

Selections from

**Vocabulary in the
Elementary and Middle
School**

By Dale D. Johnson
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How Many Languages?

- There are more than 5,000 spoken languages in the world.
- There are 700 different languages on the island of New Guinea alone.
- 95% of the people in the world speak one fewer than 100 languages.
- The most common languages? 1) Mandarin, 2) Hindi, 3) Spanish, 4) English

8 Guidelines for Expanding Vocabulary

1. Teachers must devote time to vocabulary growth.
2. Wide reading should be encouraged and facilitated.
3. Use direct instruction to teach passage-critical words.
4. Learning new words requires active involvement with the words, not passive.

8 Guidelines for Expanding Vocabulary

5. Learning vocabulary requires repeated exposures in multiple contexts.
6. Requiring students to write definitions is not recommended.
7. New words should be related to students' prior knowledge and other related words.
8. Students need to develop strategies for acquiring new words, e.g. phonic analysis, structural analysis, contextual analysis.

Ten Types of Word Associations

1. Synonyms
2. Antonyms
3. Collocations
4. Coordinates
5. Hypernyms-hyponyms
6. Hypernyms-meronyms
7. Hypernyms-attributes
8. Hypernyms-functions
9. Homographs
10. Homophones

Ten Types of Word Associations

1. **Synonyms** – words with nearly the same or quite similar meanings (e.g. rostrum, pulpit, lecturn)
2. **Antonyms** – words with opposite meanings (e.g. proud, ashamed)
3. **Collocations** – words that frequently occur together in language usage (e.g. green grass, unruly behavior)
4. **Coordinates** – words that cluster together on some semantic element but are not superordinate or subordinate to one another (e.g. roller coaster, lawn mower)
5. **Hypernyms-hyponyms** – a hypernym is the superordinate word in a category (e.g. residences) and hyponyms are the subordinate members of the category (e.g. apartments, condominiums, houses)

Ten Types of Word Associations

6. **Hypernyms-meronyms** – a hypernym is a whole (e.g. computer) and meronyms are its parts (e.g. keyboard, mouse, chip)
7. **Hypernyms-attributes** – attributes are the semantic features that describe a hypernym (editor: intelligent, well educated, underpaid)
8. **Hypernyms-functions** – functions are what the hypernym does or what is done to it (editor: checks accuracy, checks spelling, checks style)
9. **Homographs** – homographs are multiple meaning words that have the same spellings but different meanings and sometimes different pronunciations (e.g. bank, ring, record, conduct)
10. **Homophones** – homophones are words with identical sounds but different spellings and meanings (e.g. vain-vein, wrapper-rapper)

Another Association: Semantic

Wordnet “Unique Beginner Nouns

Over 80,000 nouns can be organized into 25 groups (abc order):

act, activity

animal, fauna

artifact

attribute

body

cognition, knowledge

communication

event, happening

feeling, emotion

food

group, grouping

location

motivation, motive

natural object

natural phenomenon

person, human being

plant, flora

possession

process

quantity, amount

relation

shape

state

substance

time

Another Association: Semantic

Wordnet “Unique Beginner Verbs”

Over 11,500 verbs can be organized into 14 groups:

motion

consumption

perception

creation

contract

emotion

communication

possession

competition

bodily care and functions

change

social behavior and interactions

cognition

be, resemble, belong, suffice

More Semantic Association: Word Webbing

COMIC

Synonyms:

Antonyms:

Hyponyms:

Meronyms:

Slang synonyms:

Examples:

Homographs (multiple meanings):

Functions:

Attributes:

More Semantic Association: Word Webbing

COMIC

- Synonyms: humorist, comedian, wit
- Antonyms: sourpuss, crab, eulogist, orator
- Hyponyms (types): stand-up, clown, jester, mime
- Meronyms (parts): voice, expressions, timing, attire
- Slang synonyms: wiseacre, madcap
- Examples: Lucille Ball, W. C. Fields, Jack Benny
- Homographs (multiple meanings): funnies, cartoon, comic strip
- Functions: entertain, throw barbs, cause laughter
- Attributes: funny, droll, zany, witty

Word Play: Onomastics (names)

First names: given at birth. Origins include the Bible (David, Ruth), antiquity (Marcus, Julius), royalty (Elizabeth, Charles), languages, literature and film (Scarlett, Clark), precious stones (Pearl, Ruby), flowers (Daisy, Rose), qualities (Faith, Hope, Charity, Joy), etc.

Last names: inherited. Origins include first name of father (Peterson), topographic features (Beach, Hill), occupation (Hunter, Baker, Potter), seasons (May, Winter), status (King, Bishop), places (Jordan, Berlin), plants (Moss), colors (White, Green), and others.

Word Play: Onomastics (names)

Nicknames: physical features (Stretch, Shorty), personal traits (Whiz), affection (Sweetie, Punkin), etc.

Pseudonyms: using a name for public purposes that is not your real name (Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens), Dr. Seuss (Theodore Seuss Geisel), George Elliot (Mary Ann Evans), Bob Dylan (Robert Zimmerman), and so on.

Eponyms: words named after people. Louis Braille, Jules Leotard, Teddy bear, Sylvester Graham, Caesar Cardini (salad),

Word Play: Onomastics (names)

Toponyms: words named after places (hamburger, bologna, duffel bag, french fries)

Aptronyms: names appropriate to the work those people do (Matt Batts-baseball player, Bernard Crook-police chief, John Razor-barber, Priscilla Flattery, publicist, Gary Player-golfer, Jay Posthumus, funeral director, Louise Rumpp, diet center manager)

Place names: Pleasant View; Jackpot, Nevada; Odd, West Virginia; Boring, Maryland;

Names for businesses: Wok In, Food-Man-Chew, Hair Port,

Expressions

(Beware English Language Learners!)

1. **Idioms: no literal meaning available!** (rob Peter to pay Paul, this will stick to your ribs, hold his head up high, a little slow on the draw, bite the bullet, not up to snuff, etc.)
2. **Proverbs: wise sayings, usually advisory in nature** (Don't count your chickens until they hatch. Many hands make light work. Absence makes the heart grow fonder.)
3. **Slang: usually created by the young, the socially alienated, members of certain occupations, etc.** (a Mickey Mouse course, airhead, pea brain, squirrel kisser, McPaper [a quickly written paper]), etc.

Expressions

(Beware English Language Learners!)

4. **Catchphrases:** coined to “catch” your attention (Where’s the beef? No rest for the wicked.)
5. **Slogans:** catchphrases coined to sell a product (Where’s the beef? Coke...the Real Thing, Phooey on Dewey, Just Say No)

Figures of Speech

Alliteration: repetition of initial sounds

Onomatopoeia: formation of words from the sound of what they describe (quack, moo, bang)

Tongue twisters: phrases difficult to pronounce when repeated quickly (red leather yellow leather)

Similes: comparisons that include the words “like” or “as” (a mind like a steel trap)

Metaphors: comparisons that do not use the words like or as (The faculty were sheep who lolled in the pastures of their offices.)

Figures of Speech (cont.)

Hyperbole: exaggerated statements (tons of tomatoes, a hundred lifetimes)

Meiosis: the opposite of hyperbole—understatements

Euphemisms: words or phrases thought to be inoffensive or comforting, used as substitutions for painful or taboo words (How long has your mother been *gone* now?)

Dysphemisms: the use of negative or demeaning words as a weapon against another person (cheapskate)

Doublespeak: language that is used to conceal the negative or unpleasant to make it more tolerable or professional (personal flotation device—life jacket, previously owned—used)

Figures of Speech (cont.)

- Oxymorons:** the juxtaposition of words with opposite meanings (jumbo shrimp, gourmet hot dog, cheerful pessimist)
- Irony:** words used in a meaning opposite to their normal definition (Oh, I'm just thrilled to be here.)
- Personification:** non-human things are given human traits or abilities (The old chair has a soft spot in its heart for grandpa.)
- Puns:** words of similar spelling, sound, or meanings are substituted for the expected words to create a humorous effect (I know my poetry is bad, but it could be verse.)

Creating New Words

Burgacide

Elbonics

Elecelleration

Lactomangulation

Neonphancy

Phonesia

Telecrastination

Creating New Words

Burgacide: When a hamburger can't take any more and hurls itself through the grill into the coals.

Elbonics: The actions of two people posturing for the same armrest at a theater.

Elecelleration: The notion that the more you press the elevator button the sooner it will arrive.

Lactomangulation: Manhandling the "open here" spout on a carton of milk so badly that one has to resort to opening the "illegal" side.

Neonphancy: A fluorescent light bulb struggling to come to life.

Phonesia: The affliction of dialing a phone number and forgetting whome you were calling just as they answer.

Telecrastination: The act of always waiting two rings before answering the phone, even if it is six inches away.

Word Shapes and Spellings

Anagrams: the letters of one or more words are used to form another word or words (add-dad, read-dear, recent-center)

Aptanagrams: rearrangements of letters into words that are apt or fit the meaning of the original word (ocean-canoë, point-on tip)

Antigrams: using the letters of a word to create words with an opposite meaning (teach-cheat, funeral-real fun)

Lipograms: words or phrases written with missing letters (e.g. vanity license plates, PCKERFN-Packer fan)

Word Shapes and Spellings (cont.)

Palindromes: words, phrases, or sentences which produce the same sequences when read forward or backward (toot, radar, Madam, Was it a rat I saw?)

Semordnilaps: words that change to other words when they are read backward (plug-gulp, loop-pool, desserts-stressed)

Pangrams: sentences written to include every letter of the alphabet once (The five boxing wizards jump quickly.)

And finally...

The Hink Pink Family

Hink pinks: one-syllable rhyming words used to answer a riddle (What is a person who steals steaks? A beef thief.)

Hinky Pinkies: two-syllable rhyming words used to answer a riddle (What could we call a better café? A finer diner.)

Hinkity Pinkities: three-syllable rhyming words used to answer a riddle (What is it called when you get the OK to take something away? Removal approval.)

And yes...

The Hink Hink Family

Hink Hinks: one-syllable words that have the same sound and spelling but different meanings (What piece of furniture does the head of the committee use? The chair chair.)

Hinky Hinkies: two syllables ... (What could we call an intestinal punctuation mark? A colon colon.)

Hinkity Hinkities: three ... (What do you call a round handbill? A circular circular.)

Just one more...

The Pink Pink Family

Pink Pinks: one-syllable words that have the same sound but different spellings and meanings (What is a self-centered blood vessel called? A vain vein.)

Pinky Pinkies: two syllables ... (Who speaks with rhythm to the paper around a candy bar? A wrapper rapper.)

Pinkity Pinkities: three ... (What might you call the most important rule? The principal principle).