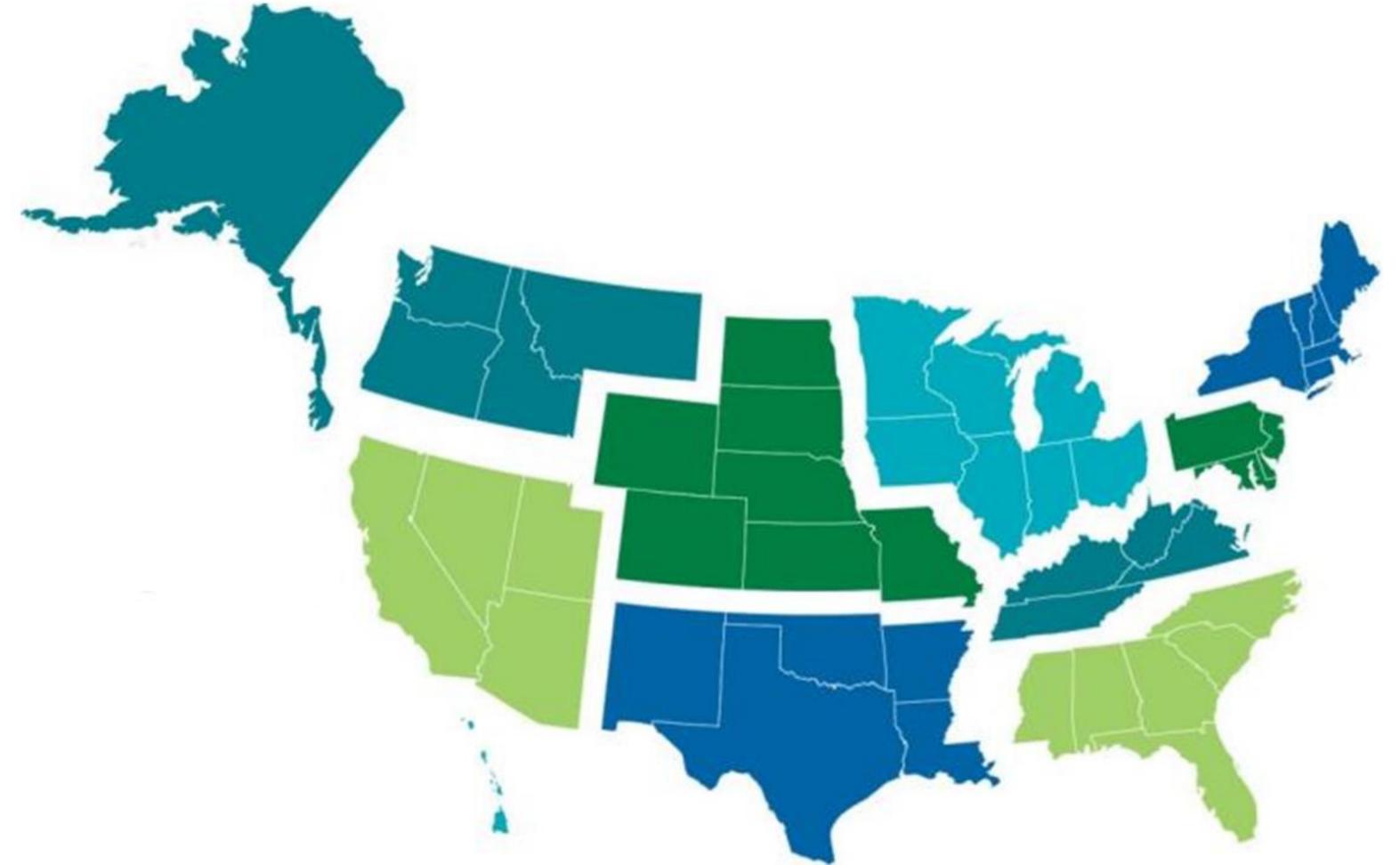




Language and Literacy Development in PreK–1st Grade: Words and More

About REL West

- 10 regions
- Bridging research, policy, and practice
- Funded by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES)



Speakers



Pamela Spycher
WestEd



Thea Fabian
Fresno Unified School District



Goals for Today's Webinar

- Learn about how to boost young children's academic language use, with a special focus on vocabulary and language-rich environments
- See an example of interactive academic vocabulary instruction to get ideas for your classroom
- Discuss ways to incorporate daily academic language learning in fun and engaging ways

Framing the Session: What we've heard from teachers...

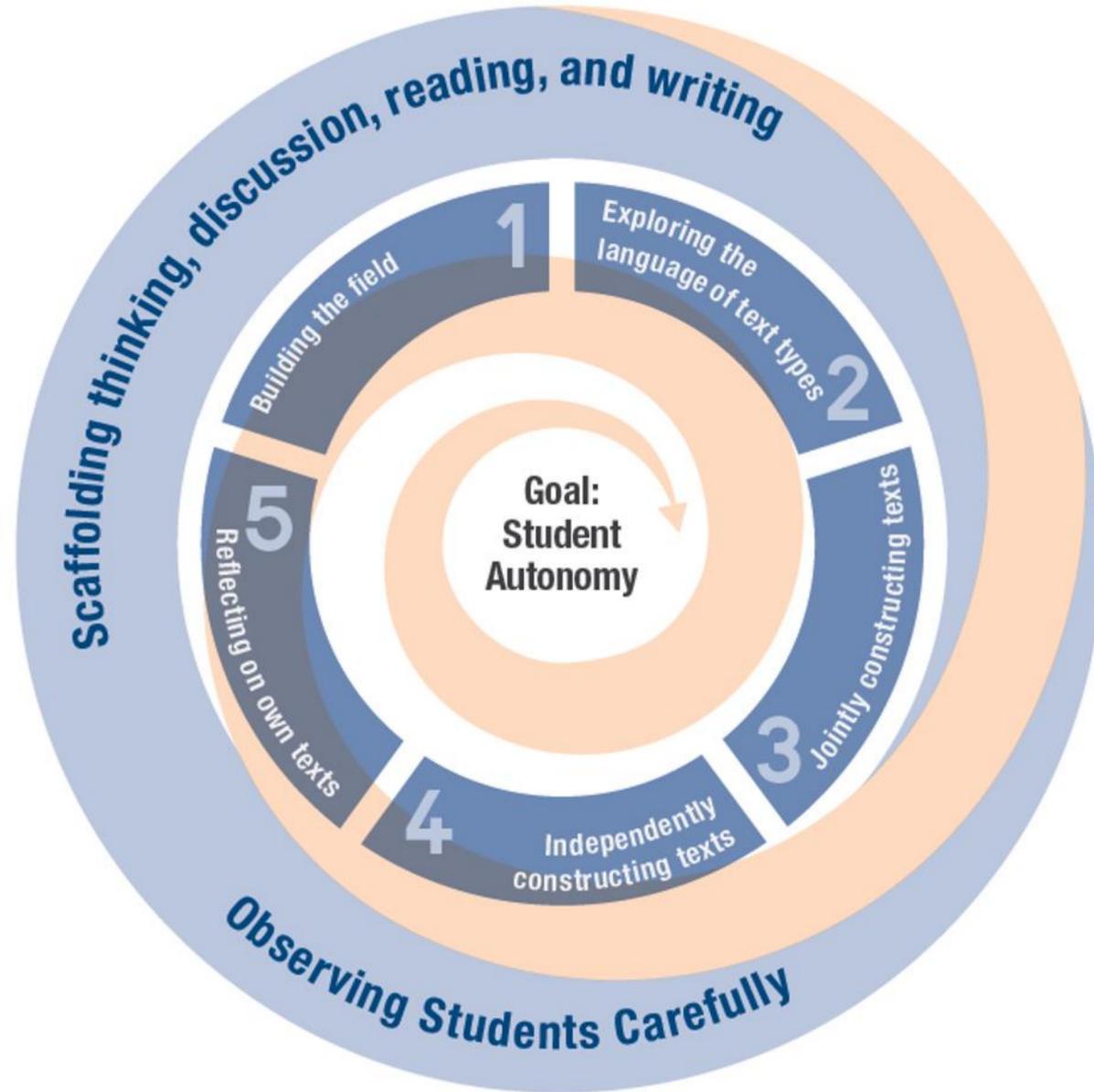
- Will young dual language learner (DLL)/English learner (EL) children be confused if we try to teach them academic vocabulary? Shouldn't we start with "basic" vocabulary first?
- I'm not sure how to support children to use more academic vocabulary when they speak and write.
- I teach my students vocabulary words but don't hear them using them or see them in their writing.
- I wish I knew how to help my kids be more curious and excited about words.

The Teaching and Learning Cycle (TLC)

What we learned about in our first webinar

What we'll learn about today

- Explicit vocabulary instruction
- Lots of exposure to new vocabulary



Adapted from Derewianka (2011), Gibbons (2015), Spycher & Linn-Nieves (2014)

Evidence-Based Practices in Focus Today

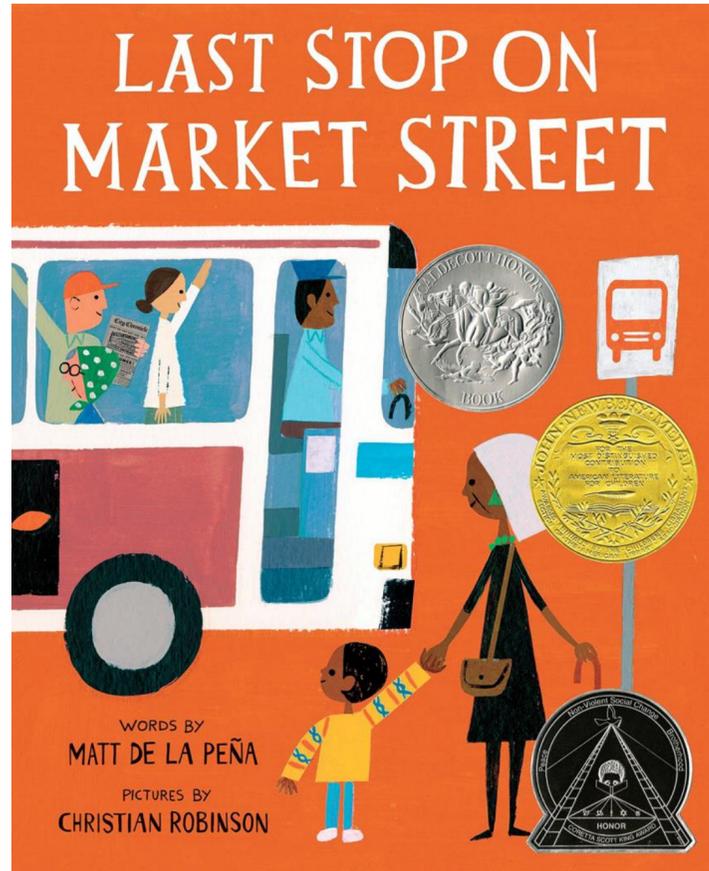
1. Provide interactive book reading experiences that support higher-order thinking and oral language development
2. Teach academic vocabulary words intensively and over time using a variety of approaches
3. Provide regular, structured opportunities to develop written language skills and daily time for students to write

Promoting the educational success of children and youth learning English: Promising futures (National Academies Press, 2017); Institute of Education Sciences/What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guides (2010, 2014, 2016, 2018); *Transforming the workforce for children birth through age 8: A unifying foundation* (National Research Council, 2015).

Comprehensive Vocabulary Learning in PreK–1

- **Wide Exposure: A wide variety of culturally relevant books, both fiction and non-fiction**
- **Wide Reading: Frequent interactive read alouds using complex texts**
- **Promoting Home Language Vocabulary Development**
- **Explicit Vocabulary Instruction**
- **Wide Use: Abundant opportunities to use new words in speaking and writing**
- **Word Consciousness: Language play**

Vocabulary Development through Interactive Read Alouds



Student Pair-share Questions:

What does CJ encounter in
his neighborhood?
CJ encounters _____.

appreciate

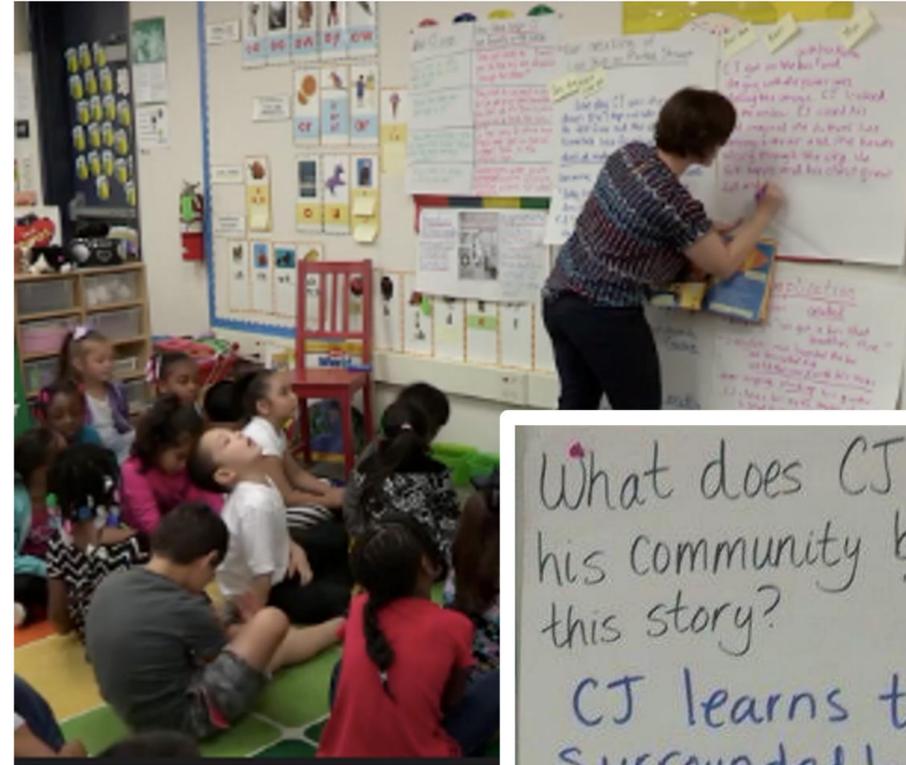
When you *appreciate*
something, you feel happy
or lucky to have it.



During the read alouds:

- New words are explained, and students say the word chorally, sometimes with a gesture
- Students are prompted to use the words as they discuss comprehension questions
- New words are charted and/or posted on a word wall

After repeated readings, the children engage in scaffolded practice where they jointly retell the story, using the new vocabulary and other language.



What does CJ learn about his community by the end of this story?

CJ learns that if you're surrounded by dirt, you're a better witness to see what's beautiful." The rainbow is beautiful. The sunglasses man showed CJ how to ~~not~~ watch the world with his ears. He learned that he could make new friends including the spotted dog. He learned that he could serve the people.

Comprehensive Approach

Wide and incidental exposure to new words

PLUS

Explicit instruction in authentically using a select set of new words

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction: 3-Step Teaching Routine (1)

How to choose a word worthy of instruction:

Select a general academic vocabulary word that is:

- From the complex text, with which the children have already engaged at least once
- Useful for better understanding the text and topic
- Useful for effectively communicating about this and other texts and topics

Source: Spycher, Garegnani, & Fabian (2019).

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction: 3-Step Teaching Routine (2)

Different Types of Words:

- Everyday (Tier 1) words: Basic, everyday words that most native English-speaking children know when they come to school (e.g., “chair,” “go,” “happy”)
- General Academic (Tier 2) words: High-utility academic words likely to be useful across disciplinary areas, such as “search,” “nibble,” and “describe”
- Domain-specific (Tier 3) words: Discipline-bound academic words that carry content meaning, such as “pollen” and “metamorphosis”

Some Words We Might Consider...

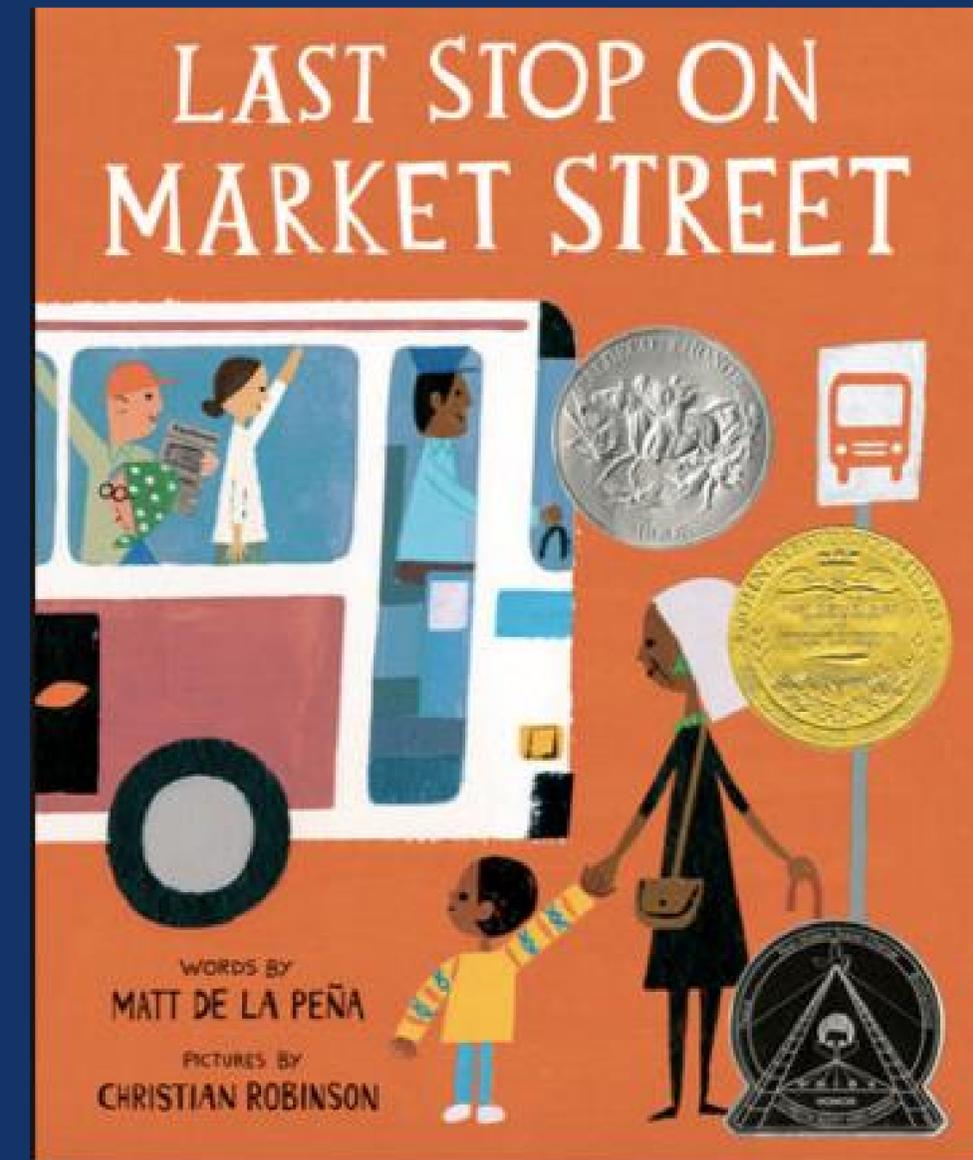
appreciate

surrounded

encounter

freedom

witness



Examples of “Encounter”



Anatomy of a Lesson Plan

General Academic Vocabulary Teaching Routine

- **Introduce the Word: (2 min.)**
- **Children Use the Word Meaningfully: (5 min.)**
- **Check for Understanding & Develop Word Knowledge Over Time: (1 min. plus repeatedly over time)**

Source: Spycher, Garegnani, & Fabian (2019).

Phase 1: Introduce the Word

Step 1: Say the word, and have students say it, and briefly tell students where they heard it

- Say the word, have students say it, write it or show a word card, clap the syllables
- Briefly situate the word in its original context

Step 2: Provide a student-friendly definition

- Say the definition twice, breaking up the sentence(s) into chunks, and then have the students echo the definition once

Step 3: Explain the meaning of the word more fully in the context of the text

Step 4: Provide examples where the word is used in other contexts. Include visuals or gestures

Phase 2: Have the Children Use the Word Meaningfully *(the heart of the lesson)*

Step 5: Students use the word meaningfully in a think-pair-share (T-P-S) conversation

- Ask the students a guiding question suggesting a scenario or context in which the word is used
- Provide THINK TIME and models
- Have students share with a partner using an open sentence frame

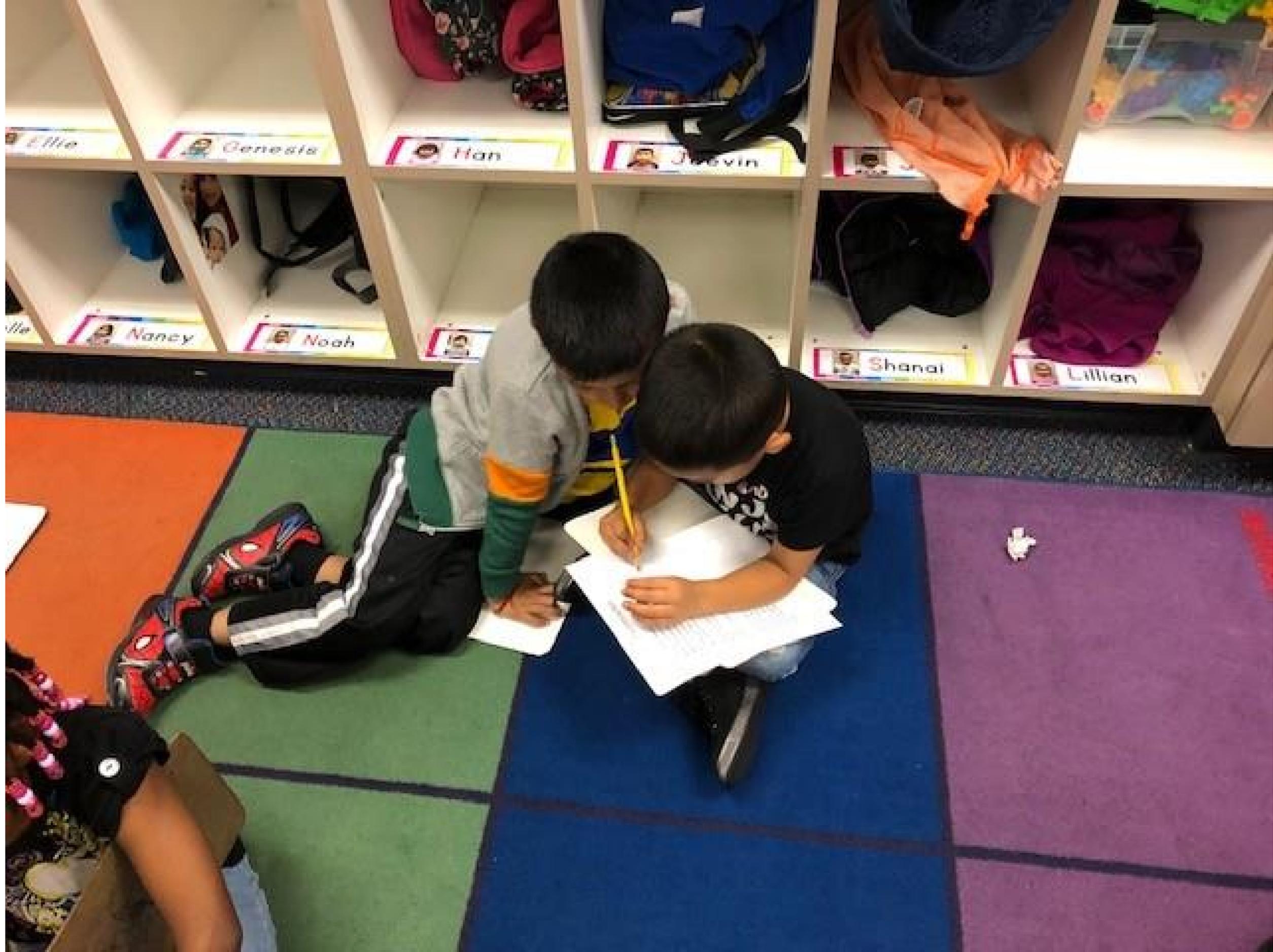
Phase 3: Check for Understanding & Develop Word Knowledge Over Time

Step 6: Ask short-answer questions to clarify and deepen understanding

- Check for understanding. If students don't respond as anticipated, stop and clarify the word's meaning in the context of the example

Step 7: Repeat the word chorally and challenge them to use the word frequently

- *Today we learned a new word, and that new word is “_____” (students say chorally). I want you to try and use the word when you talk and write as much as you can this week, and when you go home, I want you to teach the word to someone in your family.*





CJ encounters the
music in the bus.

the music lifts CJ out

the bus.

CJ and Nana was this
at the top kisin

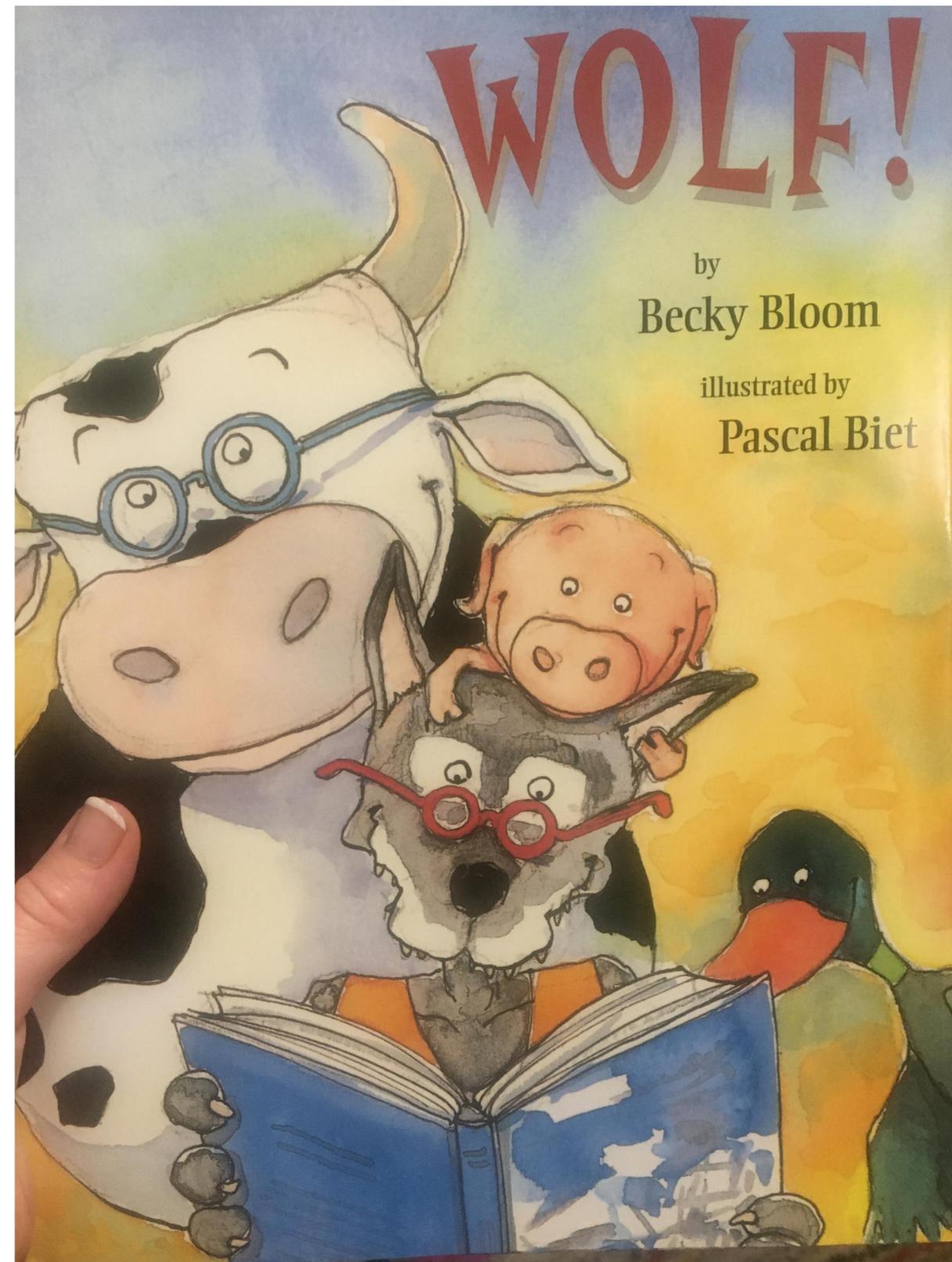
CJ glad I glad we

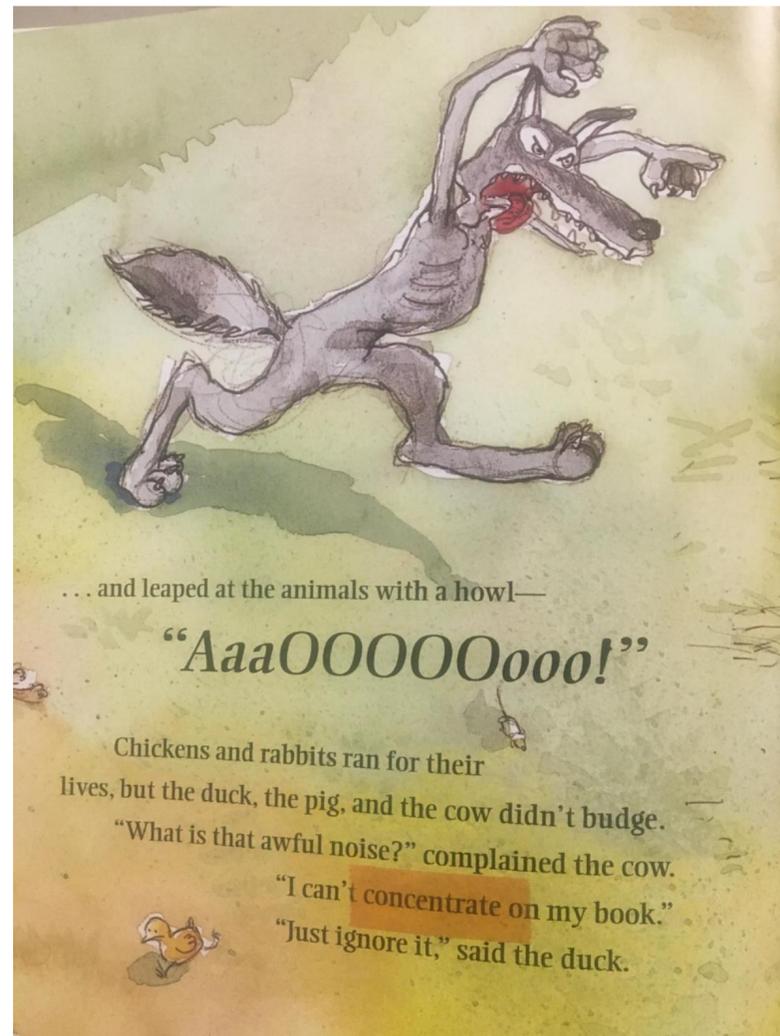
the her Nana sed

I glad I ma too.

A book chock
full of general
academic
vocab...

...and fun!





... and leaped at the animals with a howl—

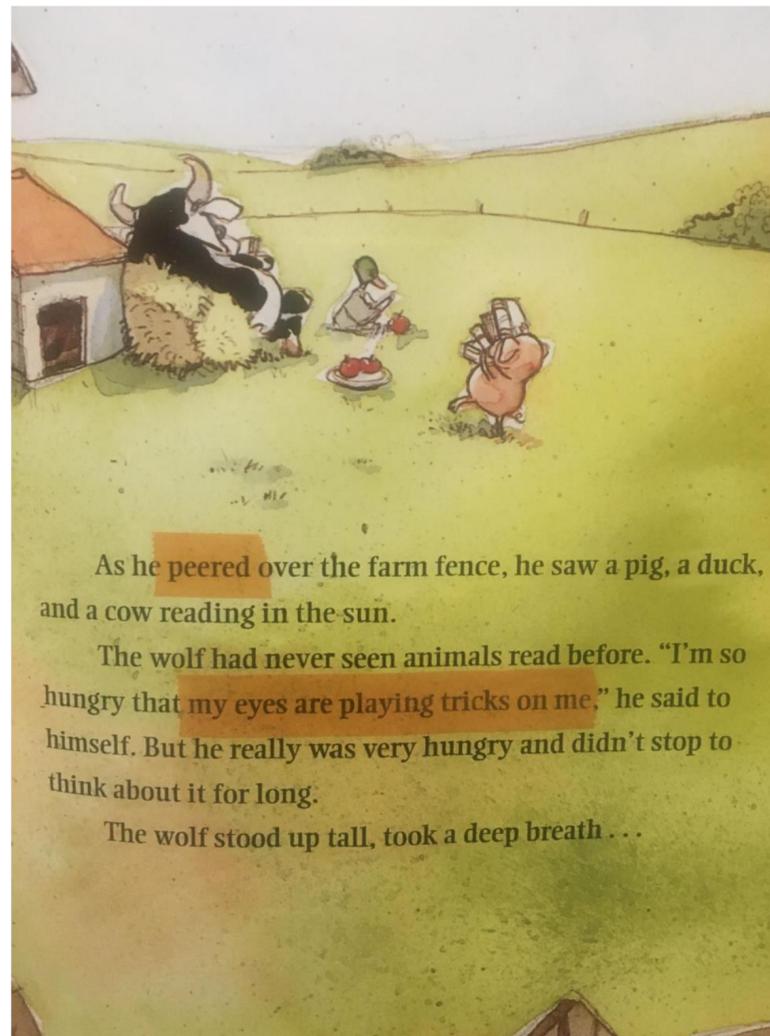
“AaaOOOOOoooo!”

Chickens and rabbits ran for their lives, but the duck, the pig, and the cow didn't budge.

“What is that awful noise?” complained the cow.

“I can't concentrate on my book.”

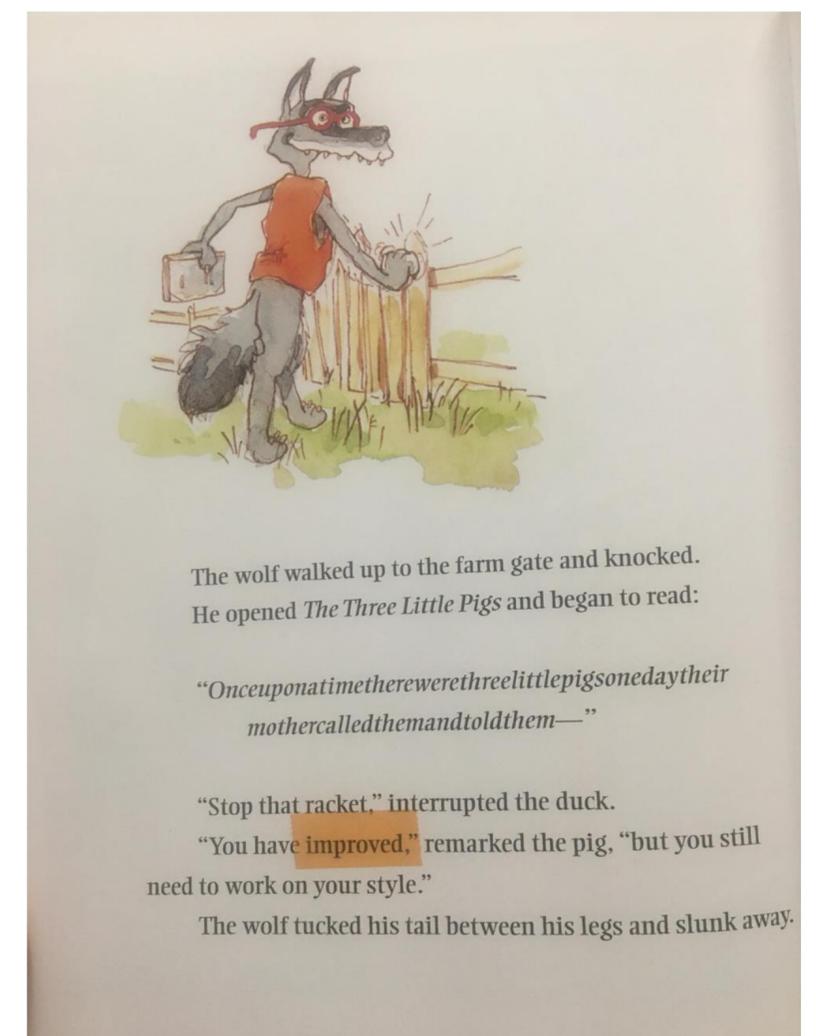
“Just ignore it,” said the duck.



As he peered over the farm fence, he saw a pig, a duck, and a cow reading in the sun.

The wolf had never seen animals read before. “I'm so hungry that my eyes are playing tricks on me,” he said to himself. But he really was very hungry and didn't stop to think about it for long.

The wolf stood up tall, took a deep breath . . .



The wolf walked up to the farm gate and knocked. He opened *The Three Little Pigs* and began to read:

“Once upon a time there were three little pigs. One day their mother called them and told them—”

“Stop that racket,” interrupted the duck.

“You have improved,” remarked the pig, “but you still need to work on your style.”

The wolf tucked his tail between his legs and slunk away.

Selecting general academic words (and an occasional phrase/saying)...

Going through my candidates to select words for the general academic vocab lessons

Candidates for vocab lessons:

- Peered
- concentrate
- educated
- satisfied
- impressed
- improved
- admire
- emerging

"pause and punch"
during interactive readaloud



One of my
winners:
admire



But the wolf wasn't about to give up. He counted the little money he had left, went to the bookshop, and bought a splendid new storybook. His first very own book!

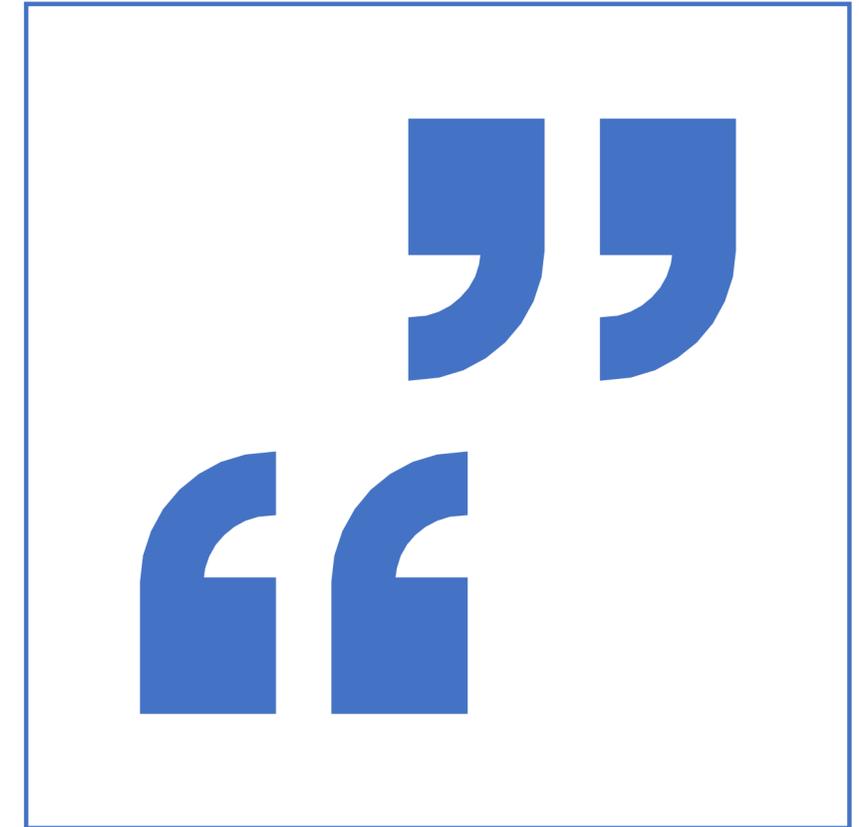
He was going to read it day and night, every letter and every line. He would read so well that the farm animals would **admire him**.



Writing my script...especially in the beginning and when working as a team:

“We are going to learn a new word today and the word is admire. Say admire. Clap the syllables, ad-mire. In Spanish, this word is ‘admirar,’ which sounds almost the same.

The word admire comes from the book that we read this morning called “Wolf.” In the story the wolf was going to read the book every day and every night and he would read it so well that the other farm animals would admire him.”



This part can be super fun standing up as you transition them into the exercise and to introduce your special word of the day with energy, delight, and expression!

Gosh “student-friendly” ...what do you mean?

“When **you** admire someone, you think they are really great or wonderful.”

Make an “admire” gesture with hands around face

Repeat – prompt kids to gesture

“When you admire someone, you think they are really great or wonderful.”

Repeat after me: When you admire someone”

Students repeat

...“you think they are really great or wonderful.”

Students repeat

“Let’s say it all together: When you admire someone, you think they are really great or wonderful.”

If it’s a verb:

- *When **you** pounce....., you...*
- *When you concentrate..., you...*
- *When you demonstrate..., you...*

If it’s an adjective:

- ***Someone** who is impressive.....*
- *Someone who is considerate...*
- ***Something** that is disruptive....*

Show them where you found it and help them get the meaning!

“**Remember** when we read this story earlier? In the story, the wolf wanted to be like the farm animals and wanted them to like him, so he had to learn how to read. He thought if he learned how to read, **they would think he is wonderful or would admire him.** What did the wolf want the farm animals to do?”
Gesture to students to repeat admire



Examples

- I admire my teacher because she helps everyone to learn.
- I admire my grandma. She's 85 years old and she takes salsa-dance lessons.
- I admire my friend Pablo because he always helps everyone.
- We admire people who do kind things for other people in need.

Things to remember

When planning this I...

- try to think of and write examples that the students can **connect with quickly** and that **reinforce the meaning** for the students.

When teaching this I...

- **speak very intentionally** and ask them to show me their thinking faces.
- watch their faces for signs of **listening closely and processing**.

When the students are familiar with the routine, I...

- prompt them with the gesture during or following the example for them to say the target word to add some **miles on the tongue!**



Selecting visuals that aid understanding and that are relatable and fun

“Why might you admire rescue workers?”

Give think time

Demonstrate that you are really thinking about this and think aloud in front of the kids:

“Hmm, I admire them because they help people.

Hmm, I admire them because they save people’s lives.

I admire them because...

I admire them because...

Let’s practice that together: I admire them because...

Now let’s take out our mini microphones (or your secret cave) and practice how we want to respond. If you need to, you can use one of my examples or think of your own!

Please turn to your partner and share.”



Notice how this second question can be more challenging linguistically.

“Why would/might you admire a friend?”

Give think time and model an example.

“I would admire a friend if he helped the teacher in class.

I might admire a friend if she is very kind.

I would/might admire a friend...”

Use mini microphones or secret cave practice when needed/wanted, then turn to your partner

*That second question is **an opportunity** to bring in even more rich language into the sentence frame so kids get an added benefit in building their academic language skills.*

Play the game well!



Train your kids to hold their thoughts while your hand is held by your face or at your chest or mouth. When you release, then they can say “admire” with the gesture, or “not admire.” They will nearly burst with anticipation but everyone will get a chance to think!

A boy who helps his teacher clean up a classroom every day

A girl who throws trash on the floor

Children who run a long race even faster than the grown-ups

A child who pushes other children in line

A student who sits on the carpet and keeps his hands to himself

Some things to keep in mind...

- This will feel slow...at first
- Kid-friendly definitions are hard to write...at first
- Keep interacting with the kids...everything's a conversation
- Have fun and don't worry too much over "doing it the right way." Get the major components in there and get learning with your kids!
- Don't underestimate the power of "Miles on the Tongue"
- Look for many opportunities to do this...once a day?

Working Smart

Make a plan for your shared work from the start that everyone can access and add to.

Share the load

Divide and conquer as a work team but create several together first and help each other figure it out.

Files > General Academic Vocab Lessons and templates 

 Name 	Modified 	Modified By 
 General Academic Vocab Lesson Templates	About a minute ago	Thea Fabian
 General Academic Vocab Lessons A-C	About a minute ago	Thea Fabian
 General Academic Vocab Lessons D-I	A few seconds ago	Thea Fabian
 General Academic Vocab Lessons L-R	A few seconds ago	Thea Fabian
 General Academic Vocab Lessons S-Z	A few seconds ago	Thea Fabian



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Scaffolding Young Children's Story Writing
Pam Spycher | May 14, 2019

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Rich Content and Language Learning in a Bilingual Kindergarten Class
"One of the first keystone pedagogies we learned about was called Sequenced Process for Interactive Reading and Language Development (SPIRAL). SPIRAL helped me realize that in order to learn languages, students need to do more of the exploring and find out more for themselves."

CHAPTER 6

**SCAFFOLDING
YOUNG CHILDREN'S
SCIENCE WRITING**

Pamela Spycher
WestEd

Danielle Garegnani
Lemon Grove School District

Thea Fabian
Fresno Unified School District

In this chapter, we describe how preschool through first grade (PK-1) teachers scaffold young children's disciplinary writing in environmental science. The ideas we provide are informed by research, learning theories, and our work as teachers of young multilingual and multilingual children and as teacher educators in culturally and linguistically diverse schools. First, we discuss the potential of integrating science with language and literacy learning and the importance of *linguistic pedagogical knowledge*. We then explain how teachers can weave into their existing practice the teaching and learning

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners and STEAM, pages 117-148
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117

**Learning Academic
Language through
Science in Two
Linguistically Diverse
Kindergarten Classes**

Pamela Spycher
University of California, Davis and WestEd

Abstract

This study examined the effectiveness of an intentional versus an implicit approach to English oral language development in young children. A vocabulary intervention in science was developed using previous research on effective vocabulary and science instruction. Participants were 39 English-learning, bilingual, and monolingual English-speaking kindergartners from lower-socioeconomic backgrounds in 2 intact classrooms in an urban school in California. The 5-week-long intervention was implemented in 1 classroom where the students' regular classroom teacher taught 20 academic words from texts from the existing science curriculum in addition to the regular science curriculum. The control class received the regular science curriculum from the same teacher without the explicit vocabulary instruction. I used the Emergent Science Vocabulary Assessment, a picture test, to ascertain receptive vocabulary knowledge. I used the Conceptual Interviews on Scientific Understanding, a one-on-one interview protocol, to ascertain expressive knowledge of the words and scientific conceptual understanding related to the words. Findings showed that the intervention class learned more target words than the control class and that students who knew more of the vocabulary expressed their understanding of scientific concepts more effectively. I discuss instructional implications.

In the current political climate surrounding the academic achievement of all students in U.S. public schools, the linguistic development of English-learning (EL) children and children from low socioeconomic backgrounds has received increased scrutiny. In California, where this study took place, more than one in three students in the primary grades is learning English as a second language (California Department of Education, 2007). The majority of EL children in

The Elementary School Journal
Volume 109, Number 4
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0013-9884/2009/10904-0003\$10.00



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The Regional Educational Laboratory West (REL West) at WestEd provides scientifically valid research findings that help meet the education needs in Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah.

Our staff draw from existing high-quality research, as well as conduct research and development projects and experimental studies. We also help stakeholders interpret evidence and build their own research capacity.

This webinar was prepared for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) under Contract ED-IES-17-C-0012. The content of the presentation does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.