

Marilyn Erickson
CERF Coordinator/Golden
Lake Reading Teacher
763-792-5956
merickson@isd12.org
Guest Editor - Sue Howell
Rice Lake Reading Teacher

CERF/Title I Parent Connection

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January — New Beginnings in Vocabulary

VOCABULARY? Why do we need *that*?

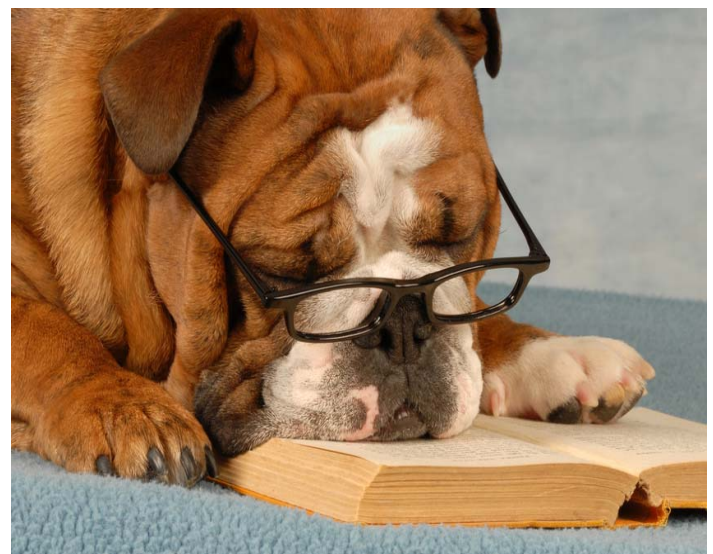
Our students need to know the meanings of a wide variety of words as a critical and important basis for understanding and comprehending what is read. Our beginning readers need a broad and growing vocabulary in order to absorb the meaning of whatever they choose to read.

All of us have three types of vocabulary: a *speaking* vocabulary, a *listening* vocabulary and a *reading* vocabulary.

Our *speaking* vocabulary includes all the words we use in speech. While we may misuse words in this way, our facial expressions, tone of voice and/or hand gestures can help make our meanings clear.

Our *listening* vocabulary includes all words we can recognize and understand as we listen to speech. In addition to listening to words, our brains incorporate the context of the message and any tones used to understand the meanings of the words we hear.

Our *reading* vocabulary is all the words we can recognize during the course of reading. This is usually our largest type of vocabulary because it includes our speaking and listening vocabularies.



Play with Words Through GAMES!

Crossword
puzzles
BLURT!

Outburst
Scrabble Jr.

Upwords
Boggle Jr.

Guesstures

Mad Gab

Password

Hangman

Some websites:

[http://
www.billsgames.com/
wordscram/](http://www.billsgames.com/wordscram/)

[http://
www.vocabulary.com/](http://www.vocabulary.com/)
(Many cool puzzles)



How can we help improve the vocabulary in our readers?

Some Ideas to Increase Vocabulary in Children:

1. Speak to children as you would speak to adults. Ask questions that require descriptive answers to stimulate creativity and expression. Explain the meanings of new words they encounter. Children can learn technical words when explaining tasks such as cooking or home repairs.
2. Play games that revolve around words. (see list on page 1)

3. Read to your child as much as possible.

4. This allows them to hear words at levels beyond what they can read. It also opens up thinking and conversing in many topics.

5. Creating word games (Hangman, hidden word puzzles) will open up new brain pathways and connections between words and their meanings.

6. Go on adventures around town. These family field trips will

expose your child to new experiences and the words to describe them.

7. For younger children, explore songs, nursery rhymes and poems. (Shel Silverstein poetry books are lots of fun for kids!)

8. Add words to children's artwork.

Knowing and using an extensive vocabulary will help our readers as they communicate with others, use reading to extend their learning and think deeply and curiously.

Remember, expanding vocabulary can be a simple as using several words to describe the same thing:

BIG	HUGE	WHOPPING
LARGE	GIANT	MONSTROUS
ENORMOUS	IMMENSE	SIZEABLE
GRAND	VAST	MASSIVE
	GREAT	SIGNIFICANT
		HEFTY

