

## Activities that Encourage Children to Interact with Words

1. **Questions, Reasons, and Examples:** Teacher-generated questions, reasons, and examples require students to use new words in meaningful contexts and to explain why these items are or are not appropriate.
  - What is something you could do to *impress* your teacher? Why?
  - Which of these things might be *extraordinary*? Why or why not?
    - a) A shirt that was comfortable or a shirt that washed itself?
    - b) A flower that kept blooming all year or a flower that bloomed for three days?
2. **Questions Yes/No, Definitions Yes/No:** This format is similar to giving examples and non-examples. Teachers write questions and definitions that can be answered “yes” or “no.” This activity requires students to decide whether a context or definition is correct or incorrect for a particular word.

3. Vocabulary Word	Question Yes	Question No	Definition Yes	Definition No
<i>miserable</i>	<p>“If you missed going to a party because you had the flu . . .</p> <p>would you feel <i>miserable</i>?”</p>	<p>“If your team won its first game . . .</p> <p>would you feel <i>miserable</i>?”</p>	<p>“Does <i>miserable</i> mean feeling very unhappy?”</p>	<p>“Does <i>miserable</i> mean feeling very excited?”</p>
<i>immense</i>	<p>“What if you saw something the size of an elephant . . .</p> <p>would it be <i>immense</i>?”</p>	<p>“What if you saw something the size of an ant . . .</p> <p>would it be <i>immense</i>?”</p>	<p>“Does <i>immense</i> mean very big?”</p>	<p>“Does <i>immense</i> mean very small?”</p>

3. **Relating Words:** This is a good concluding activity to see if focus words (italicized in the sample sentences) from the text can be placed in sentences by giving choices.
  - Sentences: “Would you *prefer* to *budge* a sleeping lamb or a *ferocious* lion?” “Why?”
  - Choices: “If you get your clothes ready to wear to school before you go to sleep, would that be *sensible* or *raucous*?”

**4. Making Choices:** Students are asked to choose between two vocabulary words when given a situation.

a. "I'll say some things. If they sound leisurely, say, 'Leisurely.' If you'd need to be in a hurry, say, 'Hurry.'"

1. "Taking a walk in the park."
2. "Firefighters getting to a fire."
3. "Runners in a race."
4. "Sitting and talking to friends."
5. "A dog lying in the sun."

**5. One Context for all the Words:** When unable to find a relationship between the words that are being taught, use one context for all the words, but present each item separately. Here are some examples of eating spaghetti:

1. "What would an *immense* plate of spaghetti look like?"
2. "Why might you feel *miserable* after eating all that spaghetti?"
3. "What would it look like to eat spaghetti in a *leisurely* way?"

**6. Same Format:** Using a pattern sentence or format and changing the different descriptors is another vocabulary activity. This format asks the children to make a choice and to explain that choice.

- "If a dog was acting menacing, would you want to pet it or move away?" "Why?"
- "Is grumpy a way you might feel or a way you might move?" "Why?"

(Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002)