

Vocabulary

Learning new vocabulary is an essential part of language development. Vocabulary size can be used to predict academic success – Children with larger vocabularies tend to do better in school.

You can help your child develop their vocabulary simply by talking:

- Comment on what your child is doing whilst they are playing.
- Read books together and talk about what is happening in the story.
- Model using new words. For example, if your child says 'jump', you could say 'bounce' or 'leap'.

Teaching New Vocabulary

If your child finds it hard to learn and remember new words, try teaching a few words at a time using a multi-sensory approach. Remember to talk about both the sounds in the word and the meaning of the word.

- Sounds: Clap out the syllables in the word; think of words that rhyme.
- Meaning: Talk about what the word means.
- Describe: If you are talking about an object, describe what it looks like. For example, what colour it is, what parts it has, where you would find it.
- Symbol: Find a picture that represents the word you are talking about.
- Actions: Act out the word.
- Song: Put the word into a song or rap.
- Draw: Draw a picture or write the word using either pen and paper, paint or sand.
- Sentences: Use the word in a sentence.

You will need to repeat new words lots of times and in different situations to help your child remember them.

You could play words games using new words to help reinforce them.

Older children may benefit from making their own dictionary, which is organised by category, or from making their own word webs (see below).

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This is an example of a word web that can be used for learning and remembering new words:

