

**Title:** Vocabulary and Background Knowledge Frontloading (Part 1) – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Grade Level:** Fourth Grade

**School:** Jefferson Elementary School

**Location:** Wichita, Kansas

**Materials:** *Treasures Reading* (Macmillan/McGraw-Hill); *Collins Cobuild Dictionary of American English*

**Videographers:** Wichita Public Schools (USD 259) Media Production Services. Staff Members: Mark Mohesky, Jennifer Bellinger-Sipes, Micael D. Smith, Jennifer Hartman

**Web Master:** Dima Yaremenko

**Elapsed Time:** 15:43

**Introduction:** This fourth grade class is preparing to read an informational passage on Ben Franklin in their core reading class. In anticipation of passage reading, vocabulary was introduced and background knowledge provided to increase reading comprehension.

**Focus:** As you watch this video,

- 1) Determine the four steps in the ***Vocabulary Instruction Routine*** that are used to introduce the following words: invent, mischief, and hilarious.
- 2) Identify **additional vocabulary practices** used to extend student knowledge of the vocabulary words.
- 3) Identify other good instructional practices.

**Feedback :**

1) Determine the four steps in the ***Vocabulary Instruction Routine*** that are used to introduce the following words: invent, mischief, and hilarious.

For each of the vocabulary words, the following instructional steps were used:

- a) Introduce the pronunciation of the word.
  - The teacher said the new word and students repeated the word. To insure that students could pronounce the words accurately, the teacher and students tapped and said the syllables in the words.
- b) Present a student-friendly explanation.
  - The teacher and the students read the explanations together.
- c) Illustrate the word with examples.
  - Pictures and photos coupled with a written sentence containing the vocabulary word were used to illustrate the new word.
  - Familiar examples and passage-related examples were used.
- d) Check students' understanding.

- Students were asked questions to verify their understanding. In a number of cases, the students had to discern between examples and non-examples.

## 2) Identify **additional vocabulary practices** used to extend student knowledge of the vocabulary words.

A number of additional vocabulary practices were embedded in this lesson. The teacher introduced:

- The part of speech
- Synonyms for the words
- Additional words in the word family (invent, invented, inventions, inventor) emphasizing the consistency of meaning and spelling
- Suffixes (-cian, -er, ist) used to indicate a person
- The use of the words (“She got into mischief.” “He got into mischief.”)

## 3) Identify other good instructional practices.

### Goal of Lesson

At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher stated the goal of the lesson (To prepare for reading an informational article concerning Ben Franklin by learning critical vocabulary and background knowledge.)

### Inclusive Active Participation

- Structured active participation strategies were used throughout the lesson including:
  - Choral responses - The teacher asked a question, gave thinking time, and then signaled for an oral answer.
  - Thumbs up – The students indicated that they had enough thinking time by putting their thumb up (LOW).
  - Partners – The students had been assigned a partner and given the designations North and South. The teacher asked a question, provided thinking time, and then designated one partner to say answer to their partner.
  - Individual oral responses – After ALL students thought of an answer and shared their answers with their partners, the teacher randomly called on a few students to report out to the group.
- The passage was read using the following procedures:
  - Choral reading – The teacher and the students read the examples and explanations together.
  - Cloze reading – The teacher read, stopping before some critical words. The students said the next word. Cloze reading is an

excellent practice for increasing on-task behavior during passage reading.

- Echo reading – The teacher said a word and students immediately “echoed” the word.

### Thinking Time

- After asking higher order questions requiring manipulation of information in working memory, the teacher gave 5 to 6 seconds of thinking time and also modeled thinking. However, adequate thinking time was not given on one question at the beginning of the video and errors resulted. When more than 3 seconds are given for thinking, the answers are longer, more logical, and supported with evidence.

### Monitoring and Coaching

- When students were discussing answers with their partners, the teacher moved around the room, listening to answers and coaching as needed.

### Scaffolding

- To increase the quality of student oral answers, the teacher provided sentence starters on the screen. The benefits of sentence starters included: a) increasing the quality of the answers, b) generating complete sentences, c) helping students initiate (start) their responses, and d) promoting the use of academic language.

### Suggestions:

In future lessons, the teacher should:

- a) Consistently provide additional thinking time for higher order questions.
- b) Provide brief explanations of unknown words that are not the focus of the lesson (e.g., marginal, advice column)
- c) Increase the use of gestures and actions to make the words more memorable. This would have been especially useful for *hilarious*.
- d) Monitor her “monitoring”. Consistently, she moved to her right when monitoring. As a result, she visited the students on one side of the room more often than the other.