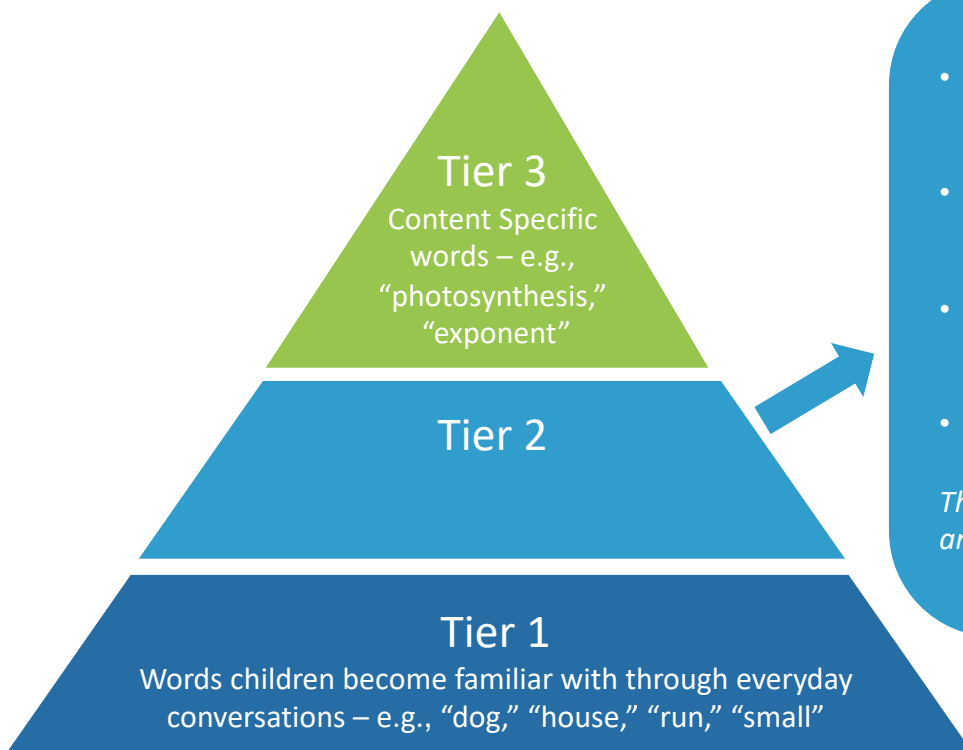


GUIDE FOR SELECTING TIER TWO VOCABULARY

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Tier Two Words versus Tiers One and Three words:

Tier Two words differ from Tier One words (typically appearing in oral conversation and rarely require explicit instruction) and Tier Three words (low frequency and domain specific). Tier Two words can powerfully impact verbal functioning by providing a more robust, rich vocabulary and knowledge of words as students become mature language users.



- Frequent enough that most native speakers are familiar with them, but they require explicit instruction
- Lack redundancy but not so specialized they would be considered “jargon”
- Often not spelled phonetically and thus difficult to decode using standard phonetic rules
- E.g., flutter, mend, resilient

These are the words you read in a book and think, “Oh, that’s a good word!”

Tier two—High Frequency/Multiple Meaning Vocabulary

These words occur often in mature language situations such as adult conversations and literature, and therefore strongly influence speaking and reading. The following is a list of common traits of Tier Two words:

1. Necessary to comprehend the text
2. Contain multiple meanings
3. Used across a variety of environments (generalization)
4. Characteristic of mature language users
5. Increases descriptive vocabulary (words that allow students to describe concepts in a detailed manner)

References:

Baumann, J. F., Ware, D., & Edwards, E. C. (2007). “Bumping into spicy, tasty words that catch your tongue”: A formative experiment on vocabulary instruction. *The Reading Teacher*, 61(2), 108-122.

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2013) *Bringing Words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction* (2nd ed.). The Guilford Press.

Hougen, M. C., & Smartt, S. M. (2020). *Fundamentals of literacy instruction & assessment: Pre-K-6*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Some Criteria for Identifying Tier Two Words:

Importance and utility: Words that are characteristic of mature language users and appear frequently across a variety of domains.

Instructional potential: Words that can work with in a variety of ways so that students can build rich representations of them and of their connections to other words and concepts.

Conceptual understanding: Words that students understand the general concept for but require precision and specificity in describing the concept.

Directions: As you read through the book, write down every Tier Two word you encounter. Afterwards use this template to select the words that require instruction. Read each question and place a check in the column if the answer is “yes.” You should prioritize teaching the words with the most checks.

We recommend the following rule of thumb for number of words taught per text:

- K-2: 5-7 words
- 3-5: 7-10 words
- 6-8: 10-12 words

Word	Do students already have a way to express the concept of this word?	Is this word critical for students to understand the text?	Is this word helpful for students to understand many texts?	Can this word be used in multiple contexts with multiple uses?

References:
 Baumann, J. F., Ware, D., & Edwards, E. C. (2007). “Bumping into spicy, tasty words that catch your tongue”: A formative experiment on vocabulary instruction. *The Reading Teacher*, 61(2), 108-122.

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