InferCabulary

Literacy Brought to Life

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Co-Founders
Silverman & Hanraft, 2011
Existing Pedagogy

BLOOM’S TAXONOMY
prudent  [prood-nt]  adjective

Wise or judicious in practical affairs; sagacious; discreet or circumspect; sober

11th grade words in a definition to “learn” a 6th grade word
prudent  [prood-nt]  adjective

Describes someone who makes smart decisions; wise
Pedagogy Turned Upside-Down

Semantic Reasoning

Inference

General Sequential Reasoning

Word Knowledge

Our Discovery
Semantic Reasoning
Semantic Reasoning

Co-authored by Beth Lawrence & Deena Seifert

Published by Academic Therapy Publications

Norm-referenced

Found high correlation with students who struggle with language and learning
Semantic Reasoning

- Skin
- Peeled
- Kernels
- Removed
Semantic Reasoning is the Secret Sauce in InferCabulary Basecamp
And InferCabulary Climb
Instruction Must Emphasize

1. Active engagement
2. Multiple contexts
3. Simple Language
4. Using visuals
5. Morphology (parts of words)
6. Semantics (word relationships)
7. Kinesthetic (drama)
8. Repetition

Beck & McKeown, 2013
Which Vocabulary to Teach?

Tier 3
- low frequency use
- limited to specific knowledge domains

Tier 2
- high frequency,
- mature language users
- found across a variety of knowledge domains
- coincidence, absurd, industrious

Tier 1
- basic words
- rarely require instruction
- Experienced frequently
- isotope, lathe, peninsula, refinery
- clock, baby, ball, happy, run
Breadth & Depth of Vocabulary
Two Phases of Learning Vocabulary

Fast Mapping (Breadth)

- Ability to learn a new word or concept with minimal exposure to it.
- Overgeneralization or under-generalization.

Extended Mapping (Depth)

- Linking words to other known words. Adds specificity.
After our PD, a high school teacher/learning specialist changed her quizzes to emphasize depth and critical thinking.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What She Had Been Doing</th>
<th>Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multiple Choice Definitions</strong></td>
<td>Rote-memorizers score well ≠ understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor memorizers do poorly (may have understood concept)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Definitions don’t tell if they understand contexts of use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fill in Blank</strong></td>
<td>Word retrieval errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unfamiliar with provided context (no depth yet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Write a Sentence with Newly-Learned Word</strong></td>
<td>Typical instruction ↠ not enough contexts (We assume they have depth we do!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gross errors sometimes show they “missed the boat entirely”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
High School Vocabulary Quiz Part 1
“Deadline” Vocab Quiz Ch. 1-6

Directions: Use your knowledge of the vocabulary to answer the following questions. (2 pts. Each)

1) Circle all words that could describe someone’s Demeanor:
   bewildered  grave  glib  grandeur  peaked

2) Sometimes life is difficult. If, after having a tough time, a person is described as RESILIENT, what is being said about that person’s ability to deal with the situation?

3) Identify a situation in which CANDOR is beneficial.

4) Would you enjoy being at a dinner with someone who likes to PONTIFICATE? Why or why not?
High School Vocabulary Quiz Part 2

Circle the letter of the sentence that uses the word *incorrectly*
(1 point)

a) John had always found math challenging, but after a particularly difficult class, he was sure that Calculus was INCOMPREENSIBLE.

b) My mother claims that she finds it INCOMPREENSIBLE that we love ice cream with our chocolate cake.

c) During this particularly difficulty presidential election, it became clear that many members of both major parties found the stance of people in the opposing party INCOMPREENSIBLE.

d) Even though she had taken years of Spanish, when she travelled to Spain, she found the talking speed of the native speakers made the language INCOMPREENSIBLE unless she asked them to slow down or repeat themselves.
High School Vocabulary Quiz Part 3

Directions: Look at the images provided, then answer the question related to the image (2 pts.)

How is Google portrayed as VORACIOUS in the cartoon?

Why would “ZEAL” be a good name for this line of health food products?
Anecdotal Evidence in a Maryland High School

10th/11th Grade English Classes
Before using InferCabulary, 29% of 10th/11th graders failed vocabulary quizzes that required application of understanding to new contexts.

After using InferCabulary, 86% of students received a 90% or above, and no students failed.

Computer Lab
Given a choice of ten educational tools, students regularly chose InferCabulary through the entire school year.
ERB Testing Scores Improved with InferCabulary

6 students receiving ELA instruction with Learning Specialist scored stanine scores of 5 or below in 2016. After one school year of 20 minutes classroom, and 20 minutes homework 3/month, all students scored stanine of 5 or higher using Semantic Reasoning instruction (InferCabulary).
Questions

This presentation, UVA research study results, and PD materials can be downloaded from InferCabulary.com/resources/
PART TWO
Classroom Use of InferCabulary & Extension Activities
Instruction Tips
## Self-rating Vocabulary Scale

Have your student do a self-rating scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I know it well</td>
<td>I know it, but can’t say what it means</td>
<td>I’ve heard it or seen it, but not sure what it means</td>
<td>I’ve never heard it before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reluctant</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oblivious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prominent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>protrude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use the words that were rated #1 and #2.
Think Aloud Script
Think Aloud Questions During Instruction

Why are ALL of these pictures on this page?

What do I notice about these pictures?

What do the pictures have in common?

How do these pictures relate to the word?

What additional information do the captions reveal about the pictures?

How does my definition compare with this definition?

Should I adjust my thinking about the word?
Noun Definitions
DEFINITION

A __________________ is a kind of ____________

development that ________________

and is or has:

- function
- size
- shape
- color
- goes with
- parts
- smell
- sound
- taste
- temperature
- where

category

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Subcategories Are More Specific Than Categories
Adjective Definitions
Lower Level Adjective Framework Example

- **Puny** describes size that is huge.
- size describes feeling that is smaller than tiny.
- That is huge.
- That is smaller than tiny.
- That is medium.
Ostentatious describes a location describes an attitude of offering to help of being rich of showing off wealth.
Word Continuum

- Hostile
- Unfriendly
- Aloof
- Welcoming
- Cordial
- Affectionate
Questions

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Additional Information
One-on-One: Struggling Student (Language and Inference)
Teacher Experience