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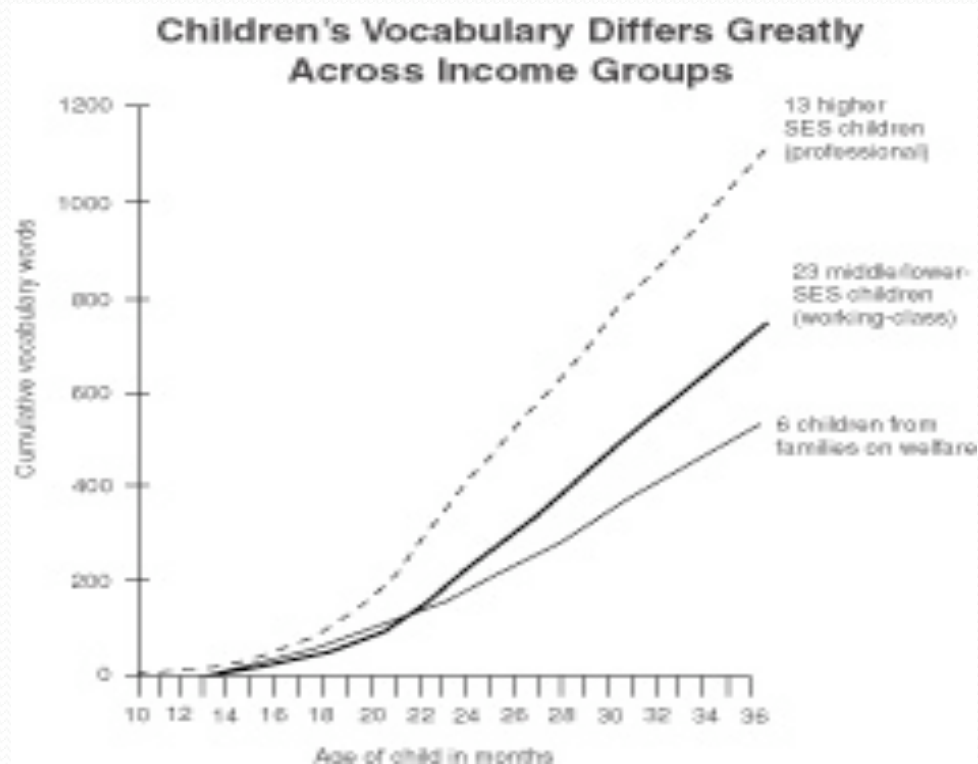
# Overview

- Why is vocabulary instruction important?
- What do we know about effective means of vocabulary instruction?
- Selecting and engaging children with Tier II words

# Why is vocabulary important?

- Vocabulary knowledge is related to reading comprehension
- When reading comprehension is compromised, it is difficult to learn new concepts and vocabulary from text
- Matthew's effects lead to gaps between children

# Vocabulary Gaps



Children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds know FAR FEWER words by age 3 than their middle class and wealthy peers and their growth trajectory is slower (Hart & Risley, 1995).

# Increases In Vocabulary Gaps

- By first-grade, children from higher-SES groups knew about twice as many words as lower SES children.
- High-knowledge third graders had vocabularies about equal to lowest-performing 12th graders.
- By senior year of high school, students at the top of their class knew about four times as many words as their lower-performing classmates.


# Why is vocabulary instruction difficult?

- Written context lacks the features of oral language that support learning new words and meanings, such as intonation, body language, and shared physical surroundings; it is decontextualized.
- When children are initially learning to read, the books often use familiar words and controlled text in order to enable children to become good decoders.



# Vocabulary Instruction

- All the available evidence suggests that there is little emphasis on the acquisition of vocabulary in school curricula.
- However, we do know that there are ways to effectively improve vocabulary development through instruction.



## What have some leaders in the field suggested as instructional techniques?

- Wide reading: Struggling readers do not read well enough to learn vocabulary through wide reading.
- Learning from Context: Relying on context alone often does not provide enough information to derive word meanings.



# Bringing Words to Life

**Tier 1 words:** Not all words need instructional attention. The first tier consists of the most basic words – clock, baby, happy, walk, etc. Most children know these words.

**Tier 2 words:** Words that comprise the second tier are those that are of high frequency for mature language users. Words in the second tier include *coincidence*, *absurd*, *industrious*, and *fortunate*.

**Tier 3 words:** Tier three words are domain specific and low frequency. Examples of tier three words include *isotope*, *lathe*, *peninsula*, and *refinery*. In general, a rich understanding of these words would not be of high utility for most learners. These words are probably best learned when a specific need arises, such as introducing *peninsula* during a geography lesson.