Developing Word Consciousness in Young Readers

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Brenda gained a lot of new knowledge from her coursework at Minnesota State University, Mankato. She would like to thank her professors for their guidance. She would also like to thank her family, especially her husband. She hopes you too will become a logophile.

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Abstract

Developing word consciousness in young readers can help motivate them to learn new words, make personal connections to words, and in turn, use words more skillfully. Word consciousness can also enable students to grow their vocabulary knowledge and improve their comprehension skills in order to become better readers. It is essential for the teacher to present words in a way that will get students excited about words and promote word consciousness. Additionally, students need to be immersed in an environment that is filled with words. Further, the words should be presented through rich, teacher-led strategies that engage students in communicating and listening. Strategies and approaches to help students develop an awareness, interest, and love for words are described.

Keywords: word consciousness, vocabulary, comprehension

Word consciousness is defined as having an awareness and interest in words and their meanings (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008). Developing word consciousness in young readers is critical in order to enhance students' vocabulary knowledge and support comprehension (Neugebauer et al., 2017). According to Neuman and Wright (2014), "without vocabulary knowledge, words are just words-without much meaning" (p. 3). As such, it is essential for teachers to implement strategies and use structured routines, such as teaching students about words and using wordplay, in order to promote word consciousness (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008), because learning words requires a variety of opportunities for students to understand the meaning of a word (Bromley, 2007). Further, helping students to become word conscious is an important aspect of instruction (Lane & Allen, 2010), because creating opportunities to enhance students' vocabulary can also build upon their reading comprehension (Barger, 2006). Therefore, getting students interested in and excited about words is essential to the effectiveness of reading instruction (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008). In order for students to get excited about words and for vocabulary instruction to work, students must be actively involved (Towell, 1997).

Word Consciousness and the Learning Environment

An environment that is rich with words influences a child's opportunity to read, hear, use, and talk about new vocabulary words (Blachowicz, Fisher, Ogle, & Watts-Taffe, 2006). Immersing students in an environment that is rich in words with instruction and word-learning strategies provides greater breadth and depth in developing more vocabulary knowledge (Baumann, Ware, & Edwards, 2007). For example, when vocabulary lessons are integrated into interventions, the students' vocabularies grow more than expected (Baumann et al., 2007). Accordingly, developing an environment that encourages word learning is important for promoting word consciousness and it is essential that teachers encourage their students'

vocabulary knowledge by implementing strategies and tools in the classroom that support and build upon word consciousness (Baumann et al., 2007). Intentionally creating such an environment and using such strategies has been shown to increase students' vocabulary knowledge, which can assist in closing the wide differences in vocabulary knowledge among school-aged children (Neugebauer et al., 2017).

Teaching vocabulary in early childhood is critical in order for children to develop a large, enriched vocabulary that can be pivotal in students becoming better readers (Neuman & Wright, 2014). Specific strategies for teaching vocabulary in early childhood include reinforcing students' words, acknowledging students' words through positive recognition, and guiding students to make personal connections to words through teacher talk (Neugebauer et al., 2017). All of these approaches can positively affect students' general vocabulary knowledge (Neugebauer et al., 2017). Further, incidental learning of words, along with explicit instruction and deliberate modeling of sophisticated vocabulary, can provide breadth to the students' vocabulary (Lane & Allen, 2010). Thus, creating a word-rich environment in the physical space in the classroom is important for vocabulary development in young readers (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008). Additionally, using wordplay by having a classroom filled with games and giving time to play such games is a tool that allows opportunities to foster word consciousness (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008).

Promoting Word Consciousness

Being a word conscious teacher can encourage word consciousness in young readers (Lane & Allen, 2010), because enthusiasm is contagious and teachers that are passionate about words often unintentionally share that enthusiasm with their students (Bromley, 2007). Therefore, teachers should foster student participation in vocabulary activities and hold students

accountable for learning words and their meanings (Manyak et al., 2014). Further, it is important to have follow-up encounters with words and allow for plenty of time to review such words in order for them to become a part of the students' vocabulary (Neuman & Roskos, 2012). Hence, it is critical teachers are given continuing professional development on strategies that are effective in order to promote word consciousness, enhance students' vocabulary knowledge, and support their comprehension. This professional development should focus on supporting a teacher's ability to be word conscious and providing vocabulary instruction that is planned, sequenced, and systematic (Neuman & Wright, 2014). Therefore, the purpose of this article is to describe strategies and tools that teachers can use to create an environment that supports the development of word consciousness.

Review of Literature

Defining Word Consciousness

Word consciousness has been defined in varying ways. For example, Neugebauer and colleagues (2017) define word consciousness as instruction that promotes students' excitement and attention to words. Similarly, other scholars have defined word consciousness as being aware of words and their meanings and having an interest in words and their meanings (Anderson & Nagy, 1992; Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2002). Additionally, a deeper definition of word consciousness includes noticing how and when new words are being used (Manzo & Manzo, 2008). Furthermore, word consciousness combines metacognition about words, a desire to learn words, and a yawning interest to learn words that doesn't end (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008).

Vocabulary's Impact on Comprehension

Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and their meanings (Biemiller & Boote, 2006; Honig, Diamond, Cole, & Gutlohn, 2008). Word consciousness is a key component of vocabulary because of the integration of metacognition and the motivation to learn words (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008). Additionally, vocabulary knowledge is one of the best predictors of reading comprehension, which relates to the ability to understand written content (Davis, 1972; Thorndike, 1917). Comprehension of text is more likely for children that have had early exposure to more vocabulary because they know the meaning of more words (Wright, 2014). Comprehension and vocabulary have a reciprocal relationship, because a larger vocabulary often leads to greater comprehension, and better comprehension leads to the learning of more and more vocabulary words (Stanovich, 1986).

Promoting Word Consciousness Through Vocabulary Instruction

Words can be complex, because, among other things, words have synonyms, antonyms, multiple meanings, homophones, and homonyms. Therefore, teachers and students have much to consider and comprehend related to vocabulary (Flanigan, Templeton, & Hayes, 2012). Vocabulary is learned through repeated exposure to new words and learners need to encounter a vocabulary word between six to sixteen times before they can remember it (Ur, 2012). Additionally, to broaden a student's vocabulary and promote word consciousness, teachers should intentionally model sophisticated vocabulary (Lane & Allen, 2010). For example, teachers can use familiar words and then change the words to more advanced words (Lane & Allen, 2010), immerse students in a vocabulary-rich environment, and provide instruction in words and strategies for how to learn those words (Baumann et al., 2007). When students have a range of experiences with words, their expressive often vocabulary increases (Baumann et al.,

2007). More specifically, when words are presented in a way that makes sense to students, it affords them the best chance of learning (Neuman & Roskos, 2012), because knowledge of word meanings is a strong predictor of reading comprehension (Biemiller & Boote, 2006).

In order to further enhance vocabulary instruction four pragmatic principles should be used. The pragmatic principles include: (1) establishing rich routines, (2) providing review experiences, (3) responding directly to student confusion, and (4) fostering universal participation and accountability (Manyak et al., 2014). The use of these principles can have a positive impact on vocabulary knowledge when used in connection with a word wall (Manyak et al., 2014). In addition, using complex, coherent text sets can build students' vocabulary (Cervetti, Wright, & Hwang, 2016).

Developing Young Readers' Vocabularies

Increasing students' knowledge of words beyond the words that are explicitly taught and finding ways to develop their excitement for and awareness of words is imperative for the development of the vocabularies of young learners (Neugebauer et al., 2017). For example, teacher talk, which is defined as teachers' everyday language and student-teacher exchanges, can be used to make personal connections with the text to promote student interest and attention to the words (Neugebauer et al., 2017). Using teacher talk can also engage young students and evoke their participation in shared reading, before, during, and after, which improves literacy growth (Gonzalez et al., 2014). Another approach that can support students' language skills is for teachers to allow wait times of three to ten seconds within their teacher talk in order to allow time for students to process the information (Wasik & Hindman, 2018). Further, repetition of words and providing positive feedback through teacher talk is another way to increase vocabulary knowledge in students (Neugebauer et al., 2017). Finally, the length of any teacher

questioning is notably related to vocabulary development because the duration of the questioning encourages active participation with meaningful gains in both vocabulary and comprehension (Gonzalez et al., 2014).

Opportunities for students to practice skill work, such as speaking, writing, retelling stories, role playing, rewriting texts, and group work activities, are also important for supporting vocabulary development (Ur, 2012). Students need opportunities to talk by being asked open-ended questions in order to get practice for how to reply with more than one-word answers (Wasik & Hindman, 2018). The more time students spend on vocabulary encourages more generative talk, which allows the students to initiate ideas and creates more connections with words and gives meaning to words (Sparapani, Calisle, & Conner, 2018). These opportunities to encourage vocabulary development can occur in a variety of ways.

Using Informational Text

For lifelong learning and success in school, informational texts that are read aloud is the most opportune time in the school day to develop vocabulary for young learners (Wright, 2014). Observations also have shown informational texts read aloud generate vocabulary curiosity and excitement in young learners (Wright, 2014). In order for there to be vocabulary development in early childhood, teachers should use explicit and implicit instruction, with explicit instruction having greater impact than implicit (Neuman & Wright, 2014).

Understanding and Teaching Morphological Awareness

Students that are provided the tools to understand word structures can significantly assist with learning vocabulary (Kieffer & Lesaux, 2007). Morphology is the study of the structure of words, which children develop an awareness of during their early childhood (Kieffer & Lesaux, 2007). Therefore, instruction in morphological awareness can be combined with vocabulary

instruction (Ramirez, Walton, & Roberts, 2014). Students' morphological awareness can increase when teachers enact effective strategies for early vocabulary development (Ramirez et al., 2014). Students that have a greater understanding of morphology, tend to have greater vocabularies (Kieffer & Lesaux, 2007). Teachers should focus attention on the relationships among words, such as their common roots, prefixes, and suffixes, to support word consciousness (Kieffer & Lesaux, 2007). Therefore, when students come to a word and they don't know what it means, students can use the word-part clues to help break a word down into its meaning (Baumann, Ware, & Edwards, 2007).

Vocabulary Development Through Play

In order to boost students' vocabularies, incorporating play into instruction is essential (Barger, 2006). Students will become independent word learners if teachers make learning words as much fun as possible by motivating and involving students in fun activities (Towell, 1997). Teachers that have a classroom of games and allow time for students to play those games is a way to incorporate fun and challenging classroom experiences with learning words (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008), Also, instruction with adult-supported play-based activities, as in when adults actively incorporate vocabulary into play with story-related toys, shows beneficial results on early vocabulary growth because learning through play makes student's learning a joy (Toub et al., 2018). Teachers should take time to play with their students in order to give them the support they need to maximize the benefits of games as an educational tool (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008).

Promoting Word Consciousness

Words are tools that can be used for communicating and teachers need to have knowledge of the language to support students' learning (Nagy & Townsend, 2012). Teachers

that encourage word consciousness for students in their classroom provide them with opportunities to learn more advanced vocabularies that enable them to support their own reading comprehension (Lane & Allen, 2010). Therefore, the best way to promote word consciousness in students is for teachers to be word conscious (Lane & Allen, 2010) and to provide a word-rich environment for them in the classroom (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008).

Promoting Word Consciousness in the Classroom

Words are essential for reading and communicating. Students should have experiences in the classroom that make learning about words interesting and purposeful. However, there may be challenges when attempting to get students excited and interested in words, which is often due to students not knowing as many words (Neuman & Wright, 2014), and having a limited vocabulary (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008). If words have never been presented to the students in an exciting way, they may just see them as words. If students are presented new words, and rarely see those words again, they will likely be forgotten because they are not word sponges, and they are unable to learn words from hearing them just one time (Neuman & Wright, 2014). Students need to encounter a vocabulary word between six and sixteen times before they remember it (Ur, 2012**). Therefore**, it is important for teachers to provide a classroom environment that promotes words often and, in order to truly learn the vocabulary words, real experiences and routines need to be put into the students' daily learning.

Approaches for Promoting Word Consciousness

Students need to be afforded opportunities to learn, practice, and communicate vocabulary words in an environment that promotes word consciousness (Lane & Allen, 2010). The Framework of Five, a set of five recommendations, provides guidance for teachers on specific instructional actions that can be taken to support word consciousness in their own

classrooms. The Framework of Five is made up of the following recommendations: (1) foster enthusiasm for words (Neugebauer, et al., 2017), (2) introduce vocabulary words with pictures or graphic interchange formats (GIFs) and include synonyms and antonyms (Neuman & Wright, 2014), (3) model and incorporate rich conversations, (Neuman & Wright, 2014), (4) offer many word walls with opportunities for review (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008), and (5) provide word games (Baumann et al., 2007). Teachers who utilize approaches that promote word consciousness should incorporate them into their students' daily learning.

Foster Enthusiasm for Words

The first step in getting students excited about words is presenting the words with enthusiasm. Consider how intimidated a young student that is learning to read might feel when being shown a list of vocabulary words with nothing else. If a list of words, or even one word, is shown to students, is talked about briefly, and then is not shown to them for a long period of time, the word(s) are often forgotten if a visual has not been presented and if the students are not even asked to say the word(s) (Neuman & Wright, 2014).

One way to assist students in learning new vocabulary words is for the teacher to present them in a powerful way (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008). The tone of the teacher's voice and the teacher's body language can influence a student's engagement. That is, how teachers say words and present them when introducing new words can captivate students from the beginning (Lane & Allen, 2010). Teacher word consciousness talk is essential in understanding the impact of promoting word consciousness (Neugebauer, et al., 2017). For example, when the teacher is about to introduce a new word or words to students, he/she may say, "First grade learners, it is our lucky day. I have something exciting to show you. We are going to look at some new vocabulary words that you are going to be able incorporate in your everyday language."

Additionally, silent signals can be created to show excitement. For example, a teacher can extend both arms and lift them to the sky and bring them back down. A teacher might also open his/her mouth as though gasping and put their hands on their cheeks to show anxiousness. After the teacher states the opening, in order to engage the students, the teacher can initiate one of these silent signals and the students would replicate what the teacher is doing.

Use Images to Introduce Word

A second way to assist students in learning a new vocabulary word is to go beyond looking at the word and saying it, by adding images to the presentation. New vocabulary words should be selected intentionally (Neuman & Wright, 2014). Then, a picture or a GIF can be used to provide an image for students to either connect their prior knowledge or give them an image in their mind of what the word means. Next, the definition of the word should be provided and read to the students. The students then read the definition with the teacher. Along with the word's definition, a synonym and antonym for the word should be displayed. This enforces the meaning of the word and allows students to consider if they are familiar with the word's synonym or its antonym.

Model and Encourage Rich Conversation

Students should be given the opportunity to engage in conversations in the classroom in order to actively participate in conversations outside of the classroom (Neuman & Wright, 2014), because they need practice using more than one word when speaking and to use complete sentences. This should be started at a young age and can be incorporated into the students' new vocabulary development in the classroom (Neuman & Wright, 2014).

After a new word has been introduced, along with its picture, synonym, and antonym, students need an opportunity to use the word. This can be done through rich conversations.

Calling on one or two students to use the word in a sentence does not afford the whole class the opportunity to use the word. Nor does each of them just saying the word in a sentence and not being held accountable for the proper use of the word. In order for students to use the new vocabulary word and to be held accountable for using it correctly, a deeper conversation needs to take place. In this type of conversation, students are expected to address their classmates before speaking and use the vocabulary word in a complete sentence. The listener then needs to respond in a complete sentence. They are expected to use words to show they agree or ask a follow up question, along with stating the name of whom they are replying to in their sentence.

In the classroom, teachers should model what a causal conversation looks, sounds, and feels like for the students. If applicable, they should try to model using personal connections that relate to the class. For example, the teacher might select a word to teach like *fit*, as in good health due to exercising. The teacher would then call up one student to assist in modeling. Next, the teacher and student should stand in front of the class, but face each other. Their feet are expected to be turned to each other and to use eye contact. The teacher should then face the student and say the student's name. "Linda, at recess I noticed you climbed from one end of the monkey bars to the other. You are so *fit*." Linda may say, "It is so fun to play on the monkey bars, Mrs. Carr." After, Linda gets to use the word *fit* in a complete sentence. She may say, "Mrs. Carr, I am *fit* because I ride my bike." To which, the teacher may reply, "I love riding bike too, Linda! It really helps me to stay *fit*."

From here, the teacher should tell the students they have a few moments to think about the word. After that, a reminder should be given that they have one minute along with the cue to turn to their partners and engage in a casual conversation about the vocabulary word in a whispered tone. Meanwhile, the teacher should choose one of the partners and listen in to ensure

they are following expectations. If needed, the teacher can provide encouragement and ideas to the pair, being sure to allow wait time, time for them to find the word they want, before providing prompts. Next, the teacher should ask who would like to share their casual conversation. A pair is chosen and they face each other. Finally, the teacher should remind the class the pair may need some wait time for retelling their casual conversation and to allow them that time by being an attentive audience that partakes through listening respectfully.

Create an Interactive Word Wall

Teachers should create word walls that are regularly and actively used for instruction (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008). However, putting words on a wall and never referring to them again is not a productive way to afford students multiple encounters with a word. The teacher can have multiple word walls in the classroom, and use a portion of the whiteboard in the front of the room to put the words that are currently being used in a lesson or unit for the entirety of the lesson/unit. After the lesson/unit is complete, the words are then put on their correct wall. Three types of suggested word walls are a math vocabulary wall, a reading vocabulary wall, and a vocabulary wall for words that are a part of a weekly vocabulary lesson. The word cards should also have pictures on them to match the word. When the teacher adds new words to a specific vocabulary wall, the teacher should do this with the students. As the teacher places the words on the applicable wall, the students should then repeat the teacher in a chant, where the word is said three times. The teacher should then proceed to do this two more times, for a total of the teacher saying the word nine times and the students chanting it nine times.

Another way the teacher can incorporate the word walls is by going on sporadic walks throughout the day. In the middle of a lesson or while students are having independent work time, the teacher may start saying a chant, "Walking, walking, so we can go talking." When the

class hears this, they stop what they are doing, join in on the chant, and begin to walk around the room. When they hear the teacher say freeze or synonyms to freeze, such as stop or halt, they know to find the closest person to them. Students know a partnership is made when the two students are facing each other with their feet toward one another and they are making direct eye contact. Students that do not have a partner continue walking and find a student that is also still walking. After all partnerships are made, the teacher should choose a word from one of the word walls. The teacher should point to it and says the word and the students repeat the word. The teacher should then model how to use the word in a complete sentence and reminds students they are expected to use casual conversations. As such, they use each other's names and show they are listening to each other by giving a response. They should once again be reminded they get one minute and are to use a whisper when communicating. After the minute, one group shares their casual conversation. After the activity is complete, the teacher should begin a new chant that indicates to students the activity is over and to continue what they were previously working on.

Use Games

Games help students to learn, practice, and get excited about words. Using board games or words games that are already established and the teacher putting their own spin on them is supportive in engaging students and in exposing them to and helping them learn new words. A sample of games are provided discussing the benefits of developing word consciousness.

Kaboom! Something as simple as choosing a stick from a cup and getting to read the word on the stick is exciting for students. It can be made into a game by students keeping the word they say correctly but having to return the word they say incorrectly. This replicates the

game *Kaboom*! There are also sticks that have the word Kaboom on them. If a student draws a stick that has Kaboom, he/she has to return all his/her sticks to the cup.

Would You Rather. The board game *Would You Rather*, offers two scenarios and a game player is expected to make choices. The teacher can use a PowerPoint to show students a new vocabulary word and its antonym. The students are then shown two spaces in the classroom. As a slide is introduced, the teacher models if she would rather be or feel the introduced vocabulary word, the teacher would walk to one of the designated spots. Or, if the teacher feels the antonym of the vocabulary word, she would walk to the other spot. The teacher should then remind students that they need to have a reason for why they made their choice and that they will need to use casual conversation with a partner to share support for their reasoning.

Charades. *Charades* is a game in which a student acts out a word or phrase and his/her teammates are expected to guess the word or phrase. It can be useful to have students collaborate with each other to come up with actions for a word. The student is then expected to use the action when they state the word. For example, students may pretend like they are swimming for the word *fit*. So now, when anyone says *fit* in relation to exercising, they have to pretend to move their arms in a swimming motion.

Pictionary. *Pictionary* is a game where students have to guess the picture that is drawn by their teammates. The teacher can do a version of that where the students *Sketch and Share*. Students are given a scenario with a few different vocabulary words. They have to choose at least one word to sketch. For example, if the words are *amaze*, *powerful*, and *decision*, the teacher may say that they are to pretend they are going to the circus and they need to use one or all the words to sketch a picture of what they see at the circus. After a given amount of time, they

share their sketches with the students at their table using the vocabulary words in complete sentences. This approach can be used to assess students' understanding of a word.

Discussion

Developing word consciousness in young readers is critical in order to enhance their vocabulary knowledge and support comprehension (Neugebauer et al., 2017). This can be done in a variety of ways, but immersing students in an environment that is rich in words, instruction, and word learning strategies provides an important foundation (Baumann, et al., 2007).

Teachers can support word consciousness in their classrooms by utilizing strategies and approaches described in the previous section. For example, when teachers provide a powerful presentation of words by exposing students to multiple vocabulary encounters, modeling the use of the word, and then engaging them to make connections with the words, teachers can foster enthusiasm about word learning (Lane & Allen, 2010). Additionally, when teachers introduce vocabulary words with pictures and GIFs, it provides instruction and strategies for how to learn words (Baumann et al., 2007). Using a vocabulary word's synonyms and antonyms in teaching the word, allows the teacher to use multiple reference points and allows the students to see multiple words that may be familiar to them and, therefore, the students can be exposed to more advanced words (Lane & Allen, 2010). Introducing vocabulary words using these structured routines will permit the students to establish rich routines and allow for the teacher to respond to any confusion during the vocabulary instruction (Manyak et al., 2014).

Vocabulary is learned through repeated exposure to a new word (Campbell & Xerri, 2016). A child's curiosity and interest in gathering new words shows they are developing word consciousness (Barger, 2006). With the use of the strategies and approaches in the previous section, teachers are able to repeat vocabulary words in a variety of ways in order to foster that

curiosity and interest in young students. Additionally, the use of the Framework of Five can help teachers engage young readers in a word-rich environment with ample opportunities for them to make personal connections to the words being taught, which promotes word consciousness among the young readers (Neugebauer et al., 2017). The approaches given are a start for teachers to develop word consciousness in their classrooms. It is vital that teachers infuse ways to provide a word-rich environment (Graves &Watts-Taffe, 2008) that affords students opportunities to become word conscious in order to enhance their vocabulary knowledge, which in turns supports their comprehension (Davis, 1972; Thorndike, 1917).

Comprehension and vocabulary have a corresponding relationship in the sense that a greater vocabulary leads to greater comprehension, and better comprehension leads to the learning of more and more vocabulary words (Stanovich, 1986). Utilizing these strategies to develop word consciousness will afford students opportunities to become excited about words, which can improve their vocabulary knowledge and, as result, develop their comprehension skills. The more words a student knows, the more likely the student will comprehend a text because the more exposure they have to vocabulary, the more they know the meaning of the word (Wright, 2014). Also, students in a word-rich environment are often encouraged to use more generative talk (Sparapani et al., 2018) and learn and comprehend words incidentally due to explicit instruction (Lane & Allen, 2010).

In order to support teachers in developing word consciousness in young readers, ongoing professional development is essential in order enhance their students' love of words. Evidence shows that children need vocabulary instruction and, consequently, ongoing professional development is essential to bringing such instruction to the classroom (Neuman & Wright, 2014). There appears to be a gap in the existing knowledge of developing word consciousness. A

number of studies have been done on vocabulary and its importance to comprehension (e.g.

Davis, 1972; Stanovich, 1986; Thorndike, 1917; Wright, 2014). However, in order for students

to learn more vocabulary words, teachers need to be properly trained on not only the importance

of word consciousness, but the strategies and approaches that support their learning environment.

Conclusion

Teachers can implement the ideas presented in this article in many ways that are

applicable to promoting word consciousness in the classroom. Teachers should consider using a

variety of ways to promote word consciousness, such as presenting words with enthusiasm, using

images, requiring rich conversations, providing word walls, and using word games to encourage

word consciousness with their students. Students should be immersed in a word-rich

environment and provided ample opportunities to see words, listen to words, speak words, and

use words, which will help to build upon their knowledge of vocabulary words and their uses.

Beyond being excited and having a yawning desire to learn words, being able to read words is

the ultimate goal. Affording students an interest and awareness in words will help them to

become intrinsic word learners. As a teacher, having excited and curious learners who want to

know what a new word means indicates the student is developing word consciousness. Such

excitement from students signifies that they understand a word is not just a word, but that a word

has meaning.

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