Using visual prompts to teach children how to learn new words as a critical thinking tool for independent word learning

Pip St. John
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www.wordle.net

What it does:
The PTV provides a structured and principled approach to demonstrating, modelling and teaching children, especially those with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), how to learn new words. Its aim is to support and scaffold the naturalistic way teachers already discuss new words and hone and develop their existing vocabulary teaching and learning strategies. It provides teachers and children with a practical framework upon which to develop critical thinking skills and tools for independent word learning. It also allows teachers to reflect on their day-to-day practice and focus on the key ‘goldilocks’ words needed by their children to effectively understand the topics in their classroom. Furthermore it reinforces the importance of developing word knowledge to improve and enhance listening and future reading comprehension.
How it works:

- The use of symbols and pictures using Communicate in Print 2 (CIP2 www.widgit.com) is embedded throughout the prompt cards to support teaching children how to learn new words.
- The key is adult modelling of these principles in a small intervention (Wave 3 group) and their generalisation throughout their whole class (Wave 1) curriculum to support the children’s increased exposure to the word and support their comprehension.
- Symbols are deliberately used to encourage children to think about the different features of a word tapping into their semantic, phonological and perceptual word knowledge. The majority of symbols are used to guide children’s thoughts so are not necessarily a direct iconic representation.
- The PTV prompt cards are presented in different formats using CIP2; A4 for use on the wall, A5 on a washing line or small strips for use in the games. An A4 adult prompt ‘how we learn new words’ learning wheel/mat is provided as a word document.
- There are three steps/differentiation in both the prompt cards (colour coded) and adult word wheels.
- The PTV resource also provides an informal and easy way to evaluate the outcome of intervention through using a word learning score (WLS) procedure developed by the author.

This resource has grown from practical class based work with children of all abilities and across all age ranges. It has been proven to be highly effective for children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), and for those with out-of-age related performance in terms of word knowledge and comprehension skills. It has been developed by the author over many years of professional and academic practice, and in collaboration with specialist speech and language therapists, community speech and language therapists and teachers.

riend it aims to make learning new words fun!

The principles of this pre-teaching vocabulary resource lie firmly rooted in evidence-based practice. A synthesis and amalgamation of the key principles of vocabulary teaching and learning were carried out by the author as part of an MSc in Language and Communication Impairment at The University of Sheffield in 2010. It proved to be statistically significant in both improving children’s word knowledge skills and the generalisation of these skills to untaught words. It also significantly increased overall phonological awareness skills, particularly syllable and initial sound awareness. In addition the resource positively impacted on teacher confidence, vocabulary teaching skills and classroom delivery.

It has been trialed across a range of schools and settings in the North West of England and the MSc research findings presented as a workshop at Warwick University NAPLIC conference April 2011.

What people say about it:

- “Thought it would just be for children with SEN but think it would be really useful for whole class vocabulary” (KS1/2 teachers)
- “Why didn’t I know about this before – not just for SEN children - could use the activities as part of a guided reading session.” (KS2 teacher)
- “Never been shown how to teach vocabulary and yet so important, especially how to work with a small group to help them learn how to learn new words & improve their vocabulary.” (KS1 teacher)
- “Step 1 works well with all reception children and I use the word wheel as an adult prompt throughout continuous provision.” (Foundation Stage teacher)

Warwick University NAPLIC conference workshop delegates:

- “Fabulous to hear of a practical intervention grounded in theory. I shall be introducing this on Monday”
- “Very practical – will be able to used back at base in mainstream, SRP and outreach”
- “Relevant to both primary and secondary school students and very thought provoking.”
- “Brilliant. Make so much sense. I’ve been looking for something like this for many years. Resources are lovely and how nice that someone wants to share for the good of the children regardless of money.”
Rationale Pre-Teaching Vocabulary (PTV)

Using visual prompts to teach children how to learn new words as a critical thinking tool for independent word learning

The rationale behind this pre-teaching vocabulary (PTV) resource has been developed by the author over many years and in collaboration with specialist speech and language therapists and teachers. It has grown from practical class based work with children of all abilities and across all age ranges and has proven to be highly effective, especially for children with speech, language and communication needs and for those children with out-of-age-related performance in terms of word knowledge and comprehension skills.

It aims to support and scaffold the naturalistic way teachers already discuss new words in their classrooms by providing a structured and principled approach to word learning, ensuring effective storage and retrieval of new words in child’s mental lexicon. The aim is for teachers to use the PTV resource to hone and develop their existing vocabulary teaching and learning strategies. In addition it provides them with a framework upon which to develop a child’s critical thinking skills and independence as learners by modeling how to learn new words.

Children entering our schools with ‘out-of-age’ related levels of vocabulary are vulnerable within the educational system. Vocabulary knowledge is a strong indicator of academic success and vital to success both within and outside school (Beimiller and Slonim 2001; Clegg et al 2009). Hart and Risley (1995, 2003) identified poor vocabulary knowledge as a primary cause of academic failure. Furthermore, growing up in disadvantaged circumstances can restrict a child’s pre-school vocabulary learning, which is likely to hinder their literacy and mathematical development once in school (Snowling et al 2001; Locke, Ginsborg and Peers 2002; Locke and Ginsborg 2003; ICAN 2006; Rose 2006; Washbrook and Waldfogel 2010). In addition, weak oral language skills are also likely to cause underachievement in comprehension (Snowling et al, 2001).

The principles of this PTV resource lie firmly rooted in evidence based practice. A synthesis and amalgamation of the key principles of vocabulary teaching and learning were originally made by the author in the production of these Pre-Teaching Vocabulary (PTV) materials as part of an MSc in Language and Communication Impairment in Children at The University of Sheffield (McKeown 1991; McKeown et al 1985, Stahl and Fairbanks 1986; Bryant and Goshwami 1990; Dole et al 1996; Beck et al 2002; Blanchowicz & Fisher 2000,2004; Beck et al 2002,2007 and 2008; Biemiller 2003, 2004 and 2005; Elks and McLachlan 2005 & 2008; Lubliner and Smetana 2005; Parsons et al 2005, Stahl & Stahl 2004, McCartney et al 2005, Nash and Snowling 2006, Ouellette 2006, Bowyer-Crane et al 2008 and the Language 4 Reading Project 2004-2008 and 2009-2012 Nuffield Foundation). The practical applications of these principles have been extended further to create this PTV resource and ensure differentiation for delivery with a whole class, a small group and/or individual children. Furthermore the use of symbols and pictures to support and scaffold learning is embedded throughout the PTV prompt cards, each with specific questions tapping into a child’s semantic, phonological and perceptual word knowledge (Widgit Symbols©Widgit Software2009).


Biemiller, A. (2003) Vocabulary: needed if more children are to read well Reading Psychology 24, 315

and E. Kasne’enui (Eds) Vocabulary Instruction: Research to Practice New York: Guilford


Language 4 Reading Project 2004-2008 and 2009-2012 (Nuffield Foundation) www.york.ac.uk/psychology/research/groups/crl/research/nuffield-language


What to do first

1. Print out a set of all resources and become familiar with the rationale and procedure used for the principled approach of pre-teaching vocabulary.

2. Be aware that you will need time to reflect upon your practice and the words you select. Remember you will be showing children how to learn new words in order to teach them independent word learning strategies; you are modeling a principle they can use and apply to all unfamiliar words.....so go slowly and tread carefully!!!

3. Choose one curriculum area and follow the instructions on page 7 when deciding which words to select. Some words, especially Tier 2 /3 words need thinking about carefully prior to use in order to get your 'head around them'.

4. The hardest thing is deciding on the words you choose to model this principle; ask yourself this question "How often will the child be able to use this word in their everyday life and in school?" Analyze your word lists in terms of:
   i. Which words can be categorised as Tier 2 / 3 words?
   ii. Which Tier 2 / Goldilocks words are necessary for understanding the topic / comprehending concepts
   iii. Are there any other words needed for comprehension? Which ones?
   iv. Are you sure they know the basic, Tier 1 words?

5. On the basis of your analysis,
   i. Which words will need brief attention
   ii. Which words will you give more explicit teaching – a selection of both Tier 2 / 3 words

6. Print out the listening rules prompts, matt laminate and use for all whole class, group and individual activities to develop children’s active listening skills

7. For the Dice (naming) games cut out each of the dice fronts and stick on A5 envelopes. Laminate and chop off the top of the envelope to make a pocket into which you can place the photograph or symbol of the word

8. Find a fishing rod, a feely bag, a dice, paper clips, a red, a green and a purple felt tip pen plus paper, a topic scrap book and a container to store all the PTV resources

9. Print out PTV Step 1 resources and matt laminate and move on to preparing Step 2 and 3 when appropriate

Please be aware that the Widgit® symbols have been selected, not as direct iconic representations but as prompts to guide children's thinking about words & their linguistic features i.e.

"What do we do with it?" prompt card (FUNCTION of a word)  - do we make it? do we eat it? do we play with it?

"What sort of thing is it?" prompt card (CATEGORY of the word)  - is it an animal? do we eat it? do we travel in it?

“Is it a short, medium or long word?” prompt card (SIZE of word) is it the same size of cat / carpet or table (on adult prompts) /caterpillar?
So, which words (PTV)

Using visual prompts to teach children how to learn new words as a critical thinking tool for independent learning

- Choose one curriculum topic area and select a range of words the children will need to know – appropriate for your children, including the relevant verbs / action words.
- Divide the words into the 3 categories using the idea of ‘tiers’ or levels of words.
- Working on the Tier 2/ Goldilocks words can make the biggest difference to children’s understanding of a topic – although avoid words which are similar,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1 words</th>
<th>Tier 2 words - ‘Goldilocks’ words – these words expand children’s general language repertoires.</th>
<th>Tier 3 words – needed in the context of the theme / topic or subject domain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>These are basic words commonly used in spoken language. They are heard frequently, in numerous contexts, often reinforced by non-verbal gestures &amp; signs. Tier 1 words rarely require explicit explanation and teaching in school, however it cannot always be assumed that this type of word is frequently heard in the home.</td>
<td>These words are not considered as ‘common’ words as they appear in more specialist situations rather than in conversation. They are not too easy, not too hard, just ‘right’ to enhance children’s understanding (Beck, McKeown &amp; Kucan 2002)</td>
<td>These words appear in more specialist situations and rarely in general use in everyday conversation. They tend to be limited to specific domains and subject areas (science, mathematics etc) and are central to building the knowledge and conceptual understanding of the subject / content. This subject specific vocabulary must be taught as they are the key words of the curriculum area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. bed, happy, boy, hamburger, clock</td>
<td>They are not the most basic way to express an idea; they represent the more sophisticated vocabulary of the written word. They are vivid verbs, adjectives, adverbs and specific or abstract nouns, the very words which aid reading comprehension and can have an impact on the quality of the spoken and written language of children. e.g. warm, darker, nearly, remarkable, mischievous, awe, light, insist, admire, compare, gentle, obstacle, sarcastic, meticulous</td>
<td>e.g. metamorphosis, symmetrical, peninsular, parallel, conceptual, archaeologist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suggested criteria for choosing which Tier Two words to teach.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual understanding</th>
<th>Instructional potential</th>
<th>Importance and utility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do the children already have ways to express the concepts? Would they be able to explain these words using the words they know already?</td>
<td>Can the words be worked with in a variety of ways so that children can build rich representations of them and make connections to other words and concepts?</td>
<td>Choose the words that are characteristic of confident language users and which appear across areas of learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Pick only six to ten Tier 2 / Goldilocks / Tier 3 words to generate pictures / symbols to explicitly model each group session, and make sure they are useful across areas of learning. (For a whole class select only one or two words to model the word learning strategy )
- Use the prompt cards at all times to give visual reinforcement of the strategy and also use when asking the child to recount/ recall information about the word.

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## Plan your curriculum vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Topic area</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>NC Year</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1 words</th>
<th>Tier 2 Goldilocks words</th>
<th>Tier 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyday spoken language for a child of this age. Used at home and in daily interactions. Most children are exposed to little else. BICS</td>
<td>Not too easy, not too hard, just right to move understanding forward. Likely to be encountered again. Average adult has a good level of knowledge of the word. CALPS</td>
<td>Average adult does not have much knowledge of the word. Topic / subject specific. CALPS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With thanks to S. Parsons & A. Branagan 2010
Prompt cards (PTV) for use with children & young people

Pre-teaching of curriculum vocabulary can be done in various ways:

- Small Wave 3 group / guided reading/ guided talking session (20 minutes)
- Individual
- used with a whole class during the introduction to any lesson / learning opportunity when new and recently acquired vocabulary is being used (5 minutes)

This pre-teaching strategy incorporates the following areas:

- Word knowledge
- Phonological awareness
- Kinesthetic / visualisation

**Step 1** prompt cards (6)

1. What is it?
2. What do we do with it?
3. Where do we find it?
4. What sort of thing is it?
5. How many beats in the word?
6. What sound does it begin with?

**Step 2** prompt cards (9)

1. What does the word mean? Tell me about it. Describe it.
2. What do we do with it?
3. Where do we find it?
4. What category? What do you already know? What does it link with?
5. What the word sounds like? It has ….beats. It rhymes with……
6. What sound does it begin with?
7. Is it a short, medium or long word?
8. Can you do an action?
9. What does it look like? Draw a picture

**Step 3** prompt cards (12)

1. What does the word mean? Tell me about it. Describe it.
2. What do we do with it?
3. Where do we find it?
4. What category? What do you already know? What does it link with?
5. Find a word which means the same / different
6. What the word sounds like? It has ….beats. It rhymes with……
7. What sound does it begin with?
8. Is it a short, medium or long word?
9. Can you do an action?
10. What does it look like? Draw a picture
11. Picture it in your head
12. Put the word in a sentence
Word Wheels (PTV)

‘How we learn new words’ learning mats / wall posters for adults

These are aide memories / prompt word wheels for adults to use within whole class delivery and in conversations with children to develop and extend exposure to a word.

Eventually move from using the individual prompt cards with children to using the appropriate word wheel as a learning mat (A5 or A4 for desk copy, A3 for class wall) and model how use as an aide memoire.
PTV What to do
Small Group / Wave 3 work

Aims

• To directly pre-teach children the vocabulary and concepts for each topic underway in their classroom in order to increase exposure to the word and improve comprehension
• To model the vocabulary learning strategies as a way of helping the pupils to become active vocabulary learners and to think about the words they hear – differentiate according to ability and age – Steps 1, 2 & 3
• Daily 10-15 minute sessions using key words from one topic area – use the principle in all curriculum areas to reinforce the principle of how we learn new words.

Teaching
You will need to collect a magnetic fishing rod, a dice, a feely bag, some paper clips, a green, a red and a purple felt tip pens plus a supply of plain paper and make a set of Dice Pockets/wallets.

Generate objects, photographs and/or pictures of the identified Tier 2 / 3 key words, with which to play the following three games / activities in one session:

1. Naming Game (Dice Game and Fishing Game activity)
2. Question Game (to develop word knowledge)
3. Word Knowledge Map (using one of the key words)

1. Naming Games

**Dice Game** (naming of topic nouns & verbs):
Place ‘key word cards’ or pictures in the envelopes labelled with dice numbers and name the category of all the pictures in them. Take turns to throw the dice and take a picture out of the envelope with the same number on it. Then ask child to take out one picture from the envelope and say "You’ve got…….." (pause to give the child time to respond but if they don’t, or wrongly name the item say "It’s……… so that you are prompting for the article + the word). Use both the key word and category as often as possible to increase exposure to the word.

**Fishing Game** (naming of topic nouns & verbs):
Put a paper clip on each picture, show the card, give the category and name it then place face down on the desk. Use a magnetic fishing rod and let each child have a turn to fish for a picture. See if they can name it by saying You’ve got…….. “ (pause to give the child time to name the word but if they don’t name it you say “It’s ……” so that you are prompting for the article + the word). Use both the key word and category as often as possible to increase exposure to the word.
2. **Question Game: ‘What’s in the bag?’**

Place key word pictures or objects in a ‘feely bag’. Take turns to select an item. Talk about what the item looks like, feels like or what parts it has, make links and associations (Nouns and verbs)

**Step 1 prompt cards must be used in this order:**

**Word knowledge**
1. What is it?
2. What do we do with it?
3. Where would you find it?
4. What type of thing is it?

**Phonological awareness**
5. Clap the beats in the word
6. What sound does it start with?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
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<tr>
<td>As before explicitly remind the children what they are doing and which category the key words are from – in order for them to correctly store the words in their memory. Give the feely bag (containing one or two objects/pictures) to one of the children. Ask them to take out something to do with the relevant category. Show the child the first question card and ask them to name the object by saying “What is it?” pause and provide name if not known. Use both the key word and category as often as possible to increase exposure to the word.</td>
<td>As before explicitly remind the children what they are doing and which category the key words are from – in order for them to correctly store the words in their memory. Rephrase the questions on the prompt cards i.e. “What is this person/ people/animal doing?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Ask them to pass the item/object to the child next to them (adult to name every time item is transferred to increase exposure to new word) and then you ask that child the question “What do we do with ……..?” If they don’t know the answer help them with a forced alternative question (e.g. “Do we eat it, is it an animal, travel in it or wear it?”). Again use both the key word and category as often as possible to increase exposure to the word.</td>
<td>As before explicitly remind the children what they are doing and which category the key words are from – in order for them to correctly store the words in their memory. REMOVE this question prompt when working with verbs – not appropriate as already explored in question 1.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Ask them to pass on the picture to the next child, again using the word, and you ask “Where would you find ……..?”. As before use both the key word and category as often as possible to increase exposure to the word.</td>
<td>As before explicitly remind the children what they are doing and which category the key words are from “Where would you find someone / something ……..?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Carry on in this way until you have asked the other questions “What type of thing is ……..?” (e.g. food, animal), i.e. category – a lot of help and support may be needed here for some time with adult modelling how to classify and categorise.</td>
<td>As before explicitly remind the children what they are doing and which category the key words are from “What type of thing is ……..?” i.e. It is an action</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Clap the beats in the word (Allow all children a turn at clapping the word.) If the child has difficulties clapping the word ask the child’s permission to take their hands and clap the word with them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. “What sound does it begin with?” Provide lots of modelling as this is purely an auditory activity to raise &amp; reinforce the child’s phonological awareness of the beginning sounds in words. The adult’s role is to emphasise the act of listening for the initial sound and to support the child in becoming aware of hearing these beginning sounds in words.</td>
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**Introduce the Step 2 and 3 prompt cards once the children are secure at Step 1 – the rate and pace of introduction will need to be differentiated according to age and ability.**
3. Word Knowledge Map

Adult to teach the children how to mind map with the outcome to show how much a child knows about a word. Demonstrate and encourage children to make word maps to show their word knowledge using the format scripted below as this directly links to the PTV prompt cards and learning mats.

Please be aware that some phonemes have different grapheme representations e.g. ‘aeroplane’ ‘onion’. To avoid confusion, try to use words which have simple grapheme/phoneme correspondence when making a word knowledge map (See Letters and Sounds)

**What to do**

Adult to draw a picture of the word, and write the word, in the centre of a page (or whiteboard if demonstrating to a bigger group) Use the relevant prompt cards (Step 1, 2 or 3) to ask the children questions about the topic word i.e.

1. On the left hand side add information to demonstrate **word knowledge** i.e. pictures / words or phrases about meaning, function and location and words which mean the same – draw using **green ‘branches’**
2. On the right hand side add information to demonstrate **phonological awareness** i.e. pictures / words or phrases about how the word sounds or the structure of the word, plus words that rhyme (encourage the children to make up words as well real words as below)- draw using **red ‘branches’**
3. On the bottom draw **purple branches** for **kinesthetic and visualisation** aspects of the word and smaller purple branches and draw pictures / words or phrases of **anything else** about the word:
   - Type of word
   - Word(s) with an opposite meaning
   - Other links / actions

Keep the word knowledge maps and the topic pictures to compile a scrap book/picture reference resource in the classroom and/or for individual children. Then made a picture dictionary using the information obtained through the word knowledge map to generate a definition plus a picture/CIP2 symbol or the child’s drawing of that topic word.

Using CIP2, generate a symbol supported word list, or booklet. of the PTV words to help with the children’s writing when back in class.

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(PTV) Small Group / Wave 3 delivery - checklist

What you need / make sure you’ve got before you start a group:

1. Pictures, photographs and/or objects for the curriculum topic
2. Naming Game resources – dice envelopes, dice, fishing rod and paper clips
3. Question game resources - Feely bag and vocabulary prompts
4. Word Knowledge Map - Plain paper or topic book, red, green and purple felt tip pens
5. Remember to **continually** use the category and key word during the activities to increase the children’s exposure to the word.
6. At the end of the topic collate the word knowledge maps and pictures into a topic reference / scrap book and picture dictionary for the children to refer to at a later time.
7. Using CIP2 generate a symbol supported word book or word list of the PTV words to help with their writing when back in class.

As the children become more confident and automatically apply the PTV principle in their own learning of unfamiliar words the adult will still need to refer to the approach and unobtrusively monitor children’s application and use.

(PTV) Word Knowledge Record Keeping

For each topic covered keep a record the date and the number of sessions for each child, topic & category as well as listing the selected words on a weekly basis

i.e.

Date Week commencing:……………

Topic / category:………………………

Selected Tier 2/ 3 words:……………………………………………………………

As the topic may extend over several weeks, gradually remove the picture/ objects of the words the children have learnt and replace with additional words related to that topic.
Whole class input developing a ‘Word Aware’ classroom

Aims

- To become an automatic way of introducing new words / key vocabulary across the curriculum, within a supportive context, in order to enhance the learning and comprehension of all children.
- To model a range of strategies for learning and remembering new vocabulary using PTV strategy visual prompt cards (A5 for a washing-line and A4 as a frieze).
- Be able to differentiate your delivery & scaffold and support the questioning of children with out-of-age-related comprehension and vocabulary levels.
- To become more aware of the Tier 2 /Goldilocks words as these words expand children’s general language repertoires.
- Chose only 1 or 2 Tier 2 /3 words to model the principles of word learning - display the key words (with pictures) for the lesson/topic on the classroom wall or whiteboard.
- Use a poster, Velcro board, trouser coat hanger or washing line (see below) with spaces to attach the individual PTV strategies as these are taught. Put the heading ‘How to learn new words’ and explain to the children you are teaching them how to learn any new word.
- Slowly introduce the individual PTV Step 1 strategy cards on a washing line or as wall display, starting with the semantic (green framed) and then the phonological (red framed) features demonstrate / model the strategy and let all the pupils try it for the key word that has been selected.
- Build up exposure by re-visiting previous PTV strategies and then add on the new one, moving into the next step, then finally the kinaesthetic/visualisation features (purple framed). Refer to the strategies throughout the working day and across the curriculum.
- Each time you do this activity start by asking if anyone can remember any of the things that help us to learn and remember new words.
- Eventually move onto using the ‘How we learn new words’ adult word wheel as a learning mat and/or key rings to promote independence and self directed learning.
Extension Activities to develop a ‘Word Aware’ classroom

Lotto
Make 3 lotto boards and 3 sets of cards using the Tier 2 words the children need to know to access their lessons; the word, a symbol/picture of the word and the definition used in the classroom (not a dictionary definition). The lotto board is placed in the middle of the group. Take turns to pick up a picture/word card and match it to the correct word, picture or definition on the chosen lotto board. Explore children’s word knowledge using the PTV prompt cards or learning mat.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>represents</th>
<th>analogue</th>
<th>24 hour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 hour</td>
<td>digital</td>
<td>minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seconds</td>
<td>hours</td>
<td>length of programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Word Study Journals /Picture topic dictionaries
Children develop their own personal book of words that they have learnt over time using these strategies - just record the word, their definition and a picture; however some pupils, especially those with SLCN, may also need an additional, individual, picture dictionary to aid word retention and memory.

The Strongest Link
Find 10 to 12 pictures that link with a topic. Name the pictures and put them face down on the table. Take turns to pick up 2 pictures. Name the words and think of something that links the pictures. The child with the strongest link keeps the pictures!

Wuzzles (word puzzles)
Word of the week
Word detective
Word games & puzzles
Web based games & puzzles

and many more word games/activities

Also see Parsons and Branagan ‘Word Aware: A whole school approach to developing vocabulary”
Word Learning Score (PTV) – monitoring progress

**Rationale**
Use the Word Learning Score (WLS) checklist **once a term** to measure the word learning progress of those children receiving regular small group PTV work. Rest assured that most children will be generalising and applying the principles of word learning across all curriculum areas, especially in classrooms where the washing line and A4 prompt cards are modeled and used within the whole classroom environment.

The WLS can be used to support IEP target setting with the percentage scores providing levels of existing skill & expected outcomes with a measurable evidence of progress i.e. improve WLS by 20% over an agreed time phase. It is also recommended that the PTV group work is recorded on a schools provision map.

**What to do**
- Use the selected words for one topic / curriculum area (number of words is dependent on children’s ability with maximum of 10 words)
- Collect pictures, objects and/or items for the selected words (which will then be used within the PTV sessions)
- Put the key words on the WLS checklist (see below)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>NC Year:</th>
<th>Curriculum area:</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Word Learning Score (WLS)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Name it</th>
<th>Give a meaning</th>
<th>Clap syllables</th>
<th>Beginning sound</th>
<th>Indicate word length</th>
<th>Function + action</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Make a link</th>
<th>Synonym</th>
<th>Re-assessment WL Score 4 weeks after the topic delivery</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic word</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<td>3 (30%)</td>
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<td>7 (70%)</td>
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- For each word, ask questions about the different features (e.g. ‘what is it? what’s the beginning sound? etc as on the prompt cards) to explore the child’s knowledge about that particular word –
  - If they say something about that feature then put a tick in the appropriate white box (See above)
  - If they are unable to give a response then give them the answer and leave the appropriate white box empty (See above)
  - Add up the total number of ticks i.e. 3 and record as a raw score and percentage i.e. 3 (30%) (See above)
- **FOUR** weeks after the topic has finished ask the children the same questions and record their responses in the green boxes. Again add up the raw scores and convert to percentages (see above).
- This four week gap is essential as it will reflect the child’s retention of information and depth of secure word knowledge.
### Word Learning Score - Word Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Name it</th>
<th>give a meaning</th>
<th>clap syllables</th>
<th>beginning sound</th>
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<th>synonym</th>
<th>Word Learning Score (WLS)</th>
<th>Re-assessment WL Score</th>
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**Total**

| /100 | /100 |
Appendices

Listening Rules
Dice Fronts
Step 1 Word Wheel Adult prompt
Step 2 Word Wheel Adult prompt
Step 3 Word Wheel Adult prompt

Listening Rules

How we learn new words

good sitting good looking good listening
Dice Game
Step 1
How we learn new words

What is it?

What do we do with it?

Where do we find it?

What sort of thing is it?

Clap the beats in the word

What sound does it begin with?
How we learn new words

1. What does the word mean?
   - Tell me about it.
   - Describe it.

2. Where do we find it?
3. What category? What do you already know? What does it link with?
4. What sound does it begin with?
5. What the word sounds like.
   - It has ..... beats
   - It rhymes with....... 

6. Is it a short, medium or long word?
7. Can you do an action?
8. What does it look like? Draw a

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STEP 3
How we learn new words

Where do we find it?
What does the word sound like?
It has ..... beats. It rhymes with……..
Is it a short, medium or long word?

What sound does it begin with?
What category? What do you already know? What does it link with?

What the word sounds like. It has ..... beats. It rhymes with……..

Find a word which means the same / means the opposite

What the word looks like?
What does it link with?

Put the word in a sentence

Can you do an action?

What do we do with it?

Tell me about it. Describe it.

Picture it in your head. Visualise

Put the word in a sentence

Picture it in your head. Visualise

Can you do an action?

What does it look like?
Draw a picture