

Vocabulary Activities



Reading Activities for the Home



- Read Aloud:** Continue to read aloud to your child even after he/she is able to read independently. Choose books above your child's level because they are likely to contain broader vocabulary. This way, you are actually teaching him/her new words and how they are used in context.
- Preview Words:** Before reading to or with your child, scan through the book, choose two words that you think might be interesting or

unfamiliar to your child. Tell your child what the words are and what they mean. As you read the book, have your child listen for those words.

- Hot Potato (Version 1):** Play Hot Potato with synonyms. Choose a word, and then your child has to think of another word that means the same thing. Take turns until neither player can think of another word. For example, you may say, *cold*, and your child might say, *freezing*. Then you could say, *chilly*, and so on. Try the game again with antonyms (opposites).
- Hot Potato (Version 2):** Play Hot Potato with categories. For younger children, the categories can be simple: pets, clothes, family members. For older children, the categories can be quite complex: the Revolutionary War, astronomy, math terms.
- Word Collecting:** Have each family member be on the look out for interesting words that they heard that day. At dinner or bedtime, have everyone share the word they collected and tell what they think it means. If the child shares an incorrect meaning, guide him/her to the correct meaning. Try to use some of the words in conversation.
- Introduce your child to a variety of experiences to help build background knowledge he/she can use while making sense of print by taking him/her to the park, museums, the zoo, etc.
- Discuss opposites (antonyms).

Vocabulary Activities—continued



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- Discuss positional words such as beside, below, under, over, etc. Make it into a game at dinner by asking your child to place his/her fork in different places in relation to his/her plate. For example, "Put your fork above your plate."
- Use the language of books such as author, title, illustrator, title page, etc.
- Discuss ordinal words such as *first*, *last*, *beginning*, *middle*, etc.
- Talk about how things are similar/alike as well as how things are different. For example, "How is a dog like a cat? How is a dog different from a cat?"
- Use a variety of words to describe feelings and emotions. For example, the way your child feels when he/she is happy. You can validate his/her feelings by saying, "I'm so glad you're joyful today! You sure look happy!"
- Trips to everyday places build vocabulary. Discuss what you are doing and seeing as you are going through the store. For example, "I'm here in the bakery. I can find donuts, cookies, and bread." Ask your child, "What else do you think I can find here?"



- When you read a book about a topic, ask him/her to tell you all the words related to it. For example, if you read a book about a dog, he/she might say dog, puppies, toy, food, play, or leash. Add other words to help expand upon what he/she says.
- When you read a book, ask your child to identify categories for words he/she has read. For example, if you read a book about pumpkins, you could put the words pumpkin, leaf, stem, and seeds into a category about the parts of a plant.