

# The Importance of Vocabulary in Content Area Classes



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# How can we address the academic needs of our **LEP** students?

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# The Baseball Game



The professional baseball team won by a score of four to nothing, even though not a single man scored. None of the players were women.

How is this possible?

from *Stories with Holes*,  
Levy, Nathan

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# Focus

- Recognize the value of previewing text for significant vocabulary.
- Learn and apply the use of the *Vocabulary Improvement Strategy (VIS)* in specific content areas.
- Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of content area textbooks as they apply to LEP students.

# ΠΝΕΡΓΨ



- **What are the words?**
- **How did you determine the words?**
- **What processes would your LEP students use to decipher the words and their meaning?**

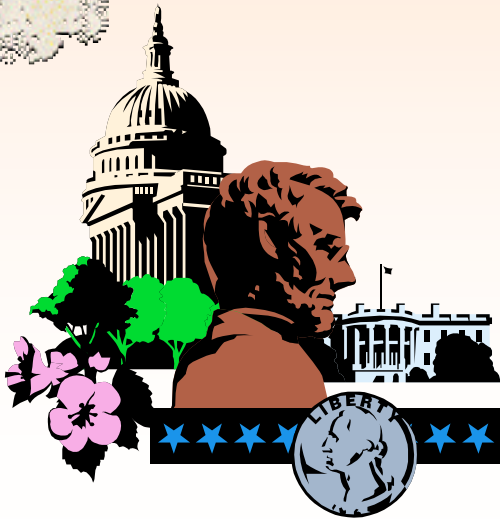


# Energy

“The **ancient** Greek word for **energy** was **energos**, which means “active.” Until the 1900s, people thought that **energy** was stored inside objects. Now we say that **energy** is the **ability** to cause change. **Energy** can change the **temperature**, speed, or direction of an object. **Energy** can change the shape of modeling **clay** or the **temperature** of a cup of water.”

# Effective ways of introducing new concepts

- Select the most important words for teaching.
- Activate background knowledge.

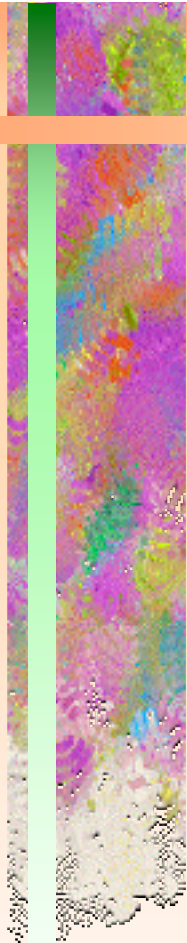







# ...Effective ways of introducing new concepts

- Show students how to elaborate word meaning.
- Empower students with strategies that promote student independence and active involvement in learning.



# Why should teachers preview the text for **key vocabulary**?

- ◆ Previewing the text allows the teacher to create prereading activities (such as vocabulary activities) that are meaningful and useful to the learner.
- ◆ Previewing the vocabulary with the students activates what they already know.
- ◆ LEP students may have background knowledge (schema) in a topic, but merely need to understand the words and concepts in English to activate this knowledge.




“...there is no formula for selecting age-appropriate vocabulary words...As long as the word can be explained in known words and can apply to what students might talk or write about, it is an appropriate word to teach.”

*Bringing Words to Life*  
*Robust Vocabulary Instruction,*  
Beck, Isabel L., McKeown,  
Margaret G., & Kucan, Linda

# Vocabulary Improvement Strategy (VIS)

<u>Word</u>	<u>Personal Clue</u>	<u>Sentence</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
(1)	(4)	(2)	(3)

# VIS Chart

<u>Word</u>	<u>Personal Clue</u>	<u>Sentence</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
(1) active	(4) 	(2) The ancient Greek word for energy was energos, which means "active."	(3) The ability to cause change



# **VIS** Group Activity

- Select one word from the text to pre-teach.
- Complete the **VIS** chart for the word.
- Use a visual as a personal clue.

# Keys to Using the VIS

- Pre-select the words from the text.
- Model the use of the **VIS** with the students.
- The teacher needs to explain the four parts prior to student use.
- The teacher can modify the **VIS** to fit the curriculum.

# Ways to adapt the **VIS** for LEP students

- Model the strategy various times.
- Use pictures as personal clues.
- Students can work in pairs or cooperative groups to create the **VIS** chart.







# Ways to adapt the **VIS** for LEP students

- Create a **VIS** chart on chart paper and have it displayed in the class for reinforcement.
- Encourage students to construct meaning through collaborative, student-generated definitions.
- Allow students to use their native language in the personal clues column.

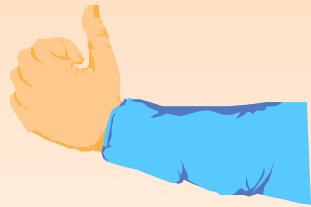


# Using Content Area Materials with LEP Students

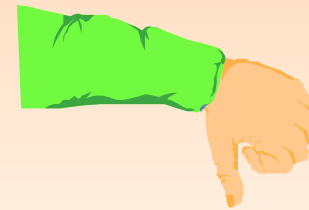
How does your textbook  
facilitate the teaching/learning  
connection for LEP students?

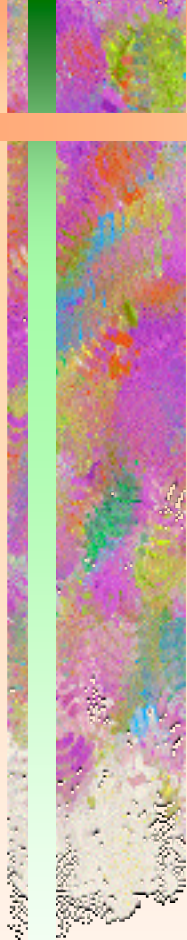
# Strengths & Weaknesses of Content Area Textbooks

## Strengths



## Weaknesses





# Strategies for Selecting, Adapting, and Using Content Area Materials with LEP Students

- Criteria for selecting materials
- Adapting less-than-ideal materials
- Using Materials

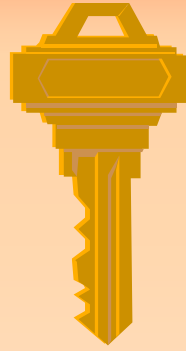


# Best Practices (Video)

- Are the students engaged?
- How do the students learn from each other?
- How does the teacher address the different learning styles?

# Best Practices

- Does the lesson reinforce the content area vocabulary?
- Does the teacher monitor student engagement?



# Key Points

- Recognize the value of previewing text for significant vocabulary.
- Learn and apply the use of the Vocabulary Improvement Strategy (VIS) in specific content areas.
- Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of content area textbooks as they apply to LEP students.

# NOTHING STAYS the SAME

Time  
ripens  
all  
things;  
no  
one  
is  
born  
wise.



Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra  
Spanish writer, author of *Don Quixote*

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