

ENGLISH STUDIES

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Course content

- Reading Skills
- Children stories
- Newspapers/magazines
- Using methods for child-centered story telling: use of voice, expressions, using pictures,
- Teaching aids
- Listening skills
- News/ Radio
- Dialogue
- Stories
- Speaking Skills
- Summarizing
- Dialoguing
- Pronunciation
- Games for language skills: Ward bingo, Lotto, Matching game, pairs, memory game, Fishing game
- Drills
- Theme related; Idioms used in the classroom, market and home
- Vocabulary
- Theme related: alphabetic pictures, ward wall, hangman, word search, classroom puzzle, jumbled word.

Introduction

This book is intended for students who are following Primary Education Studies specifications in English Language. This resource may also be of general interest to language students on university degree courses, trainee teachers and anyone with a general interest in language science. It contains a basic guide to the structure of the English language with particular attention to the English language skills - listening to conversation in English language and demonstrates understanding through a simple conversation, reading children's books and the ability to summarize in short grammatical sentences and demonstrating knowledge and use of theme-related vocabulary.

The sentence

A sentence is a set of words that is complete in itself, typically containing a subject and predicate, conveying a statement, question and exclamation. It is a structure of logical relationship. A sentence may alternatively be seen as comprising five basic units. These units are referred to as the elements of sentence: subject, verb, complement, object, and adverbial are here abbreviated as SVCOA.

- | | | |
|----|-------|--|
| 1. | SV | The sun (S) is shining (V). |
| 2. | SVO | That lecturer (S) bored (V) me (O). |
| 3. | SVC | Bola's dinner (S) seems (V) ready (C). |
| 4. | SVA | My office (S) is (V) in the next building (A). |
| 5. | SVOO | He (S) had given (V) the girl (O) an apple (O). |
| 6. | SVOCA | They (S) make (V) him (O) the chairman (C) every year (A). |
| 7. | SVOC | Students (S) have found (V) her (O) reasonably helpful (C) |
| 8. | SVAA | Dayo (S) comes (V) here (A) everyday (A). |
| 9. | ASVO | In the market (A) they (S) sell (V) beautiful things (O). |

Sentence Type

In many respects, sentences can be analyzed in the same terms as clauses. That is, separating the elements into the categories of subject, object, verb, complement and adverbial.

However, sentences are also described in terms of:

- how clauses are arranged
- functions of the sentence
- traditional patterns which are used for particular effects in speech and writing

Functions of the Sentence

This is a simple kind of classification. Sentences are traditionally categorized into four types: statement, command, question or exclamation. These are illustrated by examples below:

Statement or declarative: *This is my book.*

Command, wish, imperative or directive: *Stand up and leave the lecture room.*

Question or interrogative: *Who's been stealing my books?*

Exclamation: *How happy I feel!*

Pronunciation

/a:/	/a:/
on	report
stop	more
quality	course
wash	roar

The boy is sitting *on* the table.

The work on the project has come to a *stop*.

The Punch newspaper sent her to Kano to *report* the bomb blast.

She makes *more* phone calls than anyone else I know.

We had a lion *roar*.

We provided *quality* rented accommodation for professional people.

I'm just going to *wash* my hand.

The Four Language Skills

When learning a language, there are four skills that we need for complete communication. When learning a native language, it is usually learnt by listening first, then to speak, then to read and finally to write. These are called the four "language skills".

The four basic skills are related to one another by two parameters:

- The mode of communication: Oral or written
- The direction of communication: receiving or producing the message.

We may represent the relationship among the skills in the following chart:

	Oral	Written
Receptive	Listening	Reading
Productive	Speaking	Writing

Strategies for Teaching the Four Languages Skills

Listening Skills in English

Listening is an active skill which involves the ability to perceive, identify and react to the spoken message. This implies that a good listener must

- a) Know that he is involved in an active and demanding task.
- b) Identify the main reason why he is listening.
- c) Identify the sounds of the utterances he receives.
- d) Identify the major theme and sub-themes of whatever he is listening to.
- e) Identify how the speaker has used such features as stress and intonation

Similarities and Differences between Hearing and Listening

Often, pupils, parents and even teachers confuse the terms 'Hearing' and 'Listening'. Despite some few similarities, the two terms differ in many ways.

Similarities

- a) Both involves proper functioning of the ears.
- b) Both need proper activation of the brain.
- c) Both involve the basic perception of whatever is uttered.

The similarities end at the end of perception. Beyond this level, the differences between the two begin.

Differences

S/N	LISTENING	HEARING
1.	It involves perception of what is heard <u>plus</u> the listener's personal reaction to the message	Nothing goes beyond the hearer's perception of what is heard.
2.	The listener identifies what is heard for the purpose of classification e.g. to know whether the information is new or not, useful or useless	Hearing hardly involves identification or classification.

Specific English Speaking Skills

Consider areas which a learner must be able to perform well in using the spoken English language:

- a. Articulation of pure vowel sound in English language
- b. Articulation of English diphthongs
- c. Articulation of English consonants
- d. Syllable stress and word stress
- e. Intonation

Techniques of Teaching Speaking

The following suggestions could be used by the teachers in the classroom to provide speech experiences for learners.

- a. Students are appointed to discuss a lesson problem; this could be done by grouping learners. They will argue, talk and analyse the problem and proffer solutions independently.
- b. Students are given teaching responsibilities. Students are made to teach specific parts of, a lesson.
- c. Learners are made to present talks on interesting topics of their choice to the class.
- d. Story-telling is another good technique for developing speaking skills.
- e. Simple passages could be read to the class, preferably, familiar stories. Before the story begins, learners could be asked to pay attention to specific points.
- f. Learners are to be encouraged on pronunciation exercises of words, phrases, and sentences to instill correct stress, intonation and rhythm.

Reading Skill in English

Reading is a basic life skill. It is the cornerstones for a learner's success in school, and, indeed, throughout life. The true nature of reading abilities convey that a reader has several possible purposes for reading with different combination of skills and strategies, nature of fluent reading abilities and ability to draw meaning from a text and interpret this meaning; it also explain how reading is carried out as a cognitive process that operates under time constraint.

3.	There is some thought or reflection on what has been uttered	Reflection hardly occurs.
4.	The listener critically assesses or passes some judgment on what he heard. This is a form of evaluation	There is little or no room for critical assessment since hearing is brief and superficial
5.	Additional information, knowledge or awareness is gained	Hearing hardly as any immediate impact
6.	Listening involves positive or deliberate attention	Hearing occurs with little or no attention. The result is that there is little or no personal involvement in what is heard.
7.	Listening can hardly occur without a determined effort on the listener's part.	The hearer does not apply effort.

Listening strategies are activities that contribute to the comprehension and recall of listening input. For the purpose of classroom situation, the following categories through which English language teacher could teach the listening skill in school is identified.

Dictation:

Allow the students to listen to the tape while it is played the first time. The second time it is played, they should write it down as a dictation. Such an exercise can be at word, phrase or sentence level.

Listening Comprehension:

Allow the students to listen to a story on a tape. At the end, they should answer orally, some questions based on the story.

Use of Order, Questions and Answers:

Students should be given orders and the responses could be verbal or non-verbal.

Drilling:

It can be taught using minimal pairs such as:

Feel	Fill
Sell	Cell
Zip	Sip

Top - down

It is listener based, the listener is taught to tap into background knowledge of the topic, the situation or context, the type of text and the language. Top - down strategies include:

- Listening for the main idea
- Predicting
- Drawing inferences
- Summarizing

Bottom-up:

It is text - based; the listener relies on the language in the message, that is, the combination of sounds, words, and grammar that creates meaning. Bottom - up strategies includes:

- Listening for specific details
- Recognizing cognates
- Recognizing word - order patterns.

Pronunciation

Verb Phrases: *attend to, play with, wait for, took away, and think about*
Read the sentence below aloud.

- a) Sikiru should *attend to* the child urgently.
- b) Toyeebat often do *not play with* her work.
- c) Time does not *wait for* any man.
- d) The police took away the thief.
- e) What do u *think about* the issue?

Speaking Skill in English

Speaking, one of the four basic language skills consists of a complex set of skills. These skills are acquired naturally though not automatically, during child's first three years of life. It is the productive skill in the oral mode. It is more complicated than it seems at first and involves more than just pronouncing words.

When an individual claims to understand a language, what first comes to mind is that the person can speak the language. He may not be able to read and write in the language. Therefore a teacher needs to be competent in the spoken form of the English language as the channel through which he teaches the learners largely through the spoken form.

Reading is a set of distinct skills, which include eye movement, speech, comprehension and vocabulary. Furthermore, Lawal (2007) agreed that: Reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game.

From the above views, leading, in part, is making meaning from prints. It requires that one:

- a) identify the words in print-a process called word recognition;
- b) construct an understanding from them-a process called comprehension;
- c) coordinate, and identifying words and making meaning from them so that reading is automatic and accurate - an achievement called fluency; and
- d) the cognitive process of understanding a written linguistic message

Reading is perhaps the most difficult language skill to teach because it involves so many different elements - mechanical, eye movement, grammar, vocal, phonetics, spelling and intellectual comprehension.

Methods, Approaches and Techniques of Teaching Reading

A reading method is a set of teaching and learning materials and/or activities often given a label, such as phonics method, literature based method, or language experience method. However, there is no single method or single combination of methods that can successfully teach all students to read. Therefore, teachers must have a strong knowledge of multiple methods for teaching reading and a strong knowledge of the students in their care so they can create the appropriate balance of methods needed for the students.

There are two main approaches to teaching reading, the synthetic and analytic:

a) *Synthetic approach:*

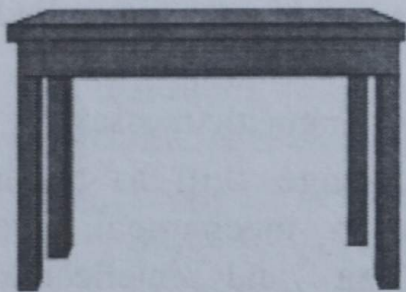
Reading is encouraged through the use of the small units of writing such as letters. While gradually, building them into larger units such as *words* and *sentences*. Examples are the *alphabetic* and *phonic* methods.

b) *Analytic approach:*

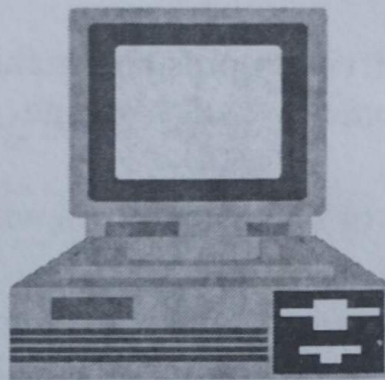
This approach is started with relatively large units such as *words*, *phrases* or *sentences*. It is later broken or analyzed into smaller units. Examples are the *whole word* or *look and say* and *language experience* methods.

The Alphabetic Method:

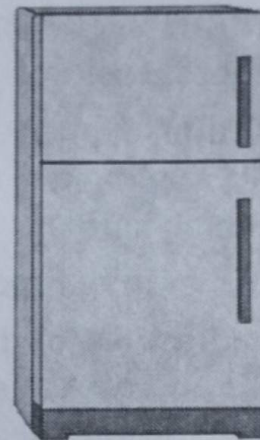
The oldest of all methods of teaching reading, the teacher makes pupils to learn first all the twenty six letters of the English language alphabets, both capitals and small letters. The letters are later combined into syllables and then words before sentences are introduced. Sometimes, the letters may be associated with particular words and pictures



Table



Computer Monitor



Refrigerator

Advantages

- a) The pupils learn, though independently, that there is some relationship between letters and sound
- b) The occasional use of pictures makes pupils to realize easily that meaning goes hand in hand with reading.

Disadvantages

- a. The method is highly demanding and it requires a lot effort and repetition by both the teacher and the pupils.
- b. The use of pictures (as is often the case). The method looks motivating since the letters are meaningless and uninteresting

Phonic - (also known as linguistics approach)

It is the Correspondence between English letters and sounds

- e.g a. sleep, keep, deep
- b. Whip, wheat, wheel

The assumption in example a is that the letter 'ee' is pronounced as /I: / when found in a word. This method of teaching helps the child to become an independent reader but the meaning which is important in reading is not emphasized.

Whole - word Reading

Another description for this is 'look and say' method. It involves recognition of simple words representing objects or concepts well understood by learners and then moves into new groups. The method takes its name from the part played by 'word' being a unit of language used in teaching reading.

Here the teacher makes the pupils acquire some basic words by associating the words with pictures; the words are taught not letters thereby stressing meaning where is important in reading, it also encourages fluency but does not encourages independent reading because the child relies heavily on pictures.

The Language Experience Method

The method stresses the use of sentences and stories in the teaching of initial reading. It is not a method for beginners. It stresses that reading must not be taught apart from the other language skills of *listening, speaking and writing*.

- The teacher allows learners to tell a brief story or give a description or comment.
- Teacher writes down the language they use and make them to read again what they've produced.
- The teacher encourages learners to say something original by making them answer some questions which the teacher puts on the chalkboard with little modification.

Advantages

The method gives learners confidence and motivation since, they are made to read their own ideas and sentences.

It also promotes cordial classroom atmosphere since, every learner is encouraged to speak about his experience - thereby promoting a feeling of progress.

Levels of Reading

Creative	- application of what is read
Critical/Evaluation	- reading beyond the lines
Inferential	- reading between the lines
Literal	- reading the lines

- a. **Literal:** - Reading the lines / interpreting the text only at the surface level. Only the meaning of the constituent shown in a sentence is needed to understand the sentence meaning. Many of the readers at the primary & junior secondary school read at this level. It is the lowest level of reading. For instance, His wife is a punching bag - a wife = + human + female + husband+ adult
- b. **Inferential:** - Reading between the lines. Hence, the reader moves beyond the surface level to get a deeper meaning of what is read. Signature usage is understood at this level. The reader also finds out the main idea, discovers organization, makes inference about content and reorganizes the writers' point of view or purpose. For instance,
'His wife is a punching bag' is understood as a metaphor. He (His) is a wife beater.
- c. **Critical or evaluative reading:** - This level deals with reading a sentence, paragraph or text beyond the lines. It requires a reaction to what is read. Here, the reader goes beyond both the surface and deeper meaning in order to evaluate, assess or criticize what has been read, in terms of truth, value, content validity and methods for thought development. The reader places himself into positions of characters in such texts in order to appreciate what the writer is saying. The skills needed here are separating facts from general opinion, comparing different facts out of same event; assess divergence or convergence of opinion and position; and assessing the communicative functions and appropriateness of the medium. For instance,
His wife is a punching bag' will generate questions such as: who, what, in the relationship between spouse/wife.
- d. **Creative Reading:** - This is the highest level of reading comprehension. It has to do with the application of what is read to day - to - day life. Reading at this level prepares the learner to perform practical problems - solving tasks. The background skills of literal, inferential and critical levels are needed and deployed to perform both linguistic and non - linguistic tasks. For instance, the ability to be ready to perform a function/tasks like - operating a machine, driving a car, preparing a menu etc.

Reading Newspapers

A newspaper is a publication that is issued daily or weekly and includes local and international news stories, advertisements, announcements, editorial, politics, letters to the editor, opinions, cartoons, education, sports, leisure news and television listings. Newspaper is regarded as one of the most reliable, readily available, less expensive and effective source of sharing information and knowledge. It let the public knows everything that is happening in their local area and around the world. Even with the advancements in computer technology, print and digital newspapers continue to be an important aspect of everyday life.

Conversation

Sikiru: Good afternoon sir

Teacher: Good afternoon, what is the problem, you look worried?

Sikiru: Yes, I've got a serious problem sir

Teacher: So, what is your problem?

Sikiru: Examination start tomorrow and I am yet to pay my school fees

Teacher: HUUUUUMMM! You can as well 'carry your courses over'

Sikiru: Oga, it's a very serious matter

Teacher: Yes, it's serious

Reading Comprehension Strategies

Learners are encouraged to use a variety of the following strategies to improve reading comprehension:

Comprehension monitoring using self-monitoring techniques to assess understanding of text;

Co - operative learning working with peers to support one another understands and use of strategies; *Graphic and*

Semantic organizers using diagrams to represent meanings and relationships of ideas in texts;

Story structure focusing in on the plot, characters and events in stories;

Questions posing and answering questions during reading to monitor comprehension of a text and incorporate meaning (such as, *What does that mean? What is the evidence for that?*);

Summarization identifying and integrating the most important points to create a coherent and succinct summary of a text.

Idiomatic Expressions

An Idiom is a combination of two or more words which are arranged in a specific pattern to produce new meaning. One cannot arrive at the meaning of an Idiom by considering each word in the group separately. Consider the following Idiomatic classification using a typology with examples:

Idioms Connected with Classroom

- a. A grey area - Something that is difficult to define
You result fell on *a grey area*
- b. Be glad to see the back of - Be happy when a person leaves
I'll *be glad to see the back of the teacher*
- c. By the book - Doing something according to rules
He's a teacher. He does everything by the book

Idioms Connected with Market

- a. A bad penny - A worthless person
She is *a bad penny* among the group.
- b. Cash cow - an easy way to earn money regularly
Quail birds area *cash cow* for Halimat.
- c. Be broke - be without money
I am completely broke

Idioms Connected with. Home

- a. Flesh and blood - a relative
I must help him. He is my own *flesh and blood*
- b. My own - A lover
He is *my own*
- c. As easy as pie - Very easy
I thought you said it was a difficult problem
It isn't in fact; it's *as easy as pie*

Idioms Connected with Agriculture

- a. Couch potato - Someone who spend too much time watching TV

Sikiru, you're a real *couch potato*

- b. Don't count your chickens until they hatch

- Don't assume

I am sure that I shall win the lottery

- c. In stock - In supply and available to buy/sell

Idioms Connected with Education

- a. Crash course - Short course design to give a lot of information

The students are made to take *crash course* in Ilorin

- b. Burn the candle at both ends - over do work and play

- Ibrahim often *burn candle at both ends*

- c. Turn a new leaf - Conduct oneself better

- I hope our students would *turn a new leaf* this semester.

Writing Skill in English

Oyeyemi (2003) stated that writing in this context involves words through a set of symbol or marks. He further explained that writing is not only an attempt to use symbols or marks to express feelings, opinions or suggestions on a particular issue but putting together appropriately these symbols and marks as they appear in words, phrases, clauses, sentences and paragraphs. He also said such symbols and marks must be used in a logical and meaningful way.

Babatunde (2009) emphasized that writing process is not a - one way traffic; rather, it is a recursive process involving movements, forward and backward. Writing systems use sets of symbols to represent the sounds of speech, and also have symbols for such things as punctuation and numerals. Writing is intellectual and emotional exhibitionism.

Teaching writing is important because written communication is a basic life skill. Learners may need to take notes, fill in forms, and write letters, and stories. The amount of time you spend on teaching writing will naturally depend on your students' needs.

The Controlled - to - Free Approach

The controlled-to-free approach is sequential: learners are first given sentence exercises, then paragraphs to copy or manipulate grammatically by changing questions to statements, present to past, or plural to singular. They might also change words to clauses or combine sentences. With these controlled compositions, it is relatively easy for learners to write and yet avoid errors, which makes error correction easy. Learners are allowed to try some free composition after they have reached an intermediate level of proficiency. As such, this approach stresses on grammar, syntax, and mechanics. It emphasizes accuracy rather than fluency or originality.

The Free - Writing Approach

This approach stresses writing quantity rather than quality. Teachers who use this approach assign vast amounts of free writing on given topics with only minimal correction. Once ideas are down on the page, grammatical accuracy and organization follow. Thus, teachers may begin their classes by asking students to write freely on any topic without worrying about grammar and spelling for five or ten minutes. The teacher does not correct these pieces of free writing. They simply read them and comment on the ideas the writer expressed. Alternatively, some learners may volunteer to read their own writing aloud to the class. Concern for "audience" and "content" are seen as important in this approach.

The Paragraph - Pattern Approach

Instead of accuracy of grammar or fluency of content, the Paragraph - Pattern Approach stresses organization. Learners copy paragraphs and imitate model passages. They put scrambled sentences into paragraph order. They identify general and specific statements and choose to invent an appropriate topic sentence or insert or delete sentences.

The Grammar - Syntax - Organization Approach

Teachers who follow this approach maintain that writing cannot be seen as composed of separate skills which are learned sequentially. Therefore, learners should be trained to pay attention to organization while they also work on the necessary grammar and syntax. This approach links the purpose of writing to the forms that are needed to convey message.

The Communicative Approach

This approach stresses the purpose of writing and the audience for it. Writers are encouraged to behave like writers in real life and ask themselves the crucial questions about purpose and audience:

Why am I writing this?

Who will read it?

Traditionally, the teacher alone has been the audience for learners writing. But some feel that writers do their best when writing is truly a communicative act, with a writer writing for a real reader. As such, the readership may be extended to classmates.

The Process Approach

Recently, the teaching of writing has moved away from a concentration on written product to an emphasis on the process of writing. Thus, writers ask themselves:

How do I write this? How do I get started?

In this approach, learners are trained to generate ideas for writing, think of the purpose and audience, and write multiple drafts in order to present written products that communicate their own ideas. Teachers who use this approach give learners time to try ideas and feedback on the content of what they write in their drafts. As such, writing becomes a process of discovery for the students as they discover new ideas and new language forms to express them.

Summarization

Summarization is a vital concept any skilled reader can utilize. It's an important literacy goal because it helps learners to understand what has been read. Writing a good summary demonstrates that you clearly understand a text and that you can communicate that understanding to your readers. A summary can be tricky to write at first because it's tempting to include too much or too little information.

Writing a Good Summary

Summary writing involves two essential factors:

- *Comprehension*: the ability to understand what has been written.
- *Composition*: the ability to put that person's idea into your own words.

Study carefully the following stages to effective summary writing:

1. First, go through the questions to have a glimpse of what the passage is all about.
2. Read to comprehend. This may involve more than a single reading. While reading, list words to generate meaning. Retain only that which is relevant to the theme, leaving out the unimportant points. Take note of figurative expressions and punctuation marks while adjectives, illustrations use to exemplify writer's meaning and other qualifying words should be omitted.
3. Read the passage again, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph.
4. Make a rough draft of your precis. Do not include details that are products of your opinion which were not indicated in the passage. Try to give answers in your own words.
5. Connectives help your work to look good, use them. However, the choice of links depends on the content of paragraph and the personal preference of the writer. Consider the examples of the following links: to illustrate, to give details, to show contrary information, to show consequence, to show time and to summaries.
for instance, in addition, firstly, in contrast, however, hence, afterward, therefore, at length, soon, to sum up, as a result, in summary.
6. Read through your draft to see if it reads smoothly and finally, write out your summary work.

Vocabulary

Words are the building blocks in a language. Words do not exist as isolated items in a language. That is, words are interwoven in a complex system in which knowledge of various levels of a lexical item is required in order to achieve adequate understanding in listening or reading or produce ideas successfully in speaking and writing.

Vocabularies include conceptual knowledge of words that goes well beyond a simple dictionary definition. Learners' vocabulary knowledge is a building process that occurs over time as they make connections to other words, learn examples and non-examples of the word and related words, and use the word accurately within the context of the sentence (Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005).

Learning words does not occur in a vacuum; that is, learners do not acquire meanings of words in isolation. Knowledge of words is acquired incidentally, where vocabulary is developed through immersion in language activities. Words are also learned through direct instruction, where students learn words through a structured approach. Graves (2006) offers a framework for successful vocabulary programs that supports effective teaching and students' development of word knowledge. It includes a four-part approach to developing robust vocabularies (pp. 4-8).

Methods and Strategies

b. Providing rich and varied language experiences:

Teachers offer and encourage students to participate in a variety of rich language experiences that occur throughout the day and across the curriculum. Examples of such experiences that promote rich and powerful vocabularies at all levels include:

- interactive read - aloud of outstanding children's literature,
- dialogic - based instructional activities,
- independent reading,
- interactive writing, and
- creating a print-rich environment where the "walls are dripping with words.

c. Teaching individual words:

Although many words may be learned incidentally and vocabularies do become stronger when they are supported with a language - rich environment, learners benefit from systematic and direct instruction of words. Vocabulary instruction should:

- provide learners with information that contains the context as well as the meaning of the word,
- design instruction that engages learners and allows sufficient time for word learning,
- make sure learners have multiple exposures to the words with review and practice,
- create a dialogue around the words.

c. Teaching word - learning strategies:

An important aspect of developing learners' robust vocabularies is teaching them tools to unlock the meaning of unknown words. The

most effective tools is to use the context of the surrounding words or sentences to infer the meaning of a word, using meaningful word parts to make sense out of the unknown word and using the dictionary effectively to help define an unknown word.

d. Building word consciousness in readers and writers:

Engage learners in learning new words. As teachers, we need to develop word consciousness within the learners and maintain their interest in words. Graves and Watts - Taffe (2008) suggest that teachers should:

- create a word-rich environment,
- recognize, promote and adept diction,
- promote word play,
- foster word consciousness through writing,
- involve students in original investigations, and
- teach students about words" (p. 186)

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