

## HOW TO TEACH VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

*Mashxura Xakimova*

*Teacher of English Philology of Namangan State University*

**Abstract:** Understanding why and how to teach vocabulary in context has been quite a controversial topic, so far. Some teachers are still learning to master. One of the main challenges of teaching reading is knowing whether your students are comprehending the text and the vocabulary in it. Often times, we observe how students read effortlessly and fluently a reading passage. We get excited when they decode multisyllabic words with little hesitation. Then we look up from our clipboards and try to check their comprehension through context, asking “Ok, now tell me what that was about.” Comprehension and fluency should be looked at with completely separate lenses. In fact, a student’s reading level may highly decrease when linked directly with comprehension. So what is the point if students are decoding with ease but not comprehending, at all?

**Keywords:** vocabulary memorization, vocabulary instruction, visuals, world connections, application activities, context, comprehension

### Introduction

Vocabulary instruction must always be explicitly taught at all grade levels. We want to teach our students decoding skills and we want students to read effortlessly. But if they aren’t getting the meaning of the words they are reading, what is the true point of our instruction? Becoming an ESL teacher, I have made it a point to be sure I am incorporating vocabulary instruction into my daily lessons with fairly effective materials. What I have found over the years is the following strategies to help build vocabulary no matter what grade level, or level of instruction.

Using visual materials in the passages of vocabulary in context is an applicable method for teachers. Students are more interested in engaging with content that includes visuals. The same as with vocabulary. When students connect a picture to a word, it can really be of a great importance for them to visualize the word and the definition in a more accurate way. In my vocabulary in context resources, I try to make it colorful, not only including a visual, but that visual is a real photograph. Real photographs are also necessary that they help students make text to self and text to world connections.

Providing vocabulary definitions relevant to context also can be of a great importance for vocabulary memorization. There are, literally, several meanings of one unique word. It is part of the reason why English is one of the most difficult languages to learn around the globe. Providing definitions that are relevant to the context you are

reading, will help with fluency and comprehension of the text you are seeking the meaning of. However, many teachers always follow up with discussing other meanings of the word, so that students are aware that there are more than one than the one that is given.

Try to use application activities to be sure that students understand the meaning. Application activities are significantly effective to teaching vocabulary. A definition can be memorized in vocabulary memorization part of you lesson, but until the student is able to use it in his speech or apply it in a sentence, we can not say it has been truly learned. Obviously, the real test is to see if students are able to correctly use the vocabulary in their own day to day conversations. I often reward and stimulate students throughout the week that have used one of our new vocabulary words correctly, at least once.

It is sometimes very helpful to write prompts that utilize the same vocabulary. Another different application activity can be to provide writing prompts that utilize the new vocabulary word. I try to get students use real life experiences in their writing so they are able to see how they work, connecting with the word, and remember it's meaning. This strategy has privileges to be used at any grade level and with any level of vocabulary.

### **Conclusion**

Like learning a new language, full immersion is essential in training yourself to use it independently. Practicing vocabulary in context by using repeated readings of a passage where the vocabulary is embedded, with relevant examples, is highly recommended. Try to always go back and review words you have already learned after you have learned new words so that the new vocabulary has not been forgotten. Practice may not sometimes make perfect, but it does make progress!

Whether you teach high school or middle school, one of the best methods of vocabulary teaching is explaining new words straight from what your students are reading. Or you can try teaching vocabulary from literature to the high level students. Teaching your students vocabulary words that appear in the books they're reading for class is a great way to combine funny stories and vocabulary learning. They can be simple a list of words from each chapter and ask each other to define them. However, your students may not retain the words for fairly long time unless they practice them and demonstrate that they understand their variable meanings.

### **Resources:**

1. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-vocabulary-important-frank-odenthal>
2. <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english>
3. <https://irisreading.com/reasons-why-improving-your-vocabulary-is-important>
4. <https://textinspector.com/vocabulary-in-language-learning>