

Teaching vocabulary

In their guidance report on developing literacy in schools, the Education Endowment Foundation (2017) recognised the importance of both implicitly and explicitly developing language.

Implicit teaching

To implicitly teach vocabulary, the teacher might model using a word when speaking, point it out during shared reading and use it when modelling or completing shared writing activities. Implicit teaching ensures pupils encounter regular repetition of the word, making it more likely that the word will transition into the pupils' vocabulary.

Explicit teaching

To explicitly teach vocabulary, a teacher would present the word along with explanations and examples of what it means, and then ask pupils to experiment with using the word.

A balanced approach

It is important that you both implicitly and explicitly teach new vocabulary, so that pupils are repeatedly exposed to high-utility and high-frequency vocabulary, in any phase or subject, throughout the school day.

Which words do you need to model and teach?

Isabel Beck and Margaret McKeown (2013) have created a helpful model that splits vocabulary into three different categories -Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3. These are outlined in the figure below.

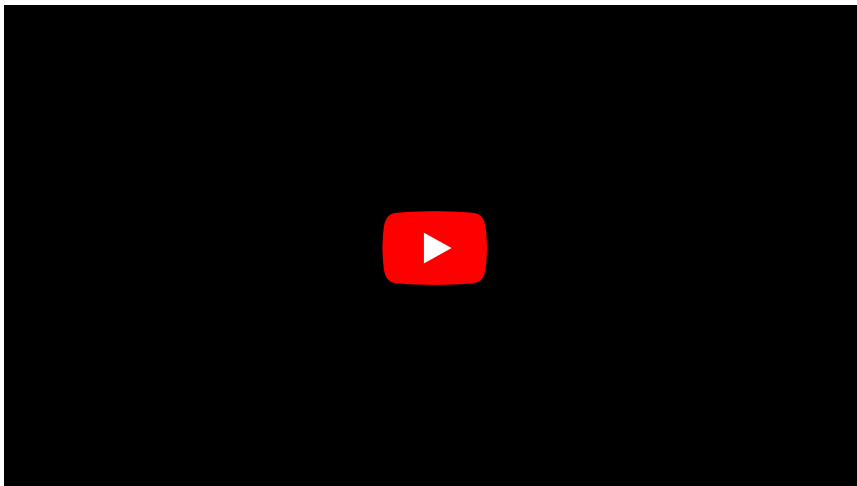


Open the image in a new tab: [Beck and McKeown \(2013\)](#)

'Tiers of Vocabulary', adapted from Improving Literacy in Secondary School (EEF, 2019)

What's the difference between these tiers?

Listen to Kelly Challis explain how each tier is different, and how you might teach them in the classroom. You can record notes using the [notes tab](#) (or your own notebook).



Direct Link: [Tiers of vocabulary - Kelly Challis, Driver Youth Trust](#)
Transcript: [Tiers of vocabulary - Kelly Challis, Driver Youth Trust](#)
([this link opens in a new window/tab](#))

How can you develop pupils' language?

There are a variety of ways that you might develop pupils' language, and this is likely to vary depending on the age range you are teaching. Therefore, the rest of this session has been broken down into two parts:

- **Option 1:** Early Years
- **Option 2:** Primary and Secondary

Please select the page that is most appropriate to the phase that you teach.