

Building an Effective School-Wide Vocabulary Development Program to Narrow the Language Divide:

ESSENTIAL PEDAGOGICAL COMPONENTS

In order for students at various proficiency levels to efficiently and effectively acquire critical vocabulary for academic purposes, they must:

1. Be regularly assigned a variety of materials across the subject areas and held accountable for actually reading, so they reap the lexical benefits
2. Read increasingly more informational texts than narrative texts
3. Have regular opportunities to engage in "narrow reading"- tackling two or more selections on a focused non-fiction topic (e.g., sweatshops, SARS) - to maximize their vocabulary exposure and conceptual foundations through recurrent words, and to more realistically simulate the literacy demands of research, higher education, and the workplace
4. Be taught words that matter most for academic purposes, including both standards-based lesson terms and high-utility academic vocabulary
5. Receive systematic planned, dynamic, and recognizable vocabulary instruction across the subject areas
6. Be taught words in a contextualized manner, drawing upon familiar language and accessible examples, that helps them connect the new to the known and establishes a powerful semantic connection
7. Be guided in developing productive word attack skills and study strategies
8. Be placed in planned and highly structured and guided daily contexts that hold them accountable for using target vocabulary in speaking and writing
9. Be assessed meaningfully and routinely on words that matter for academic purposes, including standards-based terms and high-utility academic vocabulary