

How Can I Expand My Child's Vocabulary?

Important facts regarding vocabulary:

- Vocabulary is a strong predictor of how well a student will comprehend what they read.
 - A child that has a limited vocabulary will struggle with reading beyond second grade.
 - A child that has an extensive vocabulary will become a skilled reader once decoding and fluency have developed.
- A student must have 10 exposures to a word before it becomes part of their vocabulary.
- In order to develop a child's vocabulary, it is extremely important that electronic devices, video games, and television do not replace, or get in the way of having a conversation.
- Babies and very young children also benefit from being immersed in language. Although they aren't communicating with you yet, this early exposure to language is essential.

How to engage your child in conversation:

- In the car: Begin a discussion about your surroundings.
- At the grocery store: Start a conversation about the different categories that the foods fit into and where they come from.
- Family game night: Discuss strategies for the game and continue to engage in conversation throughout.

Conversation Starters:

Ask your child questions that require something beyond a yes or no answer. Word your questions so that it engages your child in a conversation, and shows your interest in what they're doing.

- What was your favorite part of today?
- What was your least favorite part of today?
- What makes a good friend?
- What is your favorite book and why?
- If you could make your own movie or write your book, what would you call it?
- Who do you want to be most like when you grow up?

Other suggestions:

- Expand sentences by challenging your child to add more descriptive words and then have them say the whole sentence together.
- Rephrase sentences for your child when they are not grammatically correct and ask them to repeat it back to you.
- Discuss synonyms, antonyms, and multiple meaning words.
- While reading with your child, insert a word meaning when you come across a word that you think they may not understand.