EYFS Vocabulary
Development 2024/2025

Bringing Words to Life

At North Clifton Primary, we introduce new words to children that are useful and meaningful.

Early language ability is one of the strongest predicators of later development through school and in life. Language is essential for thinking, expressing our feelings, making friends and finding solutions.

The rate of language development in the first few years of life is, like many other aspects of young children's development, dramatic. If a young child does not develop the basic skills of speech, language and communication they are likely to be disadvantaged for life.

For this reason, it is a priority in our EYFS curriculum.
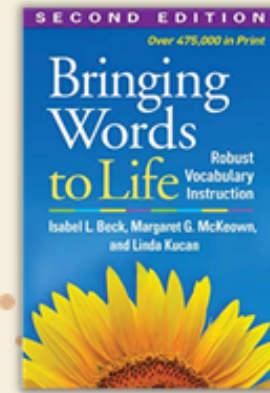
EYFS Statutory Framework (November 2024):

COMMUNICATION & LANGUAGE STATUTORY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME:

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

SELECTING WORDS FOR ROBUST INSTRUCTION

The Three–Tiers Framework (Beck, McKeown, & Omanson, 1987)

1 The first tier consists of the most basic words: warm, dog, tired, run, talk, party, swim, look, and so on. These are the words that typically appear in oral conversations, and so children are exposed to them at high frequency from a very early age. This high exposure means that children become familiar with this set of words pretty readily, and so these Tier One words rarely require instructional attention to their meanings in school.

2 The second tier words are of high utility for literate language users and are found across a variety of domains. These words are characteristic of written text and are found only infrequently in conversation, which means that children are less likely to learn these words independently, compared with Tier One words. Because of the large role Tier Two words play in a language user's repertoire, rich knowledge of words in the second tier can have a powerful impact on verbal functioning. Thus, planned vocabulary development is directed toward Tier Two words.

3 The third tier of words has a frequency of use that is quite low and often limited to specific topics and domains. Some examples of Tier Three words might be filibuster, pantheon, and epidermis. In general, a rich understanding of these words would not be of high utility for most learners. These words are probably best learned when a specific need arises.

AN EXCELLENT SOURCE FOR WORDS THAT WILL EXPAND YOUNG CHILDREN'S VOCABULARIES ARE BOOKS THAT ARE DESIGNED TO BE READ ALOUD TO CHILDREN. BOOKS ARE CHOCK-FULL OF TIER TWO WORDS. A WORD IS CONSIDERED A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR A TIER TWO WORD IS IF IT IS LIKELY TO BE UNFAMILIAR TO YOUNG CHILDREN AND BUT IS A CONCEPT THEY COULD IDENTIFY WITH AND USE IN NORMAL CONVERSATION.

How useful is it?
Will they meet it often?
Will they find it in other texts?
Will they use it to describe their own experiences?

How does it relate to other words the children know?

Will it add more dimension to a topic covered?

What does the word contribute to a text or situation?

What role does the word play in communicating?

North Clifton Primary criteria for choosing Tier Two words.

(Source: Robust Vocabulary Instruction - 2nd ed. Isabel L. Beck, Margaret G. McKeown, Linda Kucan, 2013)

Process for vocabulary instruction in the EYFS

① The word is identified as part of a story context (either using Talk for Write, The Write Stuff or using Greg Bottrill's Drawing Club). This provides a situation that is already familiar to children and a rich example of the word's use.

② The meaning of the word is explained in a child-friendly way e.g. *reluctant* means you are not sure you want to do something.

③ Every day the children are asked to repeat the word alongside an action because pronouncing a word helps build a memory for the sound and meaning of the word (Say the word with me).

④ Examples given in contexts other than the one used in the story are provided (You might be *reluctant* to eat a food that you never had before, or you might be *reluctant* to ride a roller coaster because it looks scary).

⑤ Children interact with examples or provide their own examples (Tell about something you would be *reluctant* to do. Try to use *reluctant* when you tell about it. You could start by saying something like "I would be *reluctant* to _____").

⑥ Children say the word again to reinforce its phonological representation and meaning (What's the word that means you don't want to do it?). This vocabulary is reinforced by the adults through high quality interactions during play.

Vocabulary Development
2024/2025

A selection of the planned for Tier Two words identified through texts chosen that develop our termly Create/Discover/Explore themes.

Autumn Term					
Focus text					
Tier two Vocabulary	piping hot leapt tumbled scampered dozing scrambled rose	bay station squeals clinging blare glare peers	wandering joyful obstacle courageous tiptoe panic flee	board city Guide eye-catching capsules Gems sparkles	chilly sparkling Magnificent ancient courageous dazzled exclaim precious
Create Theme:	All About Me!/ Emergency, Emergency!				

Vocabulary Development
2024/2025

A selection of the planned for Tier Two words identified through texts chosen that develop our termly Create/Discover/Explore themes.

Spring Term					
Focus text	Goldilocks and the Three Bears	Space Tortoise	Whatever Next!	Aliens Love Underpants	How to Catch a Star
Tier two Vocabulary	peeped spied cottage sized curious growled fright	rusty search gazing stretched horizon silent as a whisper crumbling	rocketing ascend consume shocked lunar comparison rummage	blinks breeze bleeps Freshly lurks	wished sunrise appear finally grab carefully lasso floating
Discover theme:	Superheroes/People Who Help Us				

Vocabulary Development
2024/2025

A selection of the planned for Tier Two words identified through texts chosen that develop our termly Create/Discover/Explore themes.

	Summer Term				
Focus text	JACK AND THE JELLY BEAN STALK	THE RAINBOW FISH	What the Ladybird Heard at the SEASIDE	The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch	THE NIGHT PIRATES
Tier two Vocabulary	peered offered juicy enormous hesitating cramming banquet thundering	ordinary ocean glide proud wise glare ink	thief whisper coast nautical neighbourly heist booby trap Kind-hearted	industrious concocting devoured appetising ingenious Racked their brains	stealthy adventure bandits crew towards goggled fearsome
Explore Theme:	We're All Going on a Summer Holiday!				

Energising the Verbal Environment

At North Clifton Primary, in addition and complementary to robust vocabulary instruction, we create an "energised verbal environment", a classroom where words are in play almost all of the time - noticed, investigated and savoured - and where every opportunity is taken to add words to children's surroundings.

(Beck et al, 2013)

❖ Adults are the most important element in this environment – alert to opportunities to use sophisticated, interesting and precise language.

❖ Adults are sensitive to words and show their own curiosity about words.

❖ Poetry and rhyme is used to expose children to fascinating and innovative ways of celebrating language, whether this be through poems that lend themselves to performance or poems encouraging children to think about the images that words evoke.

❖ Adults take spontaneous opportunities to introduce new words as they arise, using their professional judgement as to what to do with words as they enter the verbal environment.

Daily Opportunities for a language rich day

North Clifton Primary School
MIGHTY OAKS FROM LITTLE ACORNS GROW

- Daily whole class shared reading
- Daily songs, rhymes and poems
- Chatter Groups - small group opportunities for talk
- Rich and varied, meaningful activities and experiences.
- Informal 1:1 conversations - both planned and unplanned
- Listen as well as talk opportunities

Closing the Vocabulary Gap

Vocabulary is developed through the specific areas of learning. Below is the planned for foundational vocabulary needed to prepare the children for their learning in year one.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Scientific Vocabulary	All about me: Body, head, neck, arms, elbows, legs, knees, face, ears, eyes, nose, hair, mouth, teeth, hands, feet Human, animal, pet	Sun, day, moon, light, night, dark Autumn Spring Summer Winter	Seasonal changes: Autumn, day, dark, light, Winter, night, season, Moon, Sun, lighter, darker	Materials same, different, hard, soft, rough, smooth wood, metal, plastic, glass, paper	Secret Garden: tulip, daffodil, crocuses, dandelions, buttercups, daisy, plant, stem, shoot, seed, growth, plant, flower, trunk, branches	Locations: Pond, garden, seaside, habitat, native wildlife, lifecycle, egg, chrysalis, woodlouse, bee, habitats, microhabitats
Musical Vocabulary	Song words, clap, stamp, dance, instrument, drum, tambourine, bells, maracas, glockenspiel, xylophone					
Religious Education	RESPECT Jesus, Bible, Holy book, leader, promise, belief	RESPONSIBILITY Friendship, Diwali, Nativity, Hanukah	RESILIENCE Places of worship church, mosque, synagogue, Chinese New Year	RESPECT Celebration Festival	RESPONSIBILITY Unique, valuable, special, symbol	RESILIENCE Wonder, beauty
Geographical Vocabulary	Exploring maps: direction, feature find, field, house, lake, river, town, village, journey, feature, direction, building, field, house Outdoor adventures: above, aerial, birds eye view, map, Around the World: Identify, look, route, search, photograph, observe, land, mountain, field, desert, countryside, beach, blizzard, polar					
Historical Vocabulary	A long time ago, same, different, change, history, artefact, past, now, modern, old, new					