

## Teacher Packet for Vocabulary PD – From THE MAIN IDEA

### II. Defining Vocabulary and Selecting Words to Teach

*Vocabulary* refers to the words we use to communicate effectively when we listen, read, speak and write. Furthermore, vocabulary is divided into two categories to discuss words and word usage: receptive and expressive vocabulary. Our receptive vocabulary includes all of the words we understand when we *listen* and *read* while our expressive vocabulary refers to the words we generate when *speaking* or *writing*.

Is anything missing from this definition?

#### Sorting and Selecting Vocabulary Words

Tier 1 – Everyday words students (other than ELs) should mostly be familiar with such as: *big, down, house, family*.

Tier 2 – General academic words that can be found in several content areas, not just one subject area such as: *justify, explain, predict, summarize, infer, generalize, conclusion, revolution, and reflection*.

Tier 3 – More low-frequency, specialized academic words that belong to a particular discipline such as: *photosynthesis, onomatopoeia, quadratic formula, and sarcophagus*.

#### Sample Passage

The Universe was formed by an event known as the Big Bang, a large explosion of matter. After the Big Bang, the universe was composed of radiation and free-floating subatomic particles. What happened next is unclear. Did small particles slowly join to form stars, star clusters and galaxies over time? Or did the universe first organize as immense clumps of matter that later broke apart into galaxies? So far, no one has been able to prove one or the other.

Choose a few words from the excerpt above and put them in the correct category:

Tier 1

Tier 2

Tier 3

\*\*\*Special resource – for additional help with vocabulary selection there is a great tool called the ‘Academic Word Finder’ which can be found under ‘Classroom Resources’ on the Achieve the Core website ([achievethecore.org](http://achievethecore.org)). You copy and paste the text you want to use with students and it not only finds the Tier 2 words for you, but for each word it also provides the grade level, the part of speech, simple definitions, and sample sentences/phrases. Try it!

### III. A Balanced Model for Teaching Vocabulary

Most models of vocabulary instruction involve a mix of the three components below:

1. **Modeling:** All adults who interact with students model robust vocabulary and interest in words.
2. **Explicit instruction:** Teach targeted words and proven word-learning strategies so students can tackle words on their own.
3. **Incidental learning:** Facilitate incidental vocabulary learning through a print-rich environment and various literacy experiences such as read-alouds, independent reading, dramatic performances, family literacy nights, poetry slams, and more.

Paint a fuller picture of these three components by filling out the chart below:

Component of Vocabulary Instruction	What is this component?	What do we do that already fits into this component <i>or</i> how might this look in action?
<i>Direct/Explicit Instruction</i>		
<i>Indirect/Incidental Learning</i>		
<i>Modeling</i>		

## IV. Vocabulary practices to lay to rest

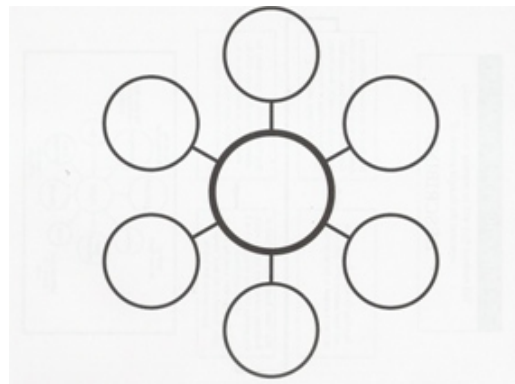
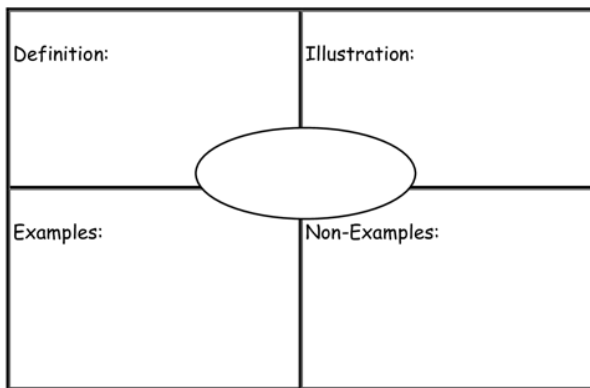
Discuss why this funny piece resonates for so many educators:

Recipe: Vocabulary Casserole	
Ingredients:	
• 20 words no one has ever heard before	• 1 dictionary with very confusing definitions
• 1 matching test to be administered on Friday	• 1 teacher who wants students to be quiet on Mondays copying words
Put 20 words on the board. Have students copy them and then look them up in dictionary. Make students write down all the definitions. For a little spice, require that students write words in sentences. Leave alone all week. Top with a boring test on Friday.	
Perishable. This casserole will be forgotten by Saturday afternoon.	
Serves: No one.	
Adapted from <i>When Kids Can't Read, What Teachers Can Do</i> by Kyleene Beers (p. 177)	

## V. A Sampling of Effective Vocabulary Strategies

### Using Graphic Organizers

Write 'explicit vocabulary instruction' in the center and fill out the graphic organizers to develop a deeper understanding of this term.



### Collaborative Word Walls

Links to explore: some science word wall examples: <https://www.pinterest.com/gettingnerdy/science-vocabulary-and-word-walls/?lp=true>

Create digital word walls through **Padlet** (padlet.com) and **ThingLink** (thinglink.com) -- here's an example of how it could be used with Solar System vocabulary: <https://www.thinglink.com/scene/705504269851164674>

### Using Context Clues

Given the *Four Types of Context Clues* below, which *type* of context clues could students use to figure out the definitions of the two vocabulary words underlined in the passage at the bottom of this page?

<i>Four Types of Context Clues with Examples</i>
1. <i>Definition</i> —the word is defined directly and clearly in the sentence in which it appears. “The manager wanted a weekly <u>inspection</u> , a careful examination of all the equipment.”
2. <i>Antonym</i> (or contrast)—often signaled by the words whereas, unlike, or as opposed to. “Unlike Jamaal’s room, which was <u>immaculate</u> , Jeffrey’s room was very messy.”
3. <i>Synonym</i> (or restatement)—other words are used in the sentence with similar meanings. “The <u>slender</u> woman was so thin her clothes were too big on her.”
4. <i>Inference</i> —word meanings are not directly described, but need to be inferred from the context. “Walt’s <u>pugnacious</u> behavior made his opponent back down.”

### Sample Reading Passage – Which type of context clues would a student use to define the underlined words?

In September 1957, nine black students enrolled at Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. It was an important moment in the civil rights movement. The students were testing a ruling by the Supreme Court, the highest court in the nation. The ruling said that all public schools had to be integrated. This meant that schools that did not allow black students had to open their doors to them. Many people resisted the ruling. On the first day of classes at Central High, Governor Orval Faubus called in the state National Guard. He told the troops to stop the black students from entering the school. (Text from Newsela.com)

Online Vocabulary Games to Explore – Explore **Vocabulary Games** ([www.vocabulary.co.il](http://www.vocabulary.co.il)), **Free Rice** ([www.freerice.com](http://www.freerice.com)), or **Flashcard Stash** ([www.flashcardstash.com](http://www.flashcardstash.com)). Or find others online!