



SAILL  
Successful Academic Interventions in  
Language and Literacy  
A focus on English Language  
Learners

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# Objectives

- Describe recent federally funded research on English Language Learners: DELLS and SAILL projects
- Discuss essential components of effective interventions for English language learners
- Model and practice effective intervention strategies



# Demographics

- There are over 400 different languages of origin in the U.S.
- In 2000-2001, an estimated 4.6 million English-language learners were enrolled in public schools,
- Nationwide 2.5% of teachers have a degree in ESL or Bilingual Education
- English-language learners lag significantly behind their English-proficient peers





# Common Language Groups Common language groups for English language learners for English Language Learners

- Spanish 79%
- Vietnamese 2%
- Chinese 1%
- Korean 1%
- Hmong 1.6%
- Other 15.4%



# Five Essential Components of Literacy

- The same five components as those identified by the National Reading Panel and required by Reading First are important determinants of literacy achievement for English language learners
  - Phonological Awareness
  - Phonics
  - Fluency
  - Vocabulary
  - Comprehension
- Important to acquisition of literacy in all alphabetic languages (Ziegler & Goswami, 2005)



# Five Essential Components of Literacy

Five essential components of literacy

- However, there are adjustments to instruction that will help English language learners achieve higher levels of language and literacy

# Recently Completed (Federal)

- Oracy/Literacy Development of Spanish-Speaking Children (HD39521)
- Jointly funded by
  - *The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development*
  - *US DOE Institute of Education Sciences.*





# Project Investigators

- University of Houston
  - *D. Francis, C. Carlson, E. Hagan, P. Cirino, H. Rivera*
- University of Texas-Austin
  - *S. Vaughn, A. Ortiz, S. Linan-Thompson, C. Wilkinson*
- Cal-State – Long Beach
  - *C. Goldenberg, L. Reese, B. Saunders*
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  - *J. Fletcher, B. Foorman, A. Papanicolaou, E. Castillo*
- Southern Methodist
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- University of Wisconsin
  - *J. Miller*
- Temple University
  - *A. Iglesias*



# Phonemic Awareness and Phonics: Research and Instruction

- Findings are consistent with the very solid L1 research findings--both phonemic awareness and phonics instruction confer clear benefits on children's reading development
- There is no evidence that phonemic awareness and phonics instruction in English needs to be delayed until a certain threshold of English oral language proficiency is attained
- Helping students hear English sounds that don't exist or are not salient in their home language is beneficial



# Phonemic Awareness and Phonics: Assessment

- PA skills are highly correlated across languages
- The same PA tasks (for example, blending and segmenting) can be used to assess PA in English and Spanish
- PA predicts decoding skills across languages (i.e., Spanish-English; English-Spanish) almost as well as within languages (i.e., Spanish-Spanish; English-English)



# Conclusions: Phonological Awareness

- It's clear that PA is strongly related across languages
  - $r = .92$  at the student level
  - $r = .87$  at the classroom level
- Moreover, PA measured in Spanish has a strong degree of relation to decoding accuracy in English
  - $r = .69$  at the student level
  - $r = .67$  at the classroom level
- In general, PA shows a similar developmental pattern and trajectory in Spanish and in English

# Fluency: Research and Instruction

- There are too few studies of teaching oral reading fluency with ELLs to draw firm conclusions
- Fluency training similarly benefits ELLs and English-speaking students
- Fluency is an important factor in comprehension and comprehension training influences fluency



# Fluency: Assessment

- We don't know to what extent the benchmarks used for English-speaking students are appropriate benchmarks for ELLs
- Measures to assess word reading efficiency and fluency with connected text in Spanish have been developed through research.
- This research in schools is helping to develop benchmarks appropriate for ELL students in English and in Spanish



# Vocabulary: Issues for ELLs

- ELLs arrive at school with a much more limited English vocabulary than English-speaking students
  - There are many basic words that English-speaking students know that ELLs do not
- ELLs may lack labels in English for concepts they know in their first language
- ELLs and English speakers may have different concepts for the same label



# Vocabulary: Issues (Cont)

- There is some English vocabulary that may be especially important in comprehending connected text—cohesion markers for example—that necessitates explicit instruction
- ELLs literate in a first language that has many cognates with English have an important resource
- Words with multiple meanings can be a source of confusion





# Vocabulary: Research and Instruction

- Must attend to vocabulary from the earliest grades
- Some incidental learning improves vocabulary as does intentional learning
- Very few empirical studies in either area



# Comprehension: Research And Instruction

- Effective practices for English-language learners builds on effective practices for English-only students (e.g., questioning, predicting, summarizing, using organizers)
- It appears modifications that take into consideration the strengths and needs of ELLs are important
- Very few empirical studies focus on comprehension and ELLs

# Preventing Reading Difficulties Among Spanish Speaking Children

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# Preventing Reading Difficulties Among Spanish Speaking Children

- Some Spanish speaking children will struggle to become readers, regardless of the language of instruction (English or Spanish)
- Much of what we know about teaching reading to native English speaking struggling readers applies to teaching native Spanish speaking struggling readers
- Thus, interventions designed to teach reading should be effective in either Spanish or English
- Oral language development and ESL strategies are critical additions to reading interventions for Spanish speaking students

# Instructional Design: Integrated Strands

Vocabulary and Concept Knowledge

Phonemic Awareness

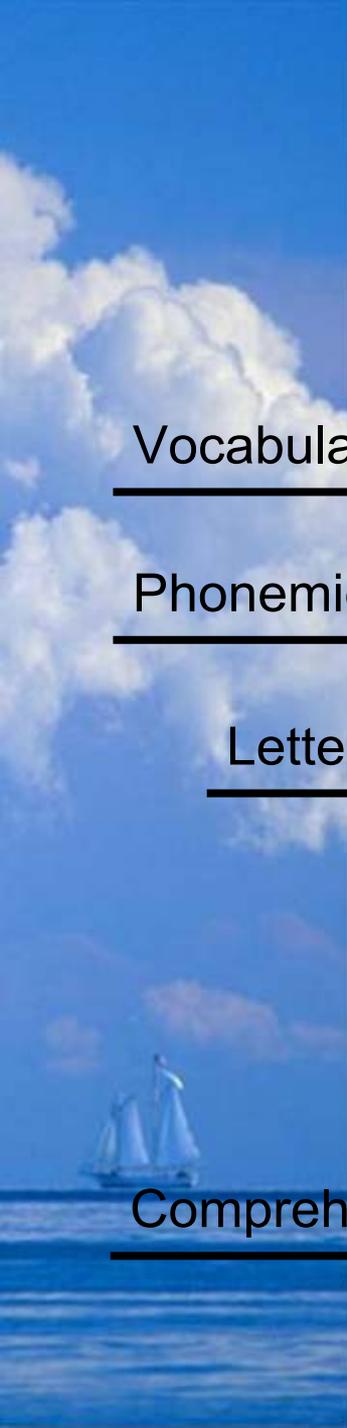
Encoding

Letter-Sound Recognition

Word Recognition

Repeated Connected Text Reading

Comprehension Strategies



# Conclusions: Interventions

Conclusions: Interventions

- Small Group Interventions matched to the language of instruction were effective in English and in Spanish
  - English language intervention similar to what has proven effective with monolingual English speakers was effective for at-risk Spanish speakers learning to read in English
  - Spanish language intervention that followed similar design principals as the English language intervention was effective for at-risk students learning to read in Spanish





# Conclusions: Interventions

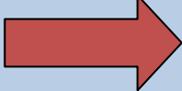
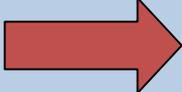
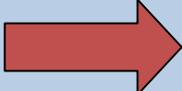
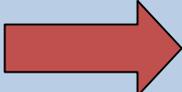
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# Conclusions: Interventions

- Effects were seen in important decoding skills, in comprehension, and in oral language
  - Spanish language intervention with English oral language component improved both Spanish and English oral language
- Effects were still apparent at the end of Grade 2 for both Spanish and English language interventions



# Essential Language Systems

1. Phonology  the basic sound units of language
2. Vocabulary  words and word meanings
3. Grammar  phrases and sentences that make sense and are correct
4. Pragmatics  the appropriate use of language; rules for communicating effectively in diverse social situations including: rules of politeness, conversational skills, and extended discourse (telling a story or giving an explanation)

# The Language-Literacy Connection

The language-literacy connection

## Language

## Reading and Writing

Phonology



- Phonological awareness
- Letter-sound correspondences
- Word recognition/decoding
- Word reading fluency
- Spelling

Vocabulary



- Listening comprehension
- Word recognition/decoding
- Word reading fluency
- Reading comprehension
- Written composition

# The Language-Literacy Connection

The language-literacy connection

## Language

## Reading and Writing

Grammar



- Listening and reading comprehension
- Word reading fluency
- Written composition

Pragmatics



- Listening and reading comprehension
- Written composition
- Understanding teacher talk



# The Language-Literacy Connection

When teachers have a strong understanding of the essential language systems and the development of literacy....

...and apply this knowledge to instruction....

... students have more opportunities to become proficient in language and in literacy.



# Second Language Literacy

- Developing oracy and literacy in a second language is not a simple task. Students are often required to:
  - develop conversational and basic reading skills at the same time, and then
  - quickly develop oral and written academic language skills to facilitate learning in all content areas.
- Students use knowledge of their first language when learning a second language.

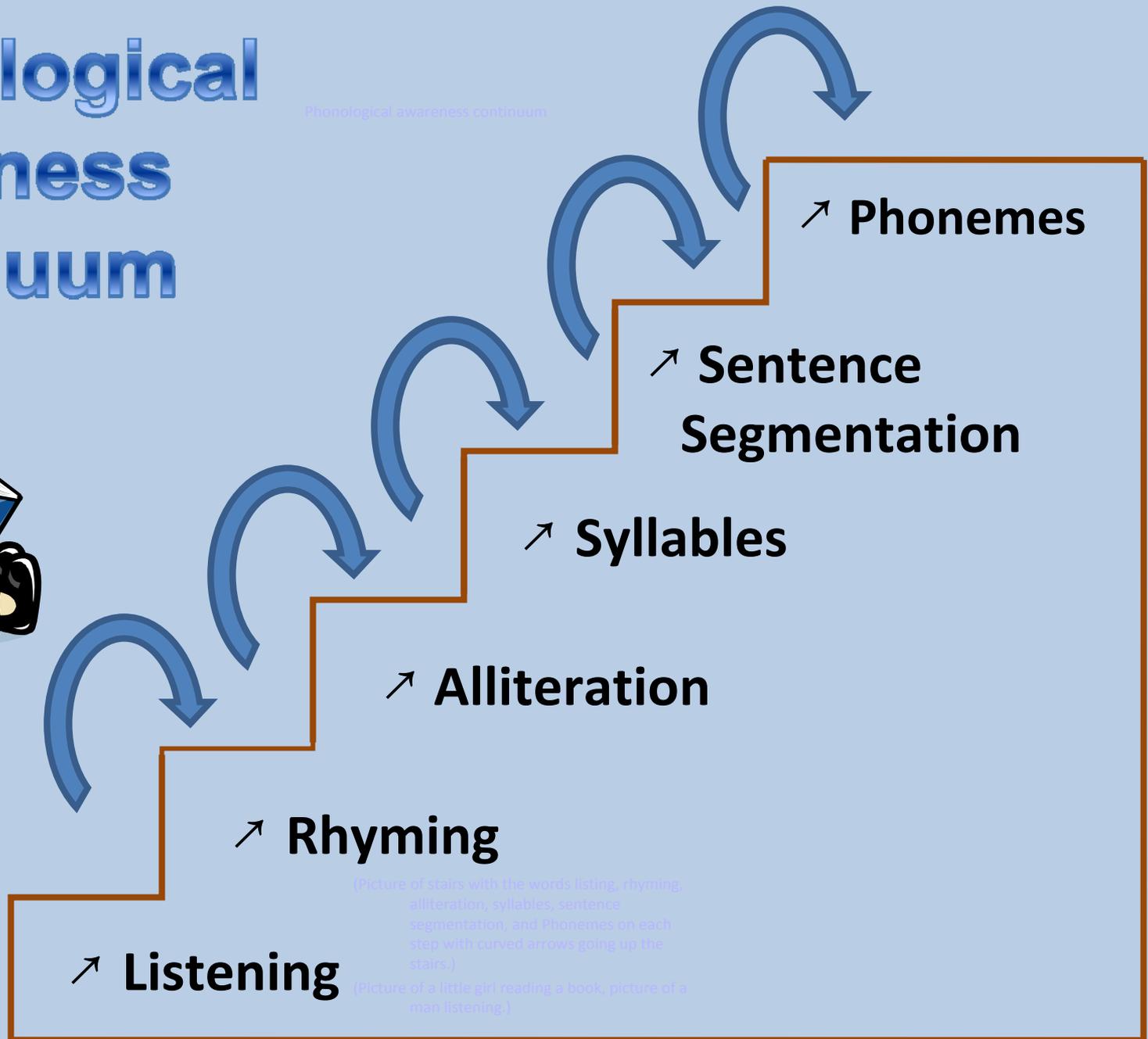
# What We Know

What we know

- ELLs need explicit, early and intensive instruction in phonological awareness to build decoding skills.
  - Roughly equal numbers of native and non-native English speakers encounter difficulties with word-decoding.
  - Many ELLs develop word decoding skills equal to those of their with their peers in early elementary years.

# Phonological Awareness Continuum

Phonological awareness continuum



(Picture of stairs with the words listing, rhyming, alliteration, syllables, sentence segmentation, and Phonemes on each step with curved arrows going up the stairs.)  
(Picture of a little girl reading a book, picture of a man listening.)

# Listening

- Environmental sounds
- Sequencing sounds
- Reverse/substitute words in nursery rhymes or familiar phrases
- Following a series of verbal questions
- Specific sounds in a story

**Have children listen to everyday sounds with eyes closed. They have to identify the sounds!**

- Air conditioner
- Vacuum cleaner
- Wind
- Footsteps
- Bell
- Piano
- Dog
- Water dripping
- Horn
- Bird





# Rhyming

- Rhyme identification
  - Thumbs up/ down
  - Use alphabet strip and change initial sound
  - Read books with rhyming words
  - Stop before the rhyming word and determining if student can generate the word.
- Scaffold rhyme generation
  - Begin sentence and student provides rhyme.(A mouse lives in the \_\_\_\_.)
- Rhyme generation

# Alliterations

Alliterations

Alliteration Identification → Identify common initial sound and use mirrors

Scaffold Alliteration Generation → Dictate a phrase and student provides words with same initial sound to complete phrase

Alliteration Generation → Give sound and Student generates alliteration



# Sentence Segmenting

Sentence Segmenting

- Select meaningful sentences from children's speech or favorite books
- Have children clap/count each word in a sentence
- Shuffle and reorder words in familiar sentences
- Make silly phrases by deleting words from sentences

(Picture of three girls playing jump rope saying "5..little..monkeys..jumping..on..the..bed.")



5..little..monkeys..jumping..on..the..bed!





# Syllables

- Syllable identification- use whole body movement from left to right to illustrate syllable
- Syllable blending- use counters, whole body movement or fingers to tap
- Syllable deletion- use counters, whole body movement, or clapping

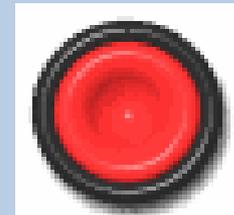
# Explicit Phonemic Routine

Explicit Phonemic Routine

## Sentence segmenting & blending

( picture of three boxes with three red buttons underneath labeled Elkonin Boxes)

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**Elkonin Boxes**

# Explicit Phonemic Routine

Explicit Phonemic Routine

## Phoneme segmenting & blending

(Picture of three boxes with three red buttons underneath labeled Elkonin Boxes)



Elkonin Boxes

# Phonemes

Phonemes

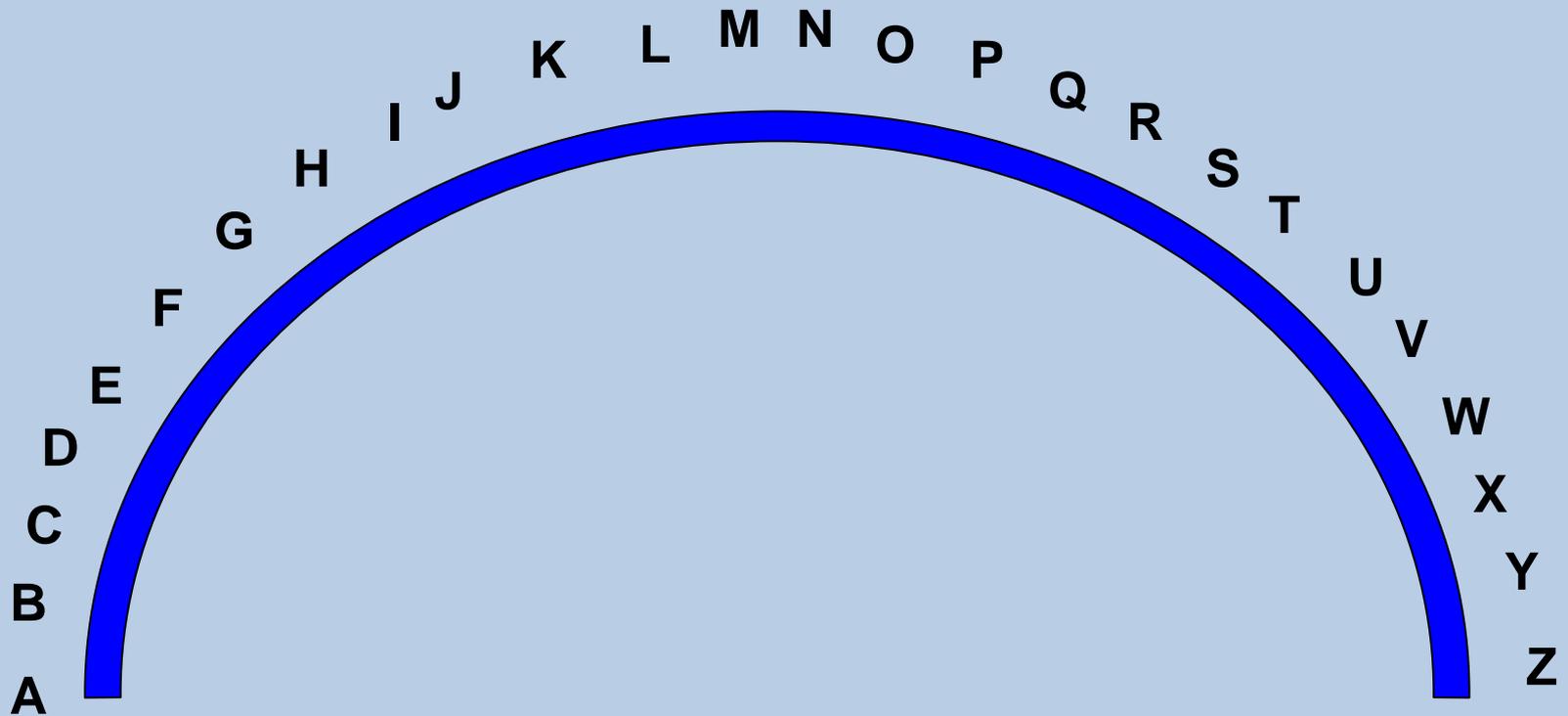
- Phoneme identification
- Blending phonemes
- Phoneme manipulation



# Alphabet Arc: *Upper & Lower Case*

Alphabet  
Alphabet

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z



# Alphabet Activities

- First, Middle, Last
- Sequencing
- Missing Letter
- Rapid Naming
- Bingo
- Dominoes
- Guess Who



# Alphabetic Principle: *Letter-Sounds*

*Students have most difficulty: correspondences w/similar sounds & articulation.*

**Multi-sensory  
Articulation  
Routines**

**Hand  
motions**

**Mirrors**

Types of Sounds		
	Voiced	Voiceless
Continuous	1. /v/	/f/
	2. /m/ /n/	
	3. /ě/ /í/	
	4. /ǒ/ /ǔ/	
Stop	5. /d/	/t/
	6. /b/	/p/
	7. /g/	/k/

# Spanish- English Spelling

Spanish-English spelling

- In Spanish there are approximately 22 phonemes, and in English, there are approximately 44 phonemes.
- In Spanish are very few ways to write the 22 Spanish phonemes, whereas in English, there are about 250 different ways to write the 44 phonemes.
- Most sounds in English have more than one spelling. In Spanish the number is significantly smaller.
- In English, many letters or combinations of letters can be used to represent different sounds in different words. Whereas in Spanish, this occurs significantly less frequently.



# Spanish- English Spelling



- Students can benefit from learning rules such as: doubling final consonants rule, the dropping rule, the changing y to i rule and the doubling medial consonants rule.
- Auditory discrimination practice of the minimal pairs is also helpful for English language learners.
- Spelling can be taught with attention and integration of the 4 domains of language
- English spelling is 85% predictable. Students **can** learn the irregular forms of words as patterns can also be found in irregular words (ball, tall, wall etc..).

# Common Points of Confusion

Common points of confusion

- **Vowels:**
  - Spanish vowels represent different phonemes than English vowels. Spanish vowels have one sound, all English vowels have multiple sounds.
- **U combinations:**
  - que, qui, gui, gue – the u is not pronounced in these Spanish combinations unless the u has a dieresis (ü). Words like queen, quiet, quick may be difficult to learn.
- **Vowel Digraphs:** ou, ow, aw, oo



# Spanish Does Not Have

Spanish does not have

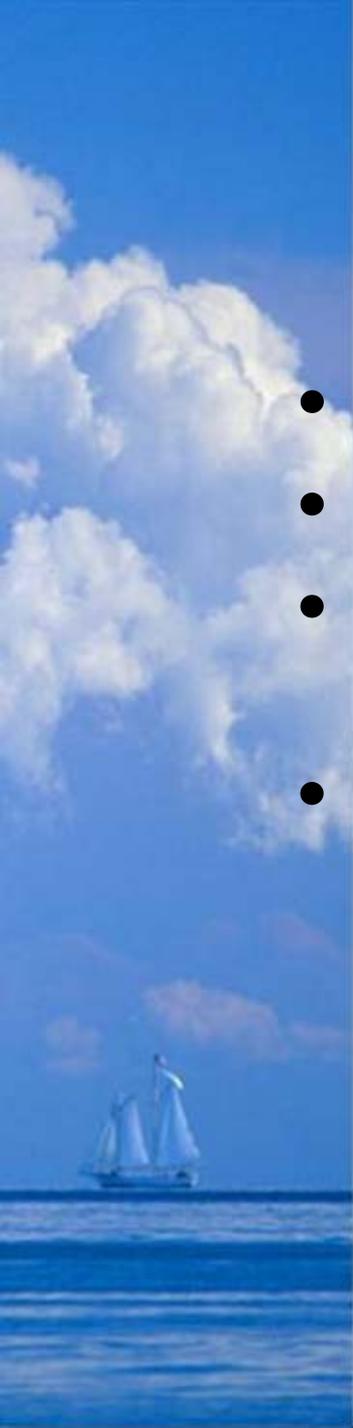
- **Consonant Digraphs:** i.e., sh, th, wh, ph, -ng, ck, wr, kn. However, the sound may exist in spelling of words such as the letter N before K is pronounced /ng/.
- **Consonant Blends:**
  - **Final consonant blends:** e.g., nd, st
  - **Three-letter consonant blends:** e.g., str
  - **S- blends:** e.g., sl,
- **Silent-e pattern:** e at the end of a word is pronounced



# Spanish Does Not Have

Spanish does not have

- /ih/ as in pig – does not exist in Spanish
- /ae/ as in apple – does not exist in Spanish
- **Endings:** -ed (pronounced /d/, /t/, /ded/, or /ted/) and -s (pronounced /s/, /z/, /ez/, or /es/)
- **Contractions:** don't, isn't, weren't, etc.



# Spanish Does Have Spanish does not have transfer Transfer

- Hard C before A, O, U, and consonants rule
- Soft C before E or I rule
- Hard G before A, O, U, and consonants rule
- Soft G before E or I rule
- VCCV syllable
- VCV syllable



# Some Common Prefixes

Prefix	Spanish	English
A-, An-	sin	without
Anti-	contra	against
Ante-	antes	before
Bi-	dos, doble	two, double
Con-	unión	with
Des-	negación	not
Dis-	oposición	not
Ex-	afuera de	outside of
Extra-	más	above
Im-, In-	no	not
Inter-	entre	between

Prefix	Spanish	English
Intro-	adentro	within
Pre-	antes	before
Pro-	por	for
Re-	repetir	again
Sin-	con	with
Sub-	debajo	under
Super-	sobre	above
Trans-	al otro lado	across
Tri-	tres	three
Uni-	uno	one

# Instructional Considerations

Instructional considerations

- Specific sounds and sound placement in words differ for different languages. Helping students hear English sounds that don't exist or are not salient in their native language is beneficial.
- Unfamiliar phonemes and graphemes make decoding and spelling difficult. Important to familiarize students with those patterns that do not exist in native language but will be encountered in English.



# What We Know

What we know

- Frequent and explicit vocabulary instruction is necessary for ELLs.
- Vocabulary instruction, while varied in nature and quantity, on average, does not receive adequate instructional attention.
  - 5-10% of instructional time is devoted to vocabulary development.
  - Focuses more frequently on labels and definitions.
- Repeated exposure to new and familiar words is important for students to learn and remember word meanings.
  - Students need 12-14 exposure to a word and its meaning, in multiple contexts (text, discussion, writing, etc.).

# Vocabulary Instruction

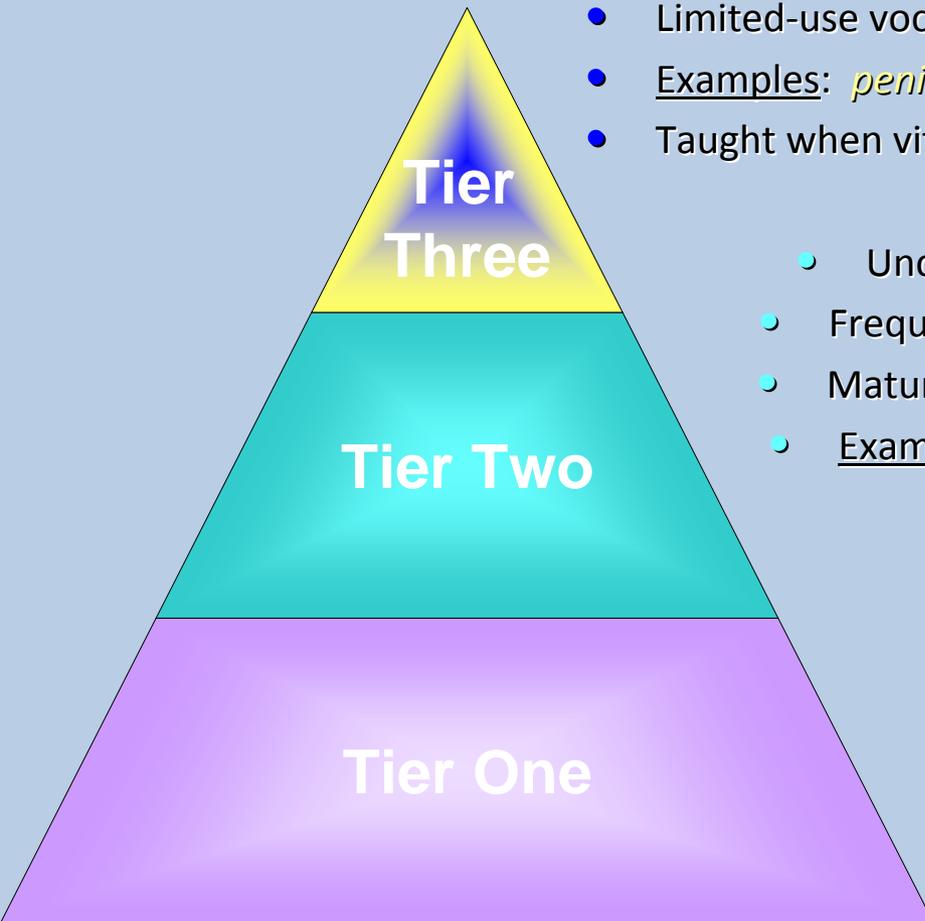
Vocabulary Instruction

## Instruction should address learning:

- labels for words, friendly definitions
- multiple meanings of words
- word parts
- how words relate to one another
- examples and non-examples
- words in multiple contexts
- strategies for independent word learning

# *Selection of Targeted Words*

Beck, McKeown, & Kucan (2002)



- Limited-use vocabulary
- Examples: *peninsula isotope lathe*
- Taught when vital to text comprehension

- Uncommon to children's oral language
- Frequently-used words in written language
- Mature or more precise labels for concepts
- Examples: *absurd commotion reluctant*

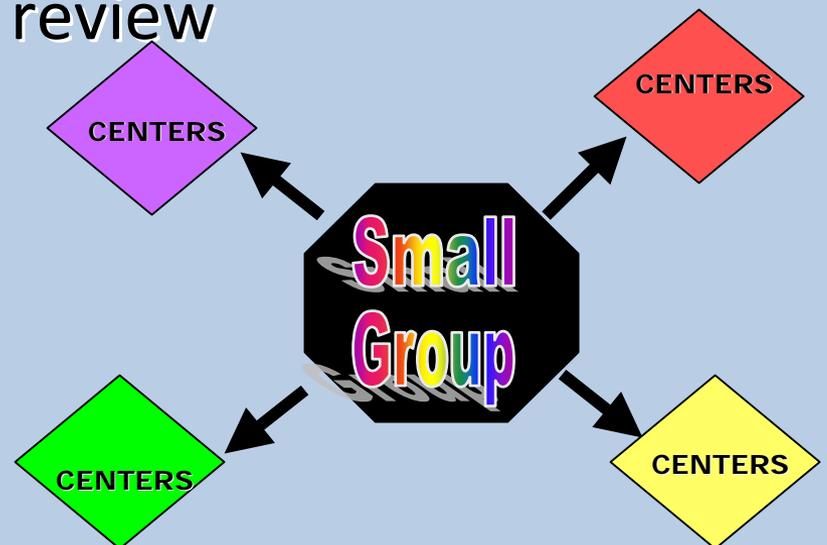
- Approximately 8,000 words
  - Basic vocabulary
- Rarely requires instructional attention
  - Examples: *baby clock happy*

# Strategic Intervention

Strategic intervention

- Focus: keep the primary goal in mind
- Careful selection of targeted words
- Word meanings in concise terms
- Multiple exposures for review

(Picture of a diagram with the words small group in the middle with arrows pointing out to diamonds saying center.)



# Multiple Meanings Your Turn

Multiple meanings  
your turn

*Run*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.



# Multiple Meanings

Multiple meanings

## *Run*

1. Run down the street.
2. In the long run it was for the best.
3. Run over to the park.
4. Sam runs his campaign.
5. He will run the Senator's campaign.
6. This machine runs well.
7. The river runs swiftly.
8. The train runs every 5 minutes.
9. There was a run on gas.
10. The movie runs for a week.
11. Maple Street runs north and south.
12. Her stocking ran.
13. Sally ran up the tab.
14. Martin looks run down.
15. He will run 100 copies.



# Steps for Explicit Direction

Steps for explicit direction

- Say and write the word
- Provide definitions (with familiar terms)
- Discuss what is known about the word
- Provide examples (and non-examples)
- Engage in extended discussions/activities with the word
- Create sentences with the word



# Definition

Definition

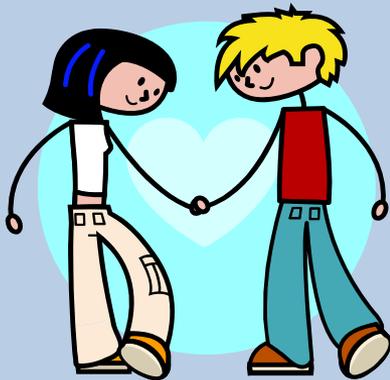
## content

1. Wanting no more than what one has.
2. Happy or satisfied.



# Examples and Non-examples Content

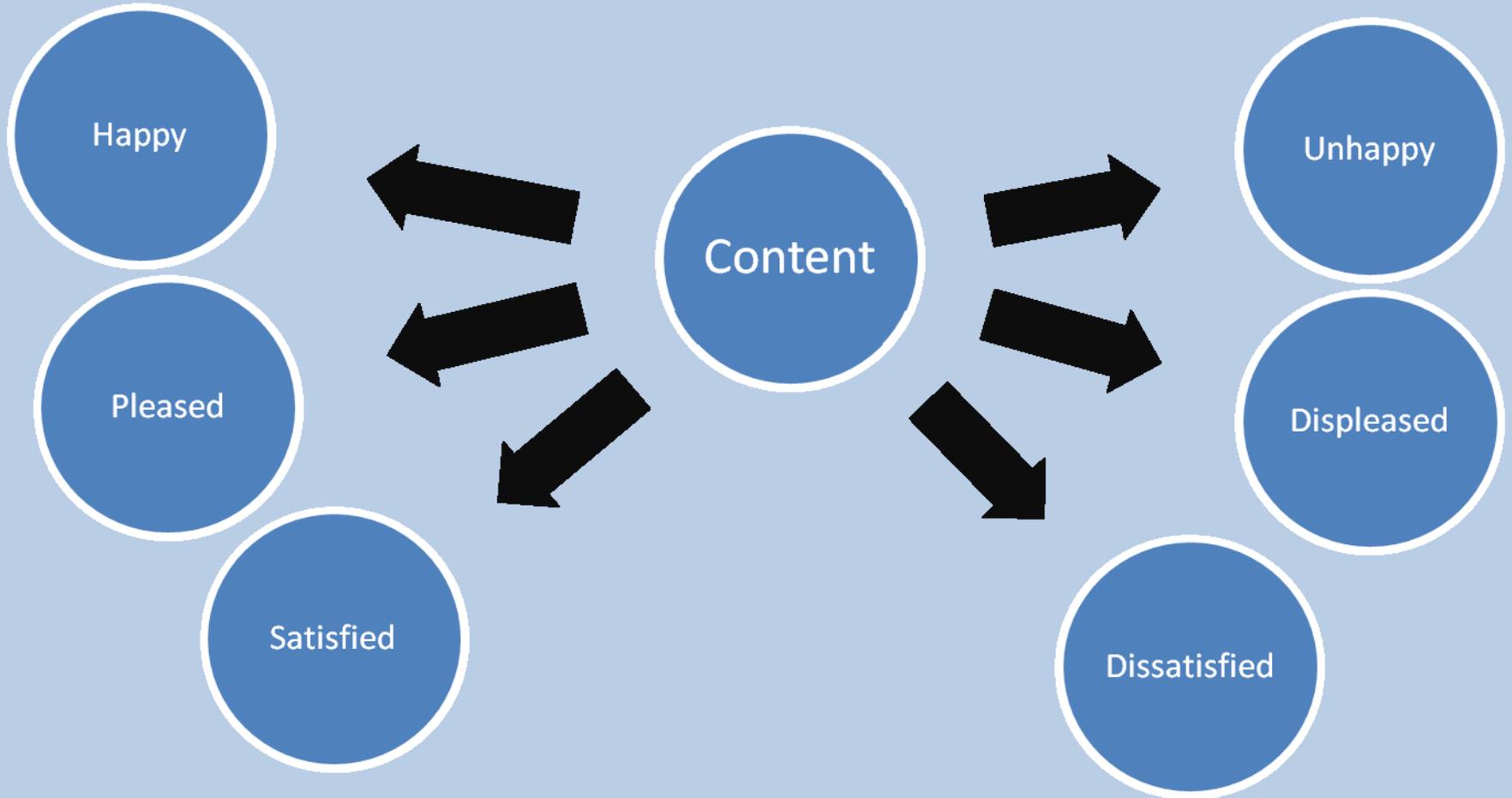
(Pictures of a girl eating ice cream, a boy washing his hands, a doctor giving a girl a shot, a man and woman arguing.)



# Semantic Web

- Definition:

(circle graph with the word content in the middle and the words satisfaction, pleased, dissatisfied, displeased, unhappy, and happy around it.)  
Sentence: Mary was content while playing in the park.



Sentence: Mary was content while playing in the park.

# Word Part Web

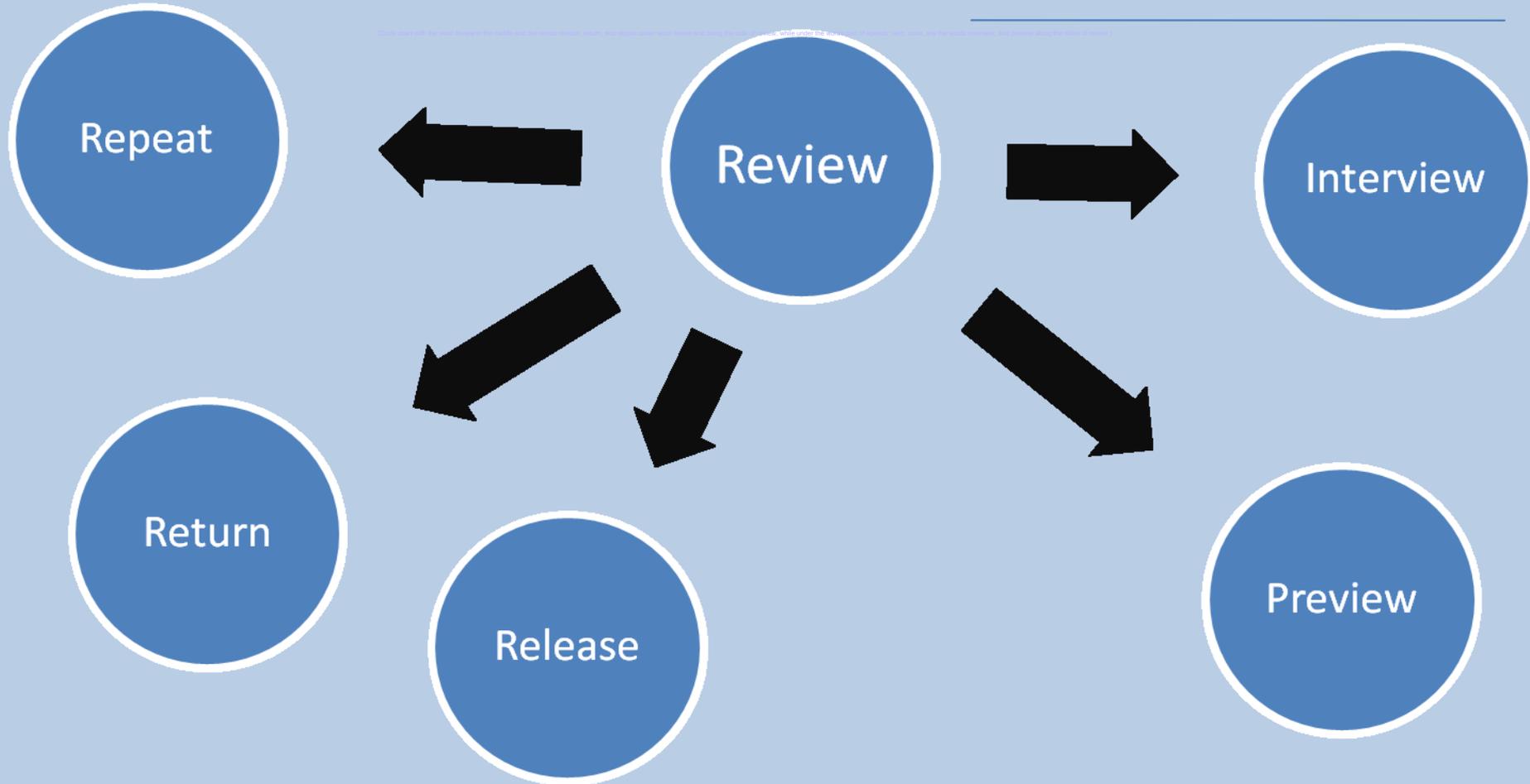
Word part web

Word: review

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Part of Speech: verb, noun

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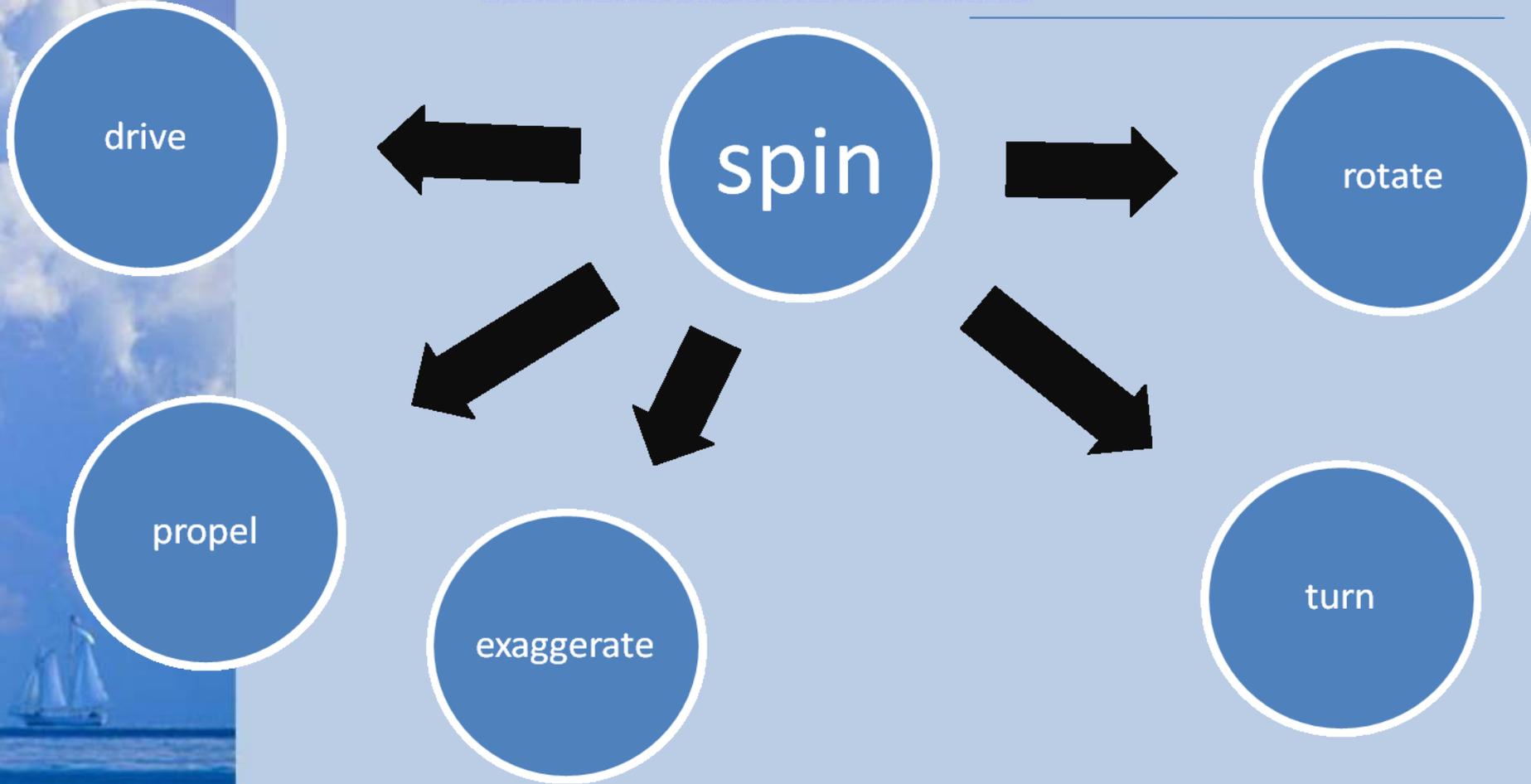
Sentence: The teacher will review the math homework tomorrow.

# Synonym Web

Synonym web

Word: spin

Part of Speech: verb



Sentence:

# Activities with Morphemes

Activities with morphemes

- **Auditory Discovery**

Students repeat these words after me and listen for the common word part.

Estudiantes repiten estas palabras que tienen entre ellas algo en común.



# Activities with Morphemes



- **Visual Discovery**

Look at the words as I write them.

Miren las palabras mientras las escribo

(Students will discover the common word part)



# Activities with Morphemes

- **Tactile/Kinesthetic Discovery**

Teacher provides opportunities for students to discover the meaning of the word part and how it applies to each word.

Repeated exposure to new and familiar words is also important for students to learn and remember word meanings. Provide multiple opportunities for using the new words.

# Language

Language comprehension

## Comprehension

- Read aloud both fiction & nonfiction books that support target strategic vocabulary that has been introduced.
- Read aloud strategic portions of text to support student oral language development and language comprehension
- Build background knowledge.



# Teaching Words Well

Teaching words well

- Learn concepts related to words through experiences
- Learn words related to concepts through experiences
- Learn how concept words are related
- Provide multiple opportunities for use



# Argument

Argument

- Concept: Talk
- Dictionary Definition: *n* a discussion in which reasons for and against something are given
- Friendly Definition: An argument is talking about two or more differing ideas about something. During an argument reasons are given to show how one idea is better than the other.



# Argument



- Example: Last weekend my brother and I had an argument. He stated that the Lakers are the best team in basketball because they have the most valuable player. I told him that the Celtics are much better because they perform as a team and can win championships. We continued to talk about other ways that one team is better than the other.

# Arguments

Use in other contexts



# Word Details

Word details

1. Phonological
2. Orthographic
3. Semantic
4. Syntactic
5. Pragmatic
6. Morphological

