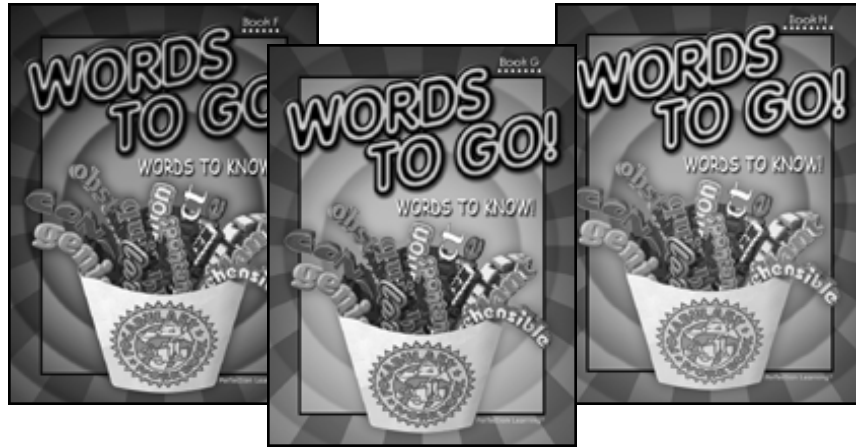


Research-Based Vocabulary Instruction

Words to Go! Words to Know!

Grades 6–8



For optimal vocabulary development, students should be continually engaged in reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Such incidental encounters with words (indirect instruction), especially through reading, has proven to be a highly effective method for students to acquire the thousands of words they must learn annually (Smith, 1997).

But research has also indicated that “direct instruction is more effective than incidental learning for the acquisition of a particular vocabulary, and also more efficient” (McKeown & Beck, 1988). With indirect or explicit instruction, specific words are taught through definitions, multiple exposures, and external cues (word-learning strategies such as recognizing word histories, root and base words, using context clues, etc.) to connect the words with meanings.

The National Reading Panel found that “a comprehensive analysis of the collective research studies suggests that a variety of direct and indirect methods of vocabulary instruction can be effective.” Students learn the most words and on a deep level when wide-reading is accompanied by directly teaching grade-level appropriate words.

Perfection Learning’s *Words to Go! Words to Know!* vocabulary program for middle school students provides direct instruction of more than 12,000 new, interesting, and important words. This report will demonstrate how this program enables educators to incorporate research-based teaching and learning into their language arts curriculum.

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Vocabulary Research

Scientific studies of how to best teach vocabulary have been conducted since the 1920s. The results of these studies have identified effective strategies for directly teaching vocabulary.

“Intensive instruction should be used for a relatively small number of carefully selected words.”

—Nagy, 1985

Efficient instruction targets no more than 20 words in an intensive lesson. The new words should be important and meaningful for students to understand and use them.

Each lesson in *Words to Go! Words to Know!* includes 15 targeted vocabulary words. The words are carefully chosen based on two criteria.

- The words will be frequently encountered in academic, social, or general life situations for many years to come.
- Words are on the students’ instructional level—slightly above grade level to challenge learners.

“Review of the literature indicated that the most effective vocabulary instruction includes multiple exposures to words in a variety of oral and written contexts.”

—Dixon-Krauss, December 2001/January 2002

“One trend that was strongly reflected in the database (research) was that high frequency and multiple, repeated exposures to vocabulary material are important for learning gains” (National Reading Panel, 2000). “In order to ‘know’ a word, one must not only know its definitional relations with other words, but also be able to interpret its meaning in a particular context (Stahl, 1996).

In *Words to Go! Words to Know!*, students encounter each new word in a variety of contexts.

Definitional Meaning

- New vocabulary items are initially presented with a definition: a practical, student-friendly pronunciation key; and a sentence using the word in context.

Word Associations

- Students learn multiple relationships for new words through
 - finding synonyms and antonyms
 - completing analogies
 - recognizing alternative word forms and usages
 - matching words and meanings
 - playing various word games

Application of New Words

- Students encounter the target words in a variety of contexts including
 - sentence completion
 - recognizing contextual meaning
 - constructing sentences and paragraphs using the new words

Each lesson in *Words to Go! Words to Know!* features 50 items in a variety of exercise formats. Every word is drilled a minimum of three times. Most exercises provide practice in writing and spelling the words by having students write out their answers.

Words to Go!

Overview

This vocabulary program is designed for implementation in individualized settings as well as in traditional, full-class environments. Within the framework of an organization carefully formulated to maximize the comprehension and retention of a beneficial core of words, students are exposed to an assortment of exercises that make vocabulary development a rich and rewarding experience.

Panel: Well, that's the jargon you expected, right? Now let's talk English.

Our Goals

The goals of the *Words to Go!* series are to help students:

- learn new words well enough to both understand and use them.
- learn how these new words are (and are not) used in context.
- use basic word-study strategies.

The series does not:

- teach grammar or creative writing.
- include cross-curricular connections to geometry, biology, or social studies.
- ask students to keep a journal, construct a miniature adobe house, or chart the course of human history on index cards.

There may be five things to do, but they are not what *Words to Go!* is about.

Our Numbers

What is *Words to Go!* about? Oh, right and a half by eleven.

few jobs that you may appreciate, though they're probably over students' heads.

The Test Book includes lesson tests, unit tests, section tests, and a final book test.

Okay, those are numbers. More important are the principles on which the series is based.

Our Approach

Usefulness

The *Words to Go!* series teaches vocabulary words that are above grade level but not so above level that there is little chance of their being encountered in academic, social, or general life situations for many years. While, for example, *perfect* is not taught in Grade 6, neither is *gregarious*.

It might be argued that any literate person should know words such as *curiousity*, *fructify*, *philology*, *amusementation*, and *antiquary*. Do you, however, want to spend valuable class time teaching *fructify*? Perhaps, but we assume that, since choices must be made, you would sacrifice it to allow time for *optimal*.

Introduction

Words are introduced in a clear format that presents basic elements of a dictionary entry. Most words are listed with the most frequently encountered pronunciation, part of speech, and meaning; where appropriate, words show two or more of these.

Pronunciation

One must know how to pronounce a word to recognize it, or use it, in speech. Instead of asking students to try to decode disorienting marks, *Words to Go!* presents words for explicit instruction.

LESSON 5

Answers

<p>Exercise A</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. fugitive 2. melancholy 3. clamor 4. agitate 5. ample 6. abode 7. perish 8. reminiscence 9. linger 10. perceive <p>Exercise B</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. TRUE 12. FALSE 13. FALSE 14. TRUE 15. FALSE 16. TRUE 17. FALSE 18. FALSE 19. TRUE 20. FALSE <p>Exercise C</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. C 22. A 23. D 24. B 25. D 	<p>Exercise D</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. perceive 27. timidity 28. aptitude 29. perish 30. compassion 31. melancholy 32. lidless 33. linger 34. belittle 35. relish <p>Exercise E</p> <p>Paragraphs should use eleven or more words from the list.</p> <p>Exercise F</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 36. compassion 37. reminiscence 38. aptitude 39. clamor 40. belittle 41. perceive 42. ample 43. fugitive 44. lidless 45. melancholy 46. perish 47. relish 48. abode 49. linger 50. timidity
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Words to Go!

Word Parts: Belittle

The prefix *be-* has several meanings; in *belittle*, it's "to make." Students don't have to know all the various meanings of this prefix, however, to decode words that contain it. Simply understanding that it's a prefix helps because it's so often attached to an English base word. Identifying the base word and noting the word's context is often sufficient for unlocking meaning. Ask students to decode the *be-* prefixed words in these examples.

1. Her clomped fans *believed* her trisomy words.
2. All of the women at the ball were *believed* of.
3. Don't *believe* your situation; make it better!

History: Fugitive

The meaning of *refuge* (Lesson 11) is tied to the meaning of *fugitive* because both use the Latin root *fugere*, which means "flee." A *fugitive* is one who flees; a *refuge* (which uses *re-* to mean "away") is where he or she is fleeing to.

Word Parts: Lidless

Most words with the *-less* suffix are a snap to decode because the meaning of the suffix is so clear and it is usually attached to familiar base words. *Lidless* is difficult because the base word is archaic; to *flit* was "to choose or prefer." (Another example of a situation in which the suffixed word has survived while the original base word has gone out of use is *reflexes*.)

In Other Words

Write this sentence on the board, explaining that it's a well-known proverb, or saying, in disguise.

One's own abode is a unique place.

Ask students to translate it into its familiar form. If you wish, give students time to consult one another. The winner is the first student to come up with "There's no place like home." (Unique was taught in Lesson 4.)

One That Didn't Fit

Q: Why did no one hear Pharaoh's halting remark? As his mother had told her it was good etiquette to cover her mouth while scoffing.

Unit 1 5

Sample pages from the *Grade 6 (Book F) Teacher Guide*

“Instruction should develop students’ strategies for acquiring new vocabulary independently.”

—Carr & Wixson, 1986

Effective vocabulary instruction includes teaching students how to determine meaning of new words they encounter in print. Students should ultimately develop the ability to learn new words independently.

An entire “Know How” section in *Words to Go! Words to Know!* focuses on teaching word-meaning strategies. Students learn and practice the following strategies.

- Inferring meaning from base words and root words
- Using word parts to understand new words, such as prefixes and suffixes
- Recognizing multiple meanings of words, especially homophones
- Using prior knowledge to infer meaning
- Using context clues to determine meaning
- Recognizing word relationships

The “Know How” lessons are positioned at the beginning of the Student Books so students can apply the strategies throughout the 30 word lessons in each book.

“When students were engaged in the tasks in which they were learning vocabulary, they had larger gains.”

—National Reading Panel, 2000

An important goal of a vocabulary program for students on any level is “to get students interested in new words so that they will notice new words, use strategies to identify their meanings, and take pride in remembering and using them” (Spiegel, 1991).

Middle school students are easily engaged when learning is fun. In one study, students who were taught vocabulary words in a humorous context grew significantly more than a control group who learned the same words in a typical textbook context (Aria, 2002).

Words to Go! Words to Know! consistently presents new words in memorable and interesting contexts, including humor, puns, palindromes, riddles, and proverbs. Students will remember the meaning of words learned in a playful way. For example, an illustration of the Big Bad Wolf is labeled “The menace in a quaint disguise.” A following cartoon of Little Red Riding Hood is underscored with the caption “The genial girl in acute danger from the menace in a quaint disguise” (Book F, pp. 28–29). Students are likely to retain the meaning of genial, acute, menace, and quaint when encountered in a fun and interesting context. And just to be sure, Mrs. Morgenstern, an exaggerated caricature of an aged, matronly schoolteacher, appears throughout the lessons to keep students on their “best learning behavior.”

By combining the direct instruction in *Words to Go! Words to Know!* with indirect vocabulary learning, educators can increase their students’ vocabulary as well as equip them to become avid vocabulary learners in their adult lives.

Know-How

Context Clues

The context of a word is the phrase, sentence, or paragraph in which it appears. A word’s context always supplies some clue or clues to its meaning. Sometimes those clues may not be much help, but sometimes they are very helpful.

For example: He’s a curmudgeon.
Curmudgeon is a noun.
I don’t want to act like a curmudgeon.
Curmudgeon is a noun and probably not something good.
Her bad temper, rudeness, and grumpiness soon gave her a reputation as a curmudgeon.
Curmudgeon is a noun that means someone who has a bad temper and is rude and grumpy.

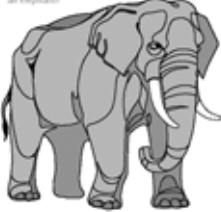
The last example for curmudgeon actually provides a definition of the word. This occurs sometimes, but a reader usually doesn’t get that much help.

A common kind of context clue is one that provides a word that means the same, or almost the same, thing.

For example: I felt peckish, and there were reasons for me to be so irritable.
This suggests that peckish and irritable are similar in meaning.
Of course I denounce that action! Who wouldn’t disapprove?
It is clear that someone who denounces something disapproves of it.

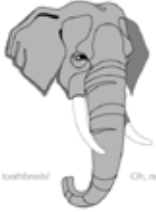
Another useful kind of context clue tells you that something is the opposite of something else, or at least very different.

Lesson 5

<p>abode ah+BOE NOUN the place where one lives. [Ben’s abode is a cabin by a lake.]</p> <p>agitate ah+JIT+ate VERB to excite or disturb. [She didn’t want to agitate her grandmother with bad news.]</p> <p>ample AMpyul ADJECTIVE enough or more than enough. [We packed ample clothing for the trip.]</p> <p>belittle bil+LIT+tle VERB to make someone or something seem small or unimportant. [Tom tried to belittle the house by calling it a shack.]</p> <p><i>Question:</i> How could you belittle an elephant?</p>  <p><i>Caption:</i> papa my is big, you and a amply ay Lappin was, wainny</p> <p>clamor Klam+ur NOUN a loud and continuing noise. [The parade’s clamor could be heard blocks away.] VERB to cry out loudly; to make a loud and continuing noise. [The crowd began to clamor.]</p>	<p>companion kam+PASH+an NOUN a feeling of sorrow or pity for another. [They showed their compassion for the homeless.]</p> <p>fugitive FUCH+juh+iv NOUN a person who is running away, usually one trying to escape capture by the law. [The detectives followed the trail of the fugitive.]</p> <p>linger LING+ger VERB to continue to stay, usually because of being unwilling to leave. [It’s nice to linger by the fire on a cold night.]</p> <p>literate LIT+er ADJECTIVE showing no interest in what is going on; having no desire to do anything active. [She sighed in a listless way and went to bed.]</p> <p>melancholy MEL+an+kol+ee ADJECTIVE sad or gloomy. [The song was melancholy tone.]</p> <p>perceive pur+SEEV VERB to see, hear, taste, smell, or feel; to be aware of. [Do you perceive the odor of something burning?]</p> <p>perish PAIR+ish VERB to be destroyed, ruined, or wiped out; to die. [If it doesn’t rain soon, the crop will perish.]</p> <p>relish REL+ish NOUN enjoyment; anything that adds pleasure or interest. [He ate with great relish.] VERB to like very much; to enjoy greatly. [I always relish a good science fiction story.]</p> <p>reminisce rem+ah+NIS VERB to think, talk, or write about one’s experiences in the past. [My grandparents used to visit to reminisce about the old days.]</p> <p>timidly tib+MED+ish+ee NOUN a lack of courage or confidence; shyness.</p>
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<p>Exercise C: Analogies Write the letter of the word pair that completes the analogy.</p> <p>21. clamor : ears :: A. bird : song B. taste : food C. odor : nose D. weight : height</p> <p>22. ample : scarce :: A. plain : fancy B. tiny : small C. rare : expensive D. warm : hot</p> <p>23. whimper : melancholy :: A. shout : nervous B. sob : angry C. growl : scary D. laugh : amused</p> <p>24. fugitive : posse :: A. horse : saddle B. rabbit : hank C. car : brakes D. nightmare : dream</p> <p>25. mansion : abode :: A. tree : flower B. nest : bird C. cabin : logs D. elephant : animal</p>	<p>Exercise D: Antonyms Write the word that is an antonym for each set of words.</p> <p>26. overlook; fail to notice _____</p> <p>27. bravery; confidence _____</p> <p>28. soothe; calm down _____</p> <p>29. survive; last _____</p> <p>30. cruelty; meanness _____</p> <p>31. cheerful; happy _____</p> <p>32. energetic; enthusiastic _____</p> <p>33. leave; depart _____</p> <p>34. flatter; honor; exaggerate _____</p> <p>35. dislike; not care for _____</p>
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Exercise E: Writing
Some people say that elephants never forget anything. How is your memory? On your own paper, write a short paragraph about a memorable experience that you have had. As you reminisce, use THREE Words in your paragraph.

Quick List

abode N.	belittle V.	fugitive N.	melancholy ADJ.	relish N., V.
agitate V.	clamor N., V.	linger V.	perceive V.	reminisce V.
ample ADJ.	companion N.	listless ADJ.	perish V.	timidly N.

34 UNIT 1

Sample pages from the *Grade 6 (Book F) Student Book*

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