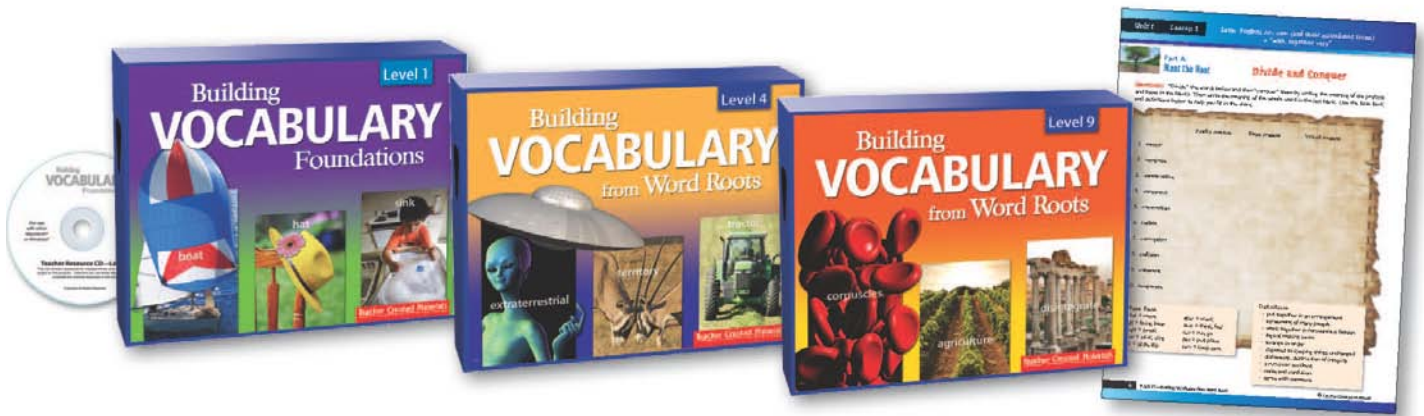


Research-Based Curriculum
Building Vocabulary Foundations
and
Building Vocabulary from Word Roots
Levels 1–11



**By Dr. Tim Rasinski, Nancy Padak,
Rick M. Newton, and Evangeline Newton**

**A Complete Supplemental Vocabulary Program Based on Respected
Research & Literature**

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Teaching Vocabulary: Research and Practice

Everyone agrees that an extensive vocabulary helps us share our thoughts and feelings with others more effectively. An extensive vocabulary is also central to reading comprehension. The larger a reader's vocabulary, the easier it is for him or her to understand the meaning of a text (National Reading Panel 2000). Young readers who lack adequate vocabulary knowledge cannot apply word recognition strategies efficiently. Baffled, they become frustrated and are quickly left behind by those readers who do have adequate word knowledge. The result is an escalating cycle of reading failure for too many students. It only makes sense! In fact, decades of research has consistently found a deep connection between vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, and academic success (Baumann and Kame'enui 2002). In this section, we define the concept of vocabulary and highlight important evidence-based research findings that clarify its critical role in reading comprehension instruction.

What is Vocabulary?

Simply put, vocabulary is knowledge of word meanings. We use our oral vocabulary to listen and speak, and our print vocabulary to read and write. Each of us also has a unique word schema consisting of active and passive vocabulary. Active vocabulary includes words we can quickly generate when we speak or write because we know them well. Passive vocabulary includes those words we can recognize but don't regularly use. We only know them well enough to figure them out when we encounter them.

Words themselves are constructed from tiny units of sound (phonemes) that form units of meaning (morphemes). We use letters and letter patterns (graphemes) to spell or represent those meanings in print. But very often there is no simple one-to-one connection between the sound (or spelling)

of a word and its meaning. Consider these examples:

Words can have the same sounds and spellings but multiple meanings. Define the word *running* in each of these sentences:

I am **running** in a marathon.

My neighbor is **running** for city council.

My refrigerator is **running** in the kitchen.

Words can also have the same sounds but different spellings and meanings. Define the words *bear* and *bare* in each of these sentences:

Hiking through the forest, John and Mary grew afraid of the **bears**. They could not **bear** the cold and blowing snow, so they looked for shelter to protect their **bare** hands and face. Finding a **bare** room, Mary asked John to **bear** with her as she built a fire.

This fusion of sound/meaning/spelling makes learning English words both interesting and complex.

Why Is Vocabulary Important?

Early reading instruction focuses on the phonological aspect of word learning. Students learn to manipulate phonemes and recognize letter patterns and to use this information strategically to decode unfamiliar words—the focus of much of Level One in *Building Vocabulary: Foundations*. However, learning to read new words often means learning new concepts, or learning new labels for familiar concepts.

Conceptual knowledge is especially important for beginning readers. Meaning does not automatically follow successful decoding if the concept related to the decoded word is not part of a student's vocabulary. Wide conceptual knowledge supports decoding; in fact, Hiebert and

Teaching Vocabulary: Research and Practice *(cont.)*

Kamil (2005) view vocabulary as a bridge that connects the word-level process of phonics and the broader cognitive process of comprehension. This is a useful way to visualize the importance of vocabulary for young readers. An extensive vocabulary helps students read fluently, comprehend, discuss what they have read, and learn. Sadly, we know that students who begin school with smaller vocabularies are at an academic disadvantage that most never overcome (Hart and Risley 1995, 2003).

How Should Vocabulary Be Taught?

According to a study in 2000 by the National Reading Panel, new words are learned directly and indirectly. Direct teaching of key words can be worthwhile, but research tells us that students can learn only eight to ten new words each week through direct instruction because learning requires repetition and multiple exposures (Stahl and Fairbanks 1986). Students need frequent opportunities to use new words in oral and print contexts in order to learn them on a deep level (Blachowicz and Fisher 2002).

A more practical approach to decoding and word learning is to focus on **predictable parts of words**. Knowing the *-ight* word family, for example, allows students to decode familiar words like *light* and *night* but also more challenging words like *lightning* and *moonlight*. Students should also study the structural and semantic nature of words by using the surrounding context and/or word parts (prefix, suffix, bases) to unlock meaning. Learning key word parts, or roots, will enable students to master new words that are semantically connected. A few of these word parts are addressed.

Most vocabulary is learned indirectly or spontaneously through discussion, reading, or listening. So another important principle of vocabulary instruction is to **read aloud to students**. Choose books with wonderful words and powerful language. Share your

own favorites. Encourage students to do so as well. If students will be tackling a new or difficult concept in the content areas, begin by reading them some picture books that address the topic. In addition to their many other benefits, read-alouds help increase students' vocabulary, an important stepping stone to reading comprehension.

Related to this principle is another: **encourage wide reading**. The more students read, the better. Establish different purposes for reading—including pure pleasure—and urge them to choose texts of personal interest. Research tells us that we learn more new words incidentally, when they appear in our reading or listening, than we do through direct instruction (Lehr, Osborn, and Hiebert 2004).

Share your own love of words and invite students to share theirs. Remember that words themselves are just plain interesting, and our ultimate goal is to create lifelong word lovers. In other words, **make word learning and word play a priority in your classroom**. Provide regular opportunities for students to practice and discover words on their own and with others. This is one of the key ideas behind *Building Vocabulary*.

Developing Students' Vocabulary

Decades of research have consistently found a deep connection between vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, and academic success (Baumann, Kame'enui, and Ash 2003). Kamil and Hiebert describe vocabulary as a bridge between the "word-level processes of phonics and the cognitive processes of comprehension" (2005, 4). This is a useful way to visualize the importance of vocabulary for young or struggling readers. But meaning does not automatically follow successful decoding. If a word is not in a student's oral vocabulary, the student cannot apply word recognition strategies effectively, and reading comprehension is hindered (National Reading Panel 2000). *Building Vocabulary* **frontloads vocabulary instruction in every lesson** so that students

Teaching Vocabulary: Research and Practice *(cont.)*

have experiences with learning the words they need to know before they encounter them in text.

Students with wide vocabularies find it easier to comprehend more of what they are reading than do students with limited vocabularies. The type of reading students encounter in school can be highly specialized, and the words they need to learn can be challenging. This type of **academic vocabulary** is often not found in everyday life or in everyday reading. Therefore, all students need an **explicit introduction to and explanation of these vocabulary words**. The task is even more challenging for English language learners. English language learners have unique advantages and challenges. They know how to move between two languages, integrating sounds and meanings into new words and grammatical structures. Their natural manipulation of two languages promotes higher-level thinking. Yet, they sometimes feel lost in the unfamiliar linguistic and academic world in which they find themselves.

Fortunately, what is known about how to teach vocabulary applies to both first- and second-language learners: all learners need to focus on meaning by using research-based strategies to learn new words. *Building Vocabulary* provides these research-based strategies in every lesson. English language learners also need frequent opportunities to try out new words in varied learning contexts. *Building Vocabulary* offers these opportunities through **readings, activity pages, writing opportunities, and games**.

There are two types of language proficiency for English language learners. Jim Cummins coined the two types of language as Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) (Crawford 2004). BICS refers to a student's social language. CALP, or academic language, takes seven or more years to acquire. CALP is proficiency

in the language of the content areas and of the classroom. A student with a strong level of CALP is able to understand key vocabulary, use it in correct context, and write well about his or her understanding of a topic. This level of academic language is not learned easily and intuitively like BICS is. This language proficiency only comes with explicit instruction and planned objectives. *Building Vocabulary* lessons have this type of instruction and planned objectives in every lesson to **increase students' academic language proficiency**.

High-Yield Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement

Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock (2001) have identified "high-yield" strategies for improving instruction and student achievement. This research was incorporated into the development of *Building Vocabulary*. While learning about word families and simple roots, students learn to identify similarities and differences, participate in cooperative learning with games and activities, have opportunities for practice and reinforcement, and make nonlinguistic representations of their learning through visual imagery, drawings, and kinesthetic experiences. Objectives are set and feedback is given throughout the lessons and assessments.

Building Vocabulary also combines the six levels of Marzano and Kendall's New Taxonomy, an update to the classic Bloom's Taxonomy. Level 1 is the basic retrieval of information (Marzano and Kendall 2007). This is found in the questions asked in the lessons. Comprehension, analysis, and application are also woven throughout the lessons. The assessments and lessons help students develop their metacognitive skills by expressing and refining their thoughts as they monitor progress. The discussions that activate and build background knowledge in the lesson plans and transparencies help students develop their self-system thinking.

Differentiating Instruction

Anyone who has interacted with first graders knows that they differ substantially in terms of reading achievement. On the first day of school, some are already reading, some are right on the verge, and others will need time and a great deal of support to become readers. Some students may be English language learners (ELLs) who are learning to speak and understand English while also learning to read English. Below, we provide general guidance about differentiating instruction for these three groups of students. Specific suggestions are found in the lesson-by-lesson portion of the *Teacher's Guide*.

Above-Level Students—Students who enter first grade already reading may need some different *Building Vocabulary* activities. Although you want students to feel like a part of the classroom community, you do not want to ask students to complete activities that provide no challenge—no opportunities to learn more about words. Thus, we recommend that these students participate in the whole-group lessons (Parts A and C), but you may want to supplement Parts B, D, and E for the lessons.

Here are some ideas:

- **Writing Practice**—Ask students to select several words that contain the word family (or word families) of focus. Students can write texts that include the words.
- **Riddles**—Ask students to select several words with the word family (or families) of focus. Ask them to write riddles about the words. Then they can read the riddles to others in the class and ask classmates to solve the riddles.

- **Word Scrambles**—Ask students to create word scramble activities based on words from a word family (or families). These would be sentences that contain scrambled versions of the words. Other students can unscramble the words.
- **Hink Pinks**—Students can create Hink Pinks using word-family words. Hink Pinks are questions with answers that are two one-syllable words that rhyme. (For example: What do you call an overweight kitty? A fat cat.) They can then read the Hink Pinks to others, who can answer the questions.
- **Internet Resources**—Students can explore some Web-based vocabulary resources (see the *Teacher Resources: References* section in this *Teacher's Guide*).

Below-Level Students—Just as you don't want to bore students with activities that provide no challenge, you don't want to ask students to attempt activities that are too difficult for them to complete successfully. Here are some ideas for providing extra support so that students can find success:

- **Have the students work with partners.**
- **Small-Group Practice**—Small-group instruction (apart from the *Building Vocabulary* lessons), provides additional opportunities to practice the poems.
- **Tutor and Volunteer Assistance**—If the students are working with tutors or volunteers, share the poems and activities with them so they can then help students with the activities.

Differentiating Instruction *(cont.)*

- **Practice Reading Skills**—Use the poems to teach and provide practice with concepts about print, letters of the alphabet, and other reading-related skills that are developmentally appropriate for students.
- **Cloze Passages**—Create cloze passages from the poems for the students to complete. See copies of the Take-Home Poems on the *Teacher Resource CD*.
- **Word Card Games**—Ask the students to select several words related to each word family. Have them make word cards for each with the word printed on one side and an illustration on the other. They can use these cards to play games like Go Fish or Memory.

For English Language Learners—Students raised in bilingual homes have unique advantages as well as unique challenges. They possess rich background experiences that can be used to enhance everyone’s learning. They know how to move between two languages, integrating sounds and meanings into new words and grammatical structures. Their natural manipulation of two languages promotes higher-level thinking. Yet ELL students sometimes feel lost in the unfamiliar linguistic and academic world in which they find themselves.

Fortunately, everything we know about how to teach vocabulary applies to both first- and second-language learners: ELL students need to focus on meaning, using research-based strategies to learn new words. They need frequent opportunities to try new words out in varied learning contexts. The major difference is that ELL students generally require more distinctive scaffolding. Following are three ideas to keep in mind as you plan vocabulary instruction for second language learners:

- **Use discussion to support word learning.** Parts A and C (Let’s Read) of each *Building Vocabulary* lesson feature teacher-led discussion, and many activities throughout the lessons either direct students to work with partners or can be adapted for small-group work. These discussion opportunities support ELL students’ growth in conversational English as well as promote learning of the featured word parts.
- **Use students’ native language wherever possible.** Many English words have cognates in other languages. Because they share Latin derivatives, Spanish-speaking students can easily relate many new English words to Spanish. In teaching *aqueduct*, for example, you can help students make the connection between the Spanish word *agua* and the Latin root *aqua* to assist their understanding of the word *aqueduct*. Encourage students to draw such connections between their first and second languages.
- **Whenever possible, select concrete words for instructional focus.** You may want to focus on fewer words for each word part in order to provide more opportunities for students to work with them. You may also need to explicitly teach the concept of synonyms. Keep in mind that ELL students may be meeting some of the targeted words for the first time.

Response to Intervention

The RTI model supports the idea that teachers should look for curricular intervention designed to bring a student back up to grade level as soon as he or she begins having difficulties. “RTI has the potential then to allow disabilities to be identified and defined based on the response a child has to the interventions that are tried” (Cruey 2006). Depending on the levels of difficulty they are having with the reading curriculum, students are classified as Tier 1, 2, or 3. Specific definitions of these tiers differ from state to state, but the following are general descriptions.

Tier 1

Tier 1 students are generally making good progress toward the standards but may be experiencing temporary or minor difficulties. These students may struggle in only a few of the overall areas of reading concepts. They usually benefit from peer work and parental involvement. They would also benefit from confidence boosters when they are succeeding. Any problems that do arise should be diagnosed and addressed quickly in order to ensure that these students continue to succeed.

Using *Building Vocabulary* in Tier 1:

Use *Building Vocabulary* with the entire class as a supplement to the core curriculum. The focused lessons provide explicit instruction in key skills that students need, with options for differentiating instruction for above-level learners, below-level learners, and English language learners. Assess students using the Diagnostic Test and/or the unit quizzes for ongoing progress monitoring. Students who aren't making progress at this level should move to Tier 2.

Tier 2

Tier 2 students may be one or two standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests. These students are struggling in various areas, which affects their overall success in the classroom. These students can usually respond to in-class differentiation strategies with focused, small-group instruction. These students may not need the help of student study teams.

Using *Building Vocabulary* in Tier 2:

Work with a small group of students that need focused instruction on a particular skill. Frequently monitor their progress using the unit quizzes and guided practice pages provided with each lesson. Students who do not respond to intervention should move to Tier 3.

Tier 3

Tier 3 students are seriously at risk of failing to meet the standards as indicated by their extremely and chronically low performance on one or more measures of a standardized test. These students are often the ones who are being analyzed by some type of in-house student assistance team in order to look for overall interventions and solutions. In the classroom, these students are having difficulties with most of the assignments and failing most of the assessments.

Using *Building Vocabulary* in Tier 3:

Use the Diagnostic Test to determine a student's specific area(s) of need. Use the lessons to work one-on-one with the student. Allow extra time for each component of the lesson being used. Provide extra opportunities for practice and review.

Tips for Implementation

1. Keep the instructional goals in mind.

Building Vocabulary has two broad goals: 1) to increase students' knowledge of words, particularly those words they need to be successful in school and; 2) to deepen their knowledge about words so that students have strategies to figure out the meaning of many new words on their own.

2. Make sure to read the "Teacher Notes" section for each new lesson.

This section provides the background information you need to teach the lesson. In levels one and two, a list of words for each word family is provided. In levels three and up, information is given to help teach Greek and Latin roots. The teacher notes section provides a wealth of interesting information and ideas for you to use with students. Each week there are also suggestions for differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all learners. It is important for children to feel successful, so use the suggestions and feel free to adapt them to meet your students' needs.

3. Develop regular routines with activities that scaffold increasingly independent learning.

Although the program gives day-to-day activities in a quick and regular routine, you should feel free to modify or adapt the program to meet your own particular instructional needs. The key is to make your instruction a regular routine that gets students to think deeply about the word families or roots. Plan to spend 10–15 minutes each day on vocabulary.

4. Try to find time for students to explore words with others.

Many of the activities in *Building Vocabulary* can be completed with partners or in small groups. Some specifically invite students to work together. When students complete an assignment with others, they have a chance to try out new words and talk about how they "work." Remember that games like "Wordo" and "Word Spokes" are not just fun—they are good instruction!

5. Keep the learning outcomes in mind.

By the end of the program, your students should have 1) learned the meaning of some of the most common word roots in the English language; 2) understood how to apply those meanings to "divide and conquer" unfamiliar words; and 3) deepened their "word awareness." Above all, we hope your students will have become independent word sleuths and lifelong word lovers!

6. Keep the focus on thinking about the roots or word families, not on memorizing particular words.

Students need to become convinced that they have knowledge and processes to figure out the meanings of words. Roots can help here because prefixes and bases represent familiar concepts (*un-* = "not"; *pre-* = "before"; *graph* = "write"). Word families help students see spelling patterns for many words. As students figure out the meaning of new words, ask them "What do you think? Why?" rather than "What's the right answer?" Remember that the most effective way to teach vocabulary is not through mindless repetition or memorization.

Tips for Implementation *(cont.)*

7. Help students become “word aware” by weaving the week’s root or word family into other activities.

Consider a Word Wall where you and/or students can post words that feature the week’s root or word family. Root or Word Family of the Week invites students to write any word they run across that uses the week’s root or word family on chart paper. They put their initials after the word. On Friday, students volunteer to share their words, tell what they mean and how they found them. Students also enjoy Root Word of the Day or Word Family of the Day. Start each day by choosing a different word containing the week’s root or word family. Choose a word that is particularly interesting or useful. Each time your students hear or see the word that day, tell them to raise two fingers in a “V” for “Vocabulary”!

8. For Levels 3 and up, use teacher-led discussion when introducing a new root.

Follow Day One “Meet the Root” activities that “Activate Background Knowledge” and “Teach New Concepts.” The activities (with overheads) have been designed to make students aware of the presence of the new root in everyday words they already know. “Activate Background Knowledge” helps students learn the meaning of a new root by connecting it to familiar words. “Teach New Concepts” provides additional practice with more difficult words. It may also introduce or reinforce an important linguistic concept (e.g., the meaning of a word may be literal or figurative). Day One may take a bit of extra time (particularly in the first weeks), but it will pay dividends later in the week.

9. For Levels 3 and up, guide students through the “Divide and Conquer” assignment.

The “Meet the Root” lesson ends by inviting students to “dissect” ten words that use the new root. Get them into an “if...then” mindset (“If *geo* means ‘earth’ and *-ology* means ‘study of,’ then *geology* must be ‘study of the earth’”). As you guide them, make sure everyone has understood what the root means and how to apply that meaning to help them figure out a word.

10. For Levels 3 and up, consider making a “Rocking with Roots” learning center.

Days Two and Four include a variety of familiar “brain-stretching” activities students enjoy, including word sorts, making and writing words, crossword puzzles, word searches, word ladders, magic squares, and more! On Day Three, students read a variety of short texts (e.g., poems, stories, advice columns) and answer questions. Students can complete these workbook and/or bonus CD activities in learning centers. They can create a “Rocking with Roots” notebook to store their work. Adapt the materials to fit the structure of your learning centers. Before students can work independently in learning centers, you may need to spend a few weeks giving them guided practice with each kind of activity.

Standards and Correlations

The No Child Left Behind legislation mandates that all states adopt academic standards that identify the skills students will learn in kindergarten through grade 12. While many states had already adopted academic standards prior to NCLB, the legislation set requirements to ensure the standards were detailed and comprehensive.

Standards are designed to focus instruction and guide adoption of curricula. Standards are statements that describe the criteria necessary for students to meet specific academic goals. They define the knowledge, skills, and content students should acquire at each level. Standards are also used to develop standardized tests to evaluate students' academic progress.

In many states today, teachers are required to demonstrate how their lessons meet state standards. State standards are used in the development of all of our products, so educators can be assured that they meet the academic requirements of each state.

Teacher Created Materials is committed to producing educational materials that are research and standards based. In this effort,

we have correlated all of our products to the academic standards of all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Dependent Schools. You can print a correlation report customized for your state from our website at <http://www.tcmpub.com>. If you require assistance in printing correlation reports, please contact Customer Service at 1-800-858-7339.

Teacher Created Materials uses the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) Compendium to create standards correlations. Each year, McREL analyzes state standards and revises the compendium. By following this procedure, they are able to produce a general compilation of national standards.

Each lesson in this book is based on one or more McREL content standards. The chart on the following page shows the McREL standards that correlate to each lesson. To see a state-specific correlation, visit the *Teacher Created Materials* website at <http://www.tcmpub.com>.

Objectives	Lesson #
<p>Objective #1</p> <p>Uses basic elements of phonetic analysis (e.g., common letter/sound relationships, beginning and ending consonants, vowel sounds, blends, word patterns) to decode unknown words</p>	<p>All lessons</p>
<p>Objective #2</p> <p>Uses basic elements of structural analysis (e.g., syllables, basic prefixes, suffixes, root words, compound words, spelling patterns, contractions) to decode unknown words</p>	<p>All lessons</p>
<p>Objective #3</p> <p>Uses conventions of spelling in written compositions (e.g., spells high-frequency, commonly misspelled words from appropriate grade-level list; spells phonetically regular words; uses letter-sound relationships; spells basic short vowel, long vowel, r-controlled, and consonant blend patterns; uses a dictionary and other resources to spell words)</p>	<p>All lessons</p>

Proficiency Levels for English Language Learners

All teachers should know the levels of language acquisition for each of their English language learners (ELLs). Knowing these levels will help to plan instruction. (The category titles and number of levels vary from district to district or state to state, but the general descriptions are common.) Students at level 1 will need a lot of language support in all the activities, especially during instruction. Using visuals to support oral and written language will help make the language more comprehensible. These students “often understand much more than they are able to express” (Herrell and Jordan 2004). It is the teacher’s job to move them from just listening to language to expressing language. Students at levels 2 and 3 will benefit from paired work in speaking tasks, but they will need additional individual support during writing and reading tasks.

Students at levels 4 and 5 may appear to be fully proficient in the English language. However, because they are English language learners, they may still struggle with comprehending the academic language used during instruction. They may also struggle with reading and writing.

The goal is for English language learners to be able to communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success (WIDA 2007).

The following chart shows the proficiency levels for English language learners at a quick glance. These proficiency levels are based on the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium (WIDA 2007).

Proficiency Level	Teacher Prompts/ Activities	Actions
Level 1—Entering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses pictorial or graphic representations communicates in words, phrases recognizes sounds with illustrations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show me..., Circle the..., Where is...?, Who has...? Ask students to reproduce illustrated word pairs by families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> listen draw mime name objects point circle label follow 1-step oral directions
Level 2—Beginning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses general language communicates in phrases, short sentences blends sounds together to make words, shown visually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> yes/no questions, either/or questions Ask students to make lists of word families from illustrated models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> move select act/act out sort describe match choose make lists follow 2-step oral directions
Level 3—Developing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses some specific content language oral/written language contains some errors but retains meaning removes or adds sounds to words to make new words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why...?, How...?, Explain... Ask students to make statements or questions about illustrated word families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> name list respond label retell categorize group tell/say sequence follow multi-step directions
Level 4—Expanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a variety of sentence lengths makes minimal errors segments illustrated sentences into words or phrases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What would happen if..?, Why do you think...? Ask students to describe word families using related sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recall retell define compare/contrast explain/discuss summarize describe role-play restate interpret/analyze
Level 5—Bridging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses technical language comparable to native-English speakers speaks using complex sentences identifies spelling/sound correspondence in grade-level text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decide if... Ask students to create stories about word families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> apply information to new context defend complete evaluation justify support create express/explain draw conclusions

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