

A Growing Vocabulary!

PARENT ACTIVITY

FEATURED BOOKS



My Garden
by Kevin Henkes

*Plant Packages: A Book
About Seeds*
by Susan Blackaby

Sunflower House
by Eve Bunting

*Growing Vegetable
Soup*
by Lois Ehlert

Helping to expand your child's vocabulary will help him/her grow into a great reader! Knowing vocabulary words, or as children often call them, "big" words, will help your child become a better reader and be successful in school. It takes multiple experiences with a word to commit it to memory. The more you converse with your child, the more words (s)he will learn!

Growing your child's vocabulary doesn't require a lot of time! You can easily incorporate vocabulary development into daily activities, like growing a garden. Growing a garden doesn't require a lot of space! You may plant a garden in the backyard, in a community garden, or even in your windowsill. For a window garden you can use a cup, an empty egg carton, or the bottom half of a milk jug. Before you begin planting, take some time to get your child excited about gardening. Read a few books on the topic, like the featured books provided at the top of this article. While reading, discuss a few words that are unfamiliar to your child. Keep your selection small, choosing only a few words per book. Select words that will be useful to your child and can be used in normal conversation.

When you are reading and come across a "big" word, take the time to explain it. Try to describe it using simple language that your child can understand. Explain the word well enough for your child to understand its meaning in the book, without interrupting the flow of the book. After you finish the book you can talk more in depth about the new and exciting words! Then try using them as you plant your own garden together.

Repetition is the key to remembering! The more chances your child has to hear and use a word, the more easily (s)he will remember it. Here are some ideas for additional ways to learn and play with words:

- Continue talking about the meaning of the word.
- Share other words that have the same meaning.
- Try to use the word in another sentence.
- See if your child can use the word in a sentence.
- Have your child draw a picture to represent the word.