


# An In-Depth Look at Vocabulary Development and Instruction

Susan J. Chambrè, PhD  
Everyone Reading 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
March 13, 2023

1

1

## What is your teaching lens?



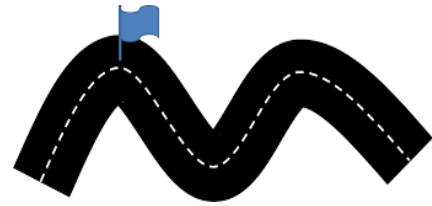
- Elementary School Teachers
- Special Education Teachers
- Preschool Teachers
- Parent
- Related Service Providers
- Administrators/Principals
- Literacy Coordinator
- Other?

MARIST

2

# Roadmap

1. Why is vocabulary important?
2. How do we learn vocabulary words?
3. Current vocabulary teaching practices
4. Classroom-based practices
5. Question & Answer session



**MARIST**

3

# Why Vocabulary Is Important

## Section I

- Part of SOR Model
- Instructional Supports

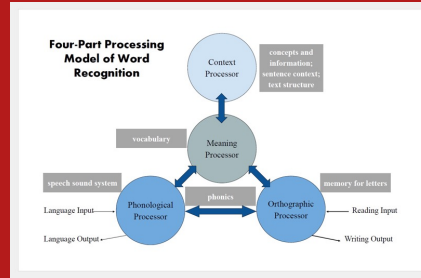
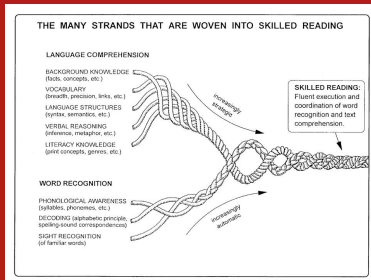


**MARIST**

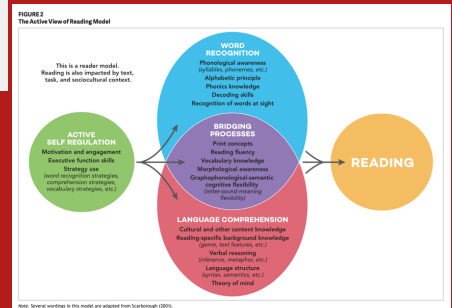
4

# Where does vocabulary fit into SOR models?

Vocabulary knowledge is a central component of reading.



$$D + LC = R$$



5

MARIST

## Vocabulary Instruction Is Important

- Proficient reader = activate multiple knowledge sources
- NAEP (2015,2019) and ECLS-K (2011) results indicated large gaps between high and low SES children with regards to reading achievement and vocabulary skills.
- We need to support all students, particularly:
  - Emergent bilinguals
  - Special needs learners (Ramey & Ramey, 2004; Weizman & Snow, 2001)
  - Children living in poverty (Marulis & Neuman, 2013)
- Vocabulary differences compounded by teacher practices (Duke, 2000; Wright & Neuman, 2014)



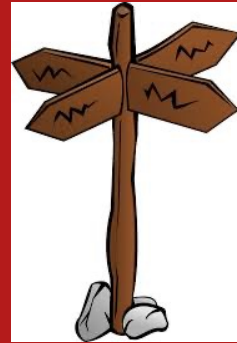
MARIST

6

# How Do We Learn Vocabulary Words?

## Section II

- How do we learn words
- Instruction types
- Breadth & depth
- Stage theory



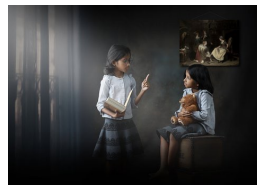
MARIST

7

## Stop & Jot

What do you remember about learning words when in school? Now?

## Possible Responses



MARIST

8

# How We Learn Words

According to Graves (2000), words are learned via:

1. Wide independent reading
2. Instruction on specific words
3. Instruction on word-learning strategies
4. Developing word-consciousness and participating in word-play.

	Expressive	Receptive
Oral		
Print		

MARIST

9

## Incidental or Embedded Instruction

- Independent reading
- Social interactions
- Storybook read-alouds



MARIST

## Explicit Instruction

- Direct instruction
- Contextualized
- Cyclical review
- Embedded throughout the school day
- Print-rich learning environment

(Beck et al. 2002; Blachowicz & Fisher, 2000; Blachowicz, Fisher, Ogle & Watts-Taffe, 2006; Graves, 2000, 2006; Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986)

10

# Your Lexicon

## Breadth

The number of words you know



## Depth

How well you know and can use the word



11

# Application Activity

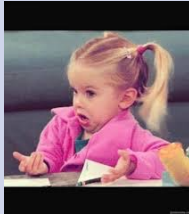

- List other words for the following term: **nice**
- Think of the different meanings for:

**hot**



12

# Stages of Vocabulary Knowledge

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<b>Vocabulary Knowledge Scale</b>				
<b>Dale's Four Levels of Vocabulary Knowledge (1965)</b>	No Idea	Have seen it but not sure what it means	Vaguely know it, can connect it to a concept	Nailed it!

**MARIST**

13

# Application Activity

<b>Word</b>	<b>Level 1 No Idea</b>	<b>Level 2 Seen it, unsure</b>	<b>Level 3 Know it</b>	<b>Level 4 Nailed it!</b>
orthography				
phoneme				
mapping				
sight-word				

**MARIST**

14

# Current Vocabulary Teaching Practices

## Section III

- The tier system
- Orthographic mapping
- Possible new framework



**MARIST**

15

## The Tier System

- Tier II words help students develop school-based or academic vocabulary.
- According to Beck, McGeown, and Kucan (2002), words are divided into three categories or tiers
  - Tier I – Basic words in your vocabulary
    - dog, house, driveway
  - Tier II – Words for mature readers
    - upset, obstacle, grimy
  - Tier III – Content specific words
    - metamorphosis, rivet, waning



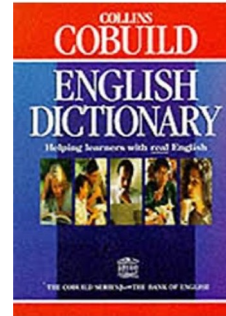
**MARIST**

16



# Student Friendly Definitions

- One sentence definition that describes the word
- Begin with **someone** or **something**
- *Familiar* is something that you already know.
- Give an example:
  - That music sounds *familiar*, is that Shakira singing?
- Create a definition for the word *rancid*:
  - <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english>
  - [www.wordsmyth.net](http://www.wordsmyth.net)

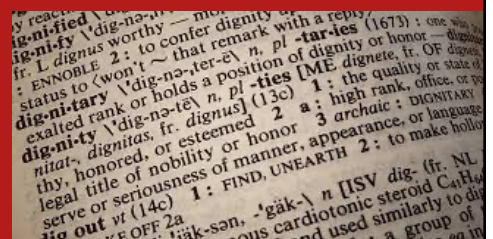


**MARIST**

17

## Criteria For Selecting Tier II Words

- Words should be:
  - Connected to what students know
  - Useful
  - Explain meaning not definitions
  - Used in writing and speaking
  - Conceptual understandings with precise definitions
  - Rich instructional potential so that students can make connections to other texts or situations
- Utility

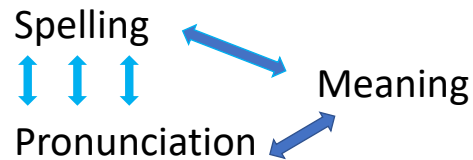


**MARIST**

18

# Orthographic Mapping and Vocabulary Learning

- Connectionist theories suggest that students create amalgams of print, pronunciation, and meaning when encountering novel words (Ehri, 1998, 2005, 2014; Perfetti & Hart, 2002).
- Vocabulary instruction underutilizes the mnemonic value of orthography (Beck, McKeown, & Omanson, 1987; Bravo & Cervetti, 2008; Dale, 1965; Ehri & Rosenthal, 2007; Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986).
- Attention has also been drawn to the vocabulary learning practices of emergent readers (Chambre et al., 2018, 2020; Marilus & Neuman, 2013; Mol, Bus & Smeets, 2008; National Early Literacy Panel, 2009, O'Leary, 2017).



**MARIST**

19

## Mapping Vocabulary

**No Orthography**



**With Orthography**



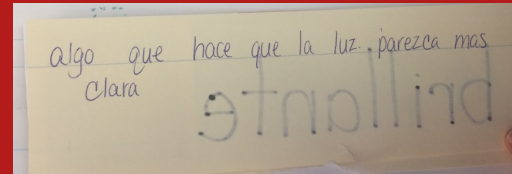
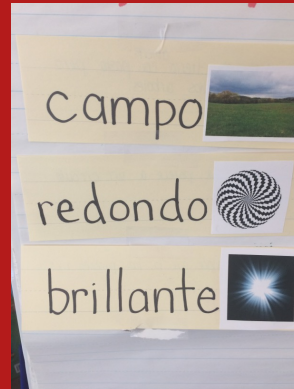
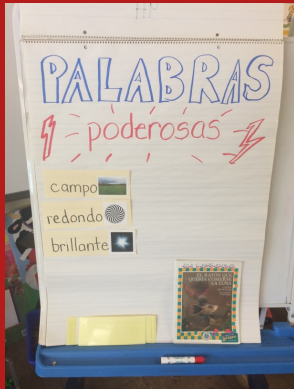
**jib**

**MARIST**

20

# Mapping Vocabulary In the Classroom

## Charting with Orthography



We are on our field trip and driving past the river... [redacted] says "el rio es brillante!" "Es una palabra poderosa!" ❤️❤️❤️

**MARIST**

21

## Show Spellings!

- Amalgamations facilitated vocabulary acquisition when compared to traditional vocabulary instruction methods
- Decoding supports increased vocabulary learning
- Orthographically enhanced vocabulary instruction eliminates access barriers faced by schools with limited funding and resource.



**MARIST**

22

# The Three Word Types

- **Drive-by Words**
  - Words I want them to hear
  - Provide brief explanation and move on
- **Working Words**
  - Words I want them to start to use on their own
  - Are accessible and essential
- **Mastery Words**
  - Words I expected to see in writing and hear in their speech
  - Are valuable and important



**MARIST**

23

## When Thinking About Words

Criteria	Definition
<b>Accessible</b>	Helps narrow gap
<b>Valuable</b>	High utility across curriculum
<b>Essential</b>	Need for this text
<b>Important</b>	Outside text, but key for understanding

**MARIST**

24

# Working Word or Mastery Word

(Graves, 2014)

- **Accessible** - words that are unknown to students with limited vocabulary. Many high achieving students KNOW these words, some do not.
- **Valuable** - words with broad utility known by mature readers. Words viewed through the lens of text and student knowledge.
- **Essential** - words that are crucial for understanding *THIS* text.
- **Important** - words not necessarily in the text but encapsulate key concepts or ideas of the text. Builds knowledge of word meaning or morphology.

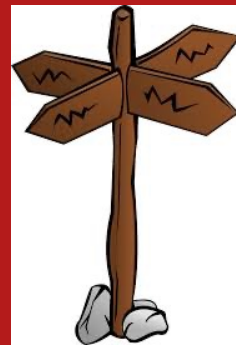
MARIST

25

# Vocabulary Classroom Practices

## Section IV

- Selecting words from text
- Assessment
- Classroom practice ideas



MARIST

26

## Selecting Words

### Which Words Do I Pick?

- Preview text
- Determine what the article/book is really all about
- Create a list of words
- Then sort the words by categories

MARIST

## The Three Categories

### Put

- Drive-by words
  - Embedded definition
- Working words
  - Need for this text
- Mastery words
  - Need for life

27

## Assessing Vocabulary Knowledge

### Word Usage Check List

Student	wiggle	soil	compost
Jose	T	D	D
Bina	DW	DWT	WT
Kaitlyn	DTW	DWA	WAT
Jevon	W	D	

### Word Wizard or WOW Chart

Student	recycle	technology
Bella	✓	
Keisha	✓	✓
Will		

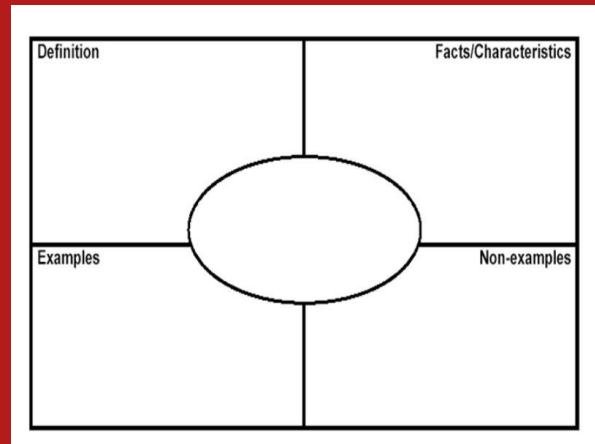
D = Used in discussion  
 W = Used in writing  
 A = applied, T = tested

MARIST

28

# Classroom Practices

<b>Word</b>	<b>Draw a Picture</b>
<b>Provide a Definition</b>	<b>Create a Sentence</b>



**MARIST**

29

## Question & Answer

1. How do I assess student reading comprehension?
  - Should we use drills?
2. Do we focus on one reading comprehension skill at a time or teach what makes sense for a specific text?
3. How do we differentiation for students?
4. Do we focus on reading/decoding before teaching reading comprehension?
5. How do we teach vocabulary in the early elementary grades?

**MARIST**

30

# Thank You!

- Thank you for attending!
- Please contact if you have further questions:
  - [Susan.chambre@marist.edu](mailto:Susan.chambre@marist.edu)

**MARIST**