



Saint Michael School

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LITERACY LETTER 4: HOW TO BUILD YOUR CHILD'S VOCABULARY

Why should parents worry about their child's vocabulary? Why increase their vocabulary and their language in general? There's a simple reason. **The more words a child has in their vocabulary, the better a reader they will become.** Knowing words means easier access to the text. They can't understand a book without knowing what words mean.

Understanding the meaning of words also helps children understand the world around them. It helps them express their emotions and feelings and to problem solve with friends when there is conflict. Having **a good vocabulary is POWER.**

HERE ARE SOME TIPS TO BUILD YOUR CHILD'S VOCABULARY:

- **TALK** to your children! **Conversations** about the child's surroundings and observations of things in daily life build up your child's memory for these topics. As you move through your daily routines together, talk about going for gas, items you are purchasing in a store, ingredients in what you are cooking, or the unknown words in a story.
- Please **use "higher" vocabulary words** when speaking to your child. Instead of saying "big," use gigantic, humongous, substantial, or colossal. Instead of saying "right," use "appropriate, suitable, or fitting." Never talk down to children. Instead, work new words into your conversations. In this way, your children learn the meanings of the words and how they are used.
- **Have print materials** like books, magazines, recipes, etc. throughout your home. Keep children's books in your home, too. The Fall River Public Library has wonderful materials available! When you have print materials and books in the home, it shows you value them. Children will follow in your footsteps and value them, too.
- **Be a reader** yourself. It sends the message to your children that reading is enjoyable and important. Being seen enjoying a book or magazine sets the standard in your home!
- The following YouTube video is short and gives good advice for parents when reading to their children. Although the title is "Helping Struggling Readers Build Their Vocabulary," it is good for advice for everyone who has young readers in their home.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch/2e2N07-wCvQ>

