Overview and Challenge

At the end of the 2016–2017 school year, only 42% of 3rd–5th grade students at Harrison Street School who took the English Language Arts Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (ELA PARCC) met or exceeded expectations. During that same time period, an average of only 67% of 3rd–5th grade students met or exceeded expectations on the vocabulary portion of the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment (and an average of 62% in ELA overall).

In 2018, Harrison Street’s School Improvement Plan included efforts to make organizational, structural, and instructional changes that would support students’ learning and increase academic achievement. Among the goals of the plan were that by the spring of 2020, 100 percent of students will receive daily guided reading at their instructional level including, if needed, a targeted intervention focusing on comprehension, decoding, or fluency.
Research shows that over 80 percent of students’ reading comprehension test scores can be accounted for by vocabulary knowledge (Reutzel and Cooter 2015). To support the goals of the School Improvement Plan and achieve measurable improvement for students, Harrison Street Elementary partnered with Teacher Created Materials to implement the Building Vocabulary, 2nd Edition program in Grade 3.

The Building Vocabulary, 2nd Edition program provides approximately 15 minutes of daily academic vocabulary practice to help students learn key Greek and Latin roots and strategies for deciphering challenging words and their meanings across the content areas. Professional development training, lesson plans, and student materials were provided to the participating teachers.

Program

Building Vocabulary, 2nd Edition is the key to unlocking academic vocabulary. Instead of learning words and definitions in isolation, students learn key roots and strategies for deciphering challenging words and their meanings across the content areas. Grounded in actual classroom application, Building Vocabulary, 2nd Edition transforms word study for students and teachers by providing interesting, fun-filled, thought-provoking opportunities to learn strategies for accessing the meaning of over 90 percent of multisyllabic English words.

Building Vocabulary, 2nd Edition is based on the latest literacy research, which demonstrates the efficacy of using roots and linguistic patterns as an approach for teaching English vocabulary. In Building Vocabulary: Foundations, 2nd Edition, students learn to “divide and conquer” words by separating initial consonants from the most common word families while in Building Vocabulary from Word Roots, 2nd Edition the focus shifts to learning words through their Greek and Latin roots and derivational constancy.

Program Components include:

➤ Teacher’s Guide
➤ Program Guide
➤ Student Guided Practice Book
➤ Multiple opportunities for assessment
➤ Digital resources, including slides, bonus student pages, and digital games
Implementation

The goal of the implementation of the Building Vocabulary, 2nd Edition program was to strengthen students’ vocabularies using a roots-based approach in order to aid in their reading comprehension and language skills.

The study was implemented for four weeks in one third-grade classroom with a total of 14 students. A second third grade classroom of 14 students was used as a control group. The vocabulary skills of all 28 students were measured directly before and after the implementation of the program to measure growth using the Montgomery Assessment of Vocabulary Acquisition (MAVA) assessment.

The MAVA is a norm-referenced assessment that is designed to measure the development of children's oral language by assessing listening and speaking vocabulary. Scores are generated in two categories: receptive age and expressive age. The receptive score shows their age for listening vocabulary. The expressive score shows their age for speaking vocabulary.

Results

At the conclusion of the four-week study, students receiving instruction with Building Vocabulary, 2nd Edition increased their receptive (listening) vocabulary by 9 months and their expressive (speaking) vocabulary by 1 year 8 months. Students in the control group grew their receptive (listening) vocabulary an average of 2 months, and their expressive (speaking) vocabulary an average of 1 year.

Research Cited

Our Mission
Teacher Created Materials develops innovative and imaginative educational materials and services for students worldwide. Everything we do is created by teachers for teachers and students to make teaching more effective and learning more fun.

For more information on Building Vocabulary, 2nd Edition and any of our standards- and research-based products, please visit us at www.tcmpub.com.

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