

Building Your Child's Vocabulary

All parents want their child to do well in school. One way to help your child is to help them build their vocabulary. Beginning readers use knowledge about words to help them make sense of what they're reading. The more words a reader knows, the more they are able to comprehend what they're reading or listening to.

Talking to and reading with your child are two terrific ways to help them hear and read new words. Conversations and questions about interesting words ("The book says, 'The boy **tumbled** down the hill,' and look at the picture! How do you think he went down the hill?") are easy, non-threatening ways to get new words into everyday talk.

Sharing a new word with your child doesn't have to take a long time: just a few minutes to talk about the word and then focus back on the book or conversation. Choose which words to talk about carefully – choosing every new word might make reading seem like a chore. The best words to explore with your child are ones that are common among adult speakers but are less common to see in the books your child might read.

When introducing new words to your young learner, keep the following four helpful hints in mind:

- 1. First, provide a simple, kid-friendly definition for the new word:**
Enormous means that something is really, really big.
- 2. Second, provide a simple, kid-friendly example that makes sense within their daily life:**
*Remember that really big watermelon we got at the grocery store? That was an **enormous** watermelon!*
- 3. Third, encourage your child to develop their own example:**
*What **enormous** thing can you think of? Can you think of something really big that you saw today? That's right! The bulldozer near the park was enormous! Those tires were huge.*
- 4. Last, keep your new words active within your house.** Over the next few days and weeks, take advantage of opportunities to use each new vocabulary word in conversation.

Take the time to share new words and build your child's vocabulary. You'll be **enormously** glad you did!

For more resources, visit the vocabulary section on Reading Rockets:
www.ReadingRockets.org/atoz/vocabulary

