



Vocabulary and Word Finding

Educational Psychology Service & Speech and Language Therapy Service

This leaflet has been designed to support parents and educators on strategies to develop vocabulary and wordfinding skills at home.



Vocabulary and Word Finding Difficulties

Vocabulary refers to the words that we understand and use. Some children have difficulty understanding or using as many words as they should in their speech and/or writing to express themselves. If a child understands lots of words but is unable to use them correctly when they're talking, we can call this a word finding difficulty. Word finding involves retrieving the right word in our brain at the right time when we need it.

To support vocabulary and word finding at home you can:



Cue them in

If your child is struggling to name a word, support them by asking them questions such as, 'what does it look like?' 'where would you find it?' 'what do you do with it?' etc.



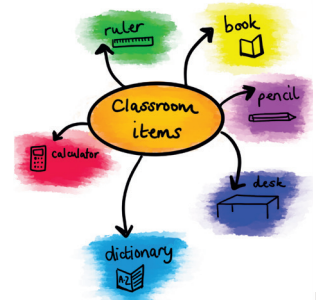
Pre-teach

Teach your child important vocabulary before it's used in class using objects, pictures, symbols and gestures.



Use mind maps

Make use of word maps and mind maps to develop a child/young person's understanding of vocabulary. A mind map explores a topic – e.g. 'Egyptians'. A word map explores specific vocabulary – e.g. 'Pyramid'.



One at a time

Introduce a few new words at a time. Pick words that will be useful and meaningful. Speak to your child's teacher about the words they'll be using in the classroom.



Explain

Use simple definitions to explain the meaning of the word.



Multi-sensory approach

- o See it: use real objects and situations, photos and pictures
- o Hear it
- o Say it: say the word and use it in a sentence
- o Read it
- o Write it: write the individual word, and again in a sentence.

