

Here are some ideas to help support Word Learning and Vocabulary Development.

You can help your child to learn new vocabulary using the following strategies:

(Some advice & information taken from *Elklan Language Builders*
<https://www.elklan.co.uk/resources/language-builders>)

STEP 1

Remember: Before we can use a word independently in the right context we must have some kind of understanding of it. **The first goal is to develop your child's understanding.**

But: There are too many words! Where do you start?

Answer: **TOPICS**

Making a list of relevant topics to focus on **would be a good first step** in helping your child to learn relevant vocabulary.

Here are some Topic examples.....

Everyday words
Furniture
Food
Space
The Tudors
Egyptians
Autumn

Once you have your list of topics it would be good **to find out the words that your child already knows** so you don't include them in the list. Otherwise your child will be learning vocabulary they are already familiar with.

How do you do this? **Topic Map**

***Help your child to write
all the words they
know about the chosen
topic around the Map***

**Write the topic
here**

***Help your child to write
all the words they
know about the chosen
topic around the Map***

Work on one topic at a time

You need to think about the **KEY WORDS** associated with that topic and **all the words your child isn't aware of but probably should be**. There are often 3 types of words: **Basic**, **Descriptive** and **Specialised**.

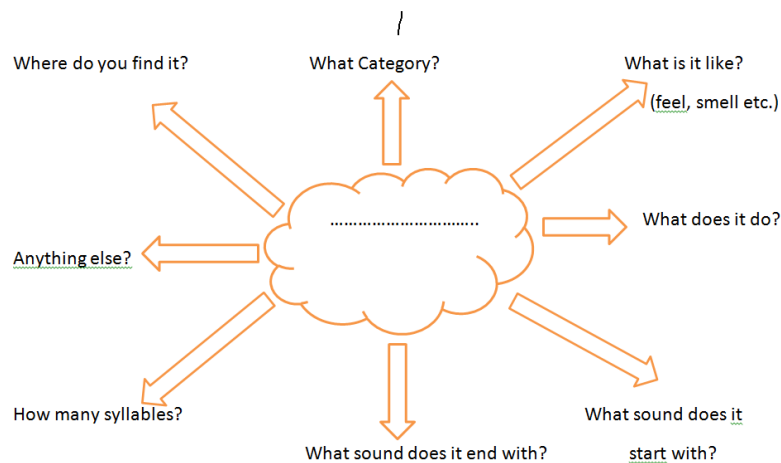
You can start filling in your list of **topic related vocabulary**. Think about the **Basic (anchor)** words they have missed out (*common/obvious words*) then think about the **Descriptive (goldilocks)** words (*adjectives, adverbs, abstract words*) and finally think about the more **specialised (step on)** words (*related exclusively to that topic.*)

Remember: You don't have to know all the words! You just have to **think of ones Your child hasn't used that would be relevant / helpful** to them. When you start looking at the words individually, you'll only be introducing a few at a time so your list can't be too long or you will never stop. **Be selective and pick the most useful words to target.**

STEP 2

Now you have your list you have to start **teaching your child about the words**.

How? Word Maps



You can **add other sections** to your word Map such as, “*What type of word is it?*”, “*Does the word have another meaning?*”, “*Can you think of a sentence with the word in*”, “*Does it rhyme with anything?*” Really, you can ask any question that helps build knowledge about that word.

Work on only a couple of new words at a time

You will need to **practice the word Maps**. You can't just fill it out once and hope Your child has learnt. Revisit the word Map. **See if your child can do it alone as well as with you.**

Step 3

Now you get to test if your practice has paid off. Do a little questionnaire with Your child. Ask them to write down or tell you the following in relation to the target word.

How? Word Wise Questionnaire

Target Word:	Tick
Can you think of two things about what the word means?	
What type of word is it?	
Do you know another word that means the same?	
Does the word have a different meaning?	
How many syllables does it have?	
What is the initial sound?	
What does it rhyme with?	
Can you write the word down?	
Can you use it in a sentence?	

If all the boxes can be ticked – the child should have a good understanding about the meaning of the word.

You'll need to **follow this process for key words in each topic**. This is why when you think of words you need to **be selective and specific**.

You can all so use Word Maps if you notice a child is finding it hard to remember a word. Make a note of it and complete a word map – to help develop the child's semantic and phonological links for the word.

You can also use the prompt questions on a word map to help the child tell you about a word they are finding hard to remember e.g. oh tell me...what do you do with it? where do you find it? what sound does it start with? Etc..

This is a great way to support the child to either access the word on their own or provide you with enough cues to know what word it is that they are struggling to find.