



Malden Public Schools Title I Parent Connection

Learning New Words

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Students who know the meaning of many words are often better readers. With a large vocabulary, students will comprehend more of what they are reading.

Parents and caregivers can help build their children's vocabulary. The most important way children develop their vocabulary is through reading and for younger children being read aloud to.

Talk to your children. Children will increase their vocabulary by listening to the people around them. In the car, turn the radio off and talk. Ask them about their day. Ask them what they liked most and what they would like to change. Tell stories. At home, turn off the TV and talk. One of the best places is at the dinner table.

To help your child learn new words, pick a word that is "sophisticated" language that they are likely to see in many situations, for example, the words cozy, complete, connect, or delight. Create a definition that uses everyday language that your child will understand. For example, cozy means comfortable. Or, delight means to make very happy. Use the word over and over again in many different situations. Exaggerate the word when you use it. For example, your bed is so warm and cozy. Or, do your pajamas feel cozy? It takes from 6 to 20 times using a word for children to learn it.

Play show and tell. Whenever you go somewhere, collect something and bring it back home. It could be a rock from the playground, a flyer from the supermarket, or a wrapper of something you ate while there. Be creative. Later, when the family is all together, share the objects, explaining why it is important. Collect the treasures in a box and pull them out in a month to share stories.

Take turns to play "Word of the Week." For a week, someone in the family has chosen a word. Write the word on a card and put it on the front door, the bathroom door, kitchen cabinet door, or the refrigerator where everyone will see it. Everyone in the family must try to use the word as often as possible. Post all the words on a kitchen cabinet door and keep trying to use the words.

Most of all, enjoy learning and playing with words.

