

Eight Explicit Vocabulary Instructional Strategies

Strategy	Definition	Examples
1. Questioning (word label/use)	Teacher asks a question to elicit a single word label from a child or group of children. “Wh” questions (e.g., who, what, and where) are the primary way a teacher would ask a question to elicit a label.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher asks, “What are these?” while pointing to a pile of <i>pins</i>. Teacher asks, “Where do you want to play?”
2. Questioning (word meaning)	Teacher asks a question or makes a statement to prompt the child or group of children to provide a definition or meaning of a word or to verbally demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of a word.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While reading a story, the teacher pauses at the word “<i>enormous</i>” and asks, “What does <i>enormous</i> mean?” While brainstorming, the teacher asks, “What are all the things we might find at a farm/grocery store/subway station?”
3. Modeling (word label/use)	Teacher uses, names, or labels a single word by emphasizing the word or drawing’s attention to the word they are modeling. Teacher can use a word as a label for own thoughts, actions, and/or feelings. Teacher can use a word as a label for the thoughts, actions, and/or feelings of others. Teacher can use a word as a label for objects, people, place, or events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child is stomping feet to the beat of the music, teacher imitates the stomping and says “Stomp, stomp, stomp” to provide a label for the child’s action. While taking a nature walk, the teacher sighs and says, “It’s sad to see so much <i>junk</i> tossed into the field like this.”
4. Modeling (word meaning)	Teacher uses words, phrases, or sentences to describe an object, person, or event with the intent to provide a meaning of a word.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While playing in the block area, teacher says “In order to build our <i>city</i> we will need to include houses, cars, and people”. While at the art center the teacher says “I am going to make a drawing of a <i>zoo</i>. I will draw tigers, elephants, and zebras”.
5. Directing/telling	Teacher directs/tells a child or group of children to say a single word.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While eating pizza, the teacher tells the child, “Say, <i>crust</i>”. While reading a story about chickens, the teacher tells the child “Say, <i>egg</i>”.
6. Prompting/fill in the blank	Teacher draws attention to an object, picture, symbol, or person with the intent for a child or group of children to produce a single word. Teacher pauses and lets child or group of children fill in the blank to complete a familiar rhyme, pattern, or sentence using a single word.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher says, “Monday, Tuesday” and pauses for a response for the next day of the week. Teacher says, “Good” and then pauses for “<i>morning</i>”.
7. Providing definition	Teacher gives a brief definition or explanation of the word’s meaning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While pretending to camp, the teacher pauses, and says, “A <i>canoe</i> is a narrow boat that moves by paddling with oars.” Teacher writes the word “<i>soil</i>” on the flip chart and tells children “This word is <i>soil</i>; <i>soil</i> is another word for dirt.”
8. Correcting	Child uses a single word to label an object, person, or event incorrectly and teacher gives the grammatically or semantically correct label. The intent is to teach the correct word label.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child says, “She run fast” and teacher says, “She <i>ran</i> fast.” Child says, “Duck” and teacher says, “Almost, that is a <i>goose</i>.”

Definitions and examples adapted with permission from Brown, T. & Pretti-Frontczak, K. (2014). *System of classroom observations for program evaluation of language (SCOPE-L)*. Unpublished measure, Kent State University, Kent, OH.

