

The importance of teaching *vocabulary*

Tamsin Mobbs

English Lead at Kingsnorth Primary CE School

Aims

Identify why learning vocabulary is important

Consider how vocabulary is learnt

Share practical ideas to teach vocabulary

Why is
vocabulary
important?

Learning

Expressing

Sharing

Progression

Why is vocabulary important?

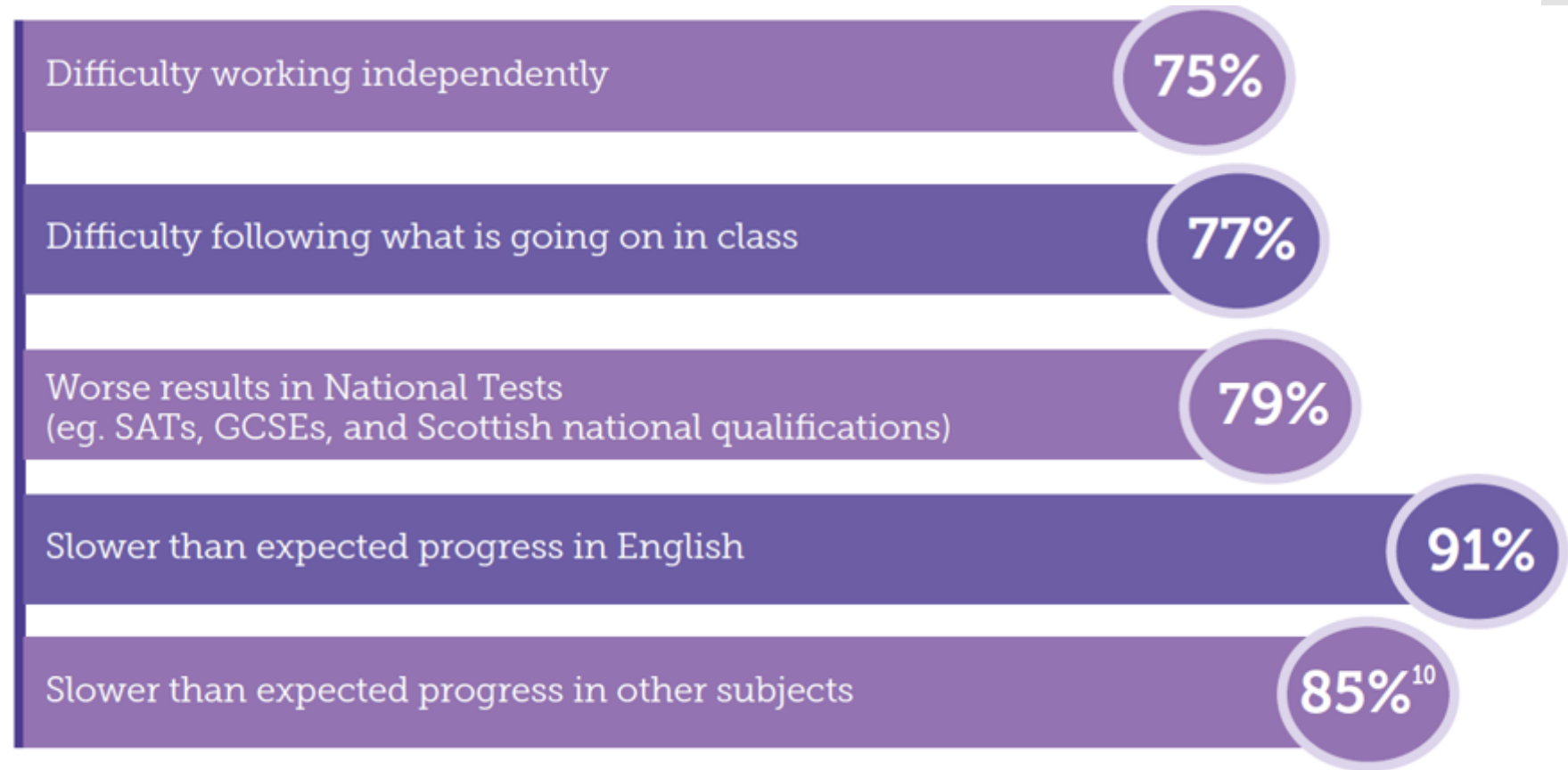
40% of pupils lack vocabulary to access learning

69% of teachers state that the word gap is increasing

(Oxford Language Report, 2018)

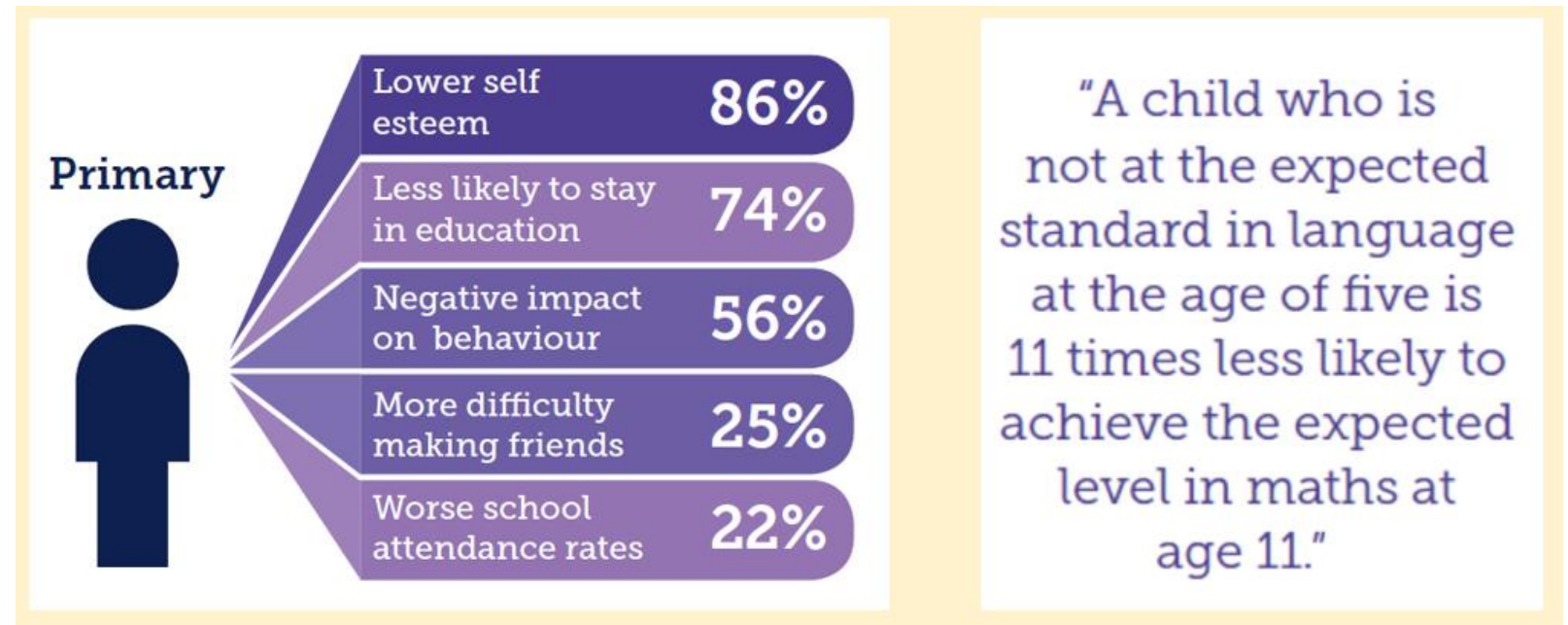
Without explicit teaching of vocabulary,
then little will change.

The impact on academic achievement



Why Closing the Word Gap Matters, OUP, 2018

How the word gap impacts on pupils



Why Closing the Word Gap Matters, OUP, 2018

Department for Education 2017

How do we learn vocabulary?

Through everyday exposure to language.

Every day conversations

- Understand how a word is used
- How it works in a sentence
- The impact the word has
- Can be limiting

Reading

- Access to books
- Harder to learn words from written context

The problems when relying on reading

Misdirective context - incorrect meaning

Nondirective context - no assistance

General context - general idea

Directive context - specific meaning

An example of misdirective context

"It's time I made an egg sac and filled it with eggs."

"I didn't know you could lay eggs," said Wilbur in amazement.

"Oh sure," said the spider, "I'm versatile."

"What does versatile mean? Full of eggs?" asked Wilbur.

"Certainly not," said Charlottle.

How do we
learn
vocabulary?

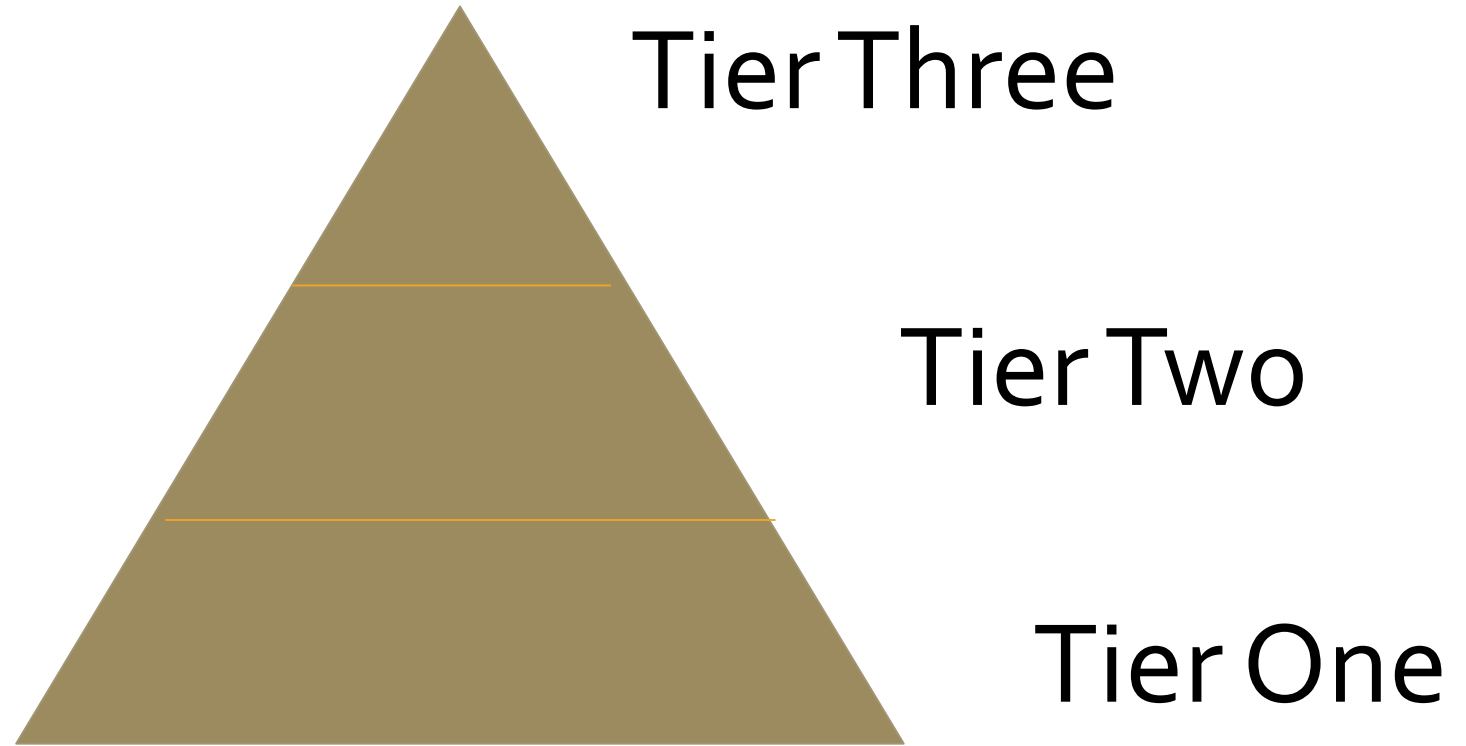
Through everyday exposure to language.

- everyday conversations
- reading

Explicit teaching

Three-Tiers Framework

(Beck, McKeown &
Omanson, 1987)

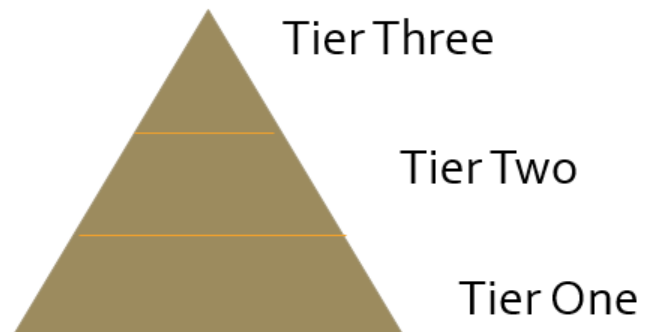


Three-Tiers Framework

* I made a change because Zack told me to look in the Thesaurus for a better word. So I looked up scary and found hair-raising (I thought it would make the readers hair-raise).

I made a change because it puts ~~#~~ chill in people. Also it makes people think what is so hair-raising. It might send a shiver down ~~my~~ the readers spine.

Three-Tiers Framework



The minute boat.
or
The small boat.

What is
understanding
vocabulary?

Simply knowing
a word is not
knowing a word

coffee

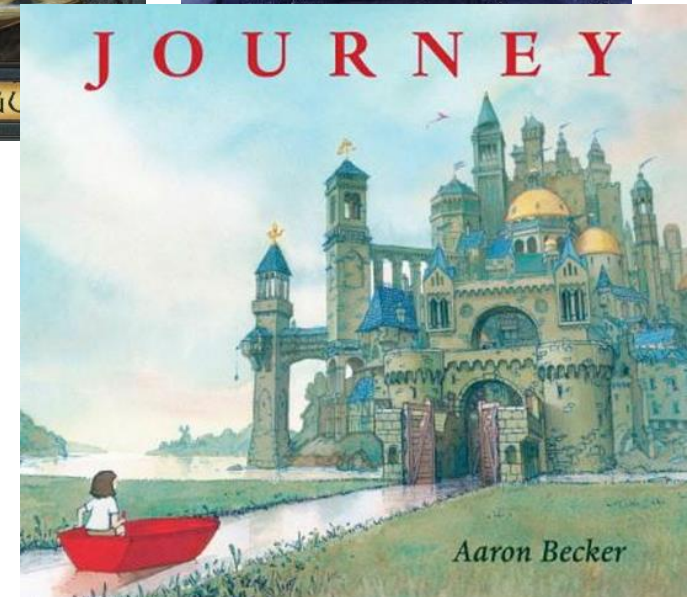
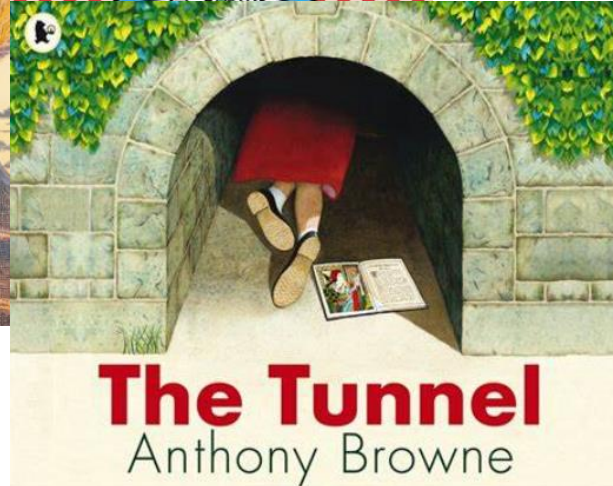
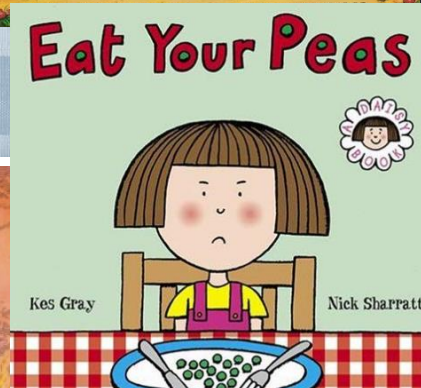
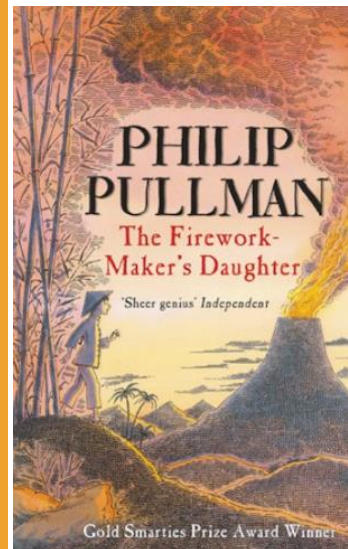
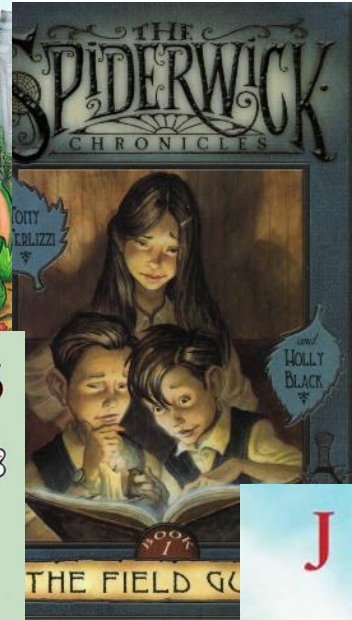
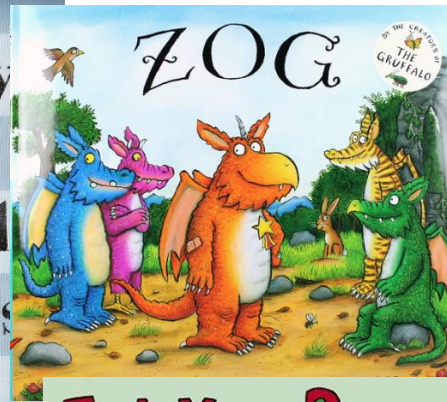
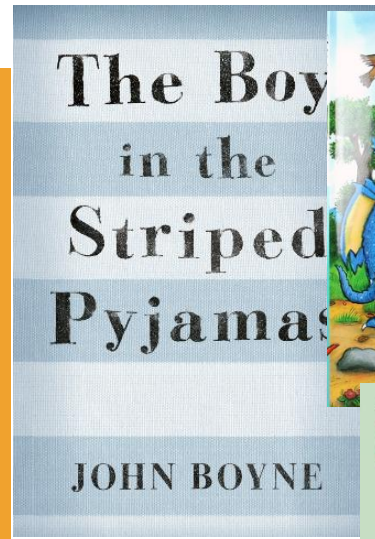
a hot drink made
from the roasted
and ground seeds
(coffee beans) of a
tropical shrub.



How to teach vocabulary

- Don't introduce too many words
- Choose challenging texts and promote reading
- Introduce words before reading
- Make links
- Avoid asking - who knows what ... means?
- Be aware of dictionary definitions
- **Prioritise vocabulary**

Reading books



Understanding a word

jealous

What might you
be jealous of?

I wonder if you
have ever been
jealous?



Ask questions
and make sure
children justify
their answers

anxious

When might you be anxious?

How might you be anxious?

Why might you be anxious?

Would you be more anxious to meet
a snake or a polar bear?

Have a class discussion about a word

beautiful



Would you use the word beautiful to describe it?

Do we all find the same things beautiful?

How could I use beautiful in a sentence?

Were you expecting this picture?

Why do you think I find it beautiful?

What words are similar to beautiful?

Make links and
word
associations

What do these two pictures have in common?



Make links and
word
associations

appearance

I don't want to play with you.

envy

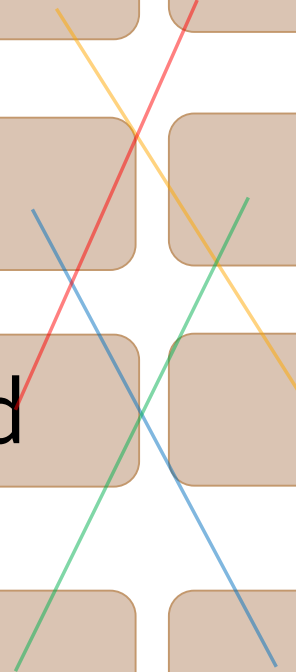
a phobia of spiders

disappointed






a smart suit

terrified

jealousy



Making links and use quotes from the text

A piece of burning wood used as a torch.		Armed with these <u>flaming brands</u> .
Start or set into motion.		... <u>launched</u> over the battlements...
Be successful in dealing with a difficulty.		You must <u>overcome</u> your own fear.
Keep someone's interest and attention		He would listen to their tales, <u>enthralled</u> .
Falling apart or in disrepair		... the <u>ramshackle</u> village...

Decide which sentence fits the meaning.

Terrible

When I opened my lunchbox, mum had forgotten to put in some chocolate cake.

Tom fell out the tree and badly cut his face. He was told it would be scarred for life.

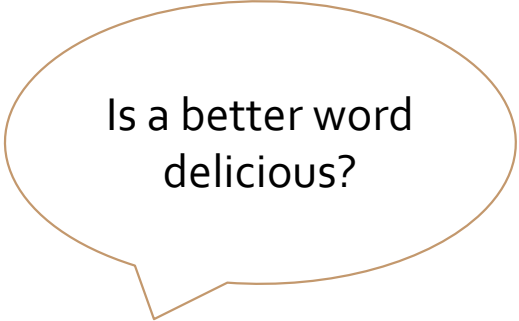
What word could be used instead of terrible?

Decide which
sentence fits
the meaning.

Incredible

The princess walked into the room
wearing a dress covered in diamonds.

The chocolate cake was covered in
chocolate ganache. Tina had never
tasted anything so good.



Is a better word
delicious?

Also, make
links with
spelling.

Interfere

Someone was lying injured on the playground. Bill wandered over and asked the children what had happened.

The girls were playing a game together. Jill came over and told the children how to make the game better.

Has this ever
happened to
you? Is it
interfering?

Write your
own
definitions

hesitate
you want to do something
but fear or doubt stop you.

terrible
the effects that you feel when
something bad has happened
but you will recover

Make links to
words that are
not obviously
related

When could interfering be useful?

When is a gift a nuisance?

When might someone be eager and hesitant?

Sentence starters

I hesitated before turning the handle. I needed to. I knew that as soon as I did...

I was right to hesitate before agreeing. She offered me much more now. This time it included...

Surprisingly, the mellifluous music was coming from...

Make links to
SPAG or other
curriculum
subjects.

I yacht...

The yacht...

Although yachting...

Whilst the yacht...

Edit words and
describe the
picture in the
readers mind

Cracked windows poured ~~falling stars~~
silver snowflakes sharp glitter

Cracked windows ~~poured falling stars~~ sharp glitter
sprinkled showered
cascaded bombarded

Cracked windows ~~poured falling stars~~

showered

bombarded

Word of the Week

Word of the Week

hostage

Definition: Someone who is held prisoner until the people who are holding them get what they want.

Complex Speed Sounds

Consonant sounds	f	l	m	n	r	s	v	z	sh	th	ng
	ff	ll	mm	nn	rr	ss	vv	zz	ti	ci	nk
	ph	le	mb	kn	wr	se	ce	se	sure		
b	c	d	g	h	j	p	qu	t	w	x	y
bb	cc	dd	gg	hh	jj	pp	tt	qq	ww	xx	yy
ck	ch	ge	dge								
ch											
Vowel sounds	a	e	i	o	u	ay	ee	igh	ow		
	ea					a-e	y	i-e	o-e		
						ai	ea	ie	oa		
						ough	e	i	o		
oo	oo	ar	or	air	ir	ou	oy	ire	ear	ure	
u-e	ue	oor	ore	are	ur	ow	oi	eer			
ew		ore	er	aw	er						
(Eloyn)				au							

Word of the Week

delectable

Definition: delicious, very pleasing

Word of the Week

humiliate

Definition: makes a person feel disgraced or ashamed

Word of the Week

idyllic

From the Greek 'Little picture'

Definition: beautiful + peaceful

The importance of Teaching Vocabulary

1. Teaching vocabulary must be explicit.
2. Select challenging reading books.
3. Make links beyond English lessons.
4. Tell children what a word means but explore that word further.
5. Use pictures to make links and display with a definition and a quote.
6. Discuss the word in context and create definitions together.
7. Make word associations and identify relationships.
8. Discuss language choices and their impact.
9. A whole school approach.
10. Keep teaching vocabulary – model your love of words!

Thank you for
listening.

Any questions?

Recommended reads:

Bringing Words to Life

By Isabel L. Beck, Maragaret G. McKeown and Linda Kucan

Making every English lesson count

By Andy Tharby