

**SHEA Conference 2012**

# **Oral Language Strategies**

*Tips from the Trenches*

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**Hopefully you can find some oral language activities in this handout that you can use in your classroom. Thank you for working to support the oral language abilities of the students on Saskatchewan's Hutterite Colonies!**

**Handout available at: <http://snack.to/fzn8bjp1>**

     **Enjoy**     

## Oral Language Development

- “Oral language is the foundation on which reading is built.”
  - 1998 - Hiebert, Pearson, Taylor, Richardson, & Paris
- Oracy – academic oral language – is the bridge to literacy
- English language learners need meaningful opportunities to practice the language

## Oral Language’s Top Five

- Talk soon!
- Talk often!
- Repeated practice!
- Have it modeled!
- Celebrate successes!

## Oral Language Instruction Should:

- Be systematic and structured
- Contain vocabulary development that is relevant, rigorous, and rich
- Include explicit practice of key grammatical forms that are embedded in the functions of language
- Support language rehearsal in an engaging and meaningful context presented by the teacher modeling and guiding language structures
- Provide multiple opportunities to rehearse language involving interactive and task-based activities

## 50 Tips from the Trenches:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>1.</b> Telly the Share Bear            | <b>26.</b> The Name Game                           |
| <b>2.</b> Mystery Bag                     | <b>27.</b> I Went to the Shop                      |
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| <b>13.</b> Entry Slips                    | <b>38.</b> Vocabulary Word Association             |
| <b>14.</b> Think Pair Share               | <b>39.</b> Idioms                                  |
| <b>15.</b> Placemats and Round Robin      | <b>40.</b> Mile a Minute                           |
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| <b>17.</b> Y Charts                       | <b>42.</b> Word Box                                |
| <b>18.</b> Body Collage                   | <b>43.</b> Picture Games                           |
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| <b>20.</b> Role Play                      | <b>45.</b> I Did/What Did You Do?                  |
| <b>21.</b> Finger Puppet Role Play        | <b>46.</b> Using Reader’s Theatre in the Classroom |
| <b>22.</b> What’s Happening Now?          | <b>47.</b> Give One, Get One                       |
| <b>23.</b> What’s the Story Rory?         | <b>48.</b> Find Someone Who ...                    |
| <b>24.</b> What Have I?                   | <b>49.</b> Show Don’t Tell                         |
| <b>25.</b> Inventions                     | <b>50.</b> Vocabulary on the Move                  |

## "Telly" the Share Bear

- Gather up a soft and cuddly teddy bear (perhaps one of the probably dozens you may have kicking around the house from your own children ... or borrow one from a friend/niece or nephew)
- Find a special bag (I used an old backpack from one of my kids) to use as Telly's suitcase
- Make a travel journal or diary for Telly to have with him in the suitcase. You could use a half of a notebook (unlined pages) with a picture of Telly or similar Teddy Bear on the front. The title could be "Telly's Diary" or "Telly's Journal"
- Send Telly and his suitcase/journal home each day with a different student. If you have only one or two kindergarten students, Telly could go home perhaps on a particular day/days of the week (e.g. Tuesday and/or Thursday). Let him go home with each child at least once a week if possible
- In the journal, the student is to draw a picture of an adventure s/he had with Telly while he was at home with him/her ... you will have to talk to parents about this ahead of time so that they are on board with it
- The next morning, the student is to bring Telly, the suitcase, and his journal back to school. During Sharing Time, the student shows the picture s/he drew and talks about what adventure s/he had with Telly the night before. Encourage the use of complete sentence in English as much as possible.
- Allow the other students in Kindergarten, or, if you don't have many Kindergarten students, some of your other students (grades 1-3/4) to ask "good" questions of the student sharing their Telly adventure. Again, encourage complete and varied questions as the students are able. Talking about the characteristics of a good question is important here. If you have a large group of students listening to the sharing and asking questions, you might want to limit the questions to 3-5, depending on the time you have to spend
- I have found this to be a great oral language activity, as the students had to share what they did with Telly (with the aid of a picture they drew), and they also had to formulate questions that they could ask the "Sharer"
- I suggest that Telly only go on a "home visit" on Monday to Thursday evenings, as I found that if he went home for the weekend, it was sometimes hard to get him back on Monday morning. I took the opportunity on the weekends to take Telly home for a "bath" if it was necessary
- The students that I have done this with have really enjoyed it and could hardly wait for their turn with Telly. The time from April to June is perfect for this activity, as the novelty doesn't seem to wear off in that length of time

## Mystery Bag

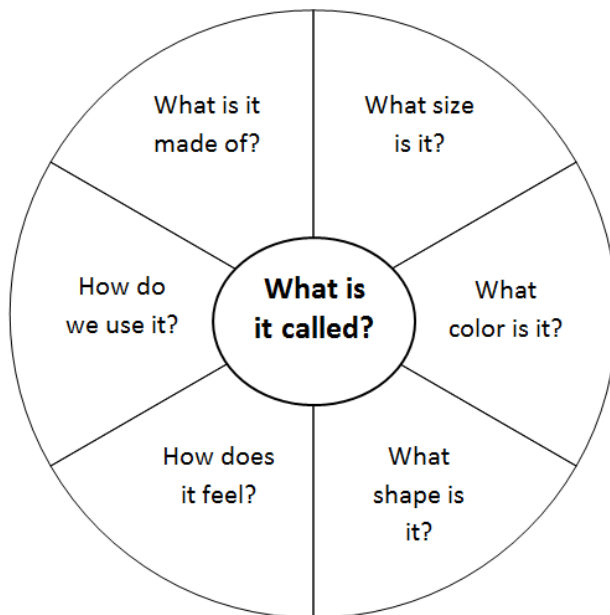
- A terrific alternative to "Show and Tell"
- Demonstrates the powerful use of barriers to promote language, as visual clues are eliminated
- The student brings something to school to share with the class and puts it in the "Mystery Bag" – a cloth bag with a drawstring at the top
- The student gives "clues" about the object to the rest of the class
- Clues vary according to the age of the student
- Younger students:
  - The shape of my object is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - The color of my object is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ gave me my object (for \_\_\_\_\_.) **OR** I made my object.
  - My object is special to me because \_\_\_\_\_.
- Older students: shape, color, what it's used for, what it compares to, where I got it
- As the Mystery Bag is passed around, the other students are able to shake, feel, and determine its weight – all things to have them describe as they do so. If they are able, have them give reasons for their description
- The teacher gives additional clues if necessary
- A variation is to use the negative descriptor (this cannot be a \_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_)

## Stuffed Animal Mystery

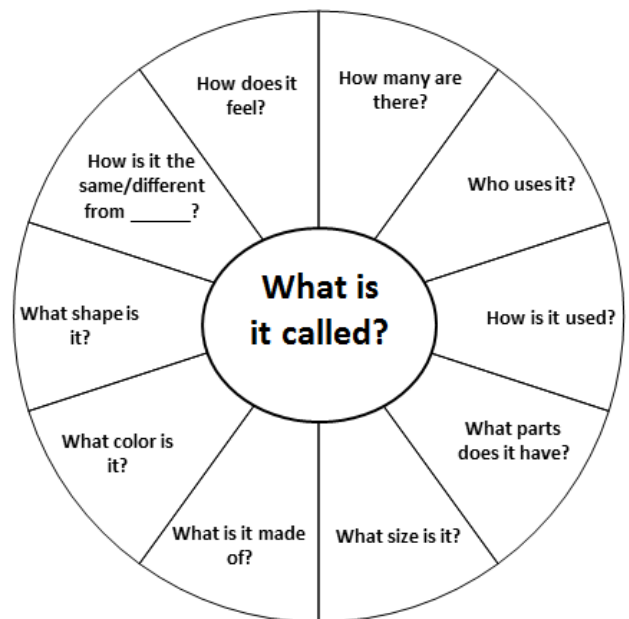
- One child fills a pillowcase with familiar stuffed animals.
- She tells the other children to close their eyes or to face in the opposite direction.
- She takes an animal from the pillowcase and hides it from view under a box.
- She tells the other children to open their eyes or to turn around.
- She uses words to describe the mystery animal without naming it.
- The other children listen and as descriptions are given, they ask questions that will help them identify the stuffed animal.
- After the stuffed animal is identified, another child takes a turn selecting an animal and describing it to the other children.
- Can be used to describe: vegetables that will be eaten at snack, toys, objects, or equipment in the classroom.

## Vocabulary Wheel

Simple:

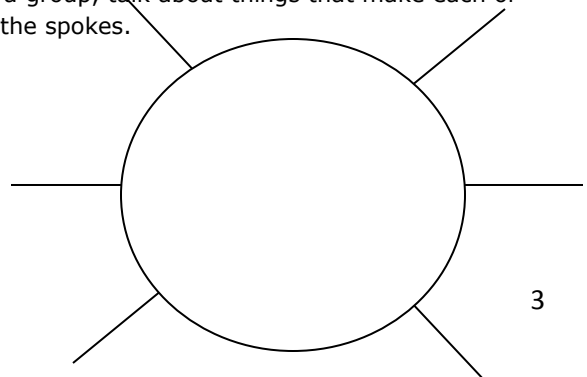


Complex:



## Vocabulary Compare and Contrast

Give each of the students a word. They could be words that are from a unit of study or words you are studying in your language development lessons. Form groups of four-six. Have group members find 4-6 things that each of the words has in common. Write those things in the center of the circle. Have each student each make a spoke that goes out from the circle. As a group, talk about things that make each of the words unique or different. Write those unique things on the spokes.



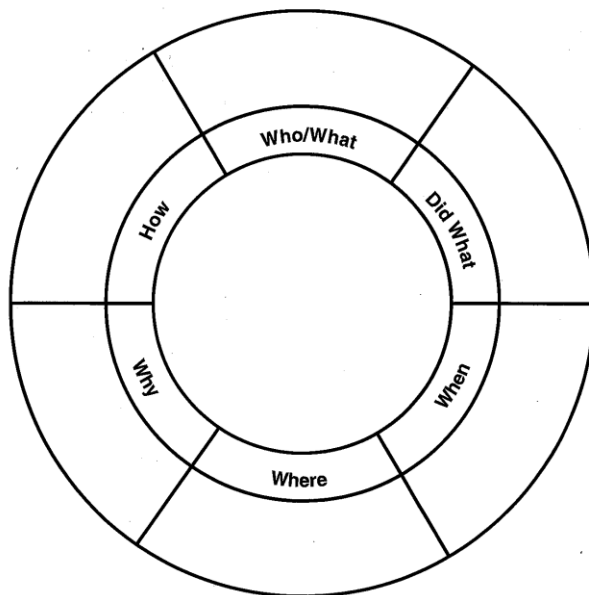
## Vocabulary Ring

- This is a learning tool that maximizes student engagement.
- helps children to show understanding of the vocabulary they have already learned.
- Teacher asks a question, provides a cloze sentence, or provides a definition or clue to the students.
- The teacher waits for mental processing, prompts the students once again and asks for the student response by previously determined signal.
- Could be used to ensure participation from all students regardless of confidence level. Words need to be previously learned or introduced to and can be changed depending on the grade level. The response cards could also be used as a Learning Centre activity. They could also be used to instruct vocabulary in the content areas. In this case, the word would be on the front of the card and the definition or a picture could be on the back of the card.
- **For EAL students,** the focus will be on showing understanding. The vocabulary rings could be set up so that the word is on the front of the cards and an associated picture is on the back of the card.

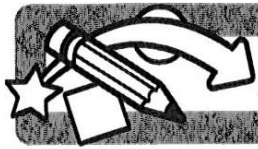


## Concept Wheel

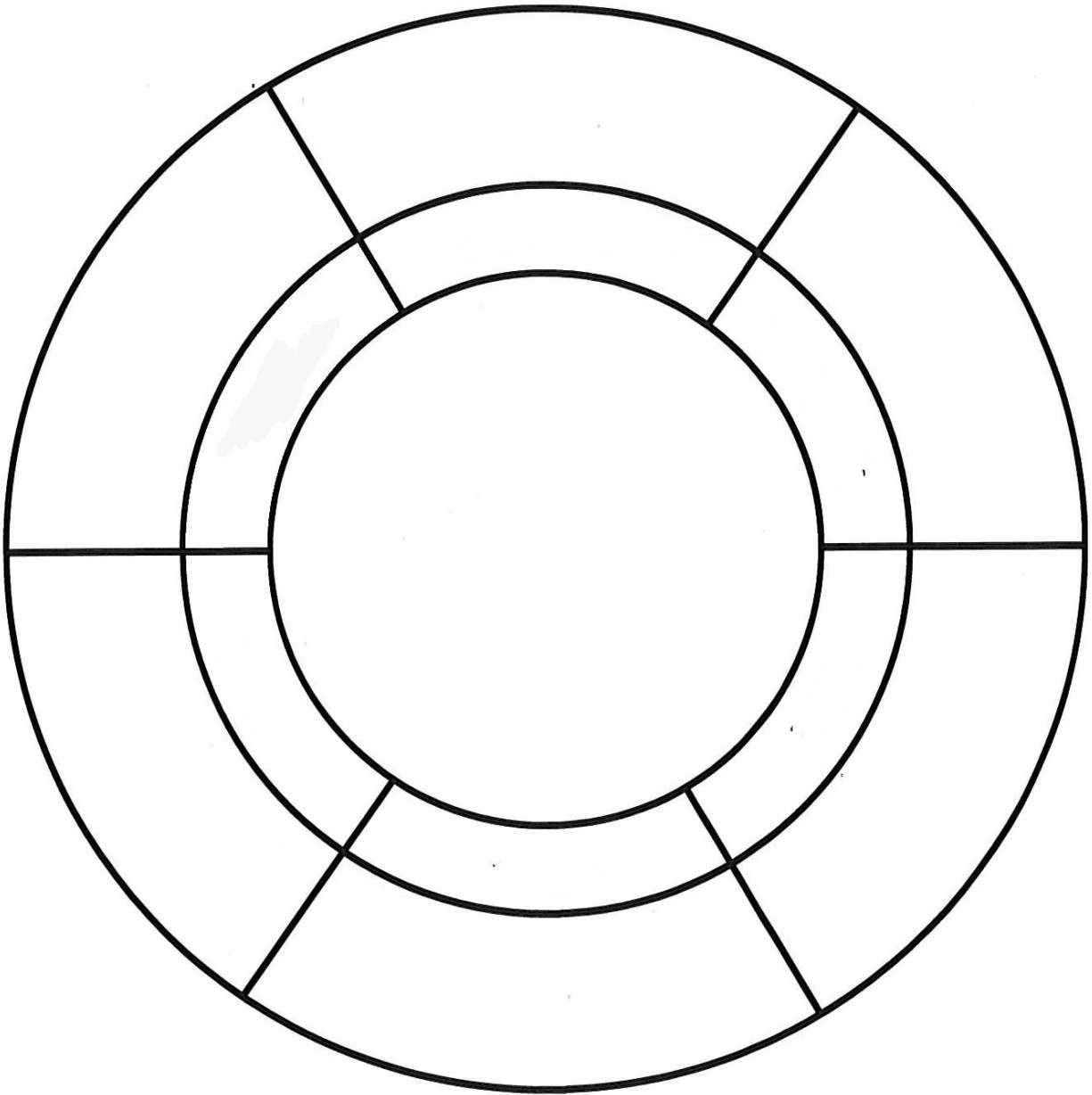
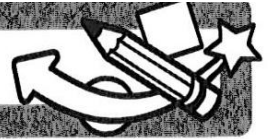
- This is a graphic organizer that asks who, what, where, when, why and how. It is used to help students organize information that has been read, but can be adapted to teach abstract concepts.
- Example:**



**Adaptations:** The wheel can be changed (change the number of categories and the names) to reflect almost any concept. For example, for the concept, 'dogs', each section of the wheel could be used to categorize different kinds of dogs. Add pictures for the youngest students or for EAL students. For Senior English Language Arts, might be used to teach the concept of Conflict, identifying the various types of conflicts, with examples.



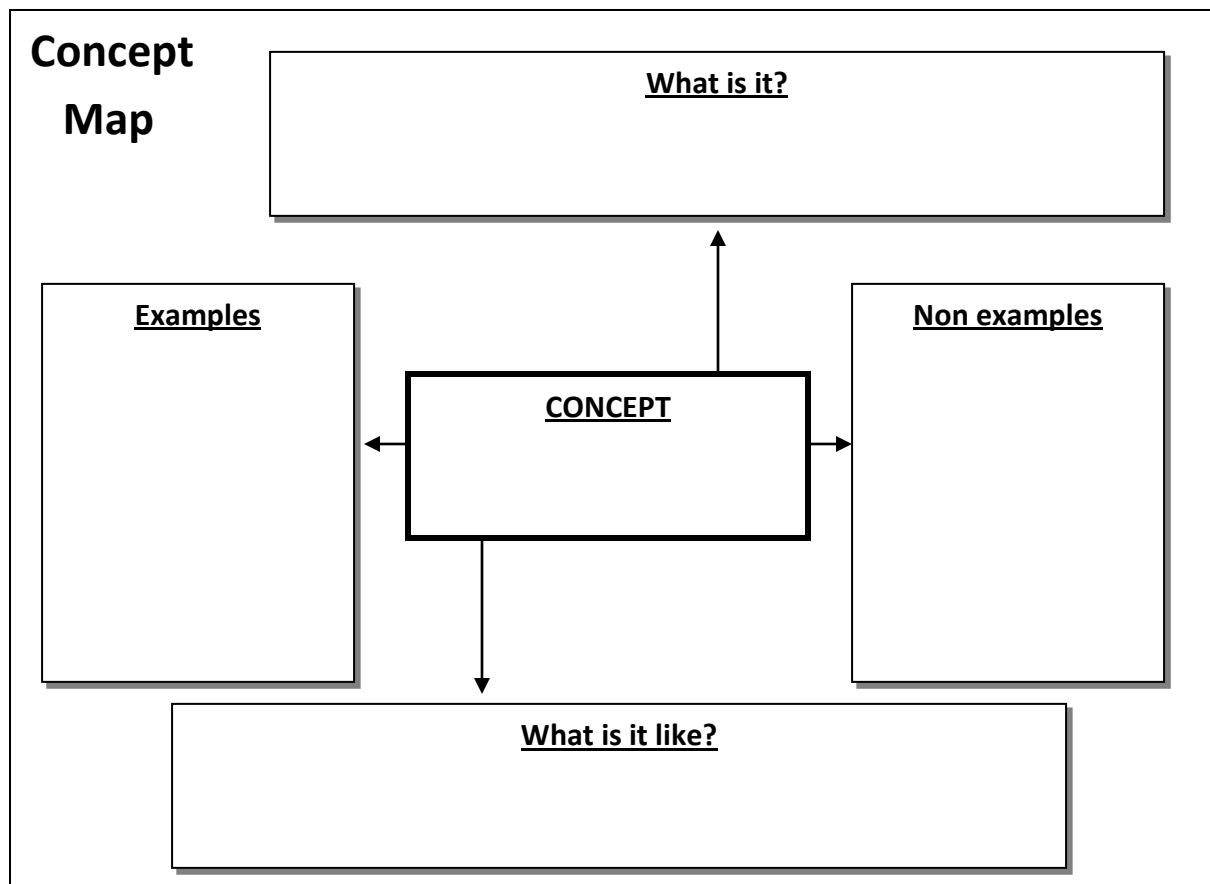
## Concept Wheel



## Concept Word Map

- A special form of a web diagram for exploring knowledge and gathering, organizing, representing, and sharing information. It is a diagram showing the relationships among concepts.
- There are a variety of different forms that this graphic organizer can take.
- With older students, use more complex concepts. Expectations for sophistication of work would increase with the age of the students.
- **For EAL students,** spend a lot of time “talking” about the concepts, using appropriate academic language. Display the Concept Word Maps for all students to see. Have the students share their Maps and ideas with their classmates.


### Examples:



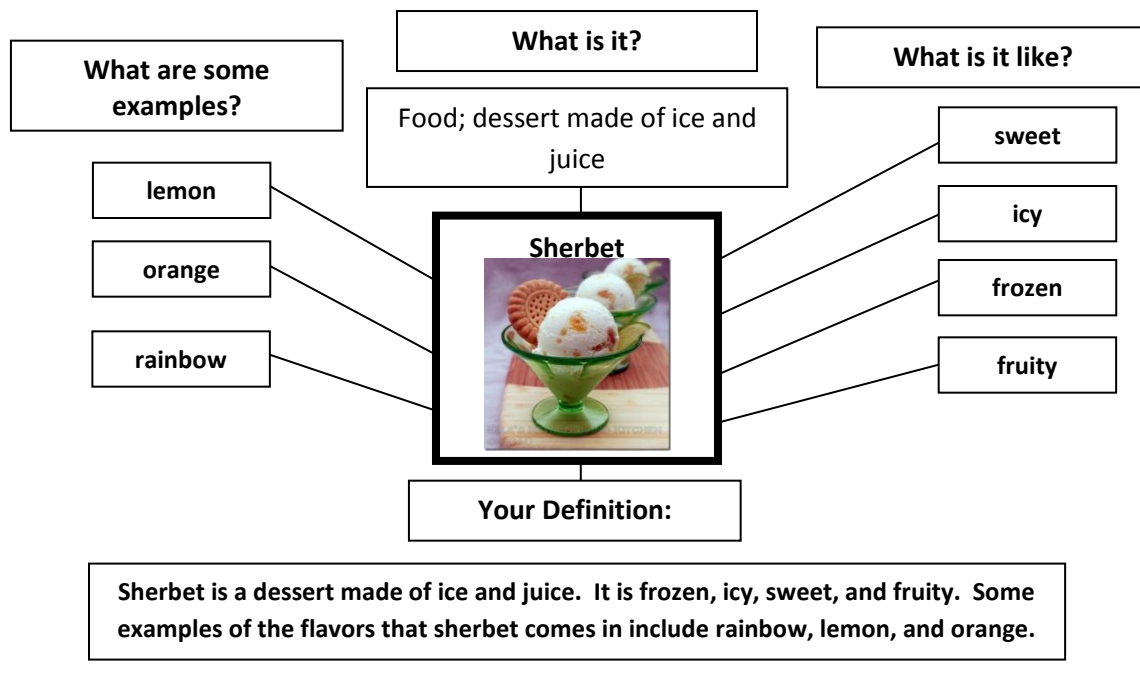


## Concept Word Map

Word: Adjacent

<b>Definition:</b> next to	<b>Synonym:</b> beside
<b>Sentence:</b> The beautiful oak tree is <u>adjacent</u> to the house.	<b>Picture:</b> 
<b>Reading Selection:</b> <u>A Christmas Morning</u> by Truman Capote (p. 152)	<b>Antonym:</b> distant

## Concept Word Map with Definitions



Name		Date	
------	--	------	--

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

## Concept Definition Map

**What is it?**

(category)

**What is it like?**

(property)

(property)

(property)

(property)

(concept)

**What are some examples?**

(illustration)

(illustration)

(illustration)

**New Definition:**

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# News Telling Chart

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

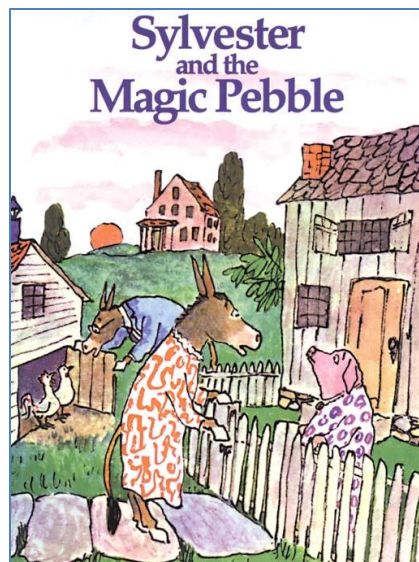
News Words	My Words	My Drawing
Who?		
What?		
Where?		
When?		
Why?		
How?		

## Text Talk – A Great Way to Develop Vocabulary

- Text Talk is an approach to read alouds that is designed to enhance children's ability to construct meaning from decontextualized language.
- Developed by Beck and McKeown
- The ultimate goal of a text talk lesson is twofold:
  1. Getting children to talk about the text, considering ideas using decontextualized language to improve comprehension
  2. The acquisition of language

### How it works:

- Pick 3+ words per text (read and revisit 2 books/per)
- Direct instruction begins after the text has been read aloud and discussed. Introduce the word by contextualizing it from the text
- Students repeat the word aloud with the teacher
- Explain the meaning of the word (in student friendly language)
- Provide examples of word used in other contexts
- Children use the word by providing their own examples (you can use sentence starters here)
  - Ask: "What's the word we have been talking about?"
    - Children repeat the word aloud again and give example
- Introduce one or two other words following the same procedure
- In applicable, have the children demonstrate the word meaning through facial expressions or actions
- Put the name of the book or the book jacket or a copy of the cover on the wall. Put the words on a card under the cover. Each time the students use one of the words, you (or they) put a check mark beside the word



### "Magic" Words

extraordinary ✓✓✓

frantic ✓

miserable ✓✓

## Wordless Books

### List of titles:

1. The Grey Lady and the Strawberry Snatcher –Bang, M.
2. Just in Passing – Bonners, S.
3. The Patchwork Farmer – Brown, C.
4. In the Pond – Cristina, E. & L. Puricelli
5. Carl Goes to Daycare – Farrar, Straus & Giroux
6. Good Dog, Carl – Day, A.
7. Pancakes for Breakfast – dePaola, T.
8. The Yellow Umbrella – Drescher, H.
9. The Surprise Picnic – Goodall, J.S.
10. Changes – Hutchins, P.
11. The Red Book – Lehman, B.
12. Animal Alphabet – Kitchen, B.
13. Amanda and the Mysterious Carpet – Krahn, F.
14. Wave – Lee, S.
15. School – McCully, E.A.
16. Black and White – Macaulay, D.
17. On Top – MacGregor, M.
18. Snowflake Bentley – Jacqueline Briggs Martin
19. One Frog Too Many – Mayer, M. & M. Mayer
20. Moonlight – Ormerod, J.
21. Sunshine – Ormerod, J.
22. The Gift – Prater, J.
23. Mouse Around – Schories, P.
24. Flying Jake – Smith, L.
25. Peter Spier's Rain – Spier, P.
26. Dreams – Spier, P.
27. This is the Farmer – Tafuri, N.
28. Deep in the Forest – Turkle, B.
29. Sector – Wiesner, D.
30. Tuesday, - Wiesner, D.

## Barrier Game

With this strategy, the students are situated so that they cannot see one another. Each student is given the same supplies or materials. One of the students is given a few minutes to "create" or "do" something with his/her supplies/materials. Then s/he verbally describes how to "do" or "create" his/her project to the other student, who follows the instructions to "do" or "create" a project of his/her own. Once complete, the students compare their projects and discuss.

### Examples:

- Have the students build something with Lego.
- Have the students draw a picture and then describe the drawing using only shapes and directional terms.
- Have the students make a "creation" out of geometric figures.
- **Variation:** Do a Following Directions Activity with the students that are behind the "barrier". Give both (all students) the same directions and see if they come up with the same "creation". An example of a drawing activity would be:
  1. In the middle of your paper, draw a happy face.
  2. On the top of the happy face, draw a triangle.
  3. Above the triangle, draw a sun.
  4. Below the happy face, draw a table.
  5. Under the table, draw a heart.
  6. In the triangle, draw a square.
  7. Draw a moon on the right side of your paper (close to the edge), parallel to the sun.
  8. Draw a line connecting the sun to the moon.
  9. Draw a glass of water on the right side of the table.
  10. Draw a star behind the left leg of the table.
  11. On the top left hand corner of your paper, draw a cloud.

Once the drawings are complete, have the students compare and discuss.

## Entry Slips

- Entry slips are the opposite of exit slips. Exit slips are used as a “ticket” to leave at the end of class. Entry slips are “tickets” to enter.
- Each student brings one word to class which they believe the entire class should learn. This could be a word from conversations, the newspaper, advertisements, their reading etc.
- Students may give the entry slip to the teacher upon entering, or write the word on the board as they enter.
- The teacher selects 2-3 words from the entry slips, and the student who brought it in should explain where the word was found, and why s/he thinks the class should learn it.

## Think Pair Share

Think Pair Share is a cognitive rehearsal structure that can be used to help students:

- recall events
- make a summary
- stimulate thinking
- share responses, feelings and ideas

### Think Pair Share

The teacher sets a problem or asks for a response to the reading.

The students think alone for a specified time.

The students form pairs to discuss the problem or give responses.

Some responses may be shared with the class.

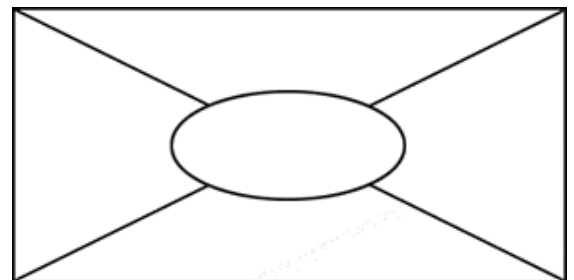
Explicit discussion about the rights and responsibilities of speakers and listeners helps to clarify the shared understandings of the partner discussions. To help the students establish effective speaking and listening skills, teachers model and refer to behaviors that are expected when people speak and listen to each other.

Teachers monitor the children’s interactions and draw attention to successful discussions so that students understand exactly what they need to do.

## Placemat and Round Robin

This activity is designed to allow for each individual’s thinking, perspective and voice to be heard, recognized and explored.

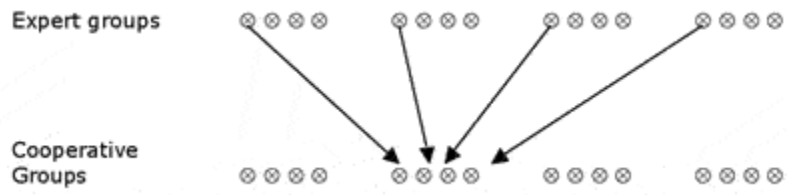
- Form participants into groups of four.
- Allocate one piece of A3 or butcher’s paper to each group.
- Ask each group to draw the diagram on the paper.
- The outer spaces are for each participant to write their thoughts about the topic.
- Conduct a Round Robin so that each participant can share their views.
- The circle in the middle of the paper is to note down (by the nominated scribe) the common points made by each participant.
- Each group then reports the common points to the whole group.



## Jigsaw

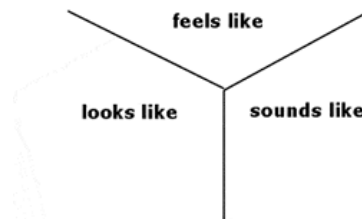
This activity is characterized by participants within a cooperative group each becoming expert on different aspects of one topic of study.

- Before presenting and teaching to the cooperative group, students form *Expert Groups*, comprised of individuals from different cooperative groups who have the same assigned topic.
- Together, expert partners study their topic and plan effective ways to teach important information when they return to their cooperative groups.
- One way of teaching is for the expert group to display their information on paper.
- Participants return to their cooperative groups and then take their cooperative group on a Gallery Tour (walk around the room) to each display.
- Or participants can return to their cooperative groups and teach all members of their group as they are now the experts.



## Y Charts

Asks students to think and talk about the attributes of an object.



## Body Collage

Learning the English vocabulary words for the different parts of the human body is an important part of ESL classes, and this project makes memorizing those words fun. Tell students they will be constructing a person by finding different parts from magazines. Brainstorm a list of parts they will need to find and cut out on the board, like eyes, nose, hair, arms, torso and feet. Provide students with lots of magazines, scissors, glue and large sheets of construction paper or poster board. Guide students with finding and cutting out each part listed on the board, then gluing them to form their own person on the paper. Talk aloud and encourage students to respond throughout the process by pointing out certain features and asking questions, such as "What color is Justin's person's hair?" and eliciting a response.

## Fruit Toss

Teach ESL youngsters vocabulary and sentence structure with a fruit toss game. Ask students to stand up at their desks or in an open area. Toss a piece of plastic fruit to a student and ask her a question about the fruit such as "What is it?" or "What color is it?" The student answers the question then tosses the fruit back to you. Continue the game giving each student a chance to answer a question.

## Role Play

Prepare small note cards with recent vocabulary words or phrases. Fold the note cards in half and place them in a sack or a hat. Gather the students together on the floor and divide them into two equal teams. Ask one child from each group to come forward and pick a card from the sack. Whisper the word to each child and ask them to act out the word for their group. The first group to guess the word wins a point. This a fun way to get the children moving and reviewing English words.

## Finger Puppet Role Play

Role play activities are always useful in an ESL classroom, as it encourages students to apply the lessons they've learned in a real life situation. Allow students to draw their own people or animals on construction paper, or provide them with templates from websites like Enchanted Learning and Free Kids Crafts. If you are not using a template, cut small rectangles of paper to tape into a ring. Students can tape their puppets onto the ring to slip onto their fingers. This art activity is applicable in many role play situations; for example, when learning about careers, students can make police officer, mail carrier and teacher finger puppets and have them discuss their jobs; or when learning about animals, students can make a zoo's worth of animal puppets and describe each as they play.

## What's Happening Now?

Make out a set of cards, with pictures for younger children or with sentences or phrases for older children. One child takes a card and goes to the center of the circle. S/he mimes whatever is on the card. (For example, s/he may mime someone golfing, getting up out of bed and dressing etc.)

Similarly the children may perform in pairs or small groups, where they work together to create the mime. The mime is frozen when the rest of the class begin to guess what the child is referring to.

Remind the children to mime things slowly with clear and expressive gestures.

For older students, make out a set of cards, with a sequence of events. One child takes a card and goes to the center of the circle. S/he mimes whatever is on the card. The mimes can develop from simple to difficult, for example the child may buy a lotto ticket, check the numbers in the newspaper, realize he/she has won, show reaction, go to claim money, can't find the ticket, return home sad. The sequence of events is longer here and emotions are involved. The child miming must be clear and deliberate in their actions, while those guessing the situation must give detailed accounts of the situation and emotions of the person miming.

## What's the Story Rory?

The children sit in a circle. One child is chosen to begin a story; he/she only says the first word. The children continue to say a word one after another, in quick succession until sentences and stories are formed. Once...upon...a...time...

Similarly, the children can say a sentence before the next person begins.

## What have I?

Begin the game by asking all of the children to close their eyes. The teacher can then use familiar everyday items to create sounds. The children guess the sound.

**Variation:** Divide the class into pairs A and B. A is given a card with the name of an object that s/he describes. A is given one minute to describe the object to B. B can have two chances at guessing the object in question. As time goes on decrease the amount of time given to describing the object, or ensure that the children give a more detailed account of an object. The children may also be asked to describe countries, places, monuments, characters, food etc. Develop this game by blindfolding two children, A and B. Child, A is given an object and begins to describe the feel, size, shape, smell, taste etc. of the object. The second child, B, guesses the object.



## Inventions

The children sit in a circle. One child becomes a famous inventor; s/he goes to the center of the circle and begins to invent something. The student may "use" as many other students as necessary to construct her/his invention. It may or may not move, depending on the students. The rest of the class tries to guess what the invention is for or what it does.

## The Name Game

Ask the children to sit in a large circle. Each child must think of an adjective beginning with the same initial as his/her first name to describe him/herself, for example Happy Henry, Silly Suzie etc. Next ask the children to think of a verb to go with their name, for example, Silly Suzie skies, Happy Henry hops. Continue on adding nouns adverbs etc. Check which children can make the longest sentences "Silly Suzie slowly skies down steep and slippery slopes".

## Word Games

The children sit in a large circle. The teacher picks a topic and one by one the children name a word that is linked to the topic. Initially the children clap or stamp their feet between each word, to give them a chance to think of linking words, for example, Cat, stamp feet, kitten, stamp feet, whiskers...etc. Topics can also include famous people, counties, space, current affairs, math (square numbers etc.).

## I Went to the Shop

The children sit in a circle and a topic is chosen, for example animals, birds, insects, food, clothes etc. A begins "I went to the shop and I bought a gorilla". The child can add an action to help others remember, for example scratching under his/her arms. B continues, "I went to the shop and I bought a gorilla and an elephant". B makes the action for gorilla and elephant, this continues around the circle with each child repeating the animals that have gone before, then adding their own animal. To end this game the entire group repeats all of the animals that were bought and each action to go with it.

## What's in a Word? (for older students)

One child (A) thinks of a word. This word may have a particular feature, for example it may have a letter doubled in it (stopper, apple, berries). A begins "I went to the shop and I bought a stopper". The rest of the group tries to link other words that have the same feature, but must guess the particular feature first. B raises his/her hand, and says a word that s/he believes is linked to the first. S/he may think A is referring to all the words that begin with "s" so s/he will suggest: "I went to the shop and I bought a saucer". C may suggest words that end with "r", "I went to the shop and I bought a calendar". A will say "That's wrong. I didn't buy a saucer or a calendar". The children continue until someone guesses the feature. D might suggest "I went to the shop and I bought a parrot". A will say "That's right. I did buy a parrot". Both A and D and whoever else guesses the feature can continue giving examples until all or the majority of people see the link. Remember some children may not have guessed the correct feature but may say a word linked to "stopper", for example a child, B, thinks that all the words beginning with "s" is the link and s/he may suggest "I went to the shop and I bought a sheep". This word has the "e" doubled so A will say it is right. To eliminate this problem, get all those who guess correctly to give a few examples of the feature throughout the game. Initially keep the game simple until the children have a good grasp of the idea.

## Retelling Familiar Stories

Use of picture books and big books; the pictures will prompt the children and provide a scaffold for retelling the story in sequence. Encourage the children to use the language of storytelling. Text- less picture books are also useful for this activity (e.g. The Snowman by Raymond Briggs). Reading predictable texts with repetition will give children the opportunity to engage with the story orally and to develop prediction skills (e.g. The Little Yellow Chicken, The Three Little Pigs, etc.) Role play retellings: Have children role play characters from stories. Each character tells the story from his/her point of view. This will involve use of voice and will express opinions on the story (e.g. Goldilocks would retell a version of her story differently to Mother Bear!). Role play familiar stories in small groups; identify the characters, work out what they would say in the story or an event from the story, work out the actions and the expressions for the characters. Allow the children to share their story with the class. Use puppets to reenact stories in a variety of ways. Children can draw characters on card and use simple lollipops to complete the puppet effect or more elaborate puppets can be made using fabric and other craft supplies. Allow children to retell well-known stories in pairs or small groups (e.g. Fairytales and stories from popular picture books).

**Story raps-** choose a fairytale- name, place, friends. Help children to create a rap using rhyming words eg. Once I knew a girl and her name was Cinders, boy did she hate cleaning windows, she had three sisters and they laughed at her blisters. Poor Cinders, full of blisters! Until one day she met on her way, a fairy queen who wasn't so mean. She sent Cinders to the ball, inside the castle wall. All was well, till the clock struck...Yell.... Cinders had a fall on the way home from the ball. She lost her shoe, she felt so blue. She was back in rags.....etc.

Children also enjoy modernizing fairytales. The teacher may decide to record the rap as the children play with words as part of the process. The rap can then be edited as a whole class/group collaborative work. This will also provide a great connection with the writing process. Listening to and reading a rich diet of stories-Fairytales, mysteries, science fiction, myths, legends, will provide children with the language of storytelling. They also need opportunities to retell the stories to an audience (e.g. in class, at sharing assemblies).

**Story innovation-** retell a familiar story introducing a new character (e.g. Little Red Riding Hood stumbles into the Goldilocks story). Ask children to retell the story in small groups.

**Book reports** also provide a context for retelling narratives.

**Role play-** younger children can dress-up and retell stories they are familiar with through play

## A Story Game - Story Tidbit

The teacher prepares simple written or drawn stories, which are cut into 4 or 5 sections, so that there is a section for each child. The sections are put into a container and mixed up. The children take on section each. The children are told how many sections complete the whole story. The children approach each other and find the missing parts to their story. Then they put the story in order. This activity can also be done in small groups of 4/5. Each child has a story part and they discuss how to re-assemble the story in a meaningful sequential context.

## Team Guessing Games

Guessing games can generate a lot of spontaneous speech, even if much of it is fairly simple in structure. To implement a guessing game as a speaking activity, working as a whole class offers too little opportunity for each student to speak, but working in pairs may often leave the lone guesser stumped for ideas. Groups of about 4 seem to be the ideal size, with one person as the "knower" and the other group members guessing.

### Preparation

The range of topics for guessing games is wide, so the game can be tailored to match the theme of the class. Prepare a sheet with all the items, make enough copies for every group, and chop the sheets into pieces (one item per slip). Make a set for each group, each set containing one copy of each item, and place the sets into envelopes. Write an additional one or two items on slips of paper and place them in a separate, marked envelope to use during the demo.

### Procedure

First explain the game, emphasizing that the knower is only allowed to answer "yes" or "no". Demonstrate the activity, by asking one student to come from the front, draw the slip from the special "demo" envelope, and answer questions from the class. Explain that students will work in groups, taking turns to draw a slip from the envelope. Check: What words can the person with the slip of paper say? ("yes" or "no"). The materials can be collected after the activity and reused in a different class.

If some groups finish early, you can ask them to take turns thinking of another item for their group members to guess. Alternatively, you could keep a few extra guessing items on hand to give to them. This way, the faster groups have something to occupy them, while the slower groups can still have the satisfaction of eventually finishing the whole envelope.

## See It and Say It (Picture and Pattern) - for younger students

This activity gives students practice with target nouns and English syntax. It can be used with almost any academic topic students are learning.

- Identify a topic students are learning about (e.g., wild animals) and the target nouns for the topic (e.g., lion, zebra, elephant). Find pictures or objects to demonstrate the target nouns.
- Show a picture of a lion and say: "I see a lion."
- Write a sentence frame on the board of this oral statement: I see a lion.
- Read the statement and ask students to repeat after you. Use your finger to draw a line under each word. Tell students they can use this sentence to help them make new sentences.
- Show a picture of a different animal and call on a volunteer to make a statement using the sentence frame for support. Example: I see a camel. Continue in this way until all students have had a chance to make a statement.

**LITERACY LINK** Ask each student to draw a picture of one of the target nouns and then write a sentence about the picture using the sentence frame for support. Have students show their picture and read their sentence to a partner. If desired, students can create entire pattern books with pictures and sentences using the sentence pattern. They can read their book to a partner or within small groups.

## Either/Or/ and More (Choice and Extension)

This activity gives students practice with target verbs and English syntax. It can be used with pictures or with classroom situations the teacher creates.

- Call a volunteer to the front of the class and whisper a command to the student. For example, tell the student to sit down and look at a book.
- Ask the other students to tell you what the volunteer is doing by offering them a choice for a response. For example: "Is the boy standing up or sitting down?" Use pantomime actions to ensure that students understand the question. If students respond with one or two word (sitting; sitting down), affirm good work and encourage elaboration. "Yes, the boy is sitting down." Write the sentence on the board and have students repeat it after you.
- Expand the practice by giving students another choice. For example, "What else is the boy doing? Is the boy looking at a book or writing?" Again, use pantomime actions as needed. If students respond with one word (looking), affirm good work and encourage elaboration. "Yes, the boy is looking at a book." Write the sentence on the board and have students repeat it after you.
- Read the two sentences aloud: "The boy is sitting down. The boy is looking at a book." Write the sentences on the board and have students repeat them after you.

**LITERACY LINK** Have students copy the sentences on a piece of paper and then draw a picture to illustrate them. Have students show their picture and read their sentences to a partner.

## Follow the Pattern (Structured Talk)

This activity can be used to practice verb tenses, adjective placement, plurals, or other grammatical forms.

- Organize students into small groups. Give students a pattern to follow. For example, have each student say three sentences that include an adjective before a noun. Model this for students first: I have a black cat. I live in a small house. I like sweet foods.
- Have each student in the group practice the pattern by creating three original sentences. Then change the pattern. For example, have students say a sentence in the past tense and then a sentence in the future tense: Yesterday I walked to school. Tomorrow I am going to ride to school.
- Continue with other patterns. As an extension, have a student in the group create a pattern and have other group members try to figure out what the pattern is by following it. For example, the student creating the pattern may say: I have a pen. You have two pens. I have a book. You have two books. I have a watch. You have two watches. The student who figures out the pattern continues: I have a sister. You have two sisters. ... and so forth.

**LITERACY LINK** After oral practice, have students write the sentences they created with help as needed.

## Relay Talk (One-on-One Communication)

This activity gives students practice expressing themselves orally in unstructured discourse. It can be used with any academic topic or with classroom situations the teacher creates.

- Organize students into two equal lines with each student facing a partner.
- Designate one line as the moving line while the other line is the non-moving line.
- Explain to students that you will ask a question and give them two minutes to discuss it with the person immediately across from them in the other line. Example: Talk to your partner about the relationship between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Tell students when you say "time is up," the first person in the "moving line" will go to the end of the line while everyone in that line will move one space to the left or right and face a new partner and a new question. Example: Talk to your partner about why \_\_\_\_\_ (related to the original question).
- Have students discuss each question with two partners. Repeat the process with 3-4 questions.

### 3-2-1 GO! (Structured Questioning)

This activity gives students practice expressing themselves orally in structured discourse. It can be used with any academic topic or with classroom situations the teacher creates.

- Write on the board three open-ended questions about a topic, following this pattern: Share three examples of habitats. Talk about two ways that an animal adapts to its habitat. Discuss one way that human beings adversely affect animals' habitats.
- Review the questions and ask students to listen carefully as you say: 3, 2, 1, GO!
- Organize students into small groups. Ask each group to take about five minutes to answer the questions.
- Call on groups to share one statement for each of the questions.

**LITERACY LINK** Ask students to write a paragraph about the third question and then to share their paragraph with the other members of their small group.

### What Is It? (Oral Description)

This activity gives students practice describing people, places, and things

- Have each student draw a picture of a person, place or thing. Alternatively, students can cut a picture from a magazine.
- Organize students in pairs. Students should not let their partner see their picture. Have students take turns describing their picture to their partner. Example: There are four different types of fruit in a bowl. There are three bananas. There is one apple. And so forth. The partner should draw what he/she hears being described.
- When both students have finished describing their pictures, have them compare the original picture with the picture that was drawn and discuss any discrepancies.



**LITERACY LINK** Have students write a paragraph describing one of the pictures and attach the picture to the paragraph.

### Vocabulary Word Association

- The teacher decides on the vocabulary words that s/he wants to introduce/review. The words could be in the form of written text or pictures.
- Have the students work in pairs.
- Have one of the students position themselves so that they cannot see the words/pictures.
- The other student must give verbal hints that will enable his/her partner to guess what the word/picture is. You might even consider having the students giving non-verbal clues for words.
- The activity could be timed so that the partners could see how many words/pictures they could go through in a certain length of time.
- Once one of the pair has had a turn giving the clues and the other guessing, switch roles with a new batch of words/pictures.
- There are a number of ways of having the words/pictures displayed – lists, pictures, overhead, etc.

### Idioms

ELLs like working with idioms because they are used so frequently by native English speakers. Encourage ELLs to draw pictures of idioms such as "she put her foot in her mouth," "it's raining cats and dogs," "I'm all ears," "He's got two left feet," etc. and then discuss the meanings.

## Mile a Minute

In this game, students are divided into 2-person teams. One is a "talker" and one is a "guesser." The talker faces a list of words on the board and tries to get the "guesser" (whose back is toward the board) to say each of the academic words being studied by quickly describing them without saying any of the words in the category title, or using rhyming words. For example, in the first list below, the word "animal" may not be said. For "mammal, however, the talker may say "These are living things that give birth to live young. Examples are horses and monkeys. "The talker keeps describing, talking, and pantomiming "a mile a minute" until the guesser identifies the term, then moves to the next term, until all words have been named. When a list is finished, the hands of the team go up, and they are the winners. For the next round, team members switch roles. If desired, you may limit the time each team has to one minute. Here are some examples to get you started.

### Types of Animals

Mammal  
Reptile  
Amphibian  
Bird  
Insect  
Fish  
Spider  
Canine

### Shapes

Square  
Circle  
Rectangle  
Triangle  
Right triangle  
Oval  
Diamond  
Rhombus

### Parts of Speech

Noun  
Verb  
Adjective  
Preposition  
Conjunction  
Adverb  
Pronoun  
Interjection

### Units of Measure

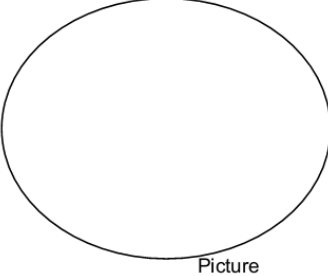
Centimetres  
Metres  
Litres  
Hours  
Kilograms  
Square metres  
Months  
Seconds

### Canada

John Diefenbaker  
Ottawa  
Nunavut  
1867  
Looney  
John A. McDonald  
Rocky Mountains  
Calgary Stampede

## Vocabulary Logs

Require students to keep vocabulary notebooks or vocabulary logs. Words, definitions, and graphic representations can be listed (in any order) on alphabetically organized pages. About twice a week, engage students in activities that help them interact with their notebook words. The more often the words are reviewed and used, the better chance the student will have of storing them in their background knowledge and remembering them. A vocabulary log might look something like this:

Vocabulary Word _____	Student Name _____
Where was the word heard or found? (If found in a book, write the sentence where it was found.)	
_____	
_____	
Definition _____	
_____	
Simple Synonym _____	
_____	
Picture	

## Word Box

Place a decorated (ex, Talk about Words!) shoebox in an easily accessible location. Invite students to write new or interesting words on a piece of paper or card located nearby, and put the word into the box. During a lull in classroom instruction, pull a card from the box and talk about it. Note to teachers: share your new words, too!

## Picture games

Picture games might also be used as guessing games when the child is fairly comfortable with the language. One student draws a card from a stack of picture cards or magazine clippings and starts to describe it. For example the pupil holding the picture might say "It is blue." "You wear it". "It keeps you warm," pausing after each sentence to see whether the others can guess the item on the clipping or card.

## Word Sorts

Sorting involves manipulating vocabulary words on cards. Students work together to group, or sort, words based on commonalities such as word beginnings or endings, vowel sounds, parts of speech, rhymes, meanings, or some other common feature. Students may compare, contrast, or identify similarities while building automatic recognition of words, thus promoting fluent reading and writing. The specific ways in which words are classified or grouped is not of foremost importance—most important is the fact that students are manipulating words and talking about the reasons for their sorting.

Ask students to write the reasons why they sorted their words in the ways they did; or ask students to write a story and incorporate the words they sorted. Then ask them to sort the same words in a different way. This often results in very creative thinking.

## I Did / What Did You Do?

Children often need practice in responding to questions like, "What did you do today?" This activity gives the teacher another avenue to promote children's expressive language, based on the adult model of asking and answering questions. The children get extra practice as they share their creations with the entire class.

**Supplies:** drawing paper, crayons or paints, pencil

**Words you can use:** tell, describe, draw, picture, time references

### What to do:

- Model the sentence structure by saying, "I took a walk in the park yesterday. What did you do?"
- After the children answer ask them to draw a picture of what they did.
- For younger students, the children make a picture of what they did and use inventive spelling or dictate their description of the activity. Write the dictation on the drawing.
- Give the children an opportunity to describe their drawings to the class.
- Display pictures in the room. Children enjoy seeing their work on display and the opportunity to share their creations.
- Use other situations such as "I went shopping last weekend. What did you do?" or "I read a book before I went to bed last night. What did you do?"
- Incorporate other wh questions such as *who*, *where*, *why*, *when* according to developmental appropriateness.
- Encourage children to write, draw, or dictate in a journal each day. Help them think of answers to questions such as "What did you do? Who did you play/work with? Where did you have the most fun?"

## Using Reader's Theatre in the Classroom

Readers' Theater serves many useful functions:

- It provides repeated reading practice—an important factor in building fluency. Repeated reading practice also improves students' confidence in, and enthusiasm for reading. It's an enjoyable change of pace from everyday practice sessions.
- It's a wonderful opportunity for children who are used to feelings of failure to provide expertise entertainment for others.
- Readers' Theater scripts cover many different subjects across the curriculum making them versatile.
- Lots of Reader's Theatre scripts available at:
  - [http://www.readinglady.com/index.php?module=documents&JAS\\_DocumentManager\\_op=viewDocument&JAS\\_Document\\_id=9&MMN\\_position=34:34](http://www.readinglady.com/index.php?module=documents&JAS_DocumentManager_op=viewDocument&JAS_Document_id=9&MMN_position=34:34)
  - <http://www.storiestogrowby.com/script.html>
  - <http://www.teachingheart.net/readerstheater.htm>
  - <http://www.aaronsherp.com/rt/RTE.html>

## Give One, Get One

This strategy allows students to talk about topics of interest or a topic that you will be studying in class. It can also be used as a review activity for the end of a unit or lesson. There are a variety of ways that you can implement this strategy:

- First, you come up with a topic. For example, "What I know about insects." Have the students write in one of squares information that they know. Then they circulate through the room, giving one idea to each student and getting one idea from each student. They write down the ideas they got in the other squares on the paper.
- Afterwards, they can discuss what they heard, who had similar answers, and which were most common. The teacher gets a good idea of the background knowledge and can clear up any misconceptions before starting a unit.
- On a piece of paper or note card, each student writes down at statement about what you have been in class. It would be a major idea that resonates with them. Then, they get up from their spot and find a partner with whom they will spend one or two minutes sharing their idea. Their partner also shares their idea. The partners swap papers and go and find a new partner with whom they share their "new" idea. The activity continues until each student has had the opportunity to share with several classmates. This strategy is great as it gets the students talking and listening, as they know they have to "present" the new ideas to someone else.
- The teacher gives each student a "Give One, Get One" grid such as the one attached. Then the students circulate around the room getting classmates to talk about the topic and a brief summary of each person's major point is written on the grid. The teacher can use the information gained as an assessment of what the students know/still need to learn.
- This strategy can also be called **"Find Someone Who ..."** (see attached). The teacher places prompts about a topic/area of study in the boxes of a grid. The students circulate around the room finding someone who can respond to the prompt. That person verbally replies to the prompt and then initials it. Then the student will move on to others to find someone else who can respond to another prompt, etc.



# Give One, Get One


# Find Someone Who . . .

**DIRECTIONS:** Walk around the room and find someone who can respond to one of the prompts in the boxes below. The person should initial the square after verbally replying to the prompt. A person can only answer and initial one square.


## Show Don't Tell

One of the best ways for students to learn vocabulary is to associate each new word with a visual or movement. This is a great tool for those visual/spatial and bodily/kinesthetic learners.

- Give each student a list that shows the vocabulary words the class is studying and the definitions for those words.
- Give each student an index card with one of the words on it, plus a large piece of paper and a bunch of markers in assorted on her card.
- The students should draw a picture of their word and then figure out a way to act out that word. Explain that each child needs to do this without showing the word on their card.
- Each student comes to the front of the room, show the class the picture and acts out their word. Ex: The word is "collaborate" means "to work together". A student might draw puzzle pieces fitting together and the action might be shaking hands.
- The other students need to guess the word. Once they have figured it out, all the students repeat the action.
- Each time a student comes to the front and acts out a word, follow up by leading the class in a review of all the words presented so far. Say and act out the word.
- Collect all pictures at the end of the session.
- As a quick review periodically, show each picture and have students act out the word associated with that picture.

## Vocabulary on the Move

Vocabulary instruction, like most good teaching, needs student engagement – and that means a lot more than just looking up the words in the dictionary. Here's one way to get the vocabulary words into your students' long term memories.

- Make a list of vocabulary terms your students have been learning. These should be terms students are familiar with; they can include words from previous units. Write the terms on sentence strips. Then staple the ends of each strip together to make a headband.
- Ask each student to put on a headband without looking at the word on that headband.
- Create a list of questions on the board. Tell students that each student's goal is to guess the word on his/her headband. Explain that students can figure out their words by walking around the room and asking other students questions from the list on the board. They should be instructed to leave their headbands on, even if they think they know their words.
- After a few minutes of playing the game, ask those students who think they know their words to tell the class what they've figured out and why they think they're right.
- Once they've done that, ask all students to remove their headbands. Celebrate with all students the experience of trying to figure out their words. Let those who came u with their words – as well as those who didn't – talk about some of the questions they asked about their words, answers they were given, etc.

With older students you could have the vocabulary words on pieces of paper attached to the students' back. They would use the same procedure of moving about the room, asking questions to assist them in determining what their word is.

### Sample Questions:

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. What is a synonym for me?      | 5. Give me an example of something I'm not. |
| 2. What is an antonym for me?     |   |
| 3. What is the definition for me? | 6. What part of speech am I?                |
| 4. Give me an example of me.      |   |

\*Depending on the level/grade of your students, you would vary the questions.