

Vocabulary: The Foundation of Reading Success

More and more research is finding that one of the most essential components of reading fluency and comprehension is a strong vocabulary. Helping students build their word knowledge works best when vocabulary activities are incorporated into lessons throughout the school year. Research shows that by providing students with a wide range of reading that strengthens their skills is critical to achieving necessary vocabulary growth.

Exposing students to materials like **Scholastic Classroom Magazines** is a great way to build vocabulary. They provide a variety of high-interest texts that expose students to new words and are accompanied by activities to reinforce students' understanding of those words.

It's Key to Comprehension.

Research shows that reading with comprehension is dependent on students being able to understand the meaning of words used. Studies find that there is a strong connection between vocabulary instruction and improved comprehension, and that "the larger the reader's vocabulary (either oral or print), the easier it is to make sense of the text."¹

- **Scholastic Classroom Magazines are a motivating and comprehensive way to expand students' vocabulary skills.** From early reading to high school level, every magazine is designed to help students learn the words they need to know for increased reading fluency and comprehension.

- Each magazine includes a Teacher's Edition with vocabulary terms and related activities for **before-reading preparation**.

A Variety of Approaches Is Essential.

Effective vocabulary instruction requires using a combination of approaches to ensure students encounter the same vocabulary words repeatedly through oral language and reading. Research shows that varied and multiple exposures to new words are key to word learning² and that **dependence on a single vocabulary instruction method will not result in optimal learning**³.

- In Scholastic's magazines, **key vocabulary words are highlighted** in the context of the articles. **Short definitions are also provided** in word boxes. For early readers, text-linked pictures help with vocabulary understanding.
- After reading the magazines, **students work with vocabulary in a variety of ways** such as matching definitions, identifying synonyms, cloze activities, and writing using the terms.
- Corresponding activities include **multiple choice quizzes and comprehension questions** to help you assess students' understanding of featured vocabulary terms.

Research-Based Strategies Build Strong Vocabularies.

Recent research has recommended strategies for vocabulary building. These include:

- Learning words before reading a text⁴
- Providing for repetition and multiple exposure to vocabulary words⁵
- Learning in rich contexts⁶
- Focusing on important, useful, or difficult words students will meet in their reading⁷
- Generating an interest in words by playing with words, researching origins, and studying author's word choice⁸
- Reading diverse texts⁹
- Using aspects of context, definition, and multiple exposures¹⁰

Scholastic Classroom Magazines are the ideal way to utilize these strategies in any classroom. Throughout the school year, they introduce and reinforce vocabulary words and help students learn to use them in context. They also:

- **Develop grade-appropriate word analysis skills** including letter sounds, syllables, spelling, analogies, figurative language, homonyms, synonyms, antonyms, parts of speech, and root words.

- **Build oral vocabulary, grammar, and fluency** through speaking activities such as discussions, plays, and debates.
- **Provide phonetic spellings** of vocabulary to assist with correct punctuation.
- **Reinforce word knowledge** through word puzzles, games, researching word origins, and studying an author's word choice.

Give Students the Vocabulary Foundation They Need.

Successful reading and learning requires strong word knowledge. By giving students a variety of high-interest materials and encouraging them to read widely, you'll help increase both their vocabularies and their reading comprehension. Scholastic Classroom Magazines provide engaging fiction and nonfiction that get students excited about reading—and they make kids want to learn new words so they can read more. Each magazine's current events, grade-appropriate topics, and colorful photos create interest and encourage reading in every content area. Try these skill-building resources in your classroom and give students what they need for reading success.

1 National Reading Panel. (2000). Teaching Children to Read. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

2 Kelsius, J.P., & Searls, E.F. (1990). A meta-analysis of recent research in meaning in vocabulary instruction. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 84 (3), 226. Stahl, S., & Kapinus, B. (2001). *Word Power: What Every Educator Needs to Know About Teaching Vocabulary*. NEA Success in Reading Series.

3 National Reading Panel.

4 National Reading Panel.

5 National Reading Panel.

6 National Reading Panel.

7 Beck, I.L., McKeown, M.G., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction*. New York: Guilford Press.

8 Blachowicz, C., & Fisher, P. (1996). *Teaching Vocabulary*. Upper Saddle River, NJ; Prentice-Hall.

9 Blachowicz & Fisher Pressley, M., & Woloshyn, V. (1995). *Cognitive Strategy Instruction That Really Improves Children's Academic Performance*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books. Nagy, W.E. (1998). *Teaching Vocabulary to Improve Comprehension*. Newark, DE: NCTE and IRA.

10 Nagy, 1998; Stahl, 1986.

For more information, or for a copy of "Examining the Educational Value of Children's Magazines," call Scholastic Classroom Magazines at 1-800-387-1437.