Vocabulary

Third Grade Teacher Reading Academy

Teacher Reading
A C A D E M I E S ™

August 2004

Information Booklet

READING
Grade 3
Revised

Texas Education Agency   •   Student Assessment Division

INTRODUCTION

The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) is a completely reconceived testing program. It assesses more of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) than the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) did and asks questions in more authentic ways. TAKS has been developed to better reflect good instructional practice and more accurately measure student learning. We hope that every teacher will see the connection between what we test on this new state assessment and what our students should know and be able to do to be academically successful. To provide you with a better understanding of TAKS and its connection to the TEKS and to classroom teaching, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has developed this newly revised edition of the TAKS information booklet. The information booklets were originally published in January 2002, before the first TAKS field test. Now, after several years of field tests and live administrations, we are able to provide an even more comprehensive picture of the testing program. We have clarified some of the existing material and, in some cases, provided new sample items and/or more explanations of certain item types. However, it is important to remember that these clarifications do not signify any change in the TAKS testing program. The objectives and TEKS student expectations assessed on TAKS remain unchanged. We hope this revised version of the TAKS information booklet will serve as a user-friendly resource to help you understand that the best preparation for TAKS is a coherent, TEKS-based instructional program that provides the level of support necessary for all students to reach their academic potential.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The development of the TAKS program included extensive public scrutiny and input from Texas teachers, administrators, parents, members of the business community, professional education organizations, faculty and staff at Texas colleges and universities, and national content-area experts. The agency involved as many stakeholders as possible because we believed that the development of TAKS was a responsibility that had to be shared if this new assessment was to be an equitable and accurate measure of learning for all Texas public school students.

The three-year test-development process, which began in summer 1999, included a series of carefully conceived activities. First, committees of Texas educators identified those TEKS student expectations for each grade and subject area assessed that should be tested on a statewide assessment. Then a committee of TEA Student Assessment and Curriculum staff incorporated these selected TEKS student expectations, along with draft objectives for each subject area, into eleventh grade exit level surveys. These surveys were sent to Texas educators at the middle school and secondary levels for their review. Based on input we received from more than 27,000 survey responses, we developed a second draft of the objectives and TEKS student expectations. In addition, we used this input during the development of draft objectives and student expectations for grades 3 through 10 to ensure that the TAKS program, like the TEKS curriculum, would be vertically aligned. This vertical alignment was a critical step in ensuring that the TAKS tests would become more rigorous as students moved from grade to grade. For example, the fifth grade tests would be more rigorous than the fourth grade tests, which would be more rigorous than the third grade tests. Texas educators felt that this increase in rigor from grade to grade was both appropriate and logical since each subject-area test was closely aligned to the TEKS curriculum at that grade level.

In fall 2000 TEA distributed the second draft of the objectives and TEKS student expectations for eleventh grade exit level and the first draft of the objectives and student expectations for grades 3 through 10 for review at the campus level. These documents were also posted on the Student Assessment Division's website to encourage input from the public. Each draft document focused on two central issues: first, whether the objectives included in the draft were essential to measure on a statewide assessment; and, second, whether students would have received enough instruction on the TEKS student expectations included under each objective to be adequately prepared to demonstrate mastery of that objective in the spring of the school year. We received more than 57,000 campus-consensus survey responses. We used these responses, along with feedback from national experts, to finalize the TAKS objectives and student expectations. Because the state assessment was necessarily limited to a "snapshot" of student performance, broad-based input was important to ensure that TAKS assessed the parts of the TEKS curriculum most critical to students' academic learning and progress.

In the thorough test-development process that we use for the TAKS program, we rely on educator input to develop items that are appropriate and valid measures of the objectives and TEKS student expectations the items are designed to assess. This input includes an annual educator review and revision of all proposed test items before field testing and a second annual educator review of data and items after field testing. In addition, each year panels of recognized experts in the fields of English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies meet in Austin to critically review the content of each of the high school level TAKS assessments to be administered that year. This critical review is referred to as a content validation review and is one of the final activities in a series of quality-control steps to ensure that each high school test is of the highest quality possible. A content validation review is considered necessary at the high school grades (9, 10, and 11) because of the advanced level of content being assessed.

ORGANIZATION OF THE TAKS TESTS

TAKS is divided into test objectives. It is important to remember that the objective statements are not found in the TEKS curriculum. Rather, the objectives are "umbrella statements" that serve as headings under which student expectations from the TEKS can be meaningfully grouped. Objectives are broad statements that "break up" knowledge and skills to be tested into meaningful subsets around which a test can be organized into reporting units. These reporting units help campuses, districts, parents, and the general public understand the performance of our students and schools. Test objectives are not intended to be "translations" or "rewordings" of the TEKS. Instead, the objectives are designed to be identical across grade levels rather than grade specific. Generally, the objectives are the same for third grade through eighth grade (an elementary/middle school system) and for ninth grade through eleventh grade (a high school system). In addition, certain TEKS student expectations may logically be grouped under more than one test objective; however, it is important for you to understand that this is not meaningless repetition—sometimes the organization of the objectives requires such groupings. For example, on the TAKS writing tests for fourth and seventh grades, some of the same student expectations addressing the conventions of standard English usage are listed under both Objective 2 and Objective 6. In this case, the expectations listed under Objective 2 are assessed through the overall strength of a student's use of language conventions on the written composition portion of the test; these same expectations under Objective 6 are assessed through multiple-choice items attached to a series of revising and editing passages.

ORGANIZATION OF THE INFORMATION BOOKLETS

The purpose of the information booklets is to help Texas educators, students, parents, and other stakeholders understand more about the TAKS tests. These booklets are not intended to replace the teaching of the TEKS curriculum, provide the basis for the isolated teaching of skills in the form of narrow test preparation, or serve as the single information source about every aspect of the TAKS program. However, we believe that the booklets provide helpful explanations as well as show enough sample items, reading and writing selections, and prompts to give educators a good sense of the assessment.

Each grade within a subject area is presented as a separate booklet. However, it is still important that teachers review the information booklets for the grades both above and below the grade they teach. For example, eighth grade reading teachers who review the seventh grade information booklet as well as the ninth grade information booklet are able to develop a broader perspective of the reading assessment than if they study only the eighth grade information booklet.

The information booklets for each subject area contain some information unique to that subject. However, all booklets include the following information, which we consider critical for every subject-area TAKS test:

- an overview of the subject within the context of TAKS

- a blueprint of the test—the number of items under each objective and the number of items on the test as a whole

- information that clarifies how to read the TEKS

- the reasons each objective and its TEKS student expectations are critical to student learning and success

- the objectives and TEKS student expectations that will be included on TAKS

- additional information about each objective that helps educators understand how it is assessed on TAKS

- sample items that show some of the ways objectives are assessed

TAKS READING
INFORMATION BOOKLET

The purposes for reading are as varied and diverse as the people who read, but the ability to read effectively is essential for all students in the increasingly complex world in which we live. Reading is one of the most important foundations for learning, not only in English language arts but also in other content areas, such as science, social studies, and mathematics. Students who can understand what they read and who can make connections between what they read and what they already know will more likely be successful—in the classroom, on the test, and in the real world. Strong reading skills are necessary for academic achievement, for the fundamental tasks of daily living, and for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

The TAKS reading assessments evaluate a subset of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state-mandated curriculum. This curriculum is specifically designed to help students make progress in reading by emphasizing the knowledge and skills most critical for student learning. Because the TAKS reading tests are closely aligned with the TEKS, students who effectively learn the TEKS will become proficient readers who are able to perform successfully on the test without unnecessary emphasis on test preparation. A system of support has been designed to ensure that all students master the TEKS. The Student Success Initiative (SSI) requires that students meet the standard on TAKS to be eligible for promotion to the next grade level as specified below:

- the reading test at grade 3, beginning in the 2002–2003 school year;

- the reading and mathematics tests at grade 5, beginning in the 2004–2005 school year; and

- the reading and mathematics tests at grade 8, beginning in the 2007–2008 school year.

To prepare students for the SSI requirements and to promote vertical alignment, it is essential that teachers collaborate and coordinate across grade levels.

The TEKS student expectations eligible for testing on the third through eighth grade TAKS reading assessments are grouped under four TAKS objectives.

Objective 1:   The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of culturally diverse written texts.

Objective 2:   The student will apply knowledge of literary elements to understand culturally diverse written texts.

Objective 3:   The student will use a variety of strategies to analyze culturally diverse written texts.

Objective 4:   The student will apply critical-thinking skills to analyze culturally diverse written texts.

These objectives are consistent from third grade through eighth grade, and the TEKS student expectations assessed under each TAKS objective are vertically aligned, meaning that they build logically from one grade level to the next. An example of this logical movement follows.

Example from Objective 2

Grade 3 TEKS 3.11 (H) states that *students are expected to analyze characters, including their traits, feelings, relationships, and changes.*

Grade 4 TEKS 4.12 (H) states that *the student is expected to analyze characters, including their traits, motivations, conflicts, points of view, relationships, and changes they undergo.*

Many of the TEKS student expectations from grade to grade are expressed in similar language, but the level of student performance required at each grade increases. Reading selections will be longer and more challenging, and the critical thinking required of students will be more complex and sophisticated. Although elementary and middle school teachers are not directly responsible for student success on TAKS at the high school level, it is important for them to familiarize themselves with the reading (ninth grade) and English language arts (tenth and eleventh grades) assessments. Without strong elementary and middle school reading programs, students will not have had the opportunity to acquire the literacy skills they need to be successful at the high school level.

TAKS READING SELECTIONS—GRADES 3–8

TAKS reading selections are designed to be interesting, meaningful, and reflective of the Texas population and our culturally diverse world. Cultural diversity includes regional, economic, social, and ethnic differences and may be represented through subject matter and/or characters. In addition, reading selections will be similar to those that students encounter in their classrooms and in their everyday lives.

Four kinds of selections are developed for TAKS:

- Narrative selections, which are fictional stories presented with a clear progression of events. Letters or diary entries as well as stories may represent narrative writing.

- Expository (informative) selections, which provide information about noteworthy people and/or events or explain topics related to content areas, such as science, social studies, art, or music.

- Mixed selections, which combine two types of writing into a single passage. For example, a mixed selection may be a story about Martin Luther King, Jr., that includes both factual information (expository) and invented dialogue (narrative). Or a selection may mix narrative and functional writing. For example, an advertisement, a recipe, instructions, or directions for a game (functional) may be presented within the context of a story (narrative).

- Paired selections, which are two selections designed to be read together. Paired selections provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate an understanding of the connections across texts. Selections may be paired for many different reasons; for example, a paired selection may be based on the same story told from two different points of view or a science article and a science fiction story that address a common theme or idea. It is important to remember that paired selections are linked by more than a superficial connection, such as common subject matter or characters. Paired selections contain a deep link, so that students can recognize the strong connection across the two pieces.

NOTE: Although the third grade TEKS include student expectations requiring students to make connections across texts, no paired selections will be included on the third grade test, since all third graders do not have independent mastery of this skill.

Word counts for each selection will vary according to age and grade-level appropriateness. Some selections may require students to turn pages in order to complete the reading selection and/or to answer test items.

- Selections for third and fourth grades will be approximately 500 to 700 words.
- Selections for fifth grade will be approximately 600 to 900 words.
- Selections for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades will be approximately 700 to 1,000 words.

Two notes regarding word counts:

(1) Selections written as a pair will be comparable in length to singly developed selections.

(2) Due to the differences in language, the Spanish reading selections may be somewhat longer than the English passages.

Other important information about TAKS reading selections:

- Paragraphs will be numbered when doing so does not interfere with the layout of the text. For example, a selection that includes an advertisement with bulleted information most likely would not have numbered paragraphs.
- When appropriate, each selection will be preceded by a title.
- Additional information will be provided in an introduction or a postscript when this information will help the reader better understand the selection.
- In sixth, seventh, and eighth grade, narrative selections will be formatted so that students have the option of taking notes, keeping track of important information, or asking themselves questions as they read. This margin is labeled *My notes about what I am reading* and is located on the right-hand side of each page in the selection.

NOTE: The third grade test booklet is a scannable (machine-scorable) booklet designed to allow third graders to mark their answers directly in the booklet.

TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF
KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS (TAKS)
BLUEPRINT FOR GRADE 3 READING

TAKS Objectives	Number of Items
Objective 1: Basic understanding	15
Objective 2: Literary elements	7
Objective 3: Analysis using reading strategies	6
Objective 4: Analysis using critical-thinking skills	8
Total number of items	**36**

A Key to Understanding the TEKS Included on TAKS Grade 3 Reading

Example from Objective 1

A

(3.8)   **Reading/vocabulary development.** The student develops an extensive vocabulary. The student is expected to

C

B →   (C) use [resources and references such as beginners' dictionaries, glossaries, available technology, and] context to build word meanings and to confirm pronunciations of words (2–3).

D

KEY

A.   Knowledge and Skills Statement

This broad statement describes what students should know and be able to do for third grade reading. The number preceding the statement identifies the grade level and number of the knowledge and skills statement.

B.   Student Expectation

This specific statement describes what students should be able to do to demonstrate proficiency in what is described in the knowledge and skills statement. Students will be tested on skills outlined in the student expectation statement.

C.   [bracketed text]

Although the entire student expectation has been provided for reference, text in brackets indicates that this portion of the student expectation will not be tested on TAKS.

D.   (2–3)

The student expectation is taught from second grade through third grade.

NOTE: The full TEKS curriculum can be found at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/teks/.

TEKS STUDENT EXPECTATIONS—IMPORTANT VOCABULARY

For every subject area and grade level, two terms—*such as* and *including*—are used to help make the TEKS student expectations more concrete for teachers. However, these terms function in different ways. To help you understand the effect each of the terms has on specific student expectations, we are providing the following:

- a short definition of each term

- an example from a specific student expectation for this subject area

- a short explanation of how this term affects this student expectation

Such as

The term *such as* is used when the specific examples that follow it function only as representative illustrations that help define the expectation for teachers. These examples are just that—examples. Teachers may choose to use them when teaching the student expectation, but there is no requirement to use them. Other examples can be used in conjunction with those listed or as replacements for those listed.

Example from Objective 1

(3.5) (D)   *use root words and other structural cues such as prefixes, suffixes, and derivational endings to recognize words*

In this student expectation, students must use structural cues to figure out the meaning of words they don't know. Three examples—prefixes, suffixes, and derivational endings—follow the *such as*. These examples name word parts that teachers may use when helping students learn how to recognize structural cues. Teachers may use these examples and others when they teach this skill.

Including

The term *including* is used when the specific examples that follow it must be taught. However, other examples may also be used in conjunction with those listed.

Example from Objective 3

(3.11) (A) *distinguish different forms of texts, including lists, newsletters, and signs and the functions they serve*

In this student expectation, students must identify the unique features of the texts listed. Students must also understand how the functions of these specific texts differ. Though teachers must teach lists, newsletters, and signs, they may also use other forms of texts in addition to these.

Remember

- Any example preceded by the term *such as* in a particular student expectation may or may not provide the basis for an item assessing that expectation. Because these examples do not necessarily have to be used to teach the student expectation, it is equally likely that other examples will be used in assessment items. The rule here is that an example will be used only if it is central to the knowledge, concept, or skill the item assesses.

- It is more likely that some of the examples preceded by the term *including* in a particular student expectation will provide the basis for items assessing that expectation, since these examples must be taught. However, it is important to remember that the examples that follow the term *including* do not represent all the examples possible, so other examples may also provide the basis for an assessment item. Again, the rule here is that an example will be used only if it is central to the knowledge, concept, or skill the item assesses.

Grade 3 TAKS Reading—Objective 1

The TEKS and corresponding student expectations listed under Objective 1 will help students as they learn to read for the basic meaning of a text. To develop an initial understanding of what they read, students must be able to do three things: (1) use context and other word-identification strategies to help them understand the meaning of the words they read, (2) recognize important supporting details, and (3) understand the main idea of a selection. These skills are the building blocks that students need to develop a deeper understanding of what they read.

TAKS Objectives and TEKS Student Expectations

Objective 1

The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of culturally diverse written texts.

(3.5)   **Reading/word identification.** The student uses a variety of word identification strategies. The student is expected to

   (D) use root words and other structural cues such as prefixes, suffixes, and derivational endings to recognize words (3); and

   (E) use knowledge of word order (syntax) and context to support word identification and confirm word meaning (1–3).

(3.7)   **Reading/variety of texts.** The student reads widely for different purposes in varied sources. The student is expected to

   (B) read from a variety of genres [for pleasure and] to acquire information [from both print and electronic sources] (2–3).

(3.8)   **Reading/vocabulary development.** The student develops an extensive vocabulary. The student is expected to

   (C) use [resources and references such as beginners' dictionaries, glossaries, available technology, and] context to build word meanings and to confirm pronunciations of words (2–3); and

   (D) demonstrate knowledge of synonyms, antonyms, and multi-meaning words [for example, by sorting, classifying, and identifying related words] (3).

(3.9)   **Reading/comprehension.** The student uses a variety of strategies to comprehend selections read aloud and selections read independently. The student is expected to

   (C) retell [or act out the order of] important events in stories (K–3); and

   (H) produce summaries of text selections (2–3).

Objective 1—For Your Information

Tested vocabulary words will be above grade level. Because a student may use context only or combine strategies (for example, knowing a word's synonym or antonym or the meaning of a prefix, root, or suffix) to determine a word's meaning, items will not be constructed to test skills in isolation (e.g., "The prefix in the word disapprove means —").

Items testing multiple-meaning words might require students to identify the correct answer from a sample dictionary entry. The entry will include the tested word, its pronunciation key, its part of speech, and four definitions of the word. Students will use the information given and context clues to choose the correct meaning of the word as it is used in the reading selection.

Students may be asked to identify the context clues in a selection that help them to understand the meaning of a tested word. Answer choices for these items will contain context clues taken verbatim from the text rather than definitions of the tested word. These answer choices will be italicized.

Students will always be provided with enough context clues to allow them to identify the correct meaning of the word as it is used in the reading selection.

NOTE: The sample vocabulary item provided at each grade level will help teachers understand some of the different ways in which vocabulary will be assessed on the TAKS reading tests.

Items that measure students' basic comprehension of a reading selection are of three types: items that focus on acquiring information from supporting details, items that focus on identifying the main idea and the important events in a selection, and items that summarize a selection. Detail items will focus on important information that is directly stated or paraphrased from a text. Main idea/gist items will be written so that students clearly understand that they are focusing on broad or central ideas. In narrative selections main idea items will focus on either a single paragraph or a series of paragraphs. However, expository and mixed selections may also include items that focus on the main idea of the entire selection. Summary items will focus on a reading selection as a whole. A summary is a short paragraph that includes the main idea and the most important details of a text. For this type of item, all answer choices will be constructed authentically as short paragraphs. However, the answer choices will be appropriate for third graders in that they will include enough information without being too long or dense.

Grade 3 TAKS Reading—Objective 2

Developing an understanding of literary elements makes stories both more accessible and more meaningful to young readers. Learning to make connections between events, characters, and other elements of a story helps students relate what they have read to their own lives and experiences. At the same time, knowing about a story's characters, setting, and problem gives students an opportunity to relate to the story in concrete terms while learning about emotions and events that are beyond their own personal experiences.

TAKS Objectives and TEKS Student Expectations

Objective 2

The student will apply knowledge of literary elements to understand culturally diverse written texts.

(3.11) **Reading/text structures/literary concepts.** The student analyzes the characteristics of various types of texts. The student is expected to

   (H) analyze characters, including their traits, feelings, relationships, and changes (1–3);

   (I)   identify the importance of the setting to a story's meaning (1–3); and

   (J)   recognize the story problem(s) or plot (1–3).

Objective 2—For Your Information

Items that test characterization focus on the degree to which students understand the characters in a story: who they are, why they feel and act as they do, how they relate to one another, and how they are changed by the things they experience. Items that require analysis of characters will be grade-level appropriate; that is, students will not be asked characterization questions that are overly sophisticated or too far beyond their developing understanding of other people and themselves.

Items that focus on setting are of two types. The first type simply measures whether a student can identify the time and place of a story. However, most setting items will focus on whether a student understands how time and place contribute to the meaning of a story.

Items that focus on story problem(s) or plot will require students to identify the main conflict in the story or to recognize important events that occur in the story. The depth of analysis required will be appropriate for third graders.

For the most part, Objective 2 items will appear with narrative selections or with mixed or expository selections that include literary elements such as characters and plot.

Grade 3 TAKS Reading—Objective 3

All texts are not equally challenging. For young readers, reading a story may be much easier than reading a text that is based on science or social studies. However, to make academic progress, students must develop the ability to comprehend and process material from a wide range of texts. That is why it is important for students to develop the ability to know the purpose of the written text they are reading, how the author has organized information, how this organization affects the way the reader reads the text, and what distinctive features characterize a particular type of text. These are the skills students must learn if they are to become independent readers who can move beyond the literal meaning of a text and who have the ability to develop the deeper understandings needed to think critically about what they read, to connect what they know to new information, and to become independent learners.

TAKS Objectives and TEKS Student Expectations

Objective 3

The student will use a variety of strategies to analyze culturally diverse written texts.

(3.9) **Reading/comprehension**. The student uses a variety of strategies to comprehend selections read aloud and selections read independently. The student is expected to

    (C) retell [or act out] the order of important events in stories (K–3); and

    (I) represent text information in different ways, including story maps, graphs, and charts (2–3).

(3.11) **Reading/text structures/literary concepts.** The student analyzes the characteristics of various types of texts. The student is expected to

    (A) distinguish different forms of texts, including lists, newsletters, and signs and the functions they serve (K–3); and

    (C) recognize the distinguishing features of familiar genres, including stories, [poems], and informational texts (1–3).

Objective 3—For Your Information

It is important for teachers to note that the knowledge and skills statement (3.9) (C) that appears here also appears under Objective 1 but with different text bracketed. In Objective 1, (3.9) (C) requires a student to be able to retell the events that occur in a story. For items assessing this skill in Objective 3, however, students must understand the proper sequence of events and how the events affect the central meaning of the text. These types of items will require students to use analysis, or higher-level thinking skills, to understand how one event relates to other events in the story.

Items that focus on representing text information in different ways may require students to select the answer choice that best completes a missing portion of a particular graphic organizer, such as a story

map, graph, chart, or picture map. Other items might require students to interpret information from a graphic source and use that information to make an inference or draw a conclusion.

Items that assess a student's ability to distinguish among different forms of text might require students to recognize that authors organize information in specific ways. It is important for students to know that authors use various organizational patterns to arrange and link ideas depending upon how they want the reader to understand those ideas ("Why does the author use a list to explain how to make a kite?" e.g., "To show the importance of performing the steps in order").

Items that require a student to distinguish among different genres focus on the unique characteristics of different kinds of texts. Items of this type might require students to distinguish between fiction and nonfiction or a fairy tale and a realistic story. Students might be asked to identify the purpose of a text (to inform, to entertain, etc.). A student might also be asked to identify the unique characteristics of a text, such as the title of a newspaper, or to identify where a particular selection might appear ("Where might the selection about the Grand Canyon be found?" e.g., "In a travel magazine").

Grade 3 TAKS Reading—Objective 4

To be successful in school, students must have the ability to bring different levels of understanding to the texts they read. Good readers can do more than "read the lines." They ask themselves questions, make initial predictions, and create meanings as they move through a text. Good readers also know that as they read, they will likely change their mind about some of their early ideas and assumptions. Why? Because as they read and acquire a more complete "picture" of the text, their understanding deepens and grows. They are able to answer their own questions, think critically about what they've read, develop their own interpretations, and use relevant parts of the text to support these interpretations. In essence, good readers understand that reading is a complex process that requires them not only to read "between the lines" but also to read "beyond the lines," relating what they've read to what they already know. In this way reading becomes an important tool for thinking and learning, both in school and in real life.

TAKS Objectives and TEKS Student Expectations

Objective 4

The student will apply critical-thinking skills to analyze culturally diverse written texts.

(3.9)   **Reading/comprehension.** The student uses a variety of strategies to comprehend selections read aloud and selections read independently. The student is expected to

    (F)   make and explain inferences from texts such as determining important ideas, causes and effects, making predictions, and drawing conclusions (1–3); and

    (J)   distinguish fact from opinion in various texts, including news stories and advertisements (3).

(3.10)   **Reading/literary response.** The student responds to various texts. The student is expected to

    (C)   support interpretations or conclusions with examples drawn from text (2–3).

Objective 4—For Your Information

Items that assess the ability to read and think inferentially will require students to move beyond their basic understanding of a text to demonstrate a deeper, more complete understanding of what they've read. These types of items can take many forms; for example, they may ask students to draw a conclusion, make a reasonable prediction, understand the relationship between two parts of a text, understand how a text relates to their own lives, or understand the deeper meanings implied by a text.

To distinguish a fact from an opinion, students must be able to recognize when an author is using opinions or persuasive techniques to influence the thinking or actions of readers or when an author is merely presenting facts. Fact/opinion items will be assessed only in expository or mixed selections in which it is clear that the author's intent is to persuade.

Students will be required to support interpretations or conclusions with evidence from the text. Answer choices for items of this type will include either paraphrased ideas or sentences taken

verbatim from the text. However, an individual item will never mix these answer-choice options; that is, paraphrased ideas and verbatim quotes will not be combined in the same item. Answer choices using words, phrases, or sentences taken verbatim from the text will be italicized.

TAKS

GRADE 3 READING

Sample Selections and Items

The Daily Sun

P e o P l e & P l a C e s

MORE THAN A ZOO

By James Davis
DAILY SUN WRITER

1 | Popcorn Park is not like most zoos. It is a very special place. This zoo gives assistance to animals in need. Workers at the zoo care for hurt or sick animals. They return some of these animals to their natural homes. Those animals that cannot live on their own stay at Popcorn Park Zoo.

2 | This unusual place was not originally a zoo. At first it was called the Forked River Animal Care Center. The workers there took care of lost or unwanted cats and dogs. Today the center is part of the zoo, but now many other kinds of animals are helped there, too.

This is Sonny in his new home at Popcorn Park Zoo.

3 | The changes to the center began in 1977 when a raccoon needed help. One of its front paws had been badly hurt. The workers cared for the animal. Finally it was better, but it could not care for itself. The raccoon was allowed to live at the center. Then a hurt deer was brought to the center for help. It, too, stayed at the center after it got well.

4 | Once people heard about the wonderful work being done at the center, they began taking all kinds of hurt or homeless animals there. Soon the center was no longer just a home for cats and dogs. So many animals were living at the center that it became more like a zoo. It was time for a new name.

5 | Popcorn Park Zoo got its funny name because many of the animals there like to eat popcorn made without oil or salt. The popcorn is sold at the zoo to help make money to care for the animals. People buy the popcorn to feed the animals as a treat.

More Than a Zoo *continued*

6   Popcorn Park Zoo now takes care of more than 200 kinds of animals. Tigers, lions, monkeys, and bears live there. The zoo is also home to squirrels, birds, and many other animals. Just like people, each animal at the zoo has its own name and its own story.

7   One of the zoo's most interesting animals is Sonny the elephant. When he was young, Sonny lived in a small zoo. Then he grew to be over 10 feet tall. He became too big for his small home. Popcorn Park Zoo was the perfect place for him to live. Sonny's new, larger home fits him much better. Now he has lots of room to move around.

8   Like Sonny, almost all the animals at Popcorn Park came to the zoo because they needed a new home. Foxy Loxy is a red fox that was rescued when he was just a baby. Tina the tiger was once with a circus, and Lacey the lion used to perform in a magic act. Dudley Morris is a potbellied pig that grew too big for his old home.

9   Many of the animals live freely at the zoo. Some of the gentler ones, such as goats, sheep, geese, and deer, walk among the visitors who come to see them. Others are kept in large closed-in areas. These areas are almost like their natural homes. All the animals at the zoo get lots of care and love.

Popcorn Park Zoo is in Forked River, New Jersey.
The zoo is open every day and welcomes visitors.

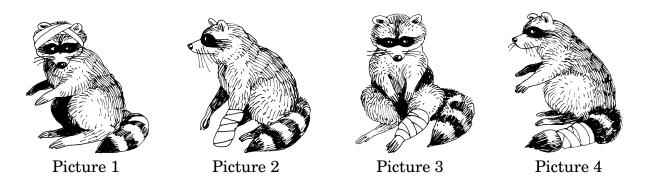**1**   Paragraph 7 is mostly about —

- ☐   where Sonny lived when he was young
- ☐   how Sonny got his name
- ⊛   why Sonny came to Popcorn Park Zoo
- ☐   what Sonny does each day

Objective 1

2   In paragraph 2, which words help the reader know what <u>originally</u> means?

- ☐   *unusual place*
- ⊛   *at first*
- ☐   *took care of*
- ☐   *lost or unwanted*

Objective 1

3 Look at these pictures of a hurt raccoon.

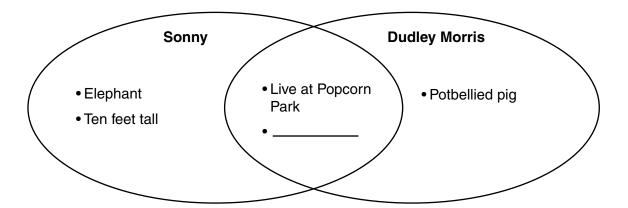Picture 1　　　　Picture 2　　　　Picture 3　　　　Picture 4

Which picture is most like the raccoon described in paragraph 3?

◯ Picture 1

◉ Picture 2

◯ Picture 3

◯ Picture 4

Objective 1

4 Look at the diagram about Sonny and Dudley Morris. Answer the question that follows.

Which of the following goes in the blank?

◯ Are raccoons
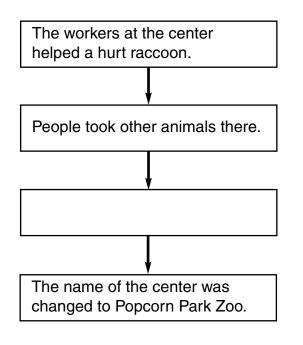
◉ Grew too big for their homes

◯ Were in the circus

◯ Had injured feet

Objective 3

5   What is the title of this article?

⬭   People and Places

⬭   The *Daily Sun*

⬭   *Daily Sun* Writer

⊛   More Than a Zoo

Objective 3

6   Read the chart below. It shows the order in which some events happened in the story.

> The workers at the center helped a hurt raccoon.

↓

> People took other animals there.

↓

>

↓

> The name of the center was changed to Popcorn Park Zoo.

Which of these belongs in the empty box?

⬭   The changes to the center began in 1977.

⬭   The raccoon began living at the center.

⊛   The animal center became more like a zoo.

⬭   The center took care of unwanted cats and dogs.

Objective 3

7   Which statement is true of most of the animals at Popcorn Park Zoo?

⊛   They once had a problem.

⬭   They are gentle.

⬭   They cannot walk very well.

⬭   They came to the zoo as babies.

Objective 4
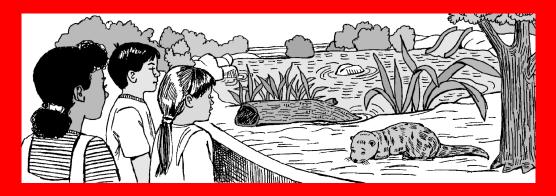
8   Which sentence from the story shows the reader that Popcorn Park Zoo is taking good care of the animals?

⬭   *The changes to the center began in 1977 when a raccoon needed help.*

⊛   *Once people heard about the wonderful work being done at the center, they began taking all kinds of hurt or homeless animals there.*

⬭   *People buy the popcorn to feed the animals as a treat.*

⬭   *Some of the gentler ones, such as goats, sheep, geese, and deer, walk among the visitors who come to see them.*

Objective 4

9   Why are some animals allowed to
        walk among the visitors?

        ⬭   Visitors like these animals the
             best.

        ⬭   These animals do not eat
             popcorn.

        ⬭   Visitors might want to adopt
             these animals.

        ⊛   These animals will not hurt the
             visitors.

Objective 4

Daisy the Otter

1   "This is Daisy," Ricardo began. He held up a picture from the newspaper for the class to see. "Daisy is the new otter at the zoo. The zoo built a special area for her. It has lots of trees and plants. It even has a pond so she can swim. Daisy also has a slide. She can go down it into the water."

2   The students studied the picture of Daisy.

3   "The newspaper story tells a lot about otters," he continued. "There are river otters and sea otters. They are playful animals. Their favorite games are sliding and hide-and-seek."

4   Ricardo stopped. His classmates wanted to know more.

5   "Otters have webbed feet like a duck's feet," Ricardo continued. "They can swim very fast. When mother otters teach their babies to swim, the babies sometimes resist. They squeal and don't want to go into the water. Their mothers lead the way. Soon the babies are swimming and playing with the other otters."

6   When Ricardo finished, several students raised their hand. "Can we see Daisy?" they asked. Mr. Chen, their teacher, had the same idea. He planned a trip to the zoo so everyone could see Daisy.

7   For the next two weeks, the class studied and learned about zoo animals. They checked out books from the school library and drew pictures of the different animals.

8   Finally the day of the trip came. The class boarded the bus, carrying their lunches. As they rode to the zoo, they chattered noisily. They could hardly wait to see Daisy and the other animals.

9   Ms. Wells, one of the zookeepers, met the class at the gate. She led them around the zoo.

10   "Very few of our animals are in cages," Ms. Wells stated. "Most of them are in fenced areas. These areas look like the animals' homes in the wild."

11   First the students walked by the lion den. Two lions were napping under a shade tree. Next the class saw the polar bears. There were two bears in a large rocky area with a big pool. Both bears were swimming. When they got out of the pool, they shook themselves. Drops of water sprayed everywhere.

12   The students finally reached Daisy's area. Her home looked like a playground. However, Daisy was not playing. She just lay there, looking sad.

13   "Is Daisy sick?" Shamika asked.

14   "No," Ms. Wells said. "She doesn't have a friend to play with. The zoo spent a lot of money to build Daisy's home. There wasn't enough money left for two otters. So we're saving money to buy Daisy an otter friend."

15   The class thought about what Ms. Wells had said. They thought a life without friends would be very sad.

16   "First we have to find another otter," Ms. Wells continued. "There is also the expense of bringing the other otter here to the zoo. We don't have enough money to pay for it right now."

17   The trip to the zoo had been fun, but the students were quiet on the bus ride back to school. As soon as they returned to their classroom, Ricardo raised his hand.

18   "Is there something we can do to help Daisy?" he asked.

19   Shamika raised her hand, too. "We could have a bake sale," she said. "We could bake cookies and brownies and bring them to school. Then we could sell them. We could give the money to the zoo. Maybe then the zoo could buy Daisy a friend."

20   The students all wanted to help. So Mr. Chen got permission to hold a bake sale. On Friday the class brought cookies and brownies to school. Some even brought whole cakes and pies. By the end of the day, the class had <u>raised</u> more than $300!

21   Two weeks later the students received a note of appreciation. The zoo thanked them for their help. The note also said that the zoo had found a friend for Daisy. The new otter would arrive soon. The class was invited to visit the zoo again. They could hardly wait to see Daisy again and meet her new friend.

10 Which of the following is the best summary of the story?

⬭ Mr. Chen takes the students on a trip to the zoo. They meet Daisy and learn more about her. Though her home looks fun, Daisy is sad because she does not have a friend to play with.

⬭ Ricardo's class has a bake sale and earns money to buy an otter for the zoo. The zoo thanks the students for their help and invites them to visit Daisy and the other animals again.

⬭ Students spend two weeks studying about different types of animals. Then they go to the zoo to learn more about the animals. Students see lions, polar bears, and an otter named Daisy.

⊛ Ricardo tells his class about an otter named Daisy. The students go to the zoo to visit Daisy. When they learn she is lonely, the students raise more than $300 to help the zoo buy another otter.

Objective 1

---

11 Read the meanings below for the word <u>raise</u>.

> **raise** (ˈrāz) *verb*
> **1.** to lift; to move higher
> **2.** to help grow
> **3.** to take care of
> **4.** to collect; to earn

Which meaning best fits the way <u>raised</u> is used in paragraph 20?

  Meaning 1

  Meaning 2

  Meaning 3

∗ Meaning 4

Objective 1

12 In paragraph 16, the word <u>expense</u> means —

⊛ cost

⬭ reason

⬭ idea

⬭ chance

Objective 1

13 Which of these best describes how the students feel on the way to the zoo?

⬭ Amused

⬭ Afraid

⊗ Excited

⬭ Bored

Objective 2

14 Why are the students quiet during the trip back to school?

⊗ They are worried about Daisy.

⬭ They are eating their lunch.

⬭ They are planning the next trip.

⬭ They are thinking about the polar bears.

Objective 2

15 What is the main problem in the story?

⬭ The zoo has to keep many of the animals in cages.

⬭ The students cannot go on a trip to the zoo.

⊗ The zoo does not have the money to buy another otter.

⬭ The students are not allowed to talk on the bus.

Objective 2

16 After listening to Ricardo's report, the class went to the zoo to —

⬭ study the plants and trees

⊗ meet the otter they had heard about

⬭ bring food to the animals

⬭ meet Ms. Wells, the zookeeper
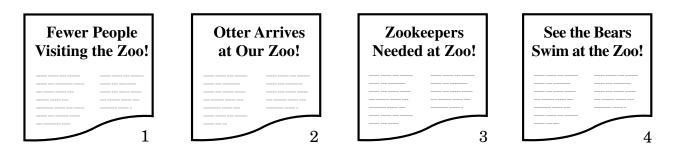
Objective 2

17 What happens after Mr. Chen plans a class trip to the zoo?

⊗ The class learns about different zoo animals.

⬭ The class reads a newspaper story about Daisy.

⬭ Ricardo shows the class a picture of Daisy.

⬭ The zoo gets a new otter named Daisy.

Objective 3

18 This story was written mainly to —

⬭ show how otters play with each other

⊗ tell how a class helped an otter at a zoo

⬭ explain what an otter is and where it lives

⬭ tell about Mr. Chen's favorite animal

Objective 3

Grade 3 Reading TAKS Information Booklet   **28**

19   Read the headlines of these newspaper stories.

Fewer People Visiting the Zoo!	**Otter Arrives at Our Zoo!**	**Zookeepers Needed at Zoo!**	**See the Bears Swim at the Zoo!**
1	2	3	4

Which newspaper story did Ricardo most likely read for his report?

⬭   Headline 1

⊛   Headline 2

⬭   Headline 3

⬭   Headline 4

Objective 4

---

20   What will Ricardo's class probably do in the future?

⬭   Go to the library to read about other zoos

⬭   Have a bake sale every Friday

⬭   Ask the zoo to give back their $300

⊛   Go on another trip to the zoo

Objective 4
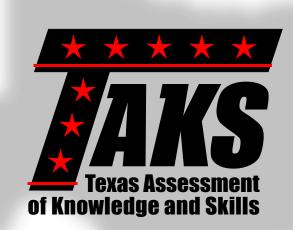
21   Use the chart below to answer the question.

What Happens	Why it Happens
Ricardo's class has a bake sale.	_____

Which of the following belongs in the empty box?

∗   They want Daisy to have a friend.

⬭   They have planned a trip to the zoo.

⬭   They hope to raise $300.

⬭   They want the zoo to build cages.

Objective 4

August 2004

Information Booklet

READING
Grade 3
SPANISH VERSION
Revised

Texas Education Agency   •   Student Assessment Division

INTRODUCTION

The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) is a completely reconceived testing program. It assesses more of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) than the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) did and asks questions in more authentic ways. TAKS has been developed to better reflect good instructional practice and more accurately measure student learning. We hope that every teacher will see the connection between what we test on this new state assessment and what our students should know and be able to do to be academically successful. To provide you with a better understanding of TAKS and its connection to the TEKS and to classroom teaching, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has developed this newly revised edition of the TAKS information booklet. The information booklets were originally published in January 2002, before the first TAKS field test. Now, after several years of field tests and live administrations, we are able to provide an even more comprehensive picture of the testing program. We have clarified some of the existing material and, in some cases, provided new sample items and/or more explanations of certain item types. However, it is important to remember that these clarifications do not signify any change in the TAKS testing program. The objectives and TEKS student expectations assessed on TAKS remain unchanged. We hope this revised version of the TAKS information booklet will serve as a user-friendly resource to help you understand that the best preparation for TAKS is a coherent, TEKS-based instructional program that provides the level of support necessary for all students to reach their academic potential.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The development of the TAKS program included extensive public scrutiny and input from Texas teachers, administrators, parents, members of the business community, professional education organizations, faculty and staff at Texas colleges and universities, and national content-area experts. The agency involved as many stakeholders as possible because we believed that the development of TAKS was a responsibility that had to be shared if this new assessment was to be an equitable and accurate measure of learning for all Texas public school students.

The three-year test-development process, which began in summer 1999, included a series of carefully conceived activities. First, committees of Texas educators identified those TEKS student expectations for each grade and subject area assessed that should be tested on a statewide assessment. Then a committee of TEA Student Assessment and Curriculum staff incorporated these selected TEKS student expectations, along with draft objectives for each subject area, into eleventh grade exit level surveys. These surveys were sent to Texas educators at the middle school and secondary levels for their review. Based on input we received from more than 27,000 survey responses, we developed a second draft of the objectives and TEKS student expectations. In addition, we used this input during the development of draft objectives and student expectations for grades 3 through 10 to ensure that the TAKS program, like the TEKS curriculum, would be vertically aligned. This vertical alignment was a critical step in ensuring that the TAKS tests would become more rigorous as students moved from grade to grade. For example, the fifth grade tests would be more rigorous than the fourth grade tests, which would be more rigorous than the third grade tests. Texas educators felt that this increase in rigor from grade to grade was both appropriate and logical since each subject-area test was closely aligned to the TEKS curriculum at that grade level.

In fall 2000 TEA distributed the second draft of the objectives and TEKS student expectations for eleventh grade exit level and the first draft of the objectives and student expectations for grades 3 through 10 for review at the campus level. These documents were also posted on the Student Assessment Division's website to encourage input from the public. Each draft document focused on two central issues: first, whether the objectives included in the draft were essential to measure on a statewide assessment; and, second, whether students would have received enough instruction on the TEKS student expectations included under each objective to be adequately prepared to demonstrate mastery of that objective in the spring of the school year. We received more than 57,000 campus-consensus survey responses. We used these responses, along with feedback from national experts, to finalize the TAKS objectives and student expectations. Because the state assessment was necessarily limited to a "snapshot" of student performance, broad-based input was important to ensure that TAKS assessed the parts of the TEKS curriculum most critical to students' academic learning and progress.

In the thorough test-development process that we use for the TAKS program, we rely on educator input to develop items that are appropriate and valid measures of the objectives and TEKS student expectations the items are designed to assess. This input includes an annual educator review and revision of all proposed test items before field testing and a second annual educator review of data and items after field testing. In addition, each year panels of recognized experts in the fields of English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies meet in Austin to critically review the content of each of the high school level TAKS assessments to be administered that year. This critical review is referred to as a content validation review and is one of the final activities in a series of quality-control steps to ensure that each high school test is of the highest quality possible. A content validation review is considered necessary at the high school grades (9, 10, and 11) because of the advanced level of content being assessed.

ORGANIZATION OF THE TAKS TESTS

TAKS is divided into test objectives. It is important to remember that the objective statements are not found in the TEKS curriculum. Rather, the objectives are "umbrella statements" that serve as headings under which student expectations from the TEKS can be meaningfully grouped. Objectives are broad statements that "break up" knowledge and skills to be tested into meaningful subsets around which a test can be organized into reporting units. These reporting units help campuses, districts, parents, and the general public understand the performance of our students and schools. Test objectives are not intended to be "translations" or "rewordings" of the TEKS. Instead, the objectives are designed to be identical across grade levels rather than grade specific. Generally, the objectives are the same for third grade through eighth grade (an elementary/middle school system) and for ninth grade through eleventh grade (a high school system). In addition, certain TEKS student expectations may logically be grouped under more than one test objective; however, it is important for you to understand that this is not meaningless repetition—sometimes the organization of the objectives requires such groupings. For example, on the TAKS writing test for fourth grade, some of the same student expectations addressing the conventions of standard Spanish usage are listed under both Objective 2 and Objective 6. In this case, the expectations listed under Objective 2 are assessed through the overall strength of a student's use of language conventions on the written composition portion of the test; these same expectations under Objective 6 are assessed through multiple-choice items attached to a series of revising and editing passages.

ORGANIZATION OF THE INFORMATION BOOKLETS

The purpose of the information booklets is to help Texas educators, students, parents, and other stakeholders understand more about the TAKS tests. These booklets are not intended to replace the teaching of the TEKS curriculum, provide the basis for the isolated teaching of skills in the form of narrow test preparation, or serve as the single information source about every aspect of the TAKS program. However, we believe that the booklets provide helpful explanations as well as show enough sample items, reading and writing selections, and prompts to give educators a good sense of the assessment.

Each grade within a subject area is presented as a separate booklet. However, it is still important that teachers review the information booklets for the grades both above and below the grade they teach. For example, eighth grade reading teachers who review the seventh grade information booklet as well as the ninth grade information booklet are able to develop a broader perspective of the reading assessment than if they study only the eighth grade information booklet.

The information booklets for each subject area contain some information unique to that subject. However, all booklets include the following information, which we consider critical for every subject-area TAKS test:

- an overview of the subject within the context of TAKS

- a blueprint of the test—the number of items under each objective and the number of items on the test as a whole

- information that clarifies how to read the TEKS

- the reasons each objective and its TEKS student expectations are critical to student learning and success

- the objectives and TEKS student expectations that will be included on TAKS

- additional information about each objective that helps educators understand how it is assessed on TAKS

- sample items that show some of the ways objectives are assessed

TAKS READING
INFORMATION BOOKLET

The purposes for reading are as varied and diverse as the people who read, but the ability to read effectively is essential for all students in the increasingly complex world in which we live. Reading is one of the most important foundations for learning, not only in Spanish language arts but also in other content areas, such as science, social studies, and mathematics. Students who can understand what they read and who can make connections between what they read and what they already know will more likely be successful—in the classroom, on the test, and in the real world. Strong reading skills are necessary for academic achievement, for the fundamental tasks of daily living, and for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

The TAKS reading assessments evaluate a subset of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state-mandated curriculum. This curriculum is specifically designed to help students make progress in reading by emphasizing the knowledge and skills most critical for student learning. Because the TAKS reading tests are closely aligned with the TEKS, students who effectively learn the TEKS will become proficient readers who are able to perform successfully on the test without unnecessary emphasis on test preparation. A system of support has been designed to ensure that all students master the TEKS. The Student Success Initiative (SSI) requires that students meet the standard on TAKS to be eligible for promotion to the next grade level as specified below:

- the reading test at grade 3, beginning in the 2002–2003 school year;

- the reading and mathematics tests at grade 5, beginning in the 2004–2005 school year; and

- the reading and mathematics tests at grade 8, beginning in the 2007–2008 school year.

To prepare students for the SSI requirements and to promote vertical alignment, it is essential that teachers collaborate and coordinate across grade levels.

The TEKS student expectations eligible for testing on the third through eighth grade TAKS reading assessments are grouped under four TAKS objectives.

Objective 1:　The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of culturally diverse written texts.

Objective 2:　The student will apply knowledge of literary elements to understand culturally diverse written texts.

Objective 3:　The student will use a variety of strategies to analyze culturally diverse written texts.

Objective 4:　The student will apply critical-thinking skills to analyze culturally diverse written texts.

These objectives are consistent from third grade through eighth grade, and the TEKS student expectations assessed under each TAKS objective are vertically aligned, meaning that they build logically from one grade level to the next. An example of this logical movement follows.

Example from Objective 2

Grade 3 TEKS 3.11 (H) states that *students are expected to analyze characters, including their traits, feelings, relationships, and changes*.

Grade 4 TEKS 4.12 (H) states that *the student is expected to analyze characters, including their traits, motivations, conflicts, points of view, relationships, and changes they undergo*.

Many of the TEKS student expectations from grade to grade are expressed in similar language, but the level of student performance required at each grade increases. Reading selections will be longer and more challenging, and the critical thinking required of students will be more complex and sophisticated. Although elementary and middle school teachers are not directly responsible for student success on TAKS at the high school level, it is important for them to familiarize themselves with the reading (ninth grade) and English language arts (tenth and eleventh grades) assessments. Without strong elementary and middle school reading programs, students will not have had the opportunity to acquire the literacy skills they need to be successful at the high school level.

TAKS READING SELECTIONS—GRADES 3–8

TAKS reading selections are designed to be interesting, meaningful, and reflective of the Texas population and our culturally diverse world. Cultural diversity includes regional, economic, social, and ethnic differences and may be represented through subject matter and/or characters. In addition, reading selections will be similar to those that students encounter in their classrooms and in their everyday lives.

Four kinds of selections are developed for TAKS:

- Narrative selections, which are fictional stories presented with a clear progression of events. Letters or diary entries as well as stories may represent narrative writing.

- Expository (informative) selections, which provide information about noteworthy people and/or events or explain topics related to content areas, such as science, social studies, art, or music.

- Mixed selections, which combine two types of writing into a single passage. For example, a mixed selection may be a story about Martin Luther King, Jr., that includes both factual information (expository) and invented dialogue (narrative). Or a selection may mix narrative and functional writing. For example, an advertisement, a recipe, instructions, or directions for a game (functional) may be presented within the context of a story (narrative).

- Paired selections, which are two selections designed to be read together. Paired selections provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate an understanding of the connections across texts. Selections may be paired for many different reasons; for example, a paired selection may be based on the same story told from two different points of view or a science article and a science fiction story that address a common theme or idea. It is important to remember that paired selections are linked by more than a superficial connection, such as common subject matter or characters. Paired selections contain a deep link, so that students can recognize the strong connection across the two pieces.

NOTE: Although the third grade TEKS include student expectations requiring students to make connections across texts, no paired selections will be included on the third grade test, since all third graders do not have independent mastery of this skill.

Word counts for each selection will vary according to age and grade-level appropriateness. Some selections may require students to turn pages in order to complete the reading selection and/or to answer test items.

- Selections for third and fourth grades will be approximately 500 to 700 words.
- Selections for fifth grade will be approximately 600 to 900 words.
- Selections for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades will be approximately 700 to 1,000 words.

Two notes regarding word counts:

(1) Selections written as a pair will be comparable in length to singly developed selections.

(2) Due to the differences in language, the Spanish reading selections may be somewhat longer than the English passages.

Other important information about TAKS reading selections:

- Paragraphs will be numbered when doing so does not interfere with the layout of the text. For example, a selection that includes an advertisement with bulleted information most likely would not have numbered paragraphs.
- When appropriate, each selection will be preceded by a title.
- Additional information will be provided in an introduction or a postscript when this information will help the reader better understand the selection.
- In sixth, seventh, and eighth grade, narrative selections will be formatted so that students have the option of taking notes, keeping track of important information, or asking themselves questions as they read. This margin is labeled *My notes about what I am reading* (*Mis notas sobre lo que estoy leyendo* in the sixth-grade Spanish version) and is located on the right-hand side of each page in the selection.

NOTE: The third grade test booklet is a scannable (machine-scorable) booklet designed to allow third graders to mark their answers directly in the booklet.

✍️   **Sample Reading Selections for TAKS in Spanish**

As indicated below, some of the sample selections provided in this Grade 3 reading booklet is a Spanish adaptation of one of the selections presented in the Grade 3 English TAKS information booklet; the other is unique to the Spanish booklet.

El lenguaje de los caballos (unique)
Una nutria llamada Daisy (adaptation)

TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS (TAKS) BLUEPRINT FOR GRADE 3 READING

TAKS Objectives	Number of Items
Objective 1: Basic understanding	15
Objective 2: Literary elements	7
Objective 3: Analysis using reading strategies	6
Objective 4: Analysis using critical-thinking skills	8
Total number of items	**36**

A Key to Understanding the TEKS Included on TAKS Grade 3 Spanish Reading

Example from Objective 1

A

(3.8) **Lectura/desarrollo de vocabulario.** El estudiante desarrolla un amplio vocabulario. Se espera que el estudiante:

C

B ➞ (C) utilice [recursos y fuentes de referencia tales como diccionarios para principiantes, glosarios, tecnología disponible y] el contexto para entender el significado de las palabras (2–3).

D

KEY

A. Knowledge and Skills Statement

This broad statement describes what students should know and be able to do for third grade reading. The number preceding the statement identifies the grade level and number of the knowledge and skills statement.

B. Student Expectation

This specific statement describes what students should be able to do to demonstrate proficiency in what is described in the knowledge and skills statement. Students will be tested on skills outlined in the student expectation statement.

C. [bracketed text]

Although the entire student expectation has been provided for reference, text in brackets indicates that this portion of the student expectation will not be tested on TAKS.

D. (2–3)

The student expectation is taught from second grade through third grade.

NOTE: The full TEKS curriculum can be found at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/teks/.

TEKS STUDENT EXPECTATIONS—IMPORTANT VOCABULARY

For every subject area and grade level, the terms *como, tal(es) como, por ejemplo, incluyendo,* and *que incluyan* are used to help make the TEKS student expectations more concrete for teachers. However, these terms function in different ways. To help you understand the effect each of the terms has on specific student expectations, we are providing the following:

- ▪ a short definition of the terms

- ▪ an example from a specific student expectation for this subject area

- ▪ a short explanation of how the terms affect this student expectation

The terms **como, tal(es) como,** and **por ejemplo** are used when the specific examples that follow them function only as representative illustrations that help define the expectation for teachers. These examples are just that—examples. Teachers may choose to use them when teaching the student expectation, but there is no requirement to use them. Other examples can be used in conjunction with those listed or as replacements for those listed.

Example from Grade 3 Reading, Objective 1

> (3.5) (D)   *utilice las raíces de palabras y otras claves estructurales, como los prefijos, los sufijos y las terminaciones, para reconocer palabras*

In this student expectation, students must use structural cues to figure out the meaning of words they don't know. Three examples—*prefijos, sufijos,* and *terminaciones*—follow the *como*. These examples name word parts that teachers may use when helping students learn how to recognize structural cues. Teachers may use these examples and others when they teach this skill.

The terms **incluyendo** and **que incluyan** are used when the specific examples that follow them must be taught. However, other examples may also be used in conjunction with those listed.

Example from Grade 3 Reading, Objective 3

> (3.11) (A)   *distinga entre diferentes tipos de textos, incluyendo listas, boletines y anuncios, así como sus funciones*

In this student expectation, students must identify the unique features of the texts listed. Students must also understand how the functions of these specific texts differ. Though teachers must teach *listas, boletines,* and *anuncios,* they may also use other forms of texts in addition to these.

Remember

- Any example preceded by the terms *como, tal(es) como,* or *por ejemplo* in a particular student expectation may or may not provide the basis for an item assessing that expectation. Because these examples do not necessarily have to be used to teach the student expectation, it is equally likely that other examples may be used in assessment items. The rule here is that an example be used only if it is central to the knowledge, concept, or skill the item assesses.

- It is more likely that some of the examples preceded by the terms *incluyendo* or *que incluyan* in a particular student expectation will provide the basis for items assessing that expectation, since these examples must be taught. However, it is important to remember that the examples that follow the terms *incluyendo* or *que incluyan* do not represent all the examples possible, so other examples may also provide the basis for an assessment item. As above, the rule here is that an example will be used only if it is central to the knowledge, concept, or skill the item assesses.

TAKS Grade 3 Spanish Reading
Objective 1

The TEKS and corresponding student expectations listed under Objective 1 will help students as they learn to read for the basic meaning of a text. To develop an initial understanding of what they read, students must be able to do three things: (1) use context and other word-identification strategies to help them understand the meaning of the words they read, (2) recognize important supporting details, and (3) understand the main idea of a selection. These skills are the building blocks that students need to develop a deeper understanding of what they read.

TAKS Objectives and TEKS Student Expectations

Objetivo 1

El estudiante demostrará comprensión básica de textos escritos que reflejan una diversidad cultural.

(3.5) **Lectura/identificación de palabras.** El estudiante utiliza una variedad de estrategias para identificar palabras. Se espera que el estudiante:

    (D)   utilice las raíces de palabras y otras claves estructurales, como los prefijos, los sufijos y las terminaciones, para reconocer palabras (3);

    (E)   utilice sus conocimientos del orden de las palabras (sintaxis) y del contexto para que esto le ayude a identificar las palabras y confirmar su significado (1–3).

(3.7) **Lectura/variedad de textos.** El estudiante lee ampliamente de una variedad de fuentes con diferentes propósitos. Se espera que el estudiante:

    (B)   lea de una variedad de géneros literarios [tanto por placer como] para adquirir información [ya sea de materiales impresos o de fuentes electrónicas] (2–3).

(3.8) **Lectura/desarrollo de vocabulario.** El estudiante desarrolla un amplio vocabulario. Se espera que el estudiante:

    (C)   utilice [recursos y fuentes de referencia tales como diccionarios para principiantes, glosarios, tecnología disponible y] el contexto para entender el significado de las palabras (2–3);

    (D)   demuestre conocimiento de sinónimos, antónimos y palabras con significados múltiples [como, por ejemplo, al separar, clasificar e identificar palabras relacionadas entre sí] (3).

(3.9) **Lectura/comprensión.** El estudiante utiliza una variedad de estrategias para comprender textos leídos en voz alta y textos leídos independientemente. Se espera que el estudiante:

    (C)   relate de nuevo [o actúe la secuencia de] los hechos importantes en historias (K–3);

    (H)   haga resúmenes de textos seleccionados (2–3).

Objective 1—For Your Information

Tested vocabulary words will be above grade level. Because a student may use context only or combine strategies (for example, knowing a word's synonym or antonym or the meaning of a prefix, root, or suffix) to determine a word's meaning, items will not be constructed to test skills in isolation (e.g., "El prefijo en la palabra desaprobar significa —").

Items testing multiple-meaning words might require students to identify the correct answer from a sample dictionary entry. The entry will include the tested word, its part of speech, and four definitions of the word. Students will use the information given and context clues to choose the correct meaning of the word as it is used in the reading selection.

Students may be asked to identify the context clues in a selection that help them to understand the meaning of a tested word. Answer choices for these items will contain context clues taken verbatim from the text rather than definitions of the tested word. These answer choices will be italicized.

Students will always be provided with enough context clues to allow them to identify the correct meaning of the word as it is used in the reading selection.

NOTE: The sample vocabulary item provided at each grade level will help teachers understand some of the different ways in which vocabulary will be assessed on the TAKS reading tests.

Items that measure students' basic comprehension of a reading selection are of three types: items that focus on acquiring information from supporting details, items that focus on identifying the main idea and the important events in a selection, and items that summarize a selection. Detail items will focus on important information that is directly stated or paraphrased from a text. Main idea/gist items will be written so that students clearly understand that they are focusing on broad or central ideas. In narrative selections main idea items will focus on either a single paragraph or a series of paragraphs. However, expository and mixed selections may also include items that focus on the main idea of the entire selection. Summary items will focus on a reading selection as a whole. A summary is a short paragraph that includes the main idea and the most important details of a text. For this type of item, all answer choices will be constructed authentically as short paragraphs. However, the answer choices will be appropriate for third graders in that they will include enough information without being too long or dense.

TAKS Grade 3 Spanish Reading
Objective 2

Developing an understanding of literary elements makes stories both more accessible and more meaningful to young readers. Learning to make connections between events, characters, and other elements of a story helps students relate what they have read to their own lives and experiences. At the same time, knowing about a story's characters, setting, and problem gives students an opportunity to relate to the story in concrete terms while learning about emotions and events that are beyond their own personal experiences.

TAKS Objectives and TEKS Student Expectations

Objetivo 2

El estudiante aplicará sus conocimientos de elementos literarios para comprender textos escritos que reflejan una diversidad cultural.

(3.11) **Lectura/estructuras del texto/conceptos literarios.** El estudiante analiza las características de varios tipos de textos. Se espera que el estudiante:

   (H)   analice personajes de forma que incluya sus características, sentimientos, relaciones personales y los cambios que experimentan (1–3);

   (I)   identifique la importancia del escenario en el significado de una historia (1–3);

   (J)   reconozca el argumento o problema(s) de la historia (1–3).

Objective 2—For Your Information

Items that test characterization focus on the degree to which students understand the characters in a story: who they are, why they feel and act as they do, how they relate to one another, and how they are changed by the things they experience. Items that require analysis of characters will be grade-level appropriate; that is, students will not be asked characterization questions that are overly sophisticated or too far beyond their developing understanding of other people and themselves.

Items that focus on setting are of two types. The first type simply measures whether a student can identify the time and place of a story. However, most setting items will focus on whether a student understands how time and place contribute to the meaning of a story.

Items that focus on story problem(s) or plot will require students to identify the main conflict in the story or to recognize important events that occur in the story. The depth of analysis required will be appropriate for third graders.

For the most part, Objective 2 items will appear with narrative selections or with mixed or expository selections that include literary elements such as characters and plot.

TAKS Grade 3 Spanish Reading
Objective 3

All texts are not equally challenging. For young readers, reading a story may be much easier than reading a text that is based on science or social studies. However, to make academic progress, students must develop the ability to comprehend and process material from a wide range of texts. That is why it is important for students to develop the ability to know the purpose of the written text they are reading, how the author has organized information, how this organization affects the way the reader reads the text, and what distinctive features characterize a particular type of text. These are the skills students must learn if they are to become independent readers who can move beyond the literal meaning of a text and who have the ability to develop the deeper understandings needed to think critically about what they read, to connect what they know to new information, and to become independent learners.

TAKS Objectives and TEKS Student Expectations

Objetivo 3

El estudiante usará una variedad de estrategias para analizar textos escritos que reflejan una diversidad cultural.

(3.9)   **Lectura/comprensión.** El estudiante utiliza una variedad de estrategias para comprender textos leídos en voz alta y textos leídos independientemente. Se espera que el estudiante:

(C)   relate de nuevo [o actúe] la secuencia de los hechos importantes en historias (K–3);

(I)   represente de diferentes formas la información contenida en textos, incluyendo mapas de los cuentos, gráficas y tablas (2–3).

(3.11)   **Lectura/estructuras del texto/conceptos literarios.** El estudiante analiza las características de varios tipos de textos. Se espera que el estudiante:

(A)   distinga entre diferentes tipos de textos, incluyendo listas, boletines y anuncios, así como sus funciones (K–3);

(C)   reconozca las características particulares de géneros literarios comunes, incluyendo cuentos [y poemas], así como las características particulares de textos informativos (1–3).

Objective 3—For Your Information

It is important for teachers to note that the knowledge and skills statement (3.9) (C) that appears here also appears under Objective 1 but with different text bracketed. In Objective 1, (3.9) (C) requires a student to be able to retell the events that occur in a story. For items assessing this skill in Objective 3, however, students must understand the proper sequence of events and how the events affect the central meaning of the text. These types of items will require students to use analysis, or higher-level thinking skills, to understand how one event relates to other events in the story.

Items that focus on representing text information in different ways may require students to select the answer choice that best completes a missing portion of a particular graphic organizer, such as a story map, graph, chart, or picture map. Other items might require students to interpret information from a graphic source and use that information to make an inference or draw a conclusion.

Items that assess a student's ability to distinguish among different forms of text might require students to recognize that authors organize information in specific ways. It is important for students to know that authors use various organizational patterns to arrange and link ideas depending upon how they want the reader to understand those ideas ("Why does the author use a list to explain how to make a kite?" e.g., "To show the importance of performing the steps in order").

Items that require a student to distinguish among different genres focus on the unique characteristics of different kinds of texts. Items of this type might require students to distinguish between fiction and nonfiction or a fairy tale and a realistic story. Students might be asked to identify the purpose of a text (to inform, to entertain, etc.). A student might also be asked to identify the unique characteristics of a text, such as the title of a newspaper, or to identify where a particular selection might appear ("Where might the selection about the Grand Canyon be found?" e.g., "In a travel magazine").

TAKS Grade 3 Spanish Reading
Objective 4

To be successful in school, students must have the ability to bring different levels of understanding to the texts they read. Good readers can do more than "read the lines." They ask themselves questions, make initial predictions, and create meanings as they move through a text. Good readers also know that as they read, they will likely change their mind about some of their early ideas and assumptions. Why? Because as they read and acquire a more complete "picture" of the text, their understanding deepens and grows. They are able to answer their own questions, think critically about what they've read, develop their own interpretations, and use relevant parts of the text to support these interpretations. In essence, good readers understand that reading is a complex process that requires them not only to read "between the lines" but also to read "beyond the lines," relating what they've read to what they already know. In this way reading becomes an important tool for thinking and learning, both in school and in real life.

TAKS Objectives and TEKS Student Expectations

Objetivo 4

El estudiante aplicará sus destrezas de razonamiento crítico para analizar textos escritos que reflejan una diversidad cultural.

(3.9)   **Lectura/comprensión.** El estudiante utiliza una variedad de estrategias para comprender textos leídos en voz alta y textos leídos independientemente. Se espera que el estudiante:

   (F)   haga y explique inferencias de textos, como determinar ideas importantes, relacionar causa y efecto, hacer predicciones y sacar conclusiones (1–3);

   (J)   distinga entre hechos y opiniones en varios textos, incluyendo noticias y anuncios de publicidad (3).

(3.10)   **Lectura/respuesta literaria.** El estudiante responde a varios textos. Se espera que el estudiante:

   (C)   apoye sus interpretaciones o conclusiones con ejemplos sacados de textos (2–3).

Objective 4—For Your Information

Items that assess the ability to read and think inferentially will require students to move beyond their basic understanding of a text to demonstrate a deeper, more complete understanding of what they've read. These types of items can take many forms; for example, they may ask students to draw a conclusion, make a reasonable prediction, understand the relationship between two parts of a text, understand how a text relates to their own lives, or understand the deeper meanings implied by a text.

To distinguish a fact from an opinion, students must be able to recognize when an author is using opinions or persuasive techniques to influence the thinking or actions of readers or when an author is merely presenting facts. Fact/opinion items will be assessed only in expository or mixed selections in which it is clear that the author's intent is to persuade.

Students will be required to support interpretations or conclusions with evidence from the text. Answer choices for items of this type will include either paraphrased ideas or sentences taken verbatim from the text. However, an individual item will never mix these answer-choice options; that is, paraphrased ideas and verbatim quotes will not be combined in the same item. Answer choices using words, phrases, or sentences taken verbatim from the text will be italicized.

TAKS

GRADE 3 SPANISH READING

Sample Selections and Items

El lenguaje de los caballos

1   Los caballos tienen muchas formas de comunicar cómo se sienten. Ésta es una de las razones por las que pensamos que son animales muy inteligentes. Tal como lo hacemos nosotros, los caballos se pueden comunicar con señales que hacen con el cuerpo. A este tipo de comunicación se le llama lenguaje corporal. Por ejemplo, ¿haces gestos cuando algo no te gusta? ¿Sonríes cuando te sientes feliz? Si es así, entonces estás usando un lenguaje corporal.

2   Los caballos, al igual que nosotros, también hacen ciertos sonidos para expresar cómo se sienten. Tú puedes aprender a entender cómo se sienten los caballos si los observas y los escuchas cuidadosamente.

Qué debes observar

3   La siguiente vez que veas un caballo, fíjate en sus orejas. Normalmente sus orejas apuntan hacia adelante. Si apuntan hacia adelante y no se mueven, el caballo siente curiosidad por algo. Tal vez ha visto otro caballo cerca o le llamó la atención el olor a comida. Cuando el caballo oye algo, voltea sus orejas hacia el sonido. Puede voltear una oreja o las dos cuando escucha algo.

Las orejas de este caballo
apuntan hacia adelante.

4   Cuando un caballo pone las orejas planas, ¡ten cuidado! El
caballo puede estar molesto o enojado. Tal vez no quiere ir a donde
su dueño lo lleva. Una persona que conoce mucho de caballos te
dirá que te alejes de un caballo cuando ponga sus orejas planas.

5   Los caballos también comunican con los ojos lo que sienten.
Cuando un caballo está contento, tiene la mirada "suave". Sus ojos
se ven redondos y tranquilos. Por otro lado, cuando está enojado o
algo le duele, su mirada es "dura". Sus ojos se ven más abiertos e
inquietos. Si un caballo tiene miedo, su mirada es de alerta.
Entonces sus ojos están completamente abiertos y se le nota más la
parte blanca de los ojos.

Mirada suave   Mirada de alerta

6   La cola de un caballo normalmente cuelga hacia abajo y no se
mueve. De vez en cuando el caballo la mueve ligeramente para
espantar moscas. Pero si ves que un caballo mueve la cola de un
lado a otro sin parar, sabrás que algo diferente le sucede. Cuando
mueve <u>continuamente</u> la cola, puede ser una señal de que está
cansado. Tal vez se siente aburrido o hasta esté enojado. Por

último, si un caballo lleva la cola en alto, está expresando lo feliz que se siente.

Este caballo lleva la cola en alto.

Qué sonidos debes escuchar

7　　Cada sonido que hace un caballo también significa algo, por ejemplo:

Resoplido: El caballo hace este sonido con la nariz. El caballo resopla con energía una o varias veces moviendo la cabeza para decirles a otros caballos "¡Cuidado!".

Chillido: Los caballos hacen un chillido con el hocico cerrado. Ésta es la manera en que un caballo dice "¡Basta!".

Relincho: El relincho es un sonido largo y fuerte que a veces se puede oír a más de media milla. Un caballo puede relinchar para saludar a otros caballos o decirles "¡Aquí estoy!". El relincho de cada caballo es distinto. Por eso, si dos caballos están lejos el uno del otro, se pueden reconocer sólo por su relincho.

Soplido: Es un sonido simple y tranquilo que el caballo hace con su nariz. Esto quiere decir "Estoy bien".

8　　　Los caballos pueden entender fácilmente las señales de otros caballos. La gente también puede aprender a entender estas señales. Si quieres aprender el lenguaje de los caballos, puedes empezar por observarles los ojos, las orejas y la cola. Escucha también los sonidos que hacen los caballos. De esa manera, cuando tengas la oportunidad de montar un caballo, por su lenguaje corporal sabrás si es un buen día para montarlo o no.

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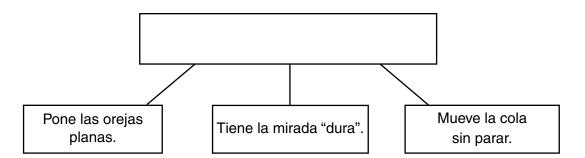
1   En el párrafo 6, ¿qué palabras le
ayudan al lector a saber qué significa
<u>continuamente</u>?

  ⬭   *para espantar*

  ⬭   *cuelga hacia abajo*

  ⌧   *sin parar*

  ⬭   *le sucede*

Objective 1

2   El párrafo 5 trata principalmente
de —

  ⌧   lo que un caballo puede
comunicar con la mirada

  ⬭   cómo se ve la mirada de un
caballo cuando tiene miedo

  ⬭   qué quiere decir la mirada
"suave" de un caballo

  ⬭   cómo se ve la mirada de un
caballo cuando sus ojos están
completamente abiertos

Objective 1

3   Observa la foto después del párrafo 6.
¿Qué demuestra la cola del caballo?

  ⬭   Las moscas lo están molestando.

  ⌧   El caballo está contento.

  ⬭   El caballo está cansado o
aburrido.

  ⬭   El caballo está enojado.

Objective 3

4   Lee la información en los cuadros de abajo.

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                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │                 │
                    └─────────────────┘
                   /        |         \
    ┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐
    │ Pone las     │ │ Tiene la     │ │ Mueve la cola│
    │ orejas       │ │ mirada       │ │ sin parar.   │
    │ planas.      │ │ "dura".      │ │              │
    └──────────────┘ └──────────────┘ └──────────────┘
```

¿Cuál de estas respuestas va en el cuadro vacío de arriba?

   ⬤   Un caballo enojado

   ⬭   Un caballo cansado

   ⬭   Un caballo curioso

      Un caballo tranquilo

Objective 3

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5   El autor usa títulos en el artículo, tales como "¿Qué debes observar?", para —

   ⬤   decirle al lector de qué trata la siguiente parte del artículo

   ⬭   que el lector descanse antes de terminar el artículo

   ⬭   para ver si el lector pone atención a lo que lee

   ⬭   para que el lector no pase mucho tiempo viendo las fotos

Objective 3

6   ¿Por qué el autor escribe una frase debajo de las dos fotografías de los ojos de un caballo?

   ⬭   La frase le dice al lector quién tomó las fotografías

   ⬭   La frase cuenta algo chistoso de cada caballo

   ⬤   La frase explica qué hay en cada fotografía

   ⬭   La frase dice cosas increíbles de los caballos

Objective 3

7 De acuerdo con esta lectura, el lector puede concluir que un caballo resopla cuando —

⬭ saluda a otro caballo

⬭ acaba de comer

⬯ hay peligro

⬭ quiere estar solo

Objective 4

8 Cuando la mirada de un caballo es "dura", lo más probable es que —

⬭ esté cansado

⬭ haya olido algo para comer

⬭ otro caballo haya relinchado

⬯ tenga una pierna herida
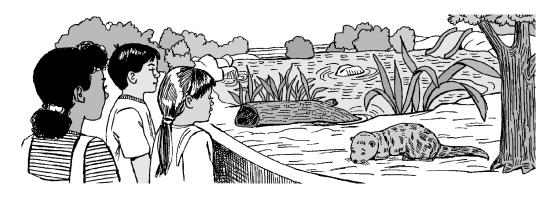
Objective 4

9 ¿Cuál oración en esta lectura le indica al lector que un caballo puede mover las orejas en diferentes direcciones?

⬭ *Tú puedes aprender a entender cómo se sienten los caballos si los observas y los escuchas cuidadosamente.*

⬭ *La siguiente vez que veas un caballo, fíjate en sus orejas.*

⬯ *Cuando el caballo oye algo, voltea sus orejas hacia el sonido.*

⬭ *Tal vez no quiere ir a donde su dueño lo lleva.*

Objective 4

Una nutria llamada Daisy

1   —Ésta es Daisy —dijo Ricardo enfrente de la clase mientras les mostraba a sus compañeros una foto del periódico—. Daisy es la nueva nutria del zoológico. El zoológico le construyó un área especial con muchos árboles y plantas. Hasta tiene un estanque para nadar. Daisy también tiene un resbaladero que usa para deslizarse y caer en el agua.

2   Los estudiantes miraron cuidadosamente la foto de Daisy.

3   —El artículo del periódico dice muchas cosas sobre las nutrias —continuó diciendo Ricardo—. Hay nutrias de río y nutrias de mar. Las nutrias son animales muy juguetones. Los juegos que más les gustan son deslizarse y jugar a las escondidas.

4   Ricardo se detuvo un momento, pero sus compañeros de clase querían saber más.

5   —Las nutrias tienen los pies palmeados como los de los patos —añadió Ricardo—. También pueden nadar muy rápido. Cuando las mamás les enseñan a nadar a sus cachorros, ellos a veces se resisten. Los cachorros chillan y no quieren entrar al agua. Sus mamás tienen que guiarlos, pero muy pronto ellos aprenden a nadar y a jugar con las otras nutrias.

6   Cuando Ricardo terminó su presentación, varios estudiantes levantaron la mano.

7   —¿Podemos ir a ver a Daisy? —preguntaron. La misma idea se le había ocurrido al maestro, el Sr. Chen. Así que planeó una excursión al zoológico para que todos pudieran ver a Daisy.

8   Durante las siguientes dos semanas, la clase estudió y aprendió sobre los animales que hay en los zoológicos. Sacaron libros de la biblioteca de la escuela y dibujaron diferentes animales.

9   Por fin llegó el día de la excursión. Los estudiantes recibieron su comida en una bolsita y se subieron al autobús. De camino al zoológico, todos hablaban ruidosamente. Estaban ansiosos por ver a Daisy y a los otros animales.

10   La Srta. Ruiz, una de las empleadas del zoológico, <u>recibió</u> a la clase en la entrada y los llevó a recorrer el zoológico.

11   —Muy pocos de nuestros animales están en jaulas —explicó la Srta. Ruiz—. La mayoría está en áreas que tienen cercas. Estas áreas se parecen a los lugares donde los animales viven en la naturaleza.

12   Primero, los estudiantes pasaron por el área de los leones. Dos leones tomaban una siesta bajo la sombra de un árbol. Después, la clase vio a los osos polares. Había dos osos en un área rocosa en donde también había un gran estanque. Los dos osos estaban nadando. Al salir del estanque, se sacudieron y salpicaron agua por todas partes.

13   Finalmente, los estudiantes llegaron al área donde estaba Daisy. Su casa parecía un patio de recreo. Sin embargo, Daisy no estaba jugando, sino que estaba echada y se veía triste.

14   —¿Está enferma Daisy? —preguntó Shamika.

15   —No —dijo la Srta. Ruiz—. Es que no tiene con quién jugar. En un principio habíamos pensado comprar dos nutrias, pero gastamos mucho dinero en la construcción de su casita. Por eso sólo nos alcanzó el dinero para comprar a Daisy. Ahora estamos ahorrando dinero para comprarle a Daisy una amiguita.

16   Los estudiantes pensaron en lo que les había dicho la Srta. Ruiz. Creían que una vida sin amigos sería muy triste.

17   —Primero tenemos que conseguir otra nutria —siguió diciendo la Srta. Ruiz—. También tenemos que añadir el costo de traer a la otra nutria al zoológico. No tenemos suficiente dinero para hacer este gasto por ahora.

18   La excursión al zoológico había sido divertida, pero los estudiantes permanecieron en silencio de regreso a la escuela. Tan pronto como regresaron al salón, Ricardo levantó la mano.

19   —¿Podemos hacer algo para ayudar a Daisy? —preguntó.

20   Shamika también levantó la mano y sugirió: —A lo mejor podemos reunir dinero vendiendo pasteles en la escuela. Después ese dinero se lo podemos dar al zoológico para que le compren una amiguita a Daisy.

21   Todos los estudiantes querían ayudar a Daisy. Así que se le dio permiso al Sr. Chen para vender los pasteles en la escuela. El viernes la clase trajo pasteles y también galletas y bizcochos. Algunos hasta trajeron refrescos y helado. ¡Al final del día, la clase había reunido más de $300!

22   Dos semanas después, los estudiantes recibieron una carta de agradecimiento. El zoológico les daba las gracias por su ayuda. La carta también decía que habían encontrado una amiga para Daisy. La nueva nutria llegaría pronto. El zoológico invitó a la clase para que volvieran. Todos estaban ansiosos por ver a Daisy de nuevo y conocer a su nueva amiguita.

10   ¿Cuál de éstos es el mejor resumen de la historia?

   ⬭   El Sr. Chen lleva a sus estudiantes a un paseo al zoológico. Conocen a Daisy y aprenden más de ella. Aunque su casa parece ser divertida, Daisy está triste porque no tiene amigos para jugar con ellos.

   ⬭   La clase de Ricardo tiene una venta de pasteles para ganar dinero y poder comprar una nutria para el zoológico. El zoológico les da las gracias a los estudiantes y los invita a visitar a Daisy y a los otros animales otra vez.

   ⬭   Los estudiantes pasan dos semanas estudiando diferentes tipos de animales. Luego van al zoológico para aprender más de los animales. Los estudiantes ven leones, osos polares y una nutria llamada Daisy.

   ⬔   Ricardo le cuenta a su clase acerca de una nutria llamada Daisy. Los estudiantes van al zoológico a visitar a Daisy. Cuando se enteran de que Daisy se siente sola, los estudiantes juntan más de $300 dólares para ayudar al zoológico a comprar otra nutria.

   Objective 1

11   ¿Cuáles palabras en el párrafo 5 ayudan al lector a saber qué significa <u>se resisten</u>?

   ⬭   *al agua*

   ⬭   *enseñan a nadar*

   ⊛   *no quieren*

   ⬭   *ellos aprenden*

Objective 1

12   Lee los siguientes significados de la palabra <u>recibir</u>.

> **recibir** *verbo*
> **1.** tomar algo que le dan a uno
> **2.** dar la bienvenida
> **3.** esperar al enemigo
> **4.** aceptar una idea o un plan

¿Cuál significado de la palabra <u>recibió</u> corresponde a la forma en que se usa en el párrafo 10?

   ⬭   Significado 1

   ⊛   Significado 2

   ⬭   Significado 3

   ⬭   Significado 4

Objective 1

13   ¿Cuál de estas respuestas describe mejor cómo se sentían los estudiantes de camino al zoológico?

   ⬭   Relajados

   ⬭   Asustados

   ⊛   Emocionados

   ⬭   Aburridos

Objective 2

14   Los estudiantes están callados de regreso a la escuela porque —

   ⊛   están preocupados por Daisy

   ⬭   están comiendo

   ⬭   están planeando su próxima excursión

   ⬭   están pensando en los osos polares

Objective 2

15 ¿Cuál es el problema principal en el cuento?

⬭ El zoológico tiene que mantener en jaulas a muchos de sus animales.

⬭ Los estudiantes no pueden ir de excursión al zoológico.

⊛ El zoológico no tiene dinero para comprar otra nutria.

⬭ A los estudiantes no se les permite hablar en el autobús.

Objective 2

16 Después de escuchar el informe de Ricardo, la clase fue al zoológico a —

⬭ estudiar las plantas y los árboles

⊛ conocer a la nutria de la que habían oído hablar

⬭ llevar alimento a los animales

⬭ conocer a la Srta. Ruiz, una empleada del zoológico
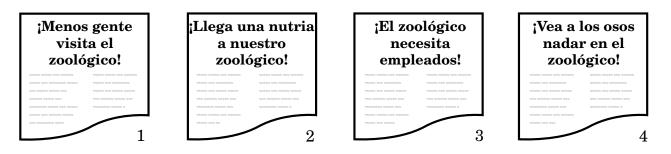
Objective 2

17 ¿Qué pasa después de que el Sr. Chen planea la excursión de la clase al zoológico?

⊛ La clase aprende sobre los diferentes animales que hay en los zoológicos.

⬭ La clase lee un artículo sobre Daisy en el periódico.

⬭ Ricardo le muestra a la clase una foto de Daisy.

⬭ El zoológico consigue una nueva nutria llamada Daisy.

Objective 3

18 Esta historia fue escrita principalmente para —

⬭ mostrar cómo juegan las nutrias unas con otras

⊛ contar cómo unos estudiantes ayudaron a una nutria de un zoológico

⬭ explicar qué son las nutrias y dónde viven

⬭ contar sobre el animal favorito del Sr. Chen

Objective 3

19 Lee los títulos de estos artículos del periódico.

¡Menos gente visita el zoológico!	**¡Llega una nutria a nuestro zoológico!**	**¡El zoológico necesita empleados!**	**¡Vea a los osos nadar en el zoológico!**
1	2	3	4

¿Cuál de estos artículos del periódico probablemente leyó Ricardo para hacer su informe?

⬭ Título 1

⬲ Título 2

⬭ Título 3

⬭ Título 4

Objective 4

20 ¿Qué hará probablemente la clase de Ricardo en el futuro?

⬭ Irán a la biblioteca a leer sobre otros zoológicos.

⬭ Venderán pasteles cada viernes.

⬭ Pedirán al zoológico que les devuelvan sus $300.

⬲ Harán otra excursión al zoológico.

Objective 4

21 Usa la tabla para contestar la pregunta que le sigue.

Qué sucede	Por qué sucede
La clase de Ricardo tiene una venta de pasteles.	_____

¿Cuál de las siguientes oraciones va en el cuadro en blanco?

⬲ Quieren que Daisy tenga una amiga.

⬭ Han planeado un viaje al zoológico.

⬭ Esperan juntar $300 dólares.

⬭ Quieren que el zoológico construya jaulas.

Objective 4

Steps for Explicit Vocabulary Instruction

Steps		Tips
1.	Have students **say** the word.	
2.	Provide a definition of the word using **student-friendly** explanations and **visuals**.	Use a sticky note to help plan your instruction.
3.	Have students discuss what is **known** about the word.	
4.	Provide **examples** and **nonexamples** of the word.	
5.	Engage in **deep-processing activities** by asking **questions**, using **graphic organizers**, or having **students act out** the word.	Choose a deep-processing word from the box. Using a sticky note, plan questions and/or activities that incorporate the word. **Deep Processing Words** Compare — Decide Categorize — Justify Design — Create Contrast — Verify Rate — Imagine Recommend — Predict
6.	**Scaffold** students to **create powerful sentences** with the new word.	Remember the "Seven-Up" Rule: Powerful sentences are seven words and up!

Rutina de Instrucción Explicita Vocabulario

	Pasos	Ideas
1.	Pedir a los estudiantes **que digan** la palabra.	
2.	Proveer una definición de la palabra usando **explicaciones a nivel de los estudiantes e ilustraciones**.	Pueden usar una nota adherible para ayudar a planear su instrucción.
3.	Pedir a los estudiantes que discutan lo que **saben** sobre la palabra.	
4.	Dar **ejemplos** y **contra-ejemplos** de la palabra.	
5.	Utilizar **actividades de procesamiento intensivo**; haciendo **preguntas**, usando **organizadores gráficos**, o **dramatizando** la palabra.	Escoge una palabra. Usando una nota adherible, planea preguntas y/o actividades que incorporen la palabra.
6.	Ayudar a los estudiantes a **crear oraciones poderosas** con la palabra nueva.	Acordarse de la regla *"Siete o Más"* ¡Las oraciones poderosas tienen siete palabras o más!

Palabras de procesamiento intensivo

Comparar	Decidir
Categorizar	Justificar
Diseñar	Hacer
Contrastar	Verificar
Calificar	Imaginar
Recomendar	Predecir

texasread1ng

VAUGHN GROSS CENTER · FOR READING & LANGUAGE ARTS

Selecting Words for Vocabulary Instruction

When planning vocabulary instruction, one of the first things to consider is the selection of the words you teach. Think of vocabulary words as occurring in three tiers:

Tier I
These words are basic words, such as *house, food, girl,* and *mother*. These words occur so frequently that students do not require direct instruction to learn them.

Tier II
Although these words don't occur as frequently as those in the first tier, they are common enough that most mature readers are familiar with them.

Tier II words can be found across various contexts and topics. Understanding these words' meanings enhances students' everyday reading and listening comprehension.

Tier III
These words occur infrequently and are often related to a specific area or topic. Tier III includes words like *nomenclature, tundra, incidence,* and *refinery*.

When considering which words to teach, focus on Tier II words. These words have the most impact on students' academic success and reading comprehension.

Questions that can guide word selection when planning vocabulary instruction include:

- **How useful is the word? Is it a word that third-graders will encounter often in their texts?**

  For example, third-graders are more likely to encounter and use words like *absurd* and *familiar* than *miscreant* and *laconic*.

- **How does the word relate to other words that students have been studying? Is it part of a unit of study?**

  For example, think of the word *civilization* in a social studies text. Does it appear in several chapters? Does it contribute to the overall understanding of a unit of study?

- **What role does the word play in conveying the meaning of an idea or concept? What contribution does the word make to an overall understanding of this topic?**

  For example, third-graders must know the meaning of the word *photosynthesis* to understand a chapter on how plants grow.

Adapted from Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Concept Word Map: Features of Effective Instruction Video Observation Form

Name: _____

Date: _____

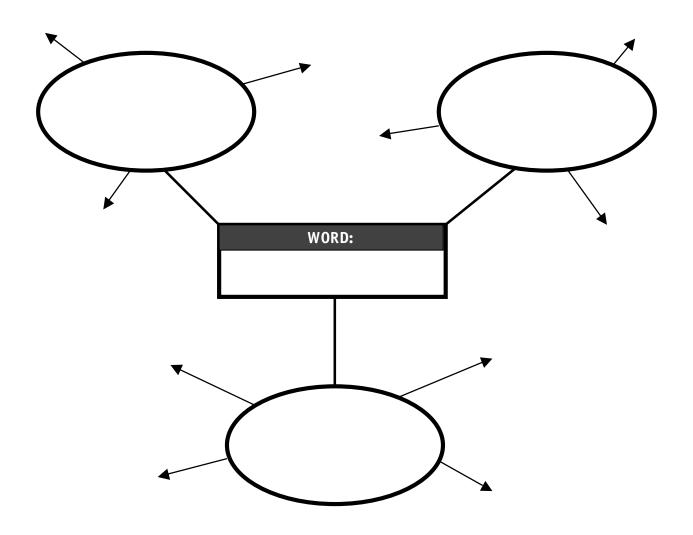| Component of Effective Instruction	Teacher Behaviors	Comments	Implications for My Classroom
Explicit instruction with modeling			
Systematic instruction with scaffolding			
Multiple opportunities for students to respond			
Immediate, specific corrective feedback			

Concept Word Map: Features of Effective Instruction **Completed** Video Observation Form

Name: _____   Date: _____

Component of Effective Instruction	Teacher Strategies	Comments	Implications for My Classroom
Explicit instruction with modeling	Sets purpose for lesson and use of graphic organizer. Has students look for specifics in her examples. Models synthesizing through think-alouds.	Teacher had examples prepared before lesson—clearly thought them through. Carefully showed students how to pull information from various parts of text.	I need to have the "end in mind," establishing what I want my students to know at the end of my lessons. Have materials prepared in advance for students to use. Model, model, model ☺.
Systematic instruction with scaffolding	Teacher encourages students to think along with her as she talks through graphic organizer. Monitors partner work. Leads students to deepen their understanding through discussing characteristics.	The teacher is constantly moving around—always available for the students, giving support as needed. **	I need to be always monitoring as my student are doing partner work or individual practice.
Multiple opportunities for students to respond	Teacher gives time during whole group instruction for students to respond. Gives time to work in pairs to respond to each other about using strategies.	Supports and extends student responses. Whole group/partner opportunities to work	Give students various ways to show their understanding. Encourage cooperative learning.
Immediate, specific corrective feedback	Teacher monitors and supports partner work, explaining and clarifying.	** Same here. Avoid comments that don't support learning for students.	Being specific about feedback helps students cement learning.

Word Map: Multiple Meaning Words

WORD:

- **Record the definitions of a word.**

- **Locate examples of the word in the text.**

- **Match the word with the definition used in the text.**

Adapted from Anderson, R. C., & Nagy, W. E. (1991). Word meanings. In R. Barr, M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research: Vol. 2* (pp. 690-724). New York, NY: Addison-Wesley Longman.

Mapa para palabras con significados múltiples

PALABRA:

1. **Apunte los significados múltiples de la palabra.**

2. **Encuentre ejemplos de la palabra en el texto.**

3. **Señale el significado de la palabra que coincida con el significado usado en el texto.**

Adapted from Anderson, R. C., & Nagy, W. E. (1991). Word meanings. In R. Barr, M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research: Vol. 2* (pp. 690-724). New York, NY: Addison-Wesley Longman.

SEMANTIC FEATURE ANALYSIS LESSON

OBJECTIVE:
The students will develop word meanings by comparing and contrasting the features (details or characteristics) of vocabulary related to a concept within an instructional theme or unit.
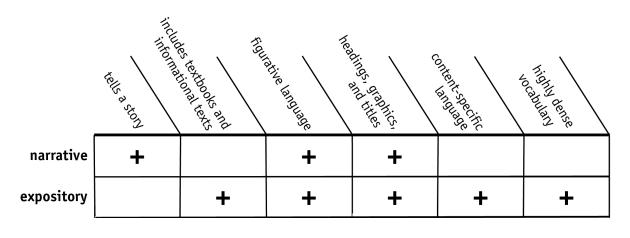
MATERIALS:
- Instructional theme for analysis including the major concepts and related vocabulary
- Semantic feature analysis matrix

TEACHING PRACTICE THAT PROMOTES READING:

Through discussion, the teacher works with students to develop the semantic feature analysis matrix. The title matches the concept being studied.

1. Label the rows of boxes on the left side of the matrix with words related to the concept.

2. Identify features of these words (from step one) and write the features on the slanted lines. The features should link the words to the targeted concept.

3. Using a symbol such as a plus sign (+) or a negative sign (-) represents the relationship between the words and the features of the words.

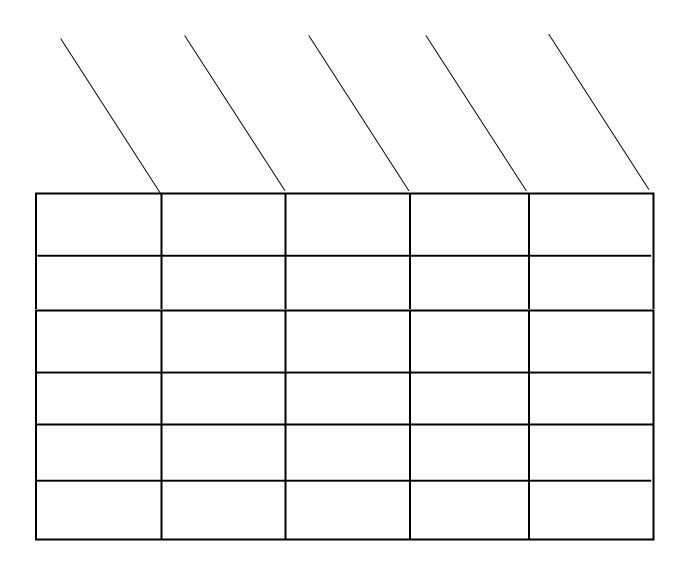|	tells a story	includes textbooks and informational texts	figurative language	headings, graphics, and titles	content-specific language	highly dense vocabulary
narrative	+		+	+		
expository		+	+	+	+	+

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION:
Provide a partially completed matrix.
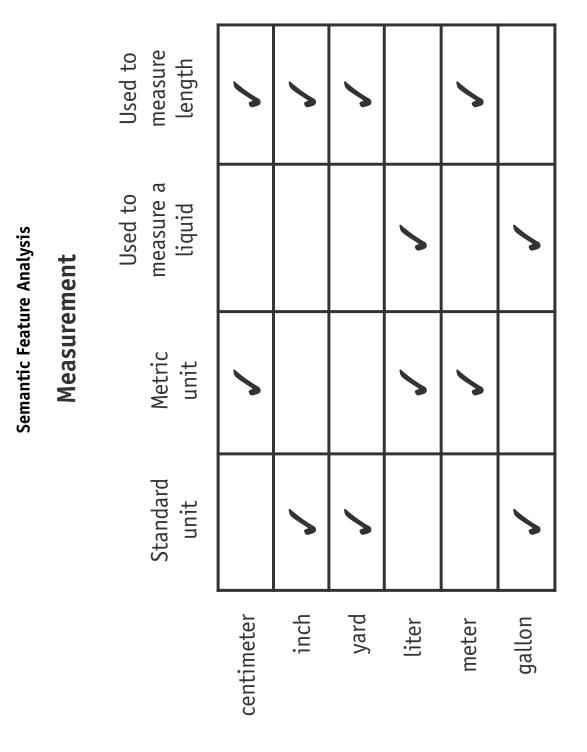
For English language learners, help students access and build on their prior knowledge of the concepts being analyzed. Use examples, pictures, or definitions to help the students understand new words being discussed throughout the lesson.

Semantic Feature Analysis
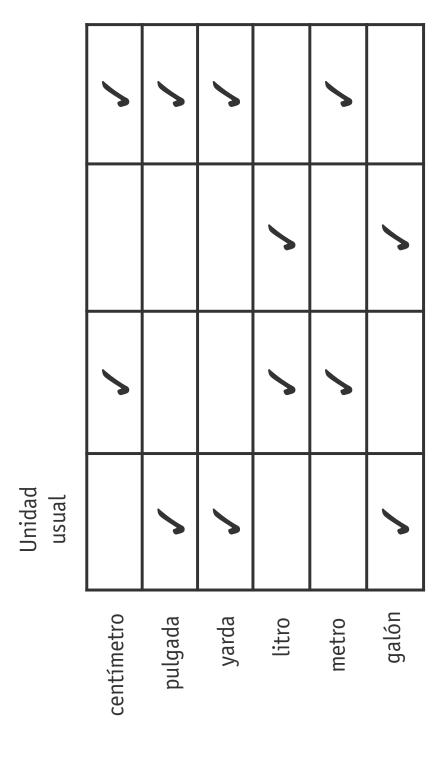
Adapted from Stahl, S. (1999). *Vocabulary development*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books.

Semantic Feature Analysis

Measurement

	Standard unit	Metric unit	Used to measure a liquid	Used to measure length
centimeter		✓		✓
inch	✓			✓
yard	✓			✓
liter		✓	✓	
meter		✓		✓
gallon	✓		✓	

Adapted from Stahl, S. (1999). *Vocabulary development.* Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books.

Análisis de las características semánticas

Medición

	Unidad usual			
centímetro		✓		✓
pulgada	✓			✓
yarda	✓			✓
litro		✓	✓	
metro		✓		✓
galón	✓		✓	

Adapted from Stahl, S. (1999). *Vocabulary development.* Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books.

Context Clues: Features of Effective Instruction Video Observation Form

Name: _____   Date: _____

Component of Effective Instruction	Teacher Behaviors	Comments	Classroom Implications
Explicit instruction with modeling			
Systematic instruction with scaffolding			
Multiple opportunities for students to respond			
Immediate, specific corrective feedback			

Context Clues: Features of Effective Instruction **Completed** Video Observation Form

Name: _____　　　　Date: _____

Component of Effective Instruction	Teacher Strategies	Comments	Implications for My Classroom
Explicit instruction with modeling	Sets purpose for lesson. Explains new vocabulary—clunk. Clearly states the two strategies she wants students to learn.	Students know what to expect. Gives analogy to explain what a clunk is. She gives examples with each.	I need to have the "end in mind," establishing what I want my students to know at the end of my lessons. Have materials prepared in advance for students to use. Model, model, model ☺.
Systematic instruction with scaffolding	Teacher restates the strategies and does a "think-aloud" to show how to use the strategies. Re-states strategies when monitoring partner work.	The teacher is constantly moving around—always available for the students and on top of their learning. **	Meeting the wide range of abilities of the students in my classroom should be constantly in the back of my mind
Multiple opportunities for students to respond	Teacher gives time during whole group instruction for students to respond. Gives time to work in pairs to respond to each other about using strategies.	Supports and extends student responses. Whole group/partner opportunities to work	Be sure to present material in various ways. Encourage cooperative learning.
Immediate, specific corrective feedback	Teacher monitors and supports partner work, explaining and clarifying.	** Same here. Avoid comments that don't support learning for students.	Giving immediate feedback can stop "mis-learnings."

Cognates: Features of Effective Instruction Video Observation Form

Name: _____

Date: _____

Component of Effective Instruction	Teacher Behaviors	Comments	Classroom Implications
Explicit instruction with modeling			
Systematic instruction with scaffolding			
Multiple opportunities for students to respond			
Immediate, specific corrective feedback			

Cognates: Features of Effective Instruction **Completed** Video Observation Form

Name: _____   Date: _____

Component of Effective Instruction	Teacher Behaviors	Comments	Implications for My Classroom
Explicit instruction with modeling	Sets purpose for lesson. Explains new vocabulary. Teacher model on board.	Students know what to expect. Student-friendly definitions given for cognates. Allows teacher to highlight the cognates for students.	I need have the "end in mind," establishing what I want my students to know at the end of my lessons. I need to find a resource for student friendly definitions. Model, model, model ☺.
Systematic instruction with scaffolding	As students work in pairs, teacher monitors and supports partner work.	The teacher is constantly moving around—always available for the students and on top of their learning. **	Meeting the wide range of abilities of the students in my classroom should be constantly in the back of my mind.
Multiple opportunities for students to respond	Teacher gives time during whole group instruction for students to respond. Gives time to work in pairs to practice the skill.	Her chart with modeling on the board allows children to respond to her think aloud. White board for partner work.	Be sure to present material in various ways. Hands-on materials, like white boards.
Immediate, specific corrective feedback	Teacher monitors and supports partner work, explaining and clarifying.	** Same here. No "Great job!" kind of comments to students.	Be careful to be specific on corrective in my comments.

Components of Effective Vocabulary Instruction

Teach and Model Independent Word-Learning Strategies

Encourage Wide Reading

COMPONENTS OF EFFECTIVE VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION

Teach Word Meaning Directly

Use High-Quality Oral Language

Promote Word Consciousness

Adapted from Texas Education Agency. (2002b). *Promoting vocabulary development: Components of effective vocabulary instruction*. Retrieved June 25, 2002, from Texas Education Agency Web site: http://www.tea.state.tx.us/reading/products/products.html

Promoting Vocabulary Development

Components of Effective Vocabulary Instruction

Texas Reading Initiative

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Introduction

Reading is central to learning—in school, in the workplace, and in everyday life. How well children learn to read sets the foundation for their future success. The Texas Reading Initiative began in 1996 in response to then-Governor George W. Bush's challenge to all Texans to focus on the most basic of education goals—teaching all children to read. The goal the Governor set was clear: every child, each and every child, must learn to read.

The Texas Education Agency, in response to Bush's challenge, has worked on a multifaceted effort aimed at providing information, resources, and knowledge to assist parents, educators, school board members, administrators, public officials, and business and community leaders as they seek to meet this goal. The Initiative has been built on years of demonstrated leadership and commitment of the Texas State Board of Education in the areas of reading development and reading difficulties. The Initiative has relied on the convergence of reading research from the past several decades that illuminates the way children learn to read and how to enhance that process.

In 1997, TEA first published the document, *Beginning Reading Instruction, Components and Features of a Research-Based Reading Program,* also known as the "red book." This booklet described important aspects of effective reading instruction, as well as elements of classroom and administrative support for effective instruction.

Since its initial publication, over 260,000 copies of *Beginning Reading Instruction* have been printed and distributed. It has served as the basis for professional development, the development of curriculum standards and instructional materials, as well as the establishment of research-based reading programs in schools. The purpose of the booklet was to provide information which can be used to guide decisions as local school districts and educators worked toward then-Governor Bush's stated goal, "all students will read on grade level or higher by the end of the third grade and continue reading on or above grade level throughout their schooling."

After the initial distribution of *Beginning Reading Instruction,* several projects were undertaken to develop companion documents to the "red book." These first companion documents: *Spotlight on Reading, A Companion to Beginning Reading Instruction; Beginning Reading Instruction: Practical Ideas for Parents;* and *Instrucción Para Comenzar a Leer: Ideas Prácticas Para Padres de Familia,* were published. In addition to these documents, the Agency, in collaboration with the University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts, has worked on additional booklets that provide information on reading topics such as vocabulary development, comprehension, and content-area reading.

Governor Rick Perry continues to support the goal that all children will learn to read. This "Red Book Series" serves as a resource to our schools and all stakeholders interested in meeting the Governor's goal.

This booklet, *Promoting Vocabulary Development,* would not be possible without the contributions of the consultants and staff of the University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts and the staff of the Texas Education Agency. A special thanks goes to Jean Osborn, Center for the Study of Reading, University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, and Fran Lehr.

Promoting Vocabulary Development

Why a booklet about vocabulary development? Because words are the tools we use to access our background knowledge, express ideas, and learn about new concepts. Students' word knowledge is linked strongly to academic success.[1] Specifically, word knowledge is crucial to reading comprehension, and determines how well students will be able to comprehend the texts they read in the upper elementary grades, in middle and high school, and in college.[2]

Although it is true that comprehension is far more than recognizing words and remembering their meanings, it is also true that if a reader does not know the meanings of a sufficient proportion of the words in the text, comprehension is impossible.

Poor readers often lack adequate vocabulary to get meaning from what they read. Consequently, reading is difficult and tedious for them, and they are unable (and often unwilling) to do the large amount of reading they must do if they are to encounter unknown words often enough to learn them. This situation contributes to what are called "Matthew Effects," that is, interactions with the environment that exaggerate individual differences over time, with "rich get richer, poor get poorer" consequences. Good readers read more, become even better readers, and learn more words; poor readers read less, become poorer readers, and learn fewer words.[3] Indeed, the vocabulary problems of students who enter school with poor or limited vocabularies only worsen over time.[4]

Yet in spite of its obvious importance to academic success, vocabulary development has received little instructional attention in recent years. So to return to our question: Why a booklet about vocabulary development? Simply because words are the very foundation of learning. Finding ways to increase students' vocabulary growth throughout the school years must become a major educational priority. The purpose of this booklet is to help you make vocabulary development an important part of instruction.

The booklet is divided into three parts. In the first part, we look at some of the obstacles that can make vocabulary development a difficult task. In the second part, we provide an overview of the components of effective vocabulary instruction and discuss how these components can help students overcome the major obstacles to vocabulary growth. In part three, we describe some specific techniques that are especially useful in teaching word meanings as concepts, particularly in the content areas.

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1   Baumann, J. F., & Kame'enui, E. J. (1991). Research on vocabulary instruction: Ode to Voltaire. In J. Flood, D. Lapp, & J. R. Squire (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teaching the English language arts* (pp. 604–632). New York: Macmillan.

2   Anderson, R. C., & Freebody, P. (1981). Vocabulary knowledge. In J. T. Guthrie (Ed.), *Comprehension and teaching: Research reviews* (pp. 77–117). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.; Chall, J. S., Jacobs, V. A., & Baldwin, L. E. (1990). *The reading crisis: Why poor children fall behind*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

3   Stahl, S. A. (1999). *Vocabulary development*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books; Stanovich, K. E. (1986). Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly, 21,* 360–407.

4   White, T. G., Graves, M. F., & Slater, W. H. (1990). Growth of reading vocabulary in diverse elementary schools: Decoding and word meaning. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 82,* 281–290.

First, however, we need to clarify what we mean by **vocabulary.** There are several types of vocabulary.[5] For example, our **listening** vocabulary is made up of all the words we hear and understand. Our **speaking** vocabulary includes all the words we use in everyday speech. Our **reading** vocabulary is made up of the words in print that we recognize or can figure out. As we use **vocabulary** in this booklet, the term refers to the reading vocabulary—the body of words students must know if they are to read increasingly demanding text with fluency and comprehension. We do **not** address issues of decoding and of acquiring sight words; our focus is on how students acquire meanings—and, more importantly, understandings—of new words and concepts. Those issues are, however, covered in the booklet, *Beginning Reading Instruction: Components and Features of a Research-Based Reading Program.*

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5   Irvin, J. L. (1997). *Reading and the middle school student* (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Some Obstacles to Vocabulary Development

Helping students to develop a strong reading vocabulary requires more than having them look up words in a dictionary. Rather, students need instruction that will help them acquire new word knowledge and develop strategies to enable them to increase the depth of that knowledge over time. To help students develop word knowledge in breadth and depth, we must first recognize four fundamental obstacles, and then develop teaching practices to address those obstacles:

- **The size of the task.** The number of words that students need to learn is exceedingly large.
- **The differences between spoken English and written, or "literate" English.** The vocabulary of written English, particularly the "literate" English that students encounter in textbooks and other school materials, differs greatly from that of spoken, especially conversational, English. Students—both English language learners and those for whom English is the first language—may have limited exposure to literate English outside of school.
- **The limitations of sources of information about words.** The sources of information about words that are readily available to students—dictionaries, word parts, and context—pose their own problems. Each can be difficult to use, uninformative, or even misleading.
- **The complexity of word knowledge.** Knowing a word involves much more than knowing its dictionary definition, and simply memorizing a dictionary definition does not guarantee the ability to use a word in reading or writing. Adding to the complexity is the fact that different kinds of words place different demands on learners.

The Size of the Task

Although there is still debate over exactly how many and what words are essential for students to learn so as to become skillful readers, there is no question that skillful readers learn words by the thousands. There is also no doubt that without instructional intervention, the vocabulary gap between more and less skillful readers continues to widen over time.

We know that, on average, students add 2,000–3,000 words a year to their reading vocabularies.[6] This means that they learn from six to eight new words each day—an enormous achievement. Individual differences in vocabulary size also involve large numbers. Some fifth-grade students may know

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6   Anderson, R. C., & Nagy, W. E. (1992). The vocabulary conundrum. *American Educator, 16,* 14–18, 44–46; Anglin, J. M. (1993). Vocabulary development: A morphological analysis. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 58* (Serial No. 238); Beck, I. L., & McKeown, M. G. (1991). Conditions of vocabulary acquisition. In R. Barr, M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research* (Vol. 2, pp. 789–814). New York: Longman; Nagy, W. E., & Herman, P. A. (1987). Breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge: Implications for acquisition and instruction. In M. G. McKeown & M. E. Curtis (Eds.), *The nature of vocabulary acquisition* (pp. 19–36). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum; White, Graves, & Slater, 1990.

thousands more words than other students in the same classroom. As a teacher, you know the difference this can make: students who know the meanings of many words catch on to and understand new ideas and concepts much faster than do those students with limited vocabularies.

Early in children's lives, differences in word knowledge levels begin to appear. This, in part, is due to the varying range of words children are exposed to within their homes and communities. Exposure to new words can differ dramatically among the children of families from different socioeconomic classes. It has been shown, for example, that young children of parents with jobs classified as "professional" can be exposed to 50 percent more words than are children of parents classified as "working class," and to twice as many words as children of parents who receive welfare support.[7] This finding does not mean that all, or even most children from low SES backgrounds are condemned to lives of linguistic poverty. Rather, it underscores the importance of finding ways to provide children with more activities that promote language development and vocabulary growth, beginning in the earliest days of school. Children whose homes have not prepared them for the variety of English necessary for educational success **can** learn to master this language through well-designed school experiences.[8]

The Differences Between Spoken English and Written English

Most spoken language, and especially the language of face-to-face conversation, is less rich and varied in vocabulary use than is written language. This is partly because speakers have a variety of communicative tools at their disposal—gestures, tone of voice, and facial expression—that are not available to writers. In addition, conversations between friends involve shared knowledge, which makes precise communication possible without precision in wording; "You know who" can identify the subject of a remark as precisely as a detailed physical description. In conversation, accuracy of communication depends more on feedback from listeners than on getting what is said exactly right.

In writing, and especially in literate writing, the primary communicative tool is precision in word choice. In fact, a conversation among college-educated adults contains, on average, less rich and varied vocabulary than does a typical children's book. The language of television is sometimes more varied than everyday conversation, but it seldom matches the level of language used in children's books.[9]

The differences between spoken and written English can pose major problems for students learning English, whose vocabulary difficulties sometimes can be disguised by their conversational fluency. For example, children of immigrant parents can become proficient in everyday conversation in less than two years. However, it may take a longer period of time for these children to become proficient in literate English.[10] If teachers are not aware of the difference in the time it takes to achieve conversational fluency and proficiency with written English, they might diagnose as learning or reading disabled a conversationally proficient English language learner who has trouble understanding textbooks.

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7   Hart, B., & Risley, T. R. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experiences of young American children: The everyday experience of one and two year old American children.* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

8   For example, Snow, C. E., Barnes, W., Chandler, J., Goodman, I., & Hemphill, L. (1992). *Unfulfilled expectations: Home and school influences on literacy.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

9   Cunningham, A. E., & Stanovich, K. E. (1998). What reading does for the mind. *American Educator, 22,* 8–15; Hayes, D. P. (1988). Speaking and writing: Distinct patterns of word choice. Journal of Memory and Language, 27, 572–585.

10 Collier, V. P. (1989). How long? A synthesis of research on academic achievement in a second language. *TESOL Quarterly, 23,* 509–631.

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Learning the vocabulary of literate English can be a problem as well for students for whom English is the first language. Words such as *renovate, restore, delve,* and *elude,* which might appear in a story from a fifth-grade textbook, are rarely encountered in everyday speech. We cannot assume that children will be familiar with all the words they encounter in school and in textbooks just because they come from English-speaking homes or just because they are proficient in conversational English.

Limitations of the Sources of Information About Words

Learning on their own or as part of a lesson, students have three main sources of information about words: dictionaries, word parts, and context. All of these are important, but each is also problematic.

Dictionaries. Although dictionary use is a main feature of most vocabulary instruction, many students do not receive the kind of instruction they need to learn how to use a dictionary effectively.[11] Traditional instruction in dictionary use focuses on having students look up words and use information from the definitions they find to write sentences. This kind of instruction appears to produce only a superficial understanding and rapid forgetting of a word. Young students often have difficulty interpreting the information in definitions, especially when it comes to how the word is used in a sentence. This is true even when the definitions have been rewritten to make them more user-friendly.[12] In fact, after examining the errors made by students who wrote sentences based on dictionary definitions of new words, the examiners concluded that this activity is "pedagogically useless."[13]

Young students also often have difficulty choosing the appropriate meanings from a dictionary entry for an unknown word. Dictionary definitions that might be accurate for adults are often too convoluted for children to understand, and the simplified definitions found in school dictionaries and glossaries often fail to adequately describe the word's meaning.

Word parts. Students' ability to use word parts—prefixes, suffixes, and roots—to interpret new words can contribute greatly to their vocabulary growth.[14] Nevertheless, word parts are not a completely reliable source of information about word meanings. To illustrate, consider pairs of words such as the following, which share recognizable parts, but which are not clearly related in meaning: *casual/casualty, emerge/emergency, sign/resign, sign/design, awe/awful.*

Context. Students can acquire a great deal of vocabulary knowledge as they pick up the meanings of words from context as they read widely in appropriately challenging texts. However, the benefits of context are primarily long-term—a matter of gradually accumulating partial information about words as they are encountered repeatedly; the chance of learning the meaning of any particular word from one encounter with that word in context is rather slim.[15]

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11 Miller, G., & Gildea, P. (1987). How children learn words. *Scientific American, 27,* 94–99.

12 McKeown, M. G. (1993). Creating effective definitions for young word learners. *Reading Research Quarterly, 27,* 16–31; Scott, J. A., & Nagy, W. E. (1997). Understanding the definitions of unfamiliar verbs. *Reading Research Quarterly, 32,* 184–200.

13 Miller & Gildea, 1987.

14 Anglin, 1993.

15 Nagy, W. E., Anderson, R. C., & Herman, P. A. (1987). Learning word meanings from context during normal reading. *American Educational Research Journal, 24,* 237–270; Schatz, E. K., & Baldwin, R. S. (1986). Context clues are unreliable predictors of word meaning. *Reading Research Quarterly, 21,* 439–453.

Finally, to use dictionary definitions, word parts, and context effectively requires awareness of words and flexible thinking—metacognitive and metalinguistic sophistication that many students do not possess. In fact, the students who are most in need of vocabulary growth are likely to be the ones least effective at using these sources of information.

The Complexity of Word Knowledge

What does it mean to **know** a word? Conventionally, when we talk about knowing a word, we mean knowing its definition. But knowing a word's definition is not the same thing as being able to use that word in speech and writing or to understand a text in which the word appears. People are able to use and to recognize in print words such as *at, the,* and *so,* but very few can give a formal definition for them.[16] Definitions are ways we talk about word meanings, but are different from word meanings.

In the conventional form of a definition, the definition first identifies the category to which a word belongs, and then describes how the word differs from other members of that category. A conventional definition of *fissure,* taken from a widely used dictionary, reads as follows: "a narrow opening [class] produced by cleavage [differentiation]."

The problem with conventional definitions is that they do not always help students to learn word meanings.[17] Indeed, the shortcomings of using such definitions to learn words can be seen in the sentences students write after they have read them. Given the following definition of *redress:* "set right; repair, remedy," one student wrote the following sentence: "The **redress** for getting well [when] you're sick is to stay in bed."[18]

Subtle misunderstandings such as this one suggest that for many students, a word's "meaning" is not captured fully in a description of its logical relations to other words. To **know** a word, students need to encounter it in context and see how its meaning relates to the words around it, and how it relates to the other words that might have been used in its place. They need to understand that *worry* and *fret* are ways of showing concern, or that *galleon, schooner,* and *dinghy* are all types of boats. In addition, they need to understand how the meanings of words shift and change as words are used in different contexts. For example, look at changes in meaning for the word *gave,* as it appears in different contexts:[19]

> John **gave** Frank five dollars.
>
> John **gave** Mary a kiss.
>
> The doctor **gave** the child an injection.
>
> The orchestra **gave** a stunning performance.

Although all of these examples involve an act of transmitting, with a giver, a recipient, and something given, each act differs greatly from the others. Students cannot learn this information from a dictionary definition alone. Instead, they need to see the word in many different contexts, to see how the word's meaning changes and shifts.

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16 Nagy, W. E. (1988). *Vocabulary instruction and reading comprehension* (Tech. Rep. No. 431). Champaign, IL: Center for the Study of Reading.

17 See, for example, Scott & Nagy, 1997.

18 Miller & Gildea, 1987.

19 Anderson, R. C., & Nagy, W. E. (1991). Word meaning. In R. Barr, M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research* (Vol. 2, pp. 690–724). New York: Longman.

Adding to the complexity of word knowledge is the fact that all words are not the same. Vocabulary contains **function** words and **content** words. Function words are words that have a syntactic function, that are used to alert a reader or speaker to the structure of the sentence. The previous sentence without the words *are, that, a, to, or, the,* and *of* reads as follows: *Function words words have syntactic function, used cue reader speaker structure sentence.* Without function words the sentence is unintelligible.

Most speakers of English learn function words readily, in the first stages of language development. There are a relatively small number of such words, with approximately 100 accounting for almost 50 percent of the words used in written English.[20] However, the number of content words is virtually unlimited. Content words are the nouns, verbs, and adjectives that carry information in a text. Content words can be more or less concrete or abstract. Concrete words have a perceptible referent—for example, things, colors, sounds. Abstract words are more difficult to picture, feel, or hear. Not surprisingly, abstract words are more difficult to learn than are concrete words.[21] In vocabulary instruction, the meanings of concrete words can be tied to an object, or shown, whereas the meanings of abstract words have to be taught through examples and non-examples.

Other content words are infrequently used synonyms for words that are already known, such as *longevous* (long-lived), *abattoir* (slaughterhouse), and *paranomasia* (pun). These words may represent different shades of meaning from their synonyms, but knowing the meaning of the more frequent synonym usually gets a reader through a text containing the less frequent word. The reader learns the different shades of meaning though continued exposure.

More often than not, content words represent not just a new term, but a new concept, a new way of organizing ideas and experiences. For example, concepts such as *logarithm* or *photosynthesis* need to be learned in the context of other mathematical or biological concepts. We learn concepts through repeated encounters with them in a number of different contexts. Because learning word meanings as concepts is vital to vocabulary development—and content-area learning—we have made it the sole focus of part three of this booklet.

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20 Adams, M. J. (1990). *Beginning to read: Thinking and learning about print.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

21 Paivio, A. (1963). Learning of adjective-noun paired associates as a function of adjective-noun word order and noun abstractness. *Canadian Journal of Psychology, 17,* 370–379.

The Components of Effective Vocabulary Instruction

To be effective, a program of vocabulary instruction should provide students with opportunities for word learning by:

- encouraging wide reading;
- exposing students to high-quality oral language;
- promoting word consciousness;
- providing explicit instruction of specific words; and
- providing modeling and instruction in independent word-learning strategies.

In this part of the booklet, we discuss how each of these components contributes to helping students overcome the major obstacles to vocabulary growth. These components extend the vocabulary development ideas presented in the booklet, *Beginning Reading Instruction: Components and Features of a Research-Based Reading Program.*

What To Do About the Size of the Task: Wide Reading

We know that the volume of students' reading is strongly related to their vocabulary knowledge.[22] Students learn new words by encountering them in text, either through their own reading or by being read to. Increasing the opportunities for such encounters improves students' vocabulary knowledge, which, in turn, improves their ability to read more and more complex text. In short, the single most important thing you can do to improve students' vocabularies is to get them to read more.

Remember, to keep up, students need to learn at a rate of 2,000–3,000 words per year; to catch up, they need to exceed this rate. Can wide reading really be enough to help students learn so many words? Evidence indicates that it can. First, there is the evidence of those avid readers who acquire large vocabularies largely apart from any type of explicit instruction in vocabulary. Second, there is a growing body of research showing that, although the odds of learning any particular word from context are small, the cumulative effects of learning from reading can be large. Consider the following argument for the effects of wide reading:[23]

- If, over a school year, a fifth-grade student reads for an hour each day, five days a week (in and out of school), at a conservative rate of 150 words per minute, the student will encounter 2,250,000 words in the course of reading.

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22 Cunningham, A. E., & Stanovich, K. E. (1991). Tracking the unique effects of print exposure in children: Associations with vocabulary, general knowledge, and spelling. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 83,* 264–274.; Fielding, L. G., Wilson, P. T., & Anderson, R. C. (1986). A new focus on free reading: The role of trade books in reading instruction. In T. Raphael & R. E. Reynolds (Eds.), *The contexts of school-based literacy*. New York: Random House.

23 Herman, P. A., Anderson, R. C., Pearson, P. D., & Nagy, W. E. (1987). Incidental acquisition of word meanings from expositions with varied text features. *Reading Research Quarterly, 23,* 263–284; Nagy et al., 1987; Nagy, W. E., Herman, P. A., & Anderson, R. C. (1985). Learning words from context. *Reading Research Quarterly, 20,* 233–253.

- If 2 to 5 percent of the words the student encounters are unknown words, he or she will encounter from 45,000 to 112,500 such words.
- We know that students learn between 5 and 10 percent of previously unknown words from a single reading. This accounts for at least 2,250 new words the student learns from context each year.

The figure 2,250 new words learned a year is based on the lowest points of the estimated ranges. Even this conservative figure suggests that reading is a powerful influence on students' vocabulary growth.

What **kinds** of reading are necessary to produce such vocabulary growth? Whereas some argue that almost any reading ultimately will have powerful benefits for students,[24] others say that if students consistently select texts below their current reading levels, even wide reading will not result in measurable vocabulary growth.[25] Nor is reading text that is full of unfamiliar words likely to produce large gains in word knowledge.[26]

To help students get the most out of reading, you should encourage them to read at a variety of levels—some text simply for enjoyment, which should benefit their fluency if nothing else—and some text that challenges them. You should also help students develop reading strategies that will allow them to read more challenging texts with lower levels of frustration. When students have been taught comprehension strategies, they tend to do more reading.[27]

Increasing their motivation to read is another critical factor in helping students make the most of wide reading. One powerful motivating factor associated with more reading is a classroom environment that encourages and promotes social interactions related to reading.[28] Making available a variety of books and setting aside ample time for reading also motivate increased reading.

As is true for any method of promoting vocabulary growth, wide reading has some limitations. One is that it obviously cannot be effective with very young students who are not yet able to read very much on their own. Another limitation is that, although wide reading may be effective in producing general vocabulary growth, it is not an effective method for teaching the words that students need to master a particular selection or a concept related to a specific content area. Finally, it is important to acknowledge that, as important as it is, wide reading does not produce immediate, magic results; its effects are cumulative, and emerge over time.

You can encourage wide reading in a number of ways. You might, for example, recommend or provide lists of books for students to read outside of class, and make time in class for students to discuss what they have read. You can set aside a time each day for independent reading. And, of course, you can model the value you place on reading as they read, by telling students about the books you are reading.

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24 Krashen, S. (1993). *The power of reading: Insights from the research*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

25 Carver, R. P. (1994). Percentage of unknown vocabulary words in text as a function of the relative difficulty of the text: Implications for instruction. *Journal of Reading Behavior, 26,* 413–437; Carver, R. P., & Leibert, R. E. (1995). The effect of reading library books at different levels of difficulty upon gain in reading ability. *Reading Research Quarterly, 30,* 26–48.

26 Shefelbine, J. L. (1990). Student factors related to variability in learning word meanings from context. *Journal of Reading Behavior, 22,* 71–97.

27 Guthrie, J. T., Schafer, W.D., Wang, Y., & Afflerbach, P. (1995). Relationships of instruction to amount of reading: An exploration of social, cognitive and instructional connections. *Reading Research Quarterly, 30,* 8–25.

28 Guthrie, Schafer, Wang & Afflerbach, 1995.

What To Do About the Differences Between Spoken and Written English: High Quality Oral Language and Word Consciousness

High-quality oral language. As we discussed earlier, both English language learners and English-speaking students may achieve fluency in the language of face-to-face conversation and still have little exposure to or knowledge of the kind of language they encounter in school textbooks. Clearly these students need more exposure to written English, and wide reading is the most effective way of increasing exposure to this kind of language. But what can be done with students who are in the process of learning to read, and who cannot do a great deal of reading on their own? Here is one solution: Increase the quality of the oral language to which students are exposed—let them hear spoken English that incorporates more of the vocabulary and syntax typical of written, and particularly literate English.

A very effective way to expose children to literate vocabulary is to read to them from storybooks, especially when the reading is accompanied with discussion.[29] Authors of good children's literature have always found ways to talk "over children's heads"—using big words and other aspects of literate language—without decreasing children's interest or enjoyment. Both younger and older students appear to benefit from read-aloud activities, and older students can learn the meanings of new words as efficiently from hearing stories read to them as they can from reading the stories themselves.[30] Making available (either in the classroom or school library) a selection of quality audio books and players that students can use on their own can also be a good way to expose them to a variety of good books and broad language experiences.

Storytelling is yet another way to increase the quality of students' oral language experiences. Even when no text is involved, storytelling still exposes students to richer language than does normal conversation. Pretend play likewise involves rich language use. The quality of preschool children's conversations and teachers' use of a more sophisticated vocabulary also have been found to affect students' language and literacy development.[31]

Word consciousness. Asked what they could do to use more sophisticated vocabulary without intimidating or confusing their students, a group of teachers responded enthusiastically, "Make it fun!" We definitely agree. Playing with language is an essential component of language development. **Word consciousness** is the knowledge of and interest in words. Word-conscious students enjoy learning new words and engaging in word play. They know and use many words, and are aware of the subtleties of word meaning and of the power words can have.[32]

To become word conscious, students first need to develop a feel for how written language is different from everyday conversation. To this end, it is valuable to draw their attention to the distinctive characteristics of written language, even when reading aloud, and to help them learn to read like a writer, and to write with an audience in mind.

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29 Dickinson, D. K., & Smith, M. W. (1994). Long-term effects of preschool teachers' book readings on low-income children's vocabulary and story comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly, 29,* 104–122.

30 Stahl, S. A., Richek, M. G., & Vandevier, R. (1991). Learning word meanings through listening: A sixth-grade replication. In J. Zutell & S. McCormick (Eds.), *Learning factors/teacher factors: Issues in literacy research. Fortieth yearbook of the National Reading Conference* (pp. 185–192). Chicago: National Reading Conference.

31 Dickinson & Smith, 1994.

32 Graves, M. F., Juel, C., & Graves, B. B. (1997). *Teaching reading in the twenty-first century.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Having students copy in their journals phrases or sentences from their reading that are examples of especially effective language use—vivid descriptions, striking metaphors, interesting similes, plays on words—can help make language more alive for them. Students can share their examples with the class, or they can post them in the classroom to serve as inspiration or models for others.

Reading and discussing two versions of the same story—ideally, one with rich language and one with language that is less interesting—can promote word consciousness in younger students.

Word consciousness can be promoted in a way that helps students become aware of differences between Standard English and non-standard varieties, without stigmatizing the latter. Shirley Brice Heath describes classrooms in which students learned to be "language detectives," studying how people speak differently in different groups and in different situations. She believes that this awareness made an important contribution to the students' academic success.[33] It may be especially important to make such differences explicit for students less familiar with standard English.

A number of oral and written word games can serve to promote word consciousness, including puns, limericks, Hink-Pinks, crossword puzzles, jokes, riddles, and anagrams.[34] Encouraging students to play with words can create an interest in knowing more about them, and thus, can become a strategy for independent word learning.

What To Do About the Limitations of Sources of Information About Words: - Independent Word-Learning Strategies -

Independent word-learning strategies are techniques that teachers can model and teach to students so as to help them figure out the meanings of unknown words on their own. Because students learn most new words incidentally, through wide reading, helping students to acquire a set of word-learning strategies is important to their vocabulary development. Key word-learning strategies include (1) the efficient use of the dictionary; (2) the use of word parts (prefixes, suffixes, roots, compounds) to unlock a word's meaning; and (3) the use of context clues.

Dictionary use. Instruction in dictionary use that focuses on having students look up words and use information from their definitions to write sentences does not provide students with the guidance they need to make dictionary use an efficient independent word-learning strategy.

This is not to say, however, that dictionaries are not important aids to word learning. In fact, the more students are exposed to dictionary definitions, the better their word learning.[35] The crucial point here is that students receive instruction in **how** to use what they find in a dictionary entry so that they are able to translate the cryptic and conventionalized content of definitions into usable word knowledge.[36] This instruction includes modeling how to look up the meaning of an unknown word, thinking-aloud

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33 Brice Heath, S. (1983). A lot of talk about nothing. *Language Arts, 60,* 39–48; Brice Heath, S. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

34 Stahl, 1999.

35 McKeown, M. G., Beck, I. L., Omanson, R. C., & Pople, M. T. (1985). Some effects of the nature and frequency of vocabulary instruction on the knowledge and use of words. *Reading Research Quarterly, 20,* 522–535.

36 Scott & Nagy, 1997.

about the various definitions in an entry, and deciding which is the most appropriate definition for a particular context.[37]

Word parts. Teaching students how to use information about word parts can be very valuable in promoting vocabulary growth. Many students, however, are not aware of this strategy. Even students who have learned to break words into parts in their decoding instruction may not understand that they can use this knowledge to figure out word meanings. Teacher modeling helps to make the strategy's value clear to students.[38]

Using word-part information can be especially helpful in learning certain content-area concepts, as we will discuss in part three of this booklet.

Context clues. Context clues are clues to the meaning of a word contained in the text that surrounds it. These clues include definitions, examples, and restatements. Teaching students strategies for identifying and using context clues has been suggested as a major instructional technique for vocabulary development.[39]

A student learns a new word from context by making connections between the word and the text in which it appears. When a new word is first encountered, the student stores in memory some information about how it fits into what is being read. In subsequent encounters with the word, this information is reinforced, and more information about the word's role in particular contexts is added until the word is understood and used appropriately. As in teaching other kinds of strategies, teaching students to use context clues to develop vocabulary is an extended process that involves: modeling the strategy; providing explicit explanations of how, why, and when to use it; providing guided practice; gradually holding students accountable for independently using the strategy; and then providing intermittent reminders to apply it to reading across content areas.

As we noted earlier, learning words from context is a long-term process, one that involves multiple encounters with words. The challenge is to create vocabulary instruction that compresses this process to enable students to learn more words in a shorter period of time.[40]

What To Do About the Complexity of Word Knowledge: Explicit Instruction of Specific Words

Although students gain most of their word knowledge through wide reading, explicit instruction of specific words and their meanings also can contribute greatly to their vocabulary development. Explicit instruction is especially important for students whose exposure to the vocabulary of literate English is limited. To be most effective, explicit vocabulary instruction should be dynamic and involve a variety of techniques. Specifically, instruction should:

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37 Graves et al., 1997.

38 Nagy, W. E., Winsor, P., Osborn, J., & O'Flahaven, J. (1994). Structural analysis: Some guidelines for instruction. In F. Lehr & J. Osborn (Eds.), *Reading, language, and literacy: Instruction for the twenty-first century* (pp. 45–58). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

39 Anderson & Nagy, 1991; Sternberg, R. J. (1987). Most vocabulary is learned from context. In M. G. McKeown & M. E. Curtis (Eds.), *The nature of vocabulary acquisition* (pp. 89–105). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

40 Stahl, 1999.

1. use both definitional and contextual information about word meanings,

2. involve students actively in word learning, and

3. use discussion to teach the meanings of new words and to provide meaningful information about the words.

1. **Use definitional and contextual information.** In the past, vocabulary instruction most often consisted of learning lists of words and definitions (with a test on Friday). We now know that such instruction is of limited value, particularly in improving students' reading comprehension.[41] Students need to know how a word functions in various contexts. Therefore, instructional methods that provide students with both definitional and contextual information **do** improve comprehension, and do so significantly.

Some instructional activities that provide students with definitional information include:

- **Teach synonyms.** Often a synonym is all students need to understand a new word in context.

- **Teach antonyms.** Not all words have antonyms, but thinking about antonyms requires students to identify the crucial aspects of a word. For example, the word *chaos* implies an abyss, a void, or clutter, but its antonym, narrows the focus to the "clutter" part of the word's meaning.

- **Rewrite definitions.** As we noted earlier, dictionary definitions can often confuse or mislead students. Asking students to restate a dictionary definition in their own words can be more effective than requiring them to remember the exact wording of the definition.

- **Provide example sentences.** A good way to ascertain whether students understand a word's definition is to have them provide example sentences in which they use the word. They may draw these examples from personal experiences ("Mom's kitchen is chaos") or from textbooks ("After the great flood of 1937, there was chaos all over the Tennessee Valley").

- **Provide non-examples.** Another way to find out if students truly understand the meaning of a new word is to have them supply words that are **not** examples of the word's meaning. For example, point out to them that cry is not an example of the word *guffaw,* then ask them to think of other non-examples of the word (*bawl, sniffle, whine, whimper*). Coming up with non-examples requires students to think about the critical attributes of a word, much like providing antonyms.

- **Discuss the difference between the new word and related words.** A discussion of the word *debris,* defined as "trash," "garbage," or "waste," might include a discussion of the differences between *debris* and *trash, garbage,* and *waste.* For example, *debris* might be the result of some sort of accident or disaster, whereas *trash* might include anything. *Garbage* generally refers to organic material, such as food leftovers, and *waste* implies something left over, rather than something resulting from a disaster. Such a thorough discussion encourages students to focus on the meanings of words.

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41 Stahl, S. A., & Fairbanks, M. M. (1986). The effects of vocabulary instruction: A model-based meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research, 56,* 72–110.

Some activities that provide students with contextual information include:

- **Have students create sentences that contain the new word.** Encourage students to create sentences that show a clear understanding of the meaning of the word—not just "I like chaos." More acceptable sentences are those that include the definition, such as, "Chaos is when everything is in disorder." Even more acceptable are sentences that extend the definition, such as, "The scene was complete chaos—desks were turned over, paint was splashed on the floor, and the trashcan was upside down." Of course, to write sentences containing a new word, students need examples of how it is used correctly. Definitions, even those that give brief examples, rarely provide enough information to guarantee that students have a real sense of how words are used. One way to scaffold students' use of new words is to have them complete sentence stems containing the word, e.g., "John thought it would **pacify** the teacher if…"[42]

- **Use more than one new word in a sentence.** Asking students to use more than one new word in each sentence they create can force them to look for relations among words.

- **Discuss the meaning of the same word in different sentences.** Many words have multiple meanings, which depend on the context in which the words appear. To prevent students from limiting word meanings to one particular context, have them use a new word in several different and varied sentences. For the word *chaos,* their sentences might include topics such as chaos in classroom behavior, chaos as clutter and mess, chaos in personal relations, and so forth.

- **Create a scenario.** Invite students to make up a story in which a new word features prominently. If students are too young for this activity, have them draw a picture story for a new word.

- **Create silly questions.** You might have students pair new words and use each pair to make a silly question.[43] For the words *actuary, hermit, philanthropist,* and *villain,* their questions might include, "Can an actuary be a hermit?" "Can an actuary be a philanthropist?" "Can a philanthropist be a hermit?" "Can a philanthropist be a villain?"

2. **Involve students actively in word learning.** Students remember more when they relate new information to known information, transforming it in their own words, generating examples and non-examples, producing antonyms and synonyms, and so forth.

Instruction That Works

In one study of exemplary vocabulary instruction, activities were conducted in a five-day cycle. On the first day, the new words were defined, and students discussed the use of each word in context. This discussion took different forms, including discussion of examples and non-examples, pantomimes, and having students say "Yay" if the word was used correctly in a sentence and "Boo" if it was not. On the second day, after a review of the definitions, students might work on log sheets, completing sentences for each word. On the third day, they completed another log sheet, then worked on a timed activity in

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42 Beck, I. L., Perfetti, C. A., & McKeown, M. G. (1982). Effects of long-term vocabulary instruction on lexical access and reading comprehension. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 74* (4), 506–521.

43 Beck, Perfetti, & McKeown, (1982).

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which pairs of students attempted in the shortest amount of time to match words with their definitions. This activity was repeated on the fourth day. After completion of the second timed activity, students were asked silly questions. On the fifth day, they took a post-test.

These activities varied somewhat with different units. For example, students also completed a "Word Wizard" chart activity each day. A Word Wizard chart is a chart that contains new vocabulary words. These words can be taken from a storybook, or a text, or can just be words that are encountered in some way. Every time a child in the class found one of these words in context, the teacher attached an adhesive note with the child's name and the context next to the word. The first child who received 5, 10, or some other number of notes became the Word Wizard. Students were given credit toward becoming a "Word Wizard" by finding examples of each word used outside of class.

This program, or variations of it, significantly improved students' comprehension of texts containing words that were taught. As part of the program, it was revealed that twelve encounters with a word reliably improved comprehension, but four encounters did not. The instructional approach, which involved active processing of each word's meaning, had significantly greater effects than did a definition-only approach on measures of comprehension, but not on measures involving the recall of definitions. These findings suggest that vocabulary instruction can improve comprehension, but only if the instruction is rich and extensive, and includes a great many encounters with to-be-learned words.

3 Use discussion to teach word meanings. Discussion adds an important dimension to vocabulary instruction. Students with little or no knowledge of some new words they encounter in a vocabulary lesson are often able to construct a good idea of a word's meaning from the bits of partial knowledge contributed by their classmates. (When the class as a whole does not know much about a particular word, however, you may have to help. Perhaps you could supply some information about the word, such as a quick definition.)

Discussion can clarify misunderstandings of words by making the misunderstandings public. For words that a student knows partially, or knows in one particular context, the give-and-take of discussion can clarify meanings. When misunderstandings are public, the teacher can shape them into the correct meaning.

Discussion involves students in other ways. As they wait to be called on, students practice covertly, or silently prepare a response. Therefore, even though you call on only one student, many other students anticipate that they will have to come up with an answer. As a result, discussion leads to increased vocabulary learning.[44] Without the practiced response, discussion is not likely to be valuable as a learning experience.

Bringing Instruction Together: A Sample Lesson

This sample lesson illustrates how a teacher can bring together the three components of explicit vocabulary instruction to teach words that are key to understanding the story *The Talking Eggs* by Robert San Soucil. The words chosen for instruction are *backwoods, contrary, dawdled, groping, rubies,* and *silver.*[45]

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44 Stahl, S. A., & Clark, C. H. (1987). The effects of participatory expectations in classroom discussion on the learning of science vocabulary. *American Educational Research Journal, 24,* 541–556.

45 This sample lesson is adapted from Stahl, 1999.

For the key word *backwoods,* read the following sentence from the story: "Then the old woman took her by the hand and led her deep into the backwoods." Ask students to predict what *backwoods* means. *Backwoods* is a compound, and, when the information from the word parts is combined with some information from the context, its meaning should be fairly clear. Next, ask students to describe the backwoods briefly.

The key word *contrary* can be taught the same way, beginning with reading this sentence from the book: "You do as I say and don't be so contrary," and asking students to predict the meaning of the word from context. For this word, have students discuss a definition for the word, such as "disagreeable, raising objections," and encourage them to explain how the definition fits in the context of the sentence. As a follow up, you have them create some sentences that contain *contrary.* This can lead to a discussion of another, related meaning for *contrary,* that of "from another point of view," as in the expression "to the contrary."

For *dawdled* and *groping,* begin once again by reading sentences in the story that contain the words. Because these words are verbs, however, you might want to pantomime the meaning of each, rather than supply a conventional definition. Then ask students to create sentences that use the words. You might define *dawdled* with some non-examples, because it is a word that has some clear antonyms, such as *hustled, ran, went quickly,* and so on.

For *rubies* and *silver,* begin by having the class discuss what precious things are. You might illustrate the words by providing pictures that show rubies and things made of silver. Next, work with the class to make a list of precious things, including rubies and silver, as well as gold, diamonds, and so forth.

The words used in the sample lesson are highly dissimilar. They were selected for instruction only because they happen to come from the story the students were reading. The techniques used to teach the words, however, are somewhat similar. For four of the six words, the teacher starts with sentences from the text, then asks students to create additional sentences to extend the meaning of the word beyond the text. Finally, the teacher also includes a definition, either a conventional verbal one or a gestural one, for each of the words.

The instruction this lesson illustrates is relatively minimal, designed to support the reading of the text. More elaborate instruction would shift the focus from the story to the vocabulary words, and might be useful in a classroom with many English language learners, or in any classroom when a greater emphasis on vocabulary is appropriate. More elaborate instruction also might include using additional sentence contexts for each word, a "yea or nay" activity ("Would you dawdle in the backwoods?"), or having students write a scenario, or story that contains these words.

Some Cautions

Explicit vocabulary instruction does seem to improve comprehension significantly, at least when the words taught come from the text students are reading. Nevertheless, some cautions are in order. First, teaching vocabulary as students read can, under certain circumstances, distract them from the main ideas of the text. Second, teaching words that are not important to understanding the text leads students to focus on individual word meanings rather than on the overall meaning of what they read. The more effort students expend focusing on word meanings, the less effort they will have available to recall information that is important to comprehension.[46] Thus, to be effective, pre-reading vocabulary instruction should focus on words that relate to the major ideas in a text, rather than on words that are interesting or unusual.

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46 Wixson, K.K. (1986). Vocabulary instruction and children's comprehension of basal stories. *Reading Research Quarterly, 21,* 317–329.

Teaching Word Meanings as Concepts

Although there is general agreement that effective vocabulary instruction should include the components we have just discussed, there is no such agreement as to the most effective techniques for increasing students' knowledge of specific words. We do know, however, that the most effective instruction teaches word meanings as concepts, using a variety of techniques to help students establish connections among context, their prior knowledge, and the concepts or words being taught.[47]
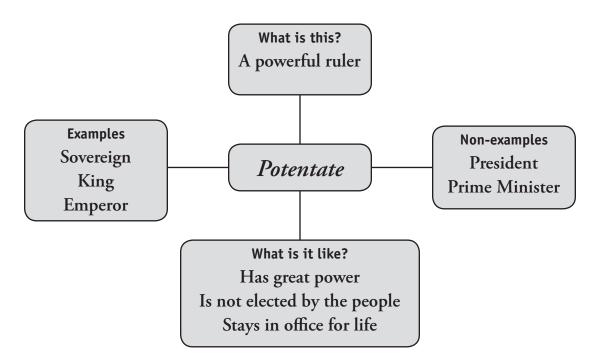
In this part of the booklet, we discuss specific techniques that have proven successful in teaching word meanings as concepts. These include Concept of Definition Maps, Semantic Mapping, Semantic Feature Mapping, Possible Sentences, Comparing and Contrasting, and Teaching Word Parts.

Concept of Definition Maps

Concept of Definition Maps (or Word Maps) reflect the idea that students need to have some understanding of what a definition is and how it works before they can give the meaning of a word on their own. Concept of Definition Maps are graphic displays that show common elements of a dictionary definition. These elements include (1) the category to which the word being defined belongs (*What is this?*), (2) some characteristics of the word (*What is it like?*), and (3) some specific examples and some non-examples of the word. Students refer to context, their prior knowledge, and dictionaries to find the elements needed to complete the map.

The following filled-in map for *potentate* was prepared to clarify the meaning of the word *potentate,* which appeared in a story in a fourth-grade reading textbook.

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47 Stahl, 1999.

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Concept of Definition Map -

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                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │  What is this?  │
                    │ A powerful ruler│
                    └────────┬────────┘
                             │
┌──────────────┐      ┌──────┴──────┐      ┌──────────────────┐
│   Examples   │      │             │      │   Non-examples   │
│  Sovereign   │──────│  Potentate  │──────│    President     │
│     King     │      │             │      │  Prime Minister  │
│   Emperor    │      └──────┬──────┘      └──────────────────┘
└──────────────┘             │
                    ┌────────┴────────────┐
                    │   What is it like?  │
                    │   Has great power   │
                    │Is not elected by the people│
                    │ Stays in office for life│
                    └─────────────────────┘
```

Once the map is complete, the teacher models how to write a definition using the information on the word map. For example, "A potentate is a ruler who has a lot of power. The people do not elect potentates, and some stay in office for life. Some types of potentates are sovereigns, kings, and emperors." After writing their own definitions, students can confirm them by using dictionaries to look up *potentate,* then revise or add to their definitions, if necessary.

A simpler variation of the Concept of Definition Map is called the Four Square activity. In this activity, each student takes a sheet of paper and folds it so there are four sections. The students write the target concept word (such as *soothing*) in the upper left section of the paper, then write some examples of the concept in the upper right section (*baths, soft music, chocolate*), some non-examples of the concept in the lower right section (*loud music, traffic, crying babies*), and a definition in the lower left section (*having a calming effect*).
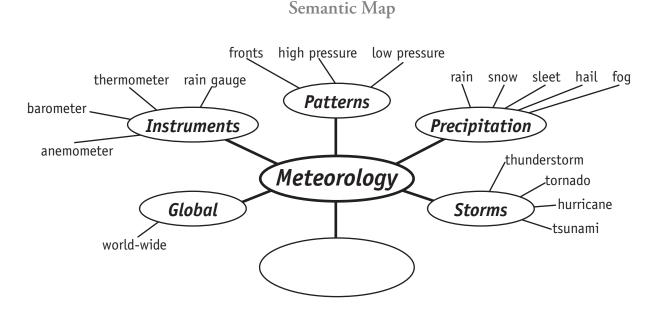
Semantic Mapping

Semantic Mapping involves a web-like graphic display. To begin instruction, students are presented with a concept that is central to understanding a selection or subject. They then brainstorm or freely associate words that are related to that concept. As students brainstorm, the teacher writes their suggestions on the board, adding words they need to learn.

For example, for a unit on weather, the teacher targeted the words *meteorology, global, precipitation, barometer,* and *hurricane* in the text students were about to read.[48] These words were defined and discussed during the brainstorming session. When the students finished brainstorming, the teacher and

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48 Stahl, S. A., & Vancil, S. J. (1986). Discussion is what makes semantic maps work. *The Reading Teacher, 40,* 62–67.

the class together developed the following map to show the relationships among the words. The target words were highlighted, and one section of the map was left blank so that the class could fill in another category after reading the selection.

Semantic Mapping is helpful for developing students' understanding of almost any concept. It has been used to develop concepts as diverse as polygons and the Dewey decimal system.[49]

Semantic Map

Discussion seems to be a crucial element in the effectiveness of Semantic Mapping.[50] For example, an individualized mapping procedure, in which students studied maps on their own and did not engage in discussion, did not work as well as a group mapping procedure. As we pointed out earlier, discussion's value is that it seems to engage all students by making them rehearse possible answers to teacher questions.

Discussion during Semantic Mapping may be especially important for students with more limited vocabularies. These students may not know many of the related words, and thus they may learn these words along with the targeted ones. Students with more developed vocabularies can also benefit from discussion. These students may know most of the related words; therefore, seeing them will reinforce the meaning of the targeted words.

Semantic Feature Analysis

Semantic Feature Analysis also draws on students' prior knowledge and uses discussion to elicit information about word meanings. Semantic Feature Analysis is similar to Semantic Mapping, with the exception that it uses a grid such as the one below rather than a map as a graphic display.

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49 See Heimlich, J. E., & Pittleman, S. D. (1986). *Semantic mapping: Classroom applications.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

50 Stahl & Clark, 1987; Stahl & Vancil, 1986.

The left-side column of the Semantic Feature Analysis grid contains the names of members of the category to which the target concept belongs. The top row of the grid contains names of features of members of the category. Students should be encouraged to add terms either across the top or down the side during discussion. Groups of students or the whole class should discuss whether each item is an example of each concept, marking **+** for positive examples, **–** for negative examples, and **?** for items which might be examples under certain circumstances.

The following grid was prepared for a unit on transportation.[51]

Semantic Feature Analysis

	two wheeled	four wheeled	one wheeled	foot powered	motor powered	on land	in the water	in the air
bicycle	+	–	–	+	–	+	–	–
car	–	+	–	–	+	+	–	–
unicycle	–	–	+	+	–	+	–	–
airplane								
boat								
hovercraft								
supersonic transport								
velocipede								

As with Semantic Mapping, discussion is the key in this activity, because there are many ambiguities in determining the feature of a concept, and discussion of these ambiguities can help students clarify the concept they are learning.

Possible Sentences

The Possible Sentences technique uses both known words and new words that are related to key concepts in a reading selection. The teacher begins by choosing some six to eight words from the text that might cause difficulty for the students. (In a content area text, these words are usually key concepts in the text, but they also may be more general words that relate to those key concepts.) Then, the teacher chooses an additional four to six words that are more likely to be known by the students. These familiar words are used to help generate sentences.

The teacher writes all of these words on the board, providing a short definition of each word if desired or if necessary. Most of the time at least one student in the class has knowledge of the word that can be

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51 This example is adapted from Stahl, 1999.

shared. Students are directed to make up sentences that contain at least two of these words, and that might be in the selection they are about to read. The teacher writes these sentences on the board. Both accurate and inaccurate guesses are accepted, but are not discussed at this time. When the students are finished contributing sentences (and all words are included in at least one sentence), the teacher has them read the selection.
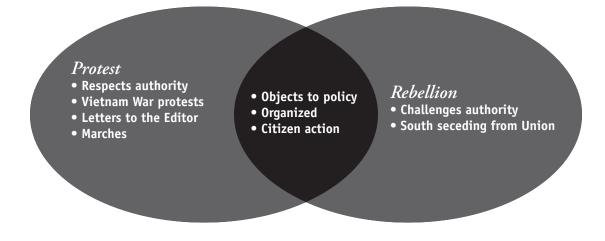
After reading, the class then returns to the sentences on the board, and discusses whether each sentence could or could not be true based on their reading. If a sentence could be true, it is left alone. If a sentence could not be true, then the class discusses how it could be modified to make it true.

For a unit on weather, *front, barometer, humidity, air mass, air pressure,* and *meteorology* were chosen as the target words, with *high, rain, clouds,* and *predict* as the familiar words.[52] The criteria for choosing the target words included a consideration of which words might be difficult for fifth graders and which words were central to the concepts taught in a specific selection. The familiar words were words that students were likely to know, and that lent themselves to logical sentences that would relate to the major concepts in the selection.

Comparing and Contrasting

Comparing and contrasting can help students extend their vocabularies by establishing relationships among concepts. A simple Venn diagram can be a good tool for comparing and contrasting such content-area concepts as *republic* and *democracy, organic* and *inorganic, symphony* and *concerto,* and so forth.

The following diagram was prepared as part of a unit on the American Revolution to compare and contrast the important concepts of *protest* and *rebellion.* The teacher first explained that whereas the American colonists thought that acts such as the Boston Tea Party were legitimate protests against British taxation, the British thought that the colonists were engaged in rebellion against their sovereign government. The difference in perceptions led to increasing tensions and eventually, revolution.

Protest
- Respects authority
- Vietnam War protests
- Letters to the Editor
- Marches

- Objects to policy
- Organized
- Citizen action

Rebellion
- Challenges authority
- South seceding from Union

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52 Stahl, S. A., & Kapinus, B. A. (1991). Possible sentences: Predicting word meanings to teach content area vocabulary. *The Reading Teacher, 45,* 36–38.

Teaching Word Parts

Teaching students to recognize and use information from word parts such as prefixes, suffixes, and roots can be an especially effective word-learning strategy for use with content area texts. These texts can contain many words that are derived from the same word parts. Although words such as *misread, interdependent,* and *substandard* can often be figured out from context, decomposing such words into known parts like *mis-, read, inter-, depend,* and so forth, not only makes the words themselves more memorable, but, in combination with sentence context, may be a useful strategy in determining the meaning of unknown words.

Students can aquire the meaning of word parts by inference as they read. However, although such a strategy may be part and parcel of normal reading, many students—even high school students—are unaware that breaking words into their parts can be a way to determine their meanings. In addition, students often do not know the meanings of common word parts.[53]

What parts to teach? A number of lists are available that contain hundreds of prefixes, suffixes, and Greek and Latin roots.[54] Although such lists may be useful, it is not possible or even fruitful to teach each element on each list. It seems more reasonable to teach students the most commonly used or important elements, and accompany this instruction with the teaching and modeling of a general strategy for breaking words into parts. One such strategy is to teach students to combine word-part information with information from the sentence context.

Prefixes. Only twenty prefixes account for 97 percent of prefixed words that appear in printed school English.[55] Teaching at least the most frequently occurring nine—if not all twenty—of these prefixes to middle school students can pay dividends in increased vocabulary learning.

Suffixes. The most frequently occurring suffixes in printed school English are inflectional endings such as noun endings (*-s, -es*), verb endings (*-ed, -ing, -en*), and adjective endings (*-er, -est*).[56] In general, even young students use these endings in their oral language. Therefore, middle school and older students should have few problems learning and using them.

Derivational suffixes (such as *-y, -ly, -ial,* and *-ic*) appear in fewer than a quarter of all the words that contain suffixes, but they can also be useful to teach. Comprehension of relatively infrequent words such as *exponential* and *unwieldy* can be aided by knowledge of the meaning of the *-ial* and *-y* suffixes.

The length of some suffixed words can occasionally overwhelm students who are less able readers. Learning to recognize the letter patterns that make common suffixes can help these students to distinguish root from suffix, thus reducing the size of the word and allowing them to focus on relevant information within the word.[57] Activities such as these are a natural extension to decoding instruction that teaches students to look at chunks of words.

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53 For example, Sternberg, R. J., & Powell, J. S. (1983). Comprehending verbal comprehension. *American Psychologist, 38,* 873–893; O'Rourke, J. (1979). Prefixes, roots, and suffixes: Their testing and usage. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Reading Association, Atlanta, GA.

54 For example, Dale, E., & O'Rourke, J. (1986). *Vocabulary building.* Columbus, OH: Zaner-Bloser; Fry, E. B., Fountoukidis, D. L., & Polk, J. K. (1985). *The new reading teacher's book of lists.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

55 White, T. G., Sowell, J., & Yanagihara, A. (1989). Teaching elementary students to use word-part clues. *The Reading Teacher, 42,* 302–309.

56 White et al., 1989.

57 Adams, 1990.

Other suffixes, such as *-ful,* and *-less,* are meaningful components of words, contributing to words' meanings in much the same way as prefixes. Even suffixes without such stable meanings, such as *-tion* or *-ly,* might also help students identify words, if only to alert them to the grammatical function of words in sentences. For example, *-tion* indicates that a word is a noun; *-ly* at the end of a word indicates that it is an adverb.

The following list shows the most common prefixes and suffixes in printed school English.

The Most Frequent Affixes in Printed School English

Rank	Prefix	Percent of All Prefixed Words	Suffix	Percent of All Sufixed Words
1	un-	26%	-s, -es	31%
2	re-	14%	-ed	20%
3	in-, im-, il-, ir- (not)	11%	-ing	14%
4	dis-	7%	-ly	7%
5	en-, em-	4%	-er, -or (agent)	4%
6	non-	4%	-ion, -tion, -ation, -ition	4%
7	in-, im- (in)	3%	-able, -ible	2%
8	over-	3%	-al, -ial	1%
9	mis-	3%	-y	1%
10	sub-	3%	-ness	1%
11	pre-	3%	-ity, -ty	1%
12	inter-	3%	-ment	1%
13	fore-	3%	-ic	1%
14	de-	2%	-ous, -eous, -ious	1%
15	trans-	2%	-en	1%
16	super-	1%	-er (comparative)	1%
17	semi-	1%	-ive, -ative, -tive	1%
18	anti-	1%	-ful	1%
19	mid-	1%	-less	1%
20	under- (too little)	1%	-est	1%
	All others	3%		7%

Roots. When students encounter unknown words such as *interdependent, readable,* and *substandard,* they can break them into prefixes, suffixes, and familiar English roots, and combine the information this analysis reveals with conceptual information they find in the context. But what can students do with content-area words such as *biosphere, astronomy, superstructure,* or *deconstruct?* In addition to their prefixes or suffixes, these words contain Greek or Latin roots. Researchers and educators are divided as to whether it is profitable to teach these roots. Some argue that the modern meanings of words (especially the most common derived words) often do not reflect the meanings of their historical roots, and that readers—particularly young students—might be misled by a literal translation of root to mean-

ing.[58] For example, knowing that *mort* refers to "death" may help students to figure out the meaning of *mortal* or *immortal,* but it probably does not help them to determine the meaning of *mortgage* or *mortify.* Likewise, knowing that *saline* means "salty" will probably not help students get the meaning of *salary,* even though the words are both derived from the same root, *sal.* (Salt was once so valuable that it was used to pay workers.)

On the other hand, having students elaborate basic information makes it more memorable.[59] Therefore, teaching roots may make new words more memorable by adding a story to their definition.

The solution may be to make a distinction between using word parts as an independent reading strategy and using word parts as a word-study tool. When students encounter new affixed words during independent reading, they will find it useful to be able to take off prefixes or suffixes and identify the word that remains. But because poor readers tend to be overwhelmed by long words, you may need to teach them how to use this strategy. For example, you might help students to figure out the meaning of the word *interdependent* by teaching them to cover the prefix *inter-,* then see if they recognize the rest of the word. If they do not recognize *dependent,* you can have them cover the suffix *-ent,* leaving *depend.* Providing students with practice in adding and removing prefixes and suffixes might also be useful. For example, you might take the root word *dependent* and add prefixes such as *in-* or *non-* to make new words.

Teaching students to further break down words into Latin or Greek roots is not likely to be a helpful independent reading strategy. We doubt, for example, that a struggling reader will be helped by breaking *depend* down further into *de-* and *pend,* even if he or she could assign meaning to these word parts, such as *down* and *hang.*

For the purposes of word study, however, when students have already been provided the meaning of the word, knowing the story or the history of the word may well make it more memorable.

A distinction also should be made between time spent studying those roots, especially Greek roots used in scientific terminology, that have relatively specific meanings (*bio, hemo, meter*), and time spent studying those roots, more often from Latin, whose meanings are not so specific (for example, *ceive,* as in *conceive, deceive, receive*).

The following list contains commonly occurring Greek and Latin roots.

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58 Nagy, W. E., & Anderson, R. C. (1984). How many words are there in printed school English? *Reading Research Quarterly, 19,* 304-330.

59 Pressley, M. (1988). *Elaborate interrogation.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Inernational Reading Association, New Orleans, LA.

Common Greek and Latin Roots –

Root	Meaning	Origin	Examples
aud	hear	Latin	audiophile, auditorium, audition
astro	star	Greek	astrology, astronaut, asteroid
bio	life	Greek	biography, biology
dict	speak, tell	Latin	dictate, predict, dictator
geo	earth	Greek	geology, geography
meter	measure	Greek	thermometer, barometer
min	little, small	Latin	minimum, minimal
mit, mis	send	Latin	mission, transmit, remit, missile
ped	foot	Latin	pedestrian, pedal, pedestal
phon	sound	Greek	phonograph, microphone, phoneme
port	carry	Latin	transport, portable, import
scrib, script	write	Latin	scribble, manuscript, inscription
spect	see	Latin	inspect, spectator, respect
struct	build, form	Latin	construction, destruction, instruct

For content-area reading, you might find it worthwhile to make up lists specific to each area. Thus, for *biology,* such a list might include *bio-, chromo-, eco-, soma-,* and so forth.
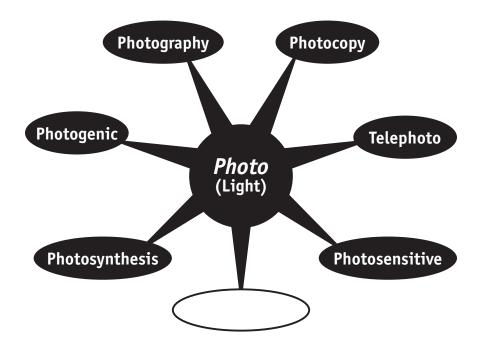
How to teach word parts. Introductory word-part lessons should stress the idea that words can be composed of elements, such as prefixes, suffixes, and roots. These elements should be defined for students, but the emphasis should not be on learning the specific terms so much as on learning about how the parts function together to affect word meaning. For example, a lesson on *un-* might provide both examples of words beginning with *un-,* and also ask students to generate *un-* words of their own, including silly words. The use of imaginative extensions may not only solidify for students the meaning of *un-,* but also may solidify the concept of **prefix** in general. Providing students with some non-examples of prefixes, such as *under* and *uncle,* also helps reinforce what prefixes are and how they work.

After students understand the basic concepts of prefix, suffix, and root, teaching them specific word parts should be easier for you. You can teach specific word parts within the context of other vocabulary instruction, as part of the discussion of a particular word's meaning, or by using explicit instruction. Such instruction should include providing a definition for the target word part, pointing out models of words using that word part, and having students read sentences containing the target parts. For prefixes, you should attempt to extend the instruction to include as many real and silly words as possible. For *un-,* you might use both real words such as *undone, unknown, unimaginable,* or *unbelievable,* and silly, or made-up words, such as *unbig, unhamburger, unsleep,* and so on.

This procedure can be used with suffixes as well as prefixes. Note, however, that although prefixes should be defined, because their definitions tend to be consistent over a variety of words, providing definitions of suffixes may serve only to confuse students. For example, defining the suffixes *-ance/-ence* and *-ment* as "condition of, quality of, or state of" does little to help students understand the mean-

ing of *amendment* or *precedence*. Adding this information to the definition of a root such as *amend* or *precede* will do little to help students understand the meaning of *amendment* or *precedence*. A more productive procedure is to give students many examples of words containing suffixes, along with the words from which they were derived.

To teach roots, you might employ a similar teaching procedure. You might also find it useful to use a word-part web, such as the following one for the Greek root *photo.* Such webs introduce students to many new words as well as teach a few key words. Discussing derivatives as part of the introduction of a new word, with or without a web, is useful and motivational.[60] Including words in the discussion and web that are relatively infrequent (such as *geocentric* or *geode*) can make target words (such as *geology*) more memorable for students.

Clearly there are benefits to be gained from teaching students to break words into their parts as a strategy for determining the meanings of new words. Combined with the use of context clues, this strategy seems to be especially fruitful, particularly in the content areas, where so many of the words students encounter in textbooks contain recognizable parts.

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60 Nagy & Anderson, 1984.

Conclusion

In the beginning of this booklet, we stressed the difficulties associated with trying to promote vocabulary development. In closing, we reiterate that helping students to develop large and powerful vocabularies is anything but an easy task. The number of words students need to learn is astronomical; their exposure to the vocabulary of literate English outside of school may be minimal; effective use of dictionary definitions, word parts, and context to determine word meanings requires students to be flexible and strategic learners; and traditional methods of teaching vocabulary are often ineffective in helping students deal with the complexity of word knowledge.

However, helping students develop strong vocabularies is essential to their success, both in school and beyond. Students may forget many of the specific facts they learn in school, but the words they learn will serve them as useful tools for a lifetime. Effective vocabulary instruction is an attainable goal. We hope that the information we have provided in this booklet will help you attain this goal for your students.

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COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

TITLE VI, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; THE MODIFIED COURT ORDER, CIVIL ACTION 5281, FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT, EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, TYLER DIVISION

Reviews of local education agencies pertaining to compliance with Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964 and with specific requirement of the Modified Court Order, Civil Action No. 5281, Federal District Court, Eastern District of Texas, Tyler Division are conducted periodically by staff representatives of the Texas Education Agency. These reviews cover at least the following policies and practices:

(1) acceptance policies on student transfers from other school districts;
(2) operation of school bus routes or runs on a nonsegregated basis;
(3) nondiscrimination in extracurricular activities and the use of school facilities;
(4) nondiscriminatory practices in the hiring, assigning, promoting, paying, demoting, reassigning, or dismissing of faculty and staff members who work with children;
(5) enrollment and assignment of students without discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin;
(6) nondiscriminatory practices relating to the use of a student's first language; and
(7) evidence of published procedures for hearing complaints and grievances.

In additional to conducting reviews, the Texas Education Agency staff representatives check complaints of discrimination made by citizen or citizens residing in a school district where alleged discriminatory practices have occurred or are occurring.

Where there is a violation of the Court Order in Civil Action No. 5281 that cannot be cleared through negotiation, the sanctions required by the Court Order are applied.

If there is a direct violation of the Court Order in Civil Action No. 5281 that cannot be cleared through negotiation, the sanctions required by the Court Order are applied.

TITLE VII, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 AS AMENDED BY THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 1972; EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11246 AND 11375; EQUAL PAY ACT OF 1964, TITLE IX, EDUCATION AMENDMENTS; REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 AS AMENDED; 1974 AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGE-HOUR LAW EXPANDING THE AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 1967; VIETNAM ERA VETERANS READJUSTMENT ACT OF 1972 AS AMENDED; IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTROL ACT OF 1986; AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990; AND THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1991.

The Texas Education Agency shall comply fully with the nondiscrimination provisions of all federal and state laws, rules and regulations by assuring that no person shall be excluded from consideration for recruitment, selection, appointment, training, promotion, retention, or any other personnel action, or be denied any benefits or participation in any educational programs or activities which it operates on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or veteran status (except where age, sex or disability constitutes a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to proper and efficient administration). The Texas Education Agency is an Equal Employment Opportunity / Affirmative Action employer.

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