



The Kindergarten Chronicles

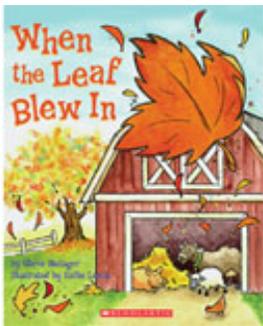
Beth Jacobsen, Goolsby Elementary

Wonderful Words!

Building Kindergarten Vocabulary

Most kindergartners certainly have one thing in common: they love to talk! Our young students enjoy sharing their ideas, especially when there is an adult ready to validate their thoughts. Rarely do we as kinder teachers have to endure silence after we ask for ideas and feedback from our students. This is one of the most wonderful aspects of teaching kindergarten. However, it is our job to give students tools to express themselves better, both in speaking and in writing. One of the kindergarten first trimester benchmarks is, "Build and comprehend vocabulary, using pictures, symbols, and environmental print."

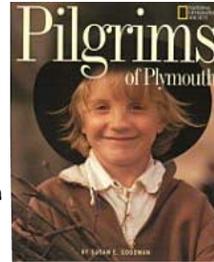
Fall is a perfect time to incorporate intentional vocabulary development into your literacy instruction. There are many motivating big books with vivid illustrations and exciting new words for kindergartners. One such book is *When the Leaf Blew In* by Steve Metzger. This book has colorful fall pictures and engaging farm animal illustrations. *The Pilgrims of*



Plymouth, a National Geographic informational big book, also has great Thanksgiving vocabulary words.

Prior to reading your chosen big book, print vocabulary words from the story on large sticky notes. These are vocabulary words you'd like your students to learn and use in their speaking and writing. Introduce these words to your students, then ask them to watch and listen for these words as you read. If they see or hear one of the words (either through illustrations or in print), have them give you a "thumbs-up" sign, and choose one of the children to come up and place that sticky note on the illustration or the word. Your students will connect the printed word to the illustration and identify like words in print. After a few readings, you may want to let your students choose and write the vocabulary words that are meaningful to them.

Keep the big book on display for your students to re-read or use while writing. You will find that your students choose to read these books over and over because their understanding of the text has been enhanced by your vocabulary instruction.



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Words at Work Stations

Literacy work stations are a great place for your students to develop their vocabulary. One idea is to use word cards with illustrations at your writing work station, so your students may have these for reference as they write a short story.



You can also have words that fit a particular theme (autumn, Thanksgiving, etc.) written on cards. Write the initial letter of the word in a different color to aid your students' decoding efforts and supply a picture card to match the word. Students can play memory match, matching the picture with the word card.



Children can go on a word hunt in books that fit your chosen theme. Write vocabulary words on sticky notes, then have your students hunt for words or pictures that match the word on the sticky note. They can place the sticky right on the picture or word that they've found.



Did you notice a new icon on your desktop when you logged into Interact? Be sure to check out the new RPDP Kindergarten Teacher Conference folder. This is a place for all kinder teachers to communicate and stay connected!