of a child's permanent vocabulary when they are used 6-12 times in different contexts. Try some of these activities at home.



Elevate Everyday Conversations

- Swap in "Big Words": Replace common words with richer synonyms during daily chat (e.g., use "heartbroken" instead of "sad", or "delighted" instead of "happy").
- Talk at the Table: Describe dinner using vivid adjectives like "scrumptious" or "delicious". Ask your child about their school day and prompt them to describe details of what happened and how people reacted.
- Encourage Full Sentences: Prompt your child to answer in complete sentences, expanding on their thoughts by using connecting words like "because".



Read & Explore Words Together



- The Unfamiliar Word Hunt: While reading together, have your child spot unfamiliar words. Define them together, discuss their meaning, and use them in a new sentence.
- Master Meaning Through Character Study: Move beyond simple definitions by discussing character traits in depth (e.g., "Could we say this character is selfish? Can an unselfish person ever do something selfish?").
- Tell Family Stories: Share stories from when you were young or trips you took; storytelling encourages children to ask questions and builds oral vocabulary.



Play with Words at Home



- Synonym Challenges: Pick common words like "nice" or "tall" and see who can brainstorm the most synonyms.
- Act Out Adverbs: Have your child act out action phrases such as "scamper silently", "crawl slowly", or "scuttle rapidly".
- Play 'Word / Not Word': Choose a descriptive word (e.g., "delightful") and list activities (like opening presents vs. doing chores). Have your child respond with "delightful" or "not delightful" and explain why.



Track & Celebrate New Words

- Build a Home Word Wall: Write new words on index cards and post them on a wall or fridge where your family will see and use them often.
- Keep a Vocabulary Journal: Encourage your child to keep a journal with new words, short explanations, and simple illustrations or drawings representing each word's meaning.
- Explore Word Play: Introduce idioms, analogies, tongue twisters, and rhymes to make word learning enjoyable.