Vocabulary

Students should learn at least 2,000 – 3,000 new vocabulary per school year to become truly literate individuals!

Pg 20 Explaining Reading - Gerald G. Duffy
Why teach Vocabulary?

All texts are made up of words and phrases. It’s important to expand students’ awareness and appreciation of language and to help them build up their personal vocabularies.

Developing an extensive vocabulary enables students to improve both their reading comprehension and writing.
The teacher's role is to:

• Develop a class community who are curious and enthusiastic about language and keen to experiment with new vocabulary and language structures;

• Encourage students to notice, savour, and share interesting words at every opportunity;

• Introduce, explain, and model the use of new words, including the academic and specialised words that the students need for their ongoing learning;

• Explicitly teach aspects of language;

• Give students opportunities to use their new words and terms in authentic oral and written language contexts and encourage them by constructive feedback.
By exploring language with students and giving them opportunities to practise their new learning, teachers can develop their students’ sense of enquiry and adventure to help build a vibrant community that thrives on discussion of language and how it works. This is invaluable support for new learners of English and also for those who are experiencing difficulty in their literacy learning.

Effective Literacy Practice in Years 5 to 8 Pg 126
Vocabulary Activities you could use in your class!
Building Word Vocab

Use the pictures to come up with adjectives for your card.

What other words could you use?
BINGO

• Teacher calls the definition
• Players mark the corresponding vocabulary term with markers on their cards.
• First player with 5 in a row or 4 corners wins.
Vocabulary Jumble

• Display 15 to 20 key words from a text to the class.

• Students have one minute to write down as many words as they can. Cover the words and give students another minute to write the words from memory.

• Students check their words against the full list and then ask other members of the group for word meanings they don't know. Students use dictionaries as well at this stage.
Clines

A cline is a visual way of showing a ladder of intensity in meaning and exemplifies the shades of meaning in a word. It is a way to expand students’ vocabulary or to help avoid overuse of a particular word.
Synonym Pile

Develop vocabulary through read-alouds. When you get to a challenging word, say, "Synonyms."
"If they start rattling some off, you know that they are familiar with the word. If not, you might reread the sentence again if you think they should be able to get it from the context. If they still can't get it, give them two or more options to choose from, one of them being the correct meaning of the word. Then reread the sentence again, just to reinforce the sound and meaning of the new word."
Imaginary World

Play this game with a food category, and the students love it. You could also play it with other categories, like animals. Players take turns, filling in the sentence, "In my imaginary world, the _____ are _____." e.g. "In my imaginary world, the trees are ice cream cones," or "In my imaginary world, the car tires are doughnuts."
A literate environment

The more experiences you have, the more words you have; the more likely it is that you will become a good reader. Because new words come from you new experiences, literate classroom environments are characterized by rich experiences with new concepts.
A literate environment

As part of an instructional programme, teachers need to plan to expand their students’ vocabularies.

Students need a substantial and ever-increasing bank of sight words, and they also need to be taught about how words work.

Every year 5 to 8 classroom needs a thesaurus, a comprehensive dictionary, and multiple copies of student dictionaries. Bilingual dictionaries in students’ first language should be available where possible.
Assessment

• Ongoing observations – these can be carried out over the school day and across different subject areas. Checklists or anecdotal records can be used.

• Self-reporting of challenging vocabulary – when students have been asked to read seen or unseen text, they can use a bookmark, sticky note, or notebook to keep a record of the vocabulary they found challenging.

• Targeted Observations – planned and focused: the teacher observes while a student explains the strategies they used to work out a word from an unseen text (alone or within a group)
Be planned, explicit, and deliberate.