

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction for Adults with Reading Difficulties

University of Wisconsin - Whitewater

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Agenda

- Welcome and introduction
 - a. Materials for this session:
 - i. Slide deck → <https://bit.ly/ZepSlides>
 - ii. Handouts → <https://bit.ly/ZepHandout>
- Learning objectives
- The role of vocabulary in reading comprehension
- Selecting words in text (SWIT)
- Explicit vocabulary instructional routines
- Session wrap-up

Welcome!



Dr. Lauren Zepp (she/her)

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Learning Objectives

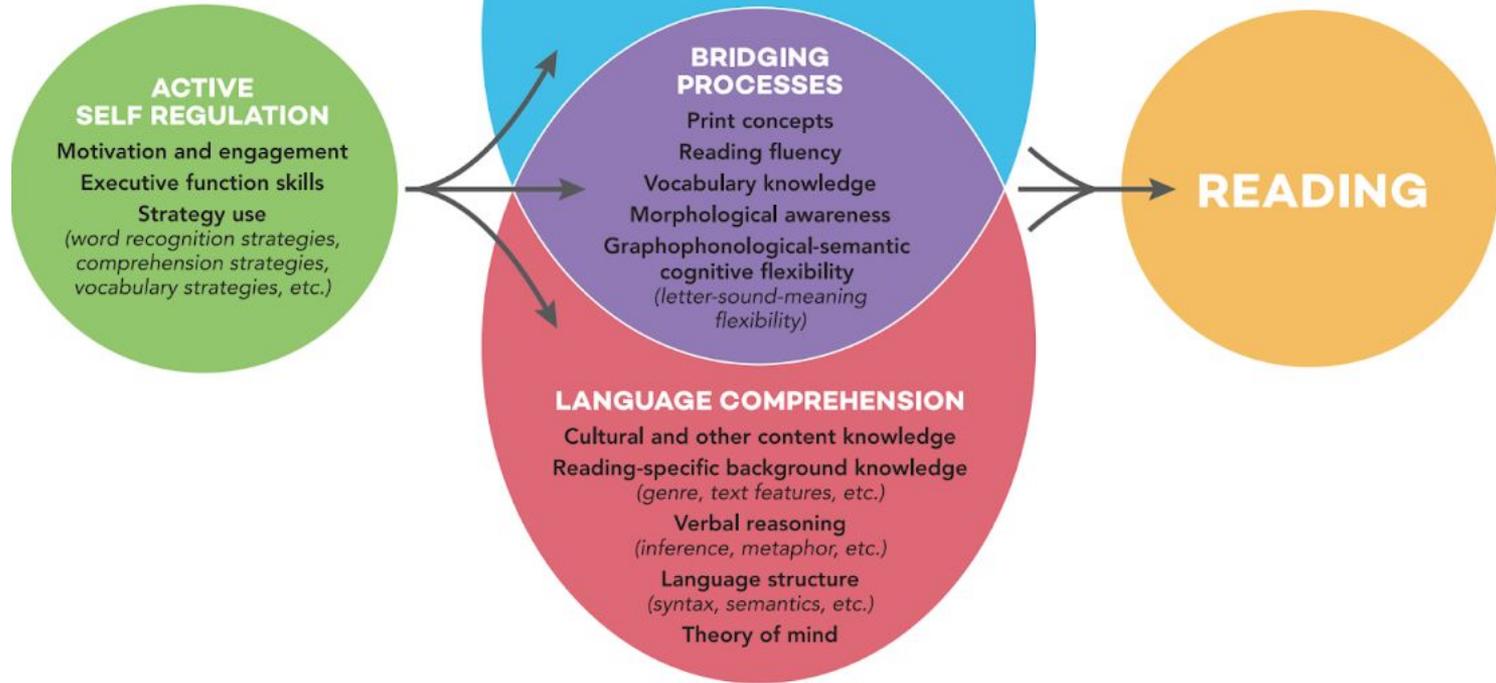


The activities in this session will prepare you to:

- Define the tiers of vocabulary in texts.
- Explore how to select useful vocabulary from texts.
- Practice instructional routines for explicitly teaching useful vocabulary to support students' language and reading comprehension.



This is a reader model.
Reading is also impacted by text,
task, and sociocultural context.



Vocabulary



- Vocabulary is the words that are understood and used in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.



Types of Vocabulary

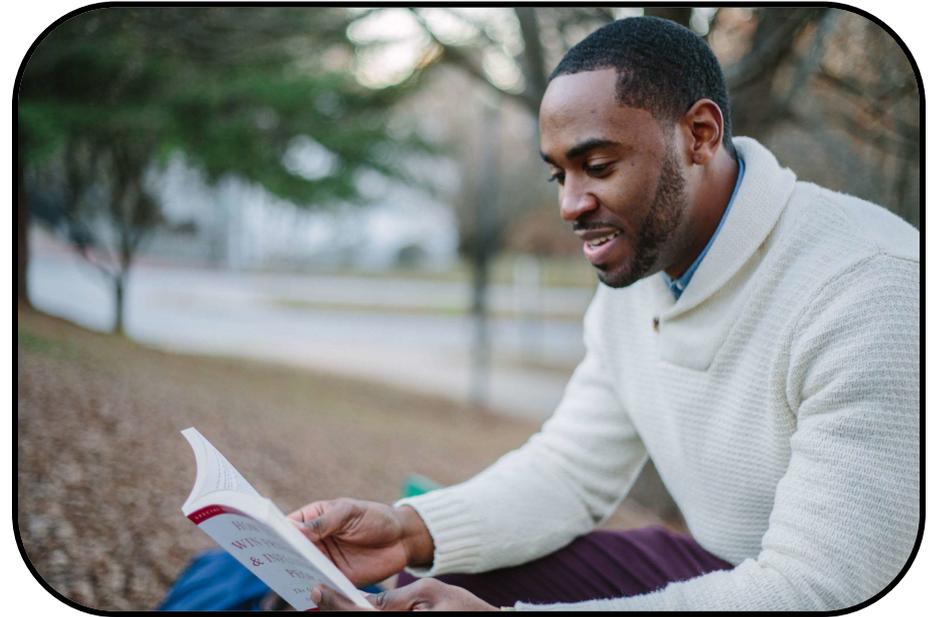


	Receptive Vocabulary	Expressive Vocabulary
Sounds 	listening 	speaking 
Print 	reading 	writing 

Vocabulary & Comprehension



- Vocabulary knowledge is one of the **most significant predictors** of reading comprehension
- Receptive vocabulary is particularly critical



Direct Vocabulary Learning



Word Learning Strategies

- Teach students ways to learn the meaning of new words
 - a. Dictionaries
 - b. Morphemic analysis
 - c. Using context clues

Specific Word Instruction

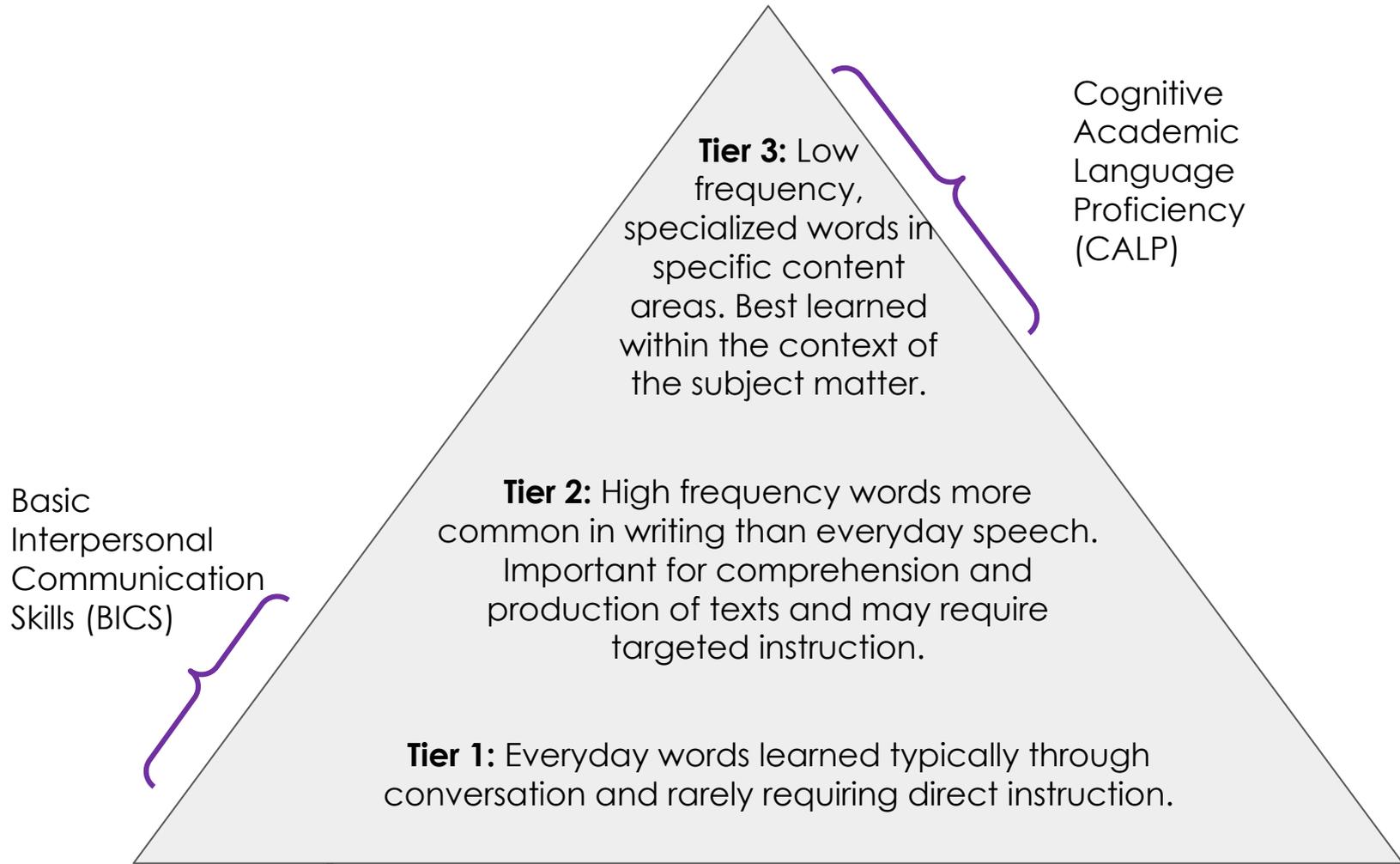
- Directly teach the meaning of selected words
 - a. Pre-teach specific words to foster vocabulary learning and improve comprehension
 - b. Actively engage students in using new vocabulary words
 - c. Provide repeated exposures to new vocabulary words

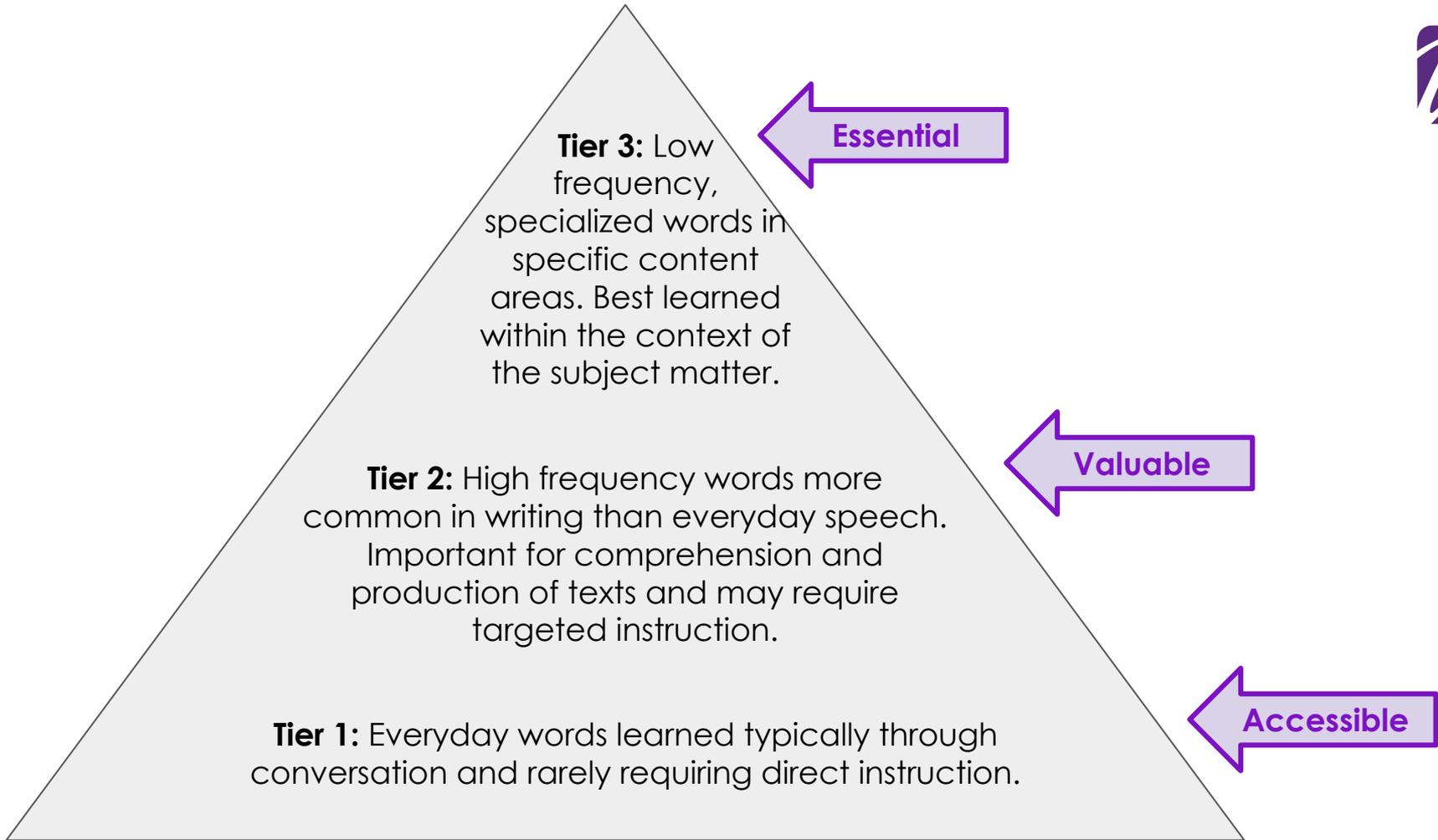
Selecting Words for Instruction from Text (SWIT)

Rationale



- Explicitly teaching words from text is an evidence-based strategy for improving reading comprehension
- Flexible instruction
- This approach works with any text
- Allows for intentional scaffolding to support students





Tier 1 / Accessible Words



- More common or higher frequency words in spoken language
- Usually do not need to be explicitly taught
- Some learners need explicit instruction in these words
 - a. Students with limited vocabulary knowledge
 - b. Older students learning English
 - c. Students with language delays or disabilities

Tier 2/Valuable Words



- Have broad, general utility for students' reading and writing and occur frequently in writing
- Can be described or explained with Tier 1 words
- Often need to be explicitly taught
- Determined in relation to text and vocabulary sophistication of students
- Students' zone of proximal vocabulary development



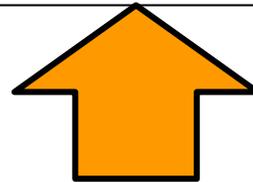
Tier 3/Essential Words

- Domain-specific vocabulary
- Relevant to only one subject area
- Crucial for comprehending texts
- Almost always need to be explicitly taught
 - a. Pre-teaching Tier 3/Essential Words before reading helps scaffold comprehension

Three-Tiered Vocabulary Examples



Content Area	Tier 1/Accessible	Tier 2/Valuable	Tier 3/Essential
Geometry	shape	triangular	isosceles
Anatomy/ Physiology	blood	circulatory	aorta
English/ Language Arts	conversation	dialogue	denouement
History	freedom	abolition	manumit



Identifying Tier 2/Valuable Words



- **Utility:** characteristic of written text, appear across content areas, can be used by students to describe their experiences
- **Conceptual understanding:** general concept is known, but Tier 2/Valuable words provide greater sophistication, specificity, or nuance of meaning and use
- **Instructional potential:** multi-dimensional words that appear in a variety of contexts

Activity: SWIT

Let's Practice SWIT



1. Read the Newsela article “Why Some Flowers Greet Us Each Spring”

2. Identify the following in the article:
 - a. At least 4 Tier 2/Valuable words
 - b. At least 2 Tier 3/Essential words

Identifying Words - Newsela



Tier 2/Valuable	Tier 3/Essential

Identifying Words - Newsela



Tier 2/Valuable	Tier 3/Essential
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- evolved- anew- sprout- wither- clusters- scarce- resources- species- cautious- devote- dormant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- annuals- biennials- perennials- botanical- Monocarpic

SWIT Instruction



1. Powerful instruction (robust) [direct instruction]

2. Brief explanation [direct instruction]

3. Infer meaning from context or by applying structural analysis [indirect instruction]

**Students need to be taught how infer meaning from context or apply structural analysis*

Brief Explanation



Teacher provides a quick explanation

- Example: Word **nonliving** (Tier 1/Accessible) 4th grade passage “It’s the Circle of Life”
- Student reads, “An ecosystem is the network of all of the living and nonliving things in an area.”
- **Teacher:** Nonliving might sound like it means the same as dead, but it doesn’t. Nonliving means things that were never alive such as rocks or water. What’s an example of a nonliving thing?
- **Student:** Sand
- **Teacher:** Yes. Sand is nonliving because it was never alive.

Powerful (Robust)



- **Capture** the word meaning within the context of the text
- **Contextualize** the meaning using examples from the text and to foster generalization outside of text
- Provide a **student-friendly definition** to explain the word in everyday language

Capture



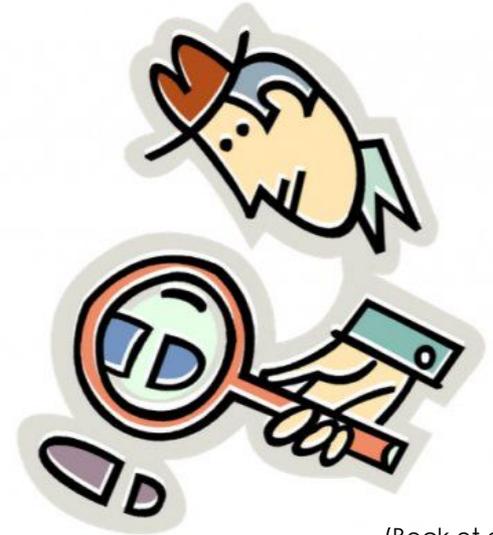
- **Capture** the word meaning within the context of the text
 - a. Explain the word, not simply define it
 - b. Capture the essence of the word by describing its use in the text
 - c. Ask the students to repeat for proper pronunciation



Contextualize



- **Contextualize** the meaning using examples from the text and to foster generalization outside of text
 - Explain the word using the example provided in the text
 - Explain the word using examples from outside the text that would be familiar to the learner



Student-friendly Definition

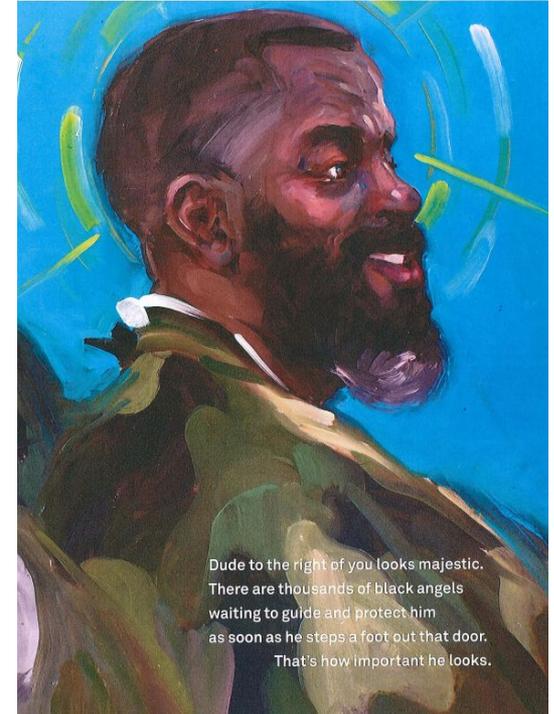


- Provide a **student-friendly definition** to explain the word in everyday language
 - a. Often a condensed version of the explanation
 - b. Use Tier 1/Accessible vocabulary
 - c. Easily repeatable

Powerful (Robust)



Capture	Contextualize	Student-Friendly Definition
<p>In the picture the man next to him has gotten a haircut and looks <u>majestic</u>. Due to his <u>majestic</u> haircut he looks important. He looks <u>majestic</u> therefore there are thousands of angels waiting for him when he walks out the door.</p>	<p>When something is <u>majestic</u> it is something so beautiful it is almost magical. A bald eagle soaring through the air is <u>majestic</u>. A waterfall shimmering in the sun is <u>majestic</u> and grand. A horse's hair blowing in the wind while it is running is <u>majestic</u> just like the man's hair.</p>	<p><u>Majestic</u> means something that is so beautiful that it is almost magical.</p>



Practice: SWIT Instruction

SWIT Instruction



Word	Type of Instruction	
	Brief Explanation	Powerful (Robust)
evolved		X
anew	X	

Brief Explanation	Powerful (Robust)
<p>Anew means happening again.</p>	<p>Capture: The article tells us that some plants die after one season, but other plants have <u>evolved</u> to come back year after year. <u>Evolved</u> means that the plants have changed over time to live longer.</p> <p>Contextualize: Human beings <u>evolved</u> from other forms of primates like chimpanzees. Horses have <u>evolved</u> to become bigger over time. The student's writing <u>evolved</u> as they learned more about writing stories.</p> <p>Student-Friendly Definition: <u>Evolved</u> means something that changes over time.</p>

Let's Practice SWIT - Instruction



1. Decide how you would teach the Tier 2 and Tier 3 words on the next slide.

Consider:

- i. Which words have the most instructional potential?
- ii. Which words have the highest utility for learners?
- iii. Which words could be easily and quickly explained?

Word	Type of Instruction	
	Brief Explanation	Powerful (Robust)
sprout		
annual(s)		
biennial(s)		
foxglove		
clusters		
perennial(s)		
scarce		
resources		
species		
cautious		

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clusters	X	
perennial(s)	X	
scarce		X
resources		X
species	X	
cautious		X

Let's Practice SWIT - Instruction



1. Using the words **clusters** and **resources** create **2-3 bullet points** about how you would teach that word
2. Record your selected words and bullet points on the provided graphic organizers

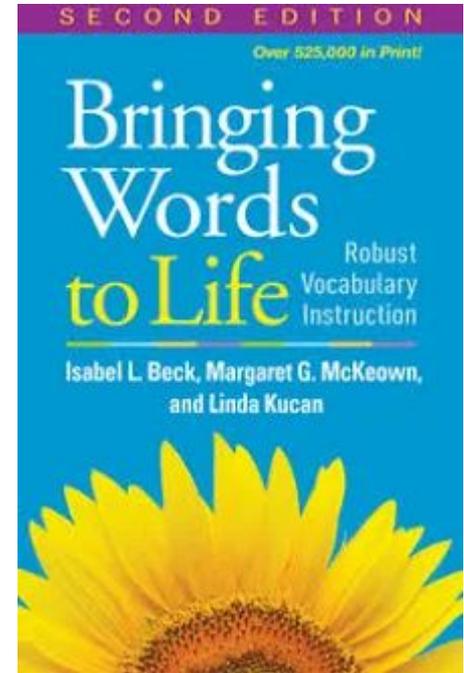
Brief Explanation	Powerful (Robust)
clusters	resources

Brief Explanation	Powerful (Robust)
clusters	resources
Groups of things close together	<p><i>Capture:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Annuals put all their resources into making seeds. <p><i>Contextualize:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Plants use water, sunlight, air- Cars use electricity or gas- Valentine's use paper, markers, glitter, glue <p><i>Student Friendly Definition:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Something that you use or need

For Continued Learning



- Cox Campus Module: [Vocabulary Instruction](#)
- Reading Rockets Module: [Vocabulary](#)
- Swanson, E., Vaughn, S., & Wexler, J. (2017). [Enhancing adolescents' comprehension of text by building vocabulary knowledge.](#) *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 50(2), 84-94.



For Continued Learning



- [UW-Whitewater's graduate certificate in dyslexia and language-based learning disabilities](#)
 - a. 15 credits
 - i. Neurology of Dyslexia and Language-Based Learning Disabilities
 - ii. Science of Reading I: Linguistics, Phonics, and Interventions
 - iii. Science of Reading II: Vocabulary, Morphology, Comprehension, Writing
 - iv. Assessment of Dyslexia and Language-Based Learning Disabilities
 - v. Practicum in Structured Literacy
 - b. Fully asynchronous and online
 - c. Award-winning faculty
 - d. IDA Accredited Plus program



Learning Objectives



The activities in this session prepared you to:

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- Explore how to select useful vocabulary from texts.
- Practice instructional routines for explicitly teaching useful vocabulary to support students' language and reading comprehension.



Thank you for your
participation!

Contact Information

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