The Wonder of Words: A Community-School Partnership to Improve Vocabulary
MCRR Summer Workshop
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The Wonder of Words
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Trimethoprim
Session Overview

Three Objectives

1. Quick review: Context for the Community-School Partnership

2. Deep[er] dive: Why vocabulary?

3. Deep dive: Our experiences and lessons learned

Also covered:

– Feedback/input from attendees
– Q & A
What ServeMinnesota Does

Today’s example: Reading Corps
Reading Corps Master Coach

Data-Based Decision Making

Evidence-Based Interventions

Implementation Fidelity

School Internal Coach
6-9 hours per tutor per month
Reading Corps Concept (in Context)

Illiteracy:
- 75% of the unemployed
- 85% of juveniles who appear in court
- 60% of prison inmates
The Goal of This Partnership

- Reading Corps Master Coach
- School Internal Coach: 6-9 hours per tutor per month
- Data-Based Decision Making
- Evidence-Based Interventions
- Implementation Fidelity
Why Vocabulary: In a Practical Sense
For Young Readers

What it’s like to read…if students know only the 500 most frequent words

Could it be an _______? The year before, _______ had seen one for the first time when his mother took him to a _______ _______ in ________, ________ _______. He had ________, ________, as the _______ a _______ by _______ on the _______ of a _______ that was ________ on the _______. Now _______ an _______ was right here in ________, and about to ________ over his house. Not ________ to _______ a thing, ________ the _______ and ________ up the _______ of the house to its _______. From there he had a good _______ of the ________, ________ the ________ place. And in the ________, ________ ever ________, he saw the ________.

Mike Graves, Univ. of Minn.
Why Vocabulary: In a Practical Sense
For Young Readers

What it’s like to read...if students know only the 1000 most frequent words

Could it be an _______? The year before, _______ had seen one for the first time when his mother took him to a _______ in ________, ________. He had watched, ________, as the _______ gave a _______ by _______ on the _______ of a _______ that was _______ on the ground. Now maybe an _______ was right here in ________, and about to _______ over his house. Not _______ to _______ a thing, _______ opened the window and _______ up the _______ of the house to its _______. From there he had a good view of the _______ River, _______ past the _______ place. And in the sky, coming ever ________, he saw the _______.

Mike Graves, Univ. of Minn.
Could it be an airplane? The year before, Charles had seen one for the first time when his mother took him to a flying _______ in ________, Virginia. He had watched, ________, as the _______ gave a _______ by _______ oranges on the _______ of a _______ that was _______ on the ground. Now maybe an airplane was right here in ________, and about to fly over his house. Not _______ to _______ a thing, Charles opened the window and climbed up the _______ roof of the house to its _______. From there he had a good view of the _______ River, _______ past the _______ place. And in the sky, coming ever closer, he saw the plane.
Why Vocabulary: In a Practical Sense

For Young Readers

What it’s like to read…if students know the 4000 most frequent words (only a handful left “unknown”)

Could it be an airplane? The year before, Charles had seen one for the first time when his mother took him to a flying exhibition in Fort Myer, Virginia. He had watched, enthralled, as the pilot gave a bombing demonstration by dropping oranges on the outline of a battleship that was traced on the ground. Now maybe an airplane was right here in Minnesota, and about to fly over his house. Not wanting to miss a thing, Charles opened the window and climbed up the sloping roof of the house to its peak. From there he had a good view of the Mississippi River, flowing past the Lindbergh place. And in the sky, coming ever closer, he saw the plane (Giblin, 1997, p. 3).
Proponents of decoding are quite willing to concede that if there is no comprehension, then reading is not taking place; if \( R = D \times C \) and \( C = 0 \), then \( R = 0 \). So the fact that someone can decode but fail to read a language which they do not know is far from an embarrassment to us; rather, it is exactly what we would predict. Decoding is not sufficient; comprehension is also necessary.

At the same time, we argue that the converse holds as well: Comprehension is not sufficient, for decoding is also necessary. Knowing a language does not suffice to make one literate; the average 5-year old is living proof. Without the ability to decode, no amount of linguistic comprehension will make a reader; if \( R = D \times C \) and \( D = 0 \), then \( R = 0 \), whatever the value of \( C \).

It is this simple view, that \( R = D \times C \), which should be the focus of the debate over decoding. It offers considerable meat for debate, for it has a number of testable implications. For example, the simple view clearly asserts that reading ability should be predictable from a measure of decoding ability (e.g., the ability to pronounce pseudowords) and a measure of listening comprehension.

Gough & Tunmer, 1986
Early prediction of reading comprehension within the simple view framework

Hugh W. Catts1, Sarah Herrera2, Diane Corcoran Nielsen3, Mindy Sittner Bridges3

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Abstract  The simple view of reading proposes that reading comprehension is the product of word reading and language comprehension. In this study, we used the simple view framework to examine the early prediction of reading comprehension abilities. Using multiple measures for all constructs, we assessed word reading precursors (i.e., letter knowledge, phonological awareness, rapid naming) and oral language at the beginning of kindergarten and reading comprehension at the end of third grade. Word reading was also assessed at the end of second grade and served as a mediator. Structural equation modeling showed that precursors of word reading and language comprehension accurately predicted reading comprehension in both mediated and non-mediated models. The results have important implications for the early identification of reading comprehension difficulties.

Keywords  Reading comprehension - Simple view of reading - Early identification

Especially Vocabulary

KEY FINDING
3rd Grade comprehension was predicted with 80% accuracy(!!) from kindergarten performance on foundational and comprehension measures.
Why Vocabulary: In an Obvious Sense

For Young Readers
Our Approach to Partnership

PILOT (1 school; 20 students)
- Develop and test prototype assessment and intervention materials.
- Implement initial intervention protocols (materials and training modules)
- Field test

DESIGNED-BASED RESEARCH ITERATIONS

ITERATION 1 (15+ schools; 750+ students)
- Complete full set of assessment and intervention materials.
- Scale to broader range of school and student demographics
- Initial impact evaluation

ITERATION 2 (20+ schools; 1000+ students)
- Revise all materials to include and better represent cultural diversity
- Improve behavioral engagement/delivery protocols
- Randomized controlled trial impact evaluation

ITERATION 3 (20+ schools; 1000+)
- Develop better vocabulary assessments
- Measure outcomes over full year
- Finalize and standardize material revisions

Partnership Roots
Year 1
Year 2
Year 3
Year 4
Year 5

ServeMinnesota
The power of AmeriCorps. The power of you.
Repeated Read Aloud

FEATURES (across grades)

✓ Repeated reading of same book
✓ Explicit instruction with active participation of students
✓ Multiple exposures to targeted word in the specific context of story, followed by use of word in more generalized contexts
✓ Deep processing activities of targeted words with active student engagement
✓ Extended learning through word discussion outside of tutoring session and an homework activity.
Repeated Read Aloud

LOGISTICS (across grades)

- small group
- 10-12 words per week
- Preselected books, words, definitions
- Preprinted 1,500 vocab cards (photo/definition)
- Script for teaching words in context of reading story each day of week
Repeated Read Aloud Books
Pre-printed PreK Vocabulary Cards

grocer
a person who sells food at the store (p. 5)

Bunny Cakes
(PreK; last revised 2018-19)
Pre-printed K Vocabulary Cards

front of vocabulary card

back of vocabulary card

wait

stay ready for something (p. 4)

The students wait on line for water.

I Like Me (K; last revised 2018-19)
The boy can recognize himself in the mirror.

Clean Your Room Harvey Moon
(1st; last revised 2018-19)
1st Grade Repeated Read Aloud

Part 1: Model and Introduce

T (Tutor): This word is ‘mural’ (*using word card cuing procedure). What word?
S (Students): mural
T: Yes, ‘mural’
T: ‘Mural’ means ‘a large picture painted on a wall’ (student-friendly definition).

*T shows two pictures of the word and briefly discusses relevance to story

T: In Our Story... the students paint a mural for the library.
T: Say ‘mural’ with me...
S: Mural

Part 2: Read Story
During reading, students give active gesture when tutor reads targeted words
Part 3: Discuss Words In and Out of Context

T: Let’s think more about what ‘mural’ means. In our story...‘the students paint a mural. That means the students paint a large picture on a wall’.

T: Let’s practice saying our word in sentences: The man painted a mural on the wall.
S: The man painted a mural on the wall.

T: [Show vocab cards with corresponding pictures. Tutor has students describe their visualization of the sentence to support comprehension.]

T: Paint a mural on the wall of your school.
S: Paint a mural on the wall of your school.

T: [Show vocab cards with corresponding pictures. Tutor has students describe their visualization of the sentence to support comprehension.]

T: **Think Pair Share:** Imagine you are standing outside with lots of paint and paintbrushes when your school principal asks you to paint a mural on the school wall. Describe what your mural would look like. Tell what colors you would use.
DAY 5: Wkly Mastery Assessment

- 10 words
- 2 questions per word
- Student must answer pair of questions correctly to earn a point
- Examples for the word: mural
  - Murals are small paintings on little pieces of paper. (N)
  - Murals are large paintings on the wall of a building. (Y)
Three Main Areas of Growth: Leaning into the Challenge

- Additional Tutor Training: Small Group Behavior Support
- Cultural Diversity & Inclusion of Materials
- New Assessment measures
Provide Additional Tutor Training: A Framework for Positive Behavior Support

- Prevent
  - Control the controllable!
- Teach
  - Teach the behavior you want to see!
- Reinforce
  - Reinforce (praise) for engaging in appropriate behavior
Priority of Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

• Important for readers to see themselves in the story line (Cartlidge, Keesy, Bennett, Ramnath, & Council, 2016; Katz & Chard, 2000; Nelson, 1989)

• Having background knowledge can help students make connections and help with comprehension and related vocabulary (National Center on Accessing the General Curriculum, 2004; Smith & Lewis, 1985)

• Associated higher outcomes across a variety of academic areas when culturally relevant text is incorporated throughout the curriculum (Gay 2000, Ladson-Billings, 1994, Nichols, Rupley, & Webb-Johnson, 2000)
Typical Book Representation*†

MAVRIC Student Representation

- African/African American: 9%
- American Indians/First Nations: 2%
- Asian/Pacific Americans: 8%
- Latinos: 6%
- White: 75%

MAVRIC‡ Book Representation

- African/African American: 21%
- American Indians/First Nations: 3%
- Asian/Pacific Americans: 5%
- Latinos: 5%
- White: 66%

NOTES:
*Book Representation indicates children’s books by and about people of color
†Statistics from Cooperative Children’s Book Center (UW-Madison)
http://ccbc.education.wisc.edu
‡MAVRIC includes 66 books used in PreK – Grade 1

Read Aloud books reflecting cultural diversity of our students
Repeated Read Aloud Books
Design New Vocabulary Assessments

• Researcher Designed measures with content proximal to words taught during intervention
• Pre & Post Test of random selection of words from the Read Aloud books used in the intervention
• K Measure: Tell me everything you know about the word _______. What does the word ________ mean?
• 1st Grade Measure: Tell me the best sentence you can with the word ________.
• Student responses assigned a score:
  ❖ Score of 0: response doesn’t convey meaning of the word
  ❖ Score of 1: response conveys partial or incomplete word meaning
  ❖ Score of 2: response clearly conveys meaning of word
2017-18 Steps Forward: New Vocabulary Assessments
Small Randomized Control Trial Study

- Kindergarten: Difference in vocabulary growth was statistically different between Treatment and Control groups.

- 1st Grade: Difference in vocabulary growth was NOT statistically different between Treatment and Control groups.
Partnership Takeaways

Learning

1. Actually enacting a data-driven approach with vocabulary is hard.

2. Context matters:
   - Student behavior must be supported.
   - Student backgrounds must be considered.

3. There is potential for a community-supported partnership to impact vocabulary.
Crowd Participation

Questions:

• How are supplemental supports provided for vocabulary in your schools?
• How are data used to ensure supplemental vocabulary supports are effective?
• What resources do you use to ensure books/materials are sufficiently representative and inclusive?
• How do you identify words to teach for students at these ages?
• ???
Questions?

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