

# Growing English learners' reading skills

Building Els's knowledge and vocabulary, to increase reading comprehension

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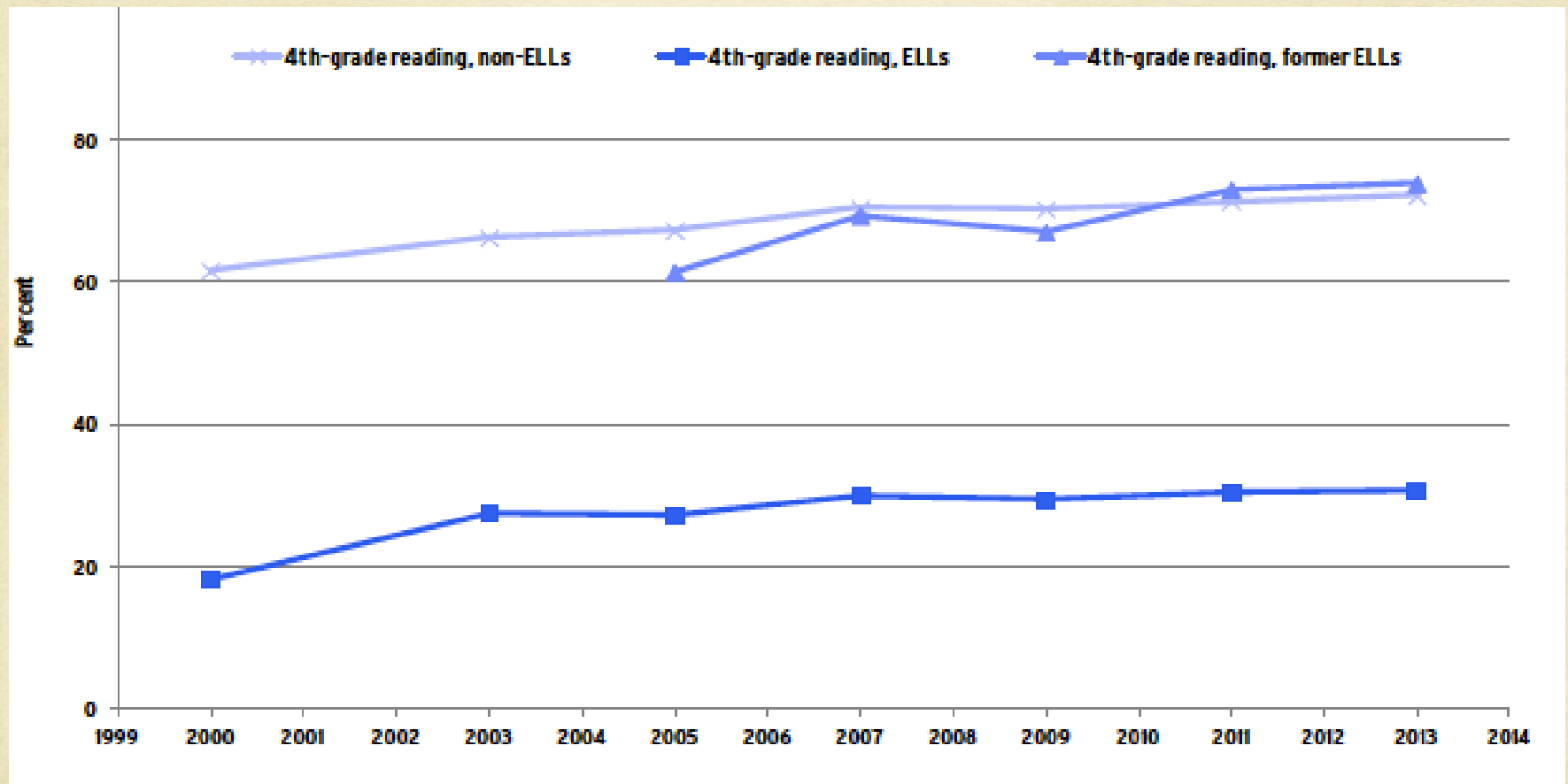
# Overview of presentation

- My interest
- The problem: EL and reading
- What does the research say about increasing reading comprehension?
- How I apply the research
- The current results

# Reasons for low reading comprehension

- Vocabulary: Failure to grow sufficient vocabulary
- Knowledge: Failure to develop wide background knowledge
- Fluency: Failure to become a fluent reader

# Percent of U.S. public school students scoring at the basic level or above in 4th-grade reading, by English language learner status: selected years, 2000-2013



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. National Assessment of Educational Progress Mathematics Assessments (NAEP), 2000-2013 Reading Assessments. Accessed through the NAEP Data Explorer, at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/>

**Table 1**  
**National Performance in Mathematics and Reading**  
*(percent of students in achievement level)*

Achievement Level	MATH		READING	
	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8
<b>ELL Students</b>				
Advanced	1	1	1	0
Proficient	11	5	6	4
Basic	43	23	21	24
Below Basic	46	71	73	71
<b>White Students</b>				
Advanced	7	7	10	3
Proficient	40	30	30	34
Basic	42	42	35	43
Below Basic	11	21	25	19
<b>Black Students</b>				
Advanced	1	1	2	0
Proficient	12	8	11	11
Basic	47	33	29	40
Below Basic	40	59	59	49
<b>Hispanic Students</b>				
Advanced	1	1	2	1
Proficient	18	12	13	13
Basic	48	38	29	41
Below Basic	33	50	56	45

Source: 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

# Vocabulary and reading comprehension

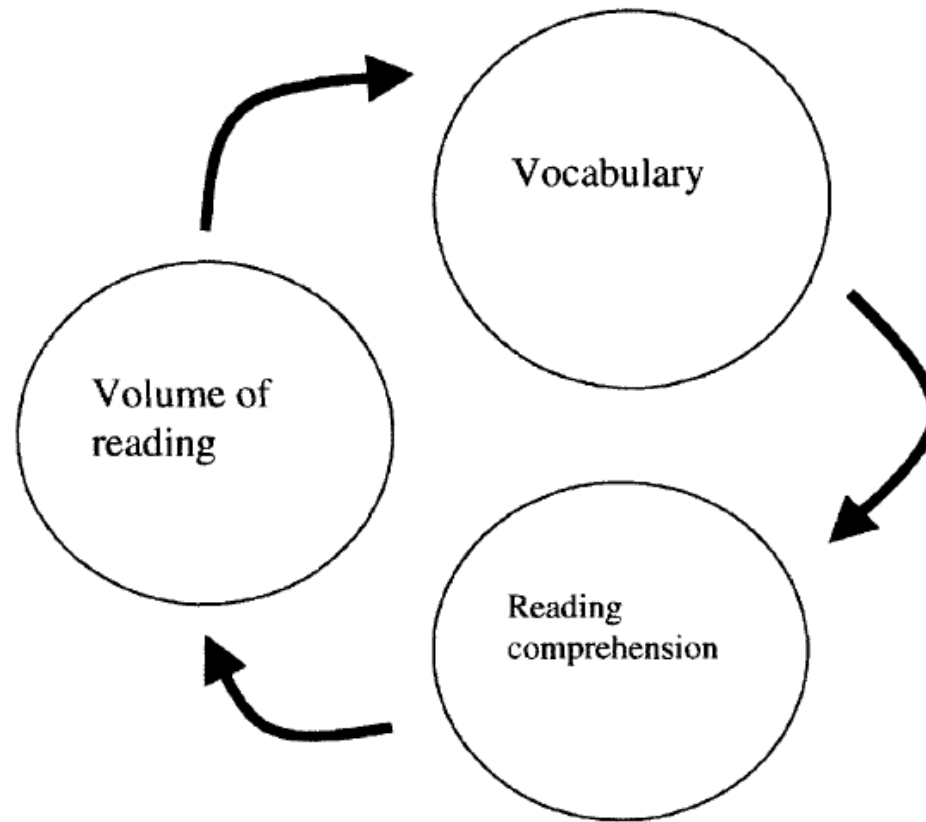


FIG. 2.1. A reciprocal model of vocabulary and reading comprehension.



# Low vocabulary

[REDACTED], and the [REDACTED] Eliza even wrote a book—the [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
about [REDACTED]

When Eliza went back to [REDACTED] it wasn't long before she started thinking  
about [REDACTED] again. She decided to visit her older brother, who was working in  
[REDACTED]. Eliza [REDACTED] across [REDACTED]

In [REDACTED] she rode on trains, [REDACTED] and bumpy [REDACTED]. She climbed  
mountains, ate strange foods, and visited [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. Everything was so  
different! She studied [REDACTED] and learned to [REDACTED]. She fell in love  
with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] people.

Eliza [REDACTED] loved [REDACTED]. Eliza's favorite plants, by far, were the  
[REDACTED]. Eliza called them "the most beautiful thing in the world."  
[REDACTED] of the trees were [REDACTED] in parks and along the [REDACTED]. When  
the [REDACTED] the trees became clouds of pink [REDACTED]. As the [REDACTED]



- When she was twenty-six, Eliza bought tickets to **faraway Alaska**. Few **tourists** had ever been there. Eliza wrote **reports** for the **newspapers** back home. She loved sharing the **fascinating** things she saw, such as **huge glaciers**, **spouting whales**, and the **native people**. Eliza even wrote a book – the first **guidebook** about **Alaska**.
- When Eliza went back to **Washington**, it wasn't long before she started thinking about **traveling** again. She decided to visit her older brother, who was working in **Japan**. Eliza **sailed** across the ocean.

- Vocabulary experts agree that adequate reading comprehension depends on a person already knowing between 90 and 95 percent of the words in a text. Knowing that percentage of words allows the reader to get the main thrust of what is being said and therefore to guess correctly what the unfamiliar words probably mean. (Hirsch, E.D., 2003)

# What To Do About Vocabulary/Knowledge?

In order to learn new words, you need to know other words. The more of these words you are taught, the easier it is to learn other words.

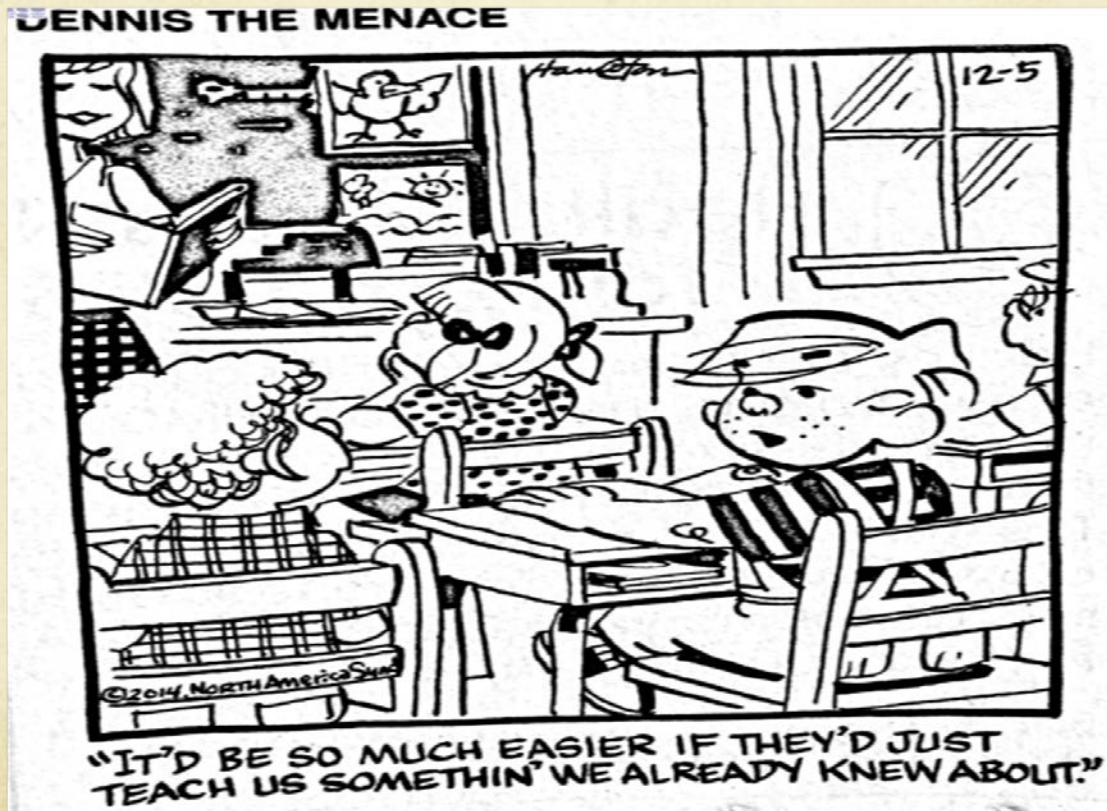
- The fastest way to learn about new topics is to read about them this also helps students build knowledge.
- Knowledge gained through reading can help make up for differences in background knowledge.

# Knowledge is power

- Volume of reading can level the playing field
- Students cannot build knowledge and vocabulary without a high volume of reading.
- Text sets: Independent reading alone doesn't provide the repeated and multiple exposures to vocabulary

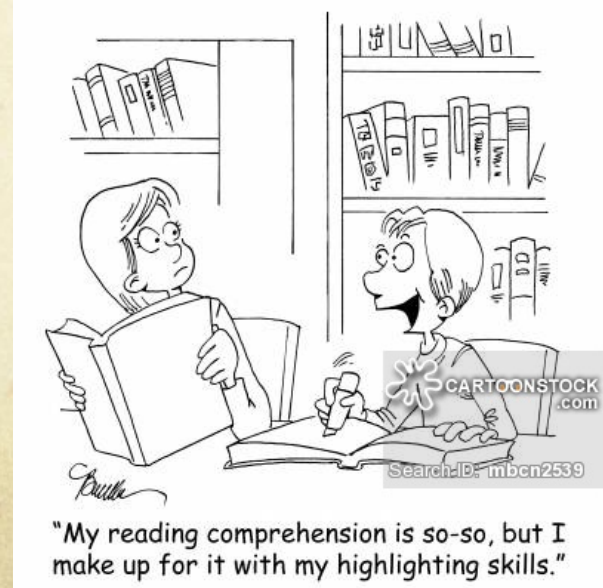


# Background knowledge



# Knowledge and reading comprehension

- Prior knowledge is important to comprehension, but when students struggle with comprehension, we rarely focus on building knowledge as our primary intervention.
- We often use comprehension strategies, and attempt to build stamina, or simply ask kids to practice.



Knowledge of words and knowledge of  
the world go together



# Why I chose to use text sets

- We learn a little from the first encounter with a word and then more and more about a word's meaning as we meet it in new and different contexts. (Graves, 2006)



# Text sets and silent reading to build background and knowledge

- “more words a student knows, the more likely she is to be gathering new meanings from context.” (David Liben, Student Achievement Partners)  
<http://achievethecore.org/author/14/david-liben>
- The probability of learning a word from context increases substantially with additional occurrences of the word.
- We learn a little from the first encounter with a word and then more and more about a word’s meaning as we meet it in new and different contexts.

# SSR/Independent reading

- Students must read widely and different types of texts to that are difficult enough for them to encounter a wide # of unfamiliar words (Beck & Mckeown, 2013)
- Independent reading of student magazines and articles provides repeated and multiple exposures to vocabulary and builds their knowledge about the world



# Variation in amount of independent reading

<i>Percentile</i>	<i>Independent Reading Minutes Per Day</i>	<i>Words Read Per Year</i>
98	65.0	4,358,000
90	21.1	1,823,000
80	14.2	1,146,000
70	9.6	622,000
60	6.5	432,000
50	4.6	282,000
40	3.2	200,000
30	1.3	106,000
20	0.7	21,000
10	0.1	8,000
2	0.0	0

*Note.* Adapted from Anderson, Wilson, and Fielding (1988) in Cunningham &

# Not all high-volume reading is equally effective

- Prior research into vocabulary acquisition shows that students acquire vocabulary up to four times faster when they read a series of related texts.
- Reading a number of texts within a topic grows knowledge and vocabulary far faster than any other approach

# Informational text sources

- High interest and lexiled texts
- Class magazines like Scholastic magazines
- SERP
- Newsela
- Readrightthink
- Gallagers articles of the week

# Systematically build vocabulary and knowledge about the world

- Pick high interest topics, current events
- Choose articles that are complex and have varying lexile levels, start with lower lexile level; spiral up towards articles with higher lexiles
- Is it a topic that is worth knowing that adds to knowledge worth remembering?

# Vocabulary development

- Reading comprehension and vocabulary are developed up to four times faster by spending extended time on reading and listening to texts on the same topic and discussing the facts and ideas in them. (Hirsch, 2003)
- Reading increasingly complex text sets on a topic builds students' reading skills and stamina (Shanahanm Fisher, and Frey, 2012)

# Vocabulary activities

Repetition, repetition, repetition	
<b>Provide definition:</b> for some words quick definition while reading	students draw an image, Students write sentences for words.
<b>Speaking and listening:</b> Drills— students take turns doing vocab drills	Partners quiz each other on meanings Whole class white board quizzes Spelling bees Vocabulary bees, quizzes
<b>Writing;</b> Focusing on the over arching functions: explain/describe, make a claim, compare/contrast, cause/effect	Summary of article using 5-6 vocabulary words
<b>Reading:</b> Student underline important	Say something (everyone participates) List of important concepts: then give one



# Creating text sets

- Choose a salient topic
- Identify a series of resources: ie student magazine articles, News Ela, ReadWriteThink videos or news clips on the topic, political cartoons; each resource contributes to the whole set
- Resources are then sequenced to from lower to higher lexile levels and text complexity to create a coherent and gradual learning process
- Text sets develops students knowledge of words and the world

# Vocab instruction

- Give brief explanations of new vocabulary when reading a text, then give a more detailed definition after. In the midst of a text, the focus should be on comprehension, not vocabulary acquisition: that can come later.
- Best to **introduce 6-10 new words over 5-9 days**. But use each word in lots of different contexts.
- **Remember the vital importance of frequent encounters of words in different contexts, plus the need to regular retrieval/recall.**
- (Beck, McKeown and Kucan, 2013)

# Vocabulary

- Develop student friendly explanations
- If it's not a word they would know in their home language, teach in the same way you would teach a native speaker. High challenge, high support. Then lots of activities to use new vocabulary

Explain in **everyday language**.

E.g. *'Covert describes something that is done in a hidden or secret way.'*

**Show in the definition how the word is applied.**

**(Beck, McKeown and Kucan, 2013)**

# Possible activities to use when introducing new vocabulary

- Once **the 5-7 words** for the week have been selected, ensure they are each the focus of attention at least **10 times** during the week.

-Word association. *Why are these words associated?*

-Have you ever? E.g. *'have you ever coveted something?'*

-Applause. *Clap if you would like to be described as these things: exuberant, morose, etc.*

-Which would you rather be? *Exasperated or elated? Truculent or radiant? Etc.*

*(Beck, McKeown, and Kucan)*

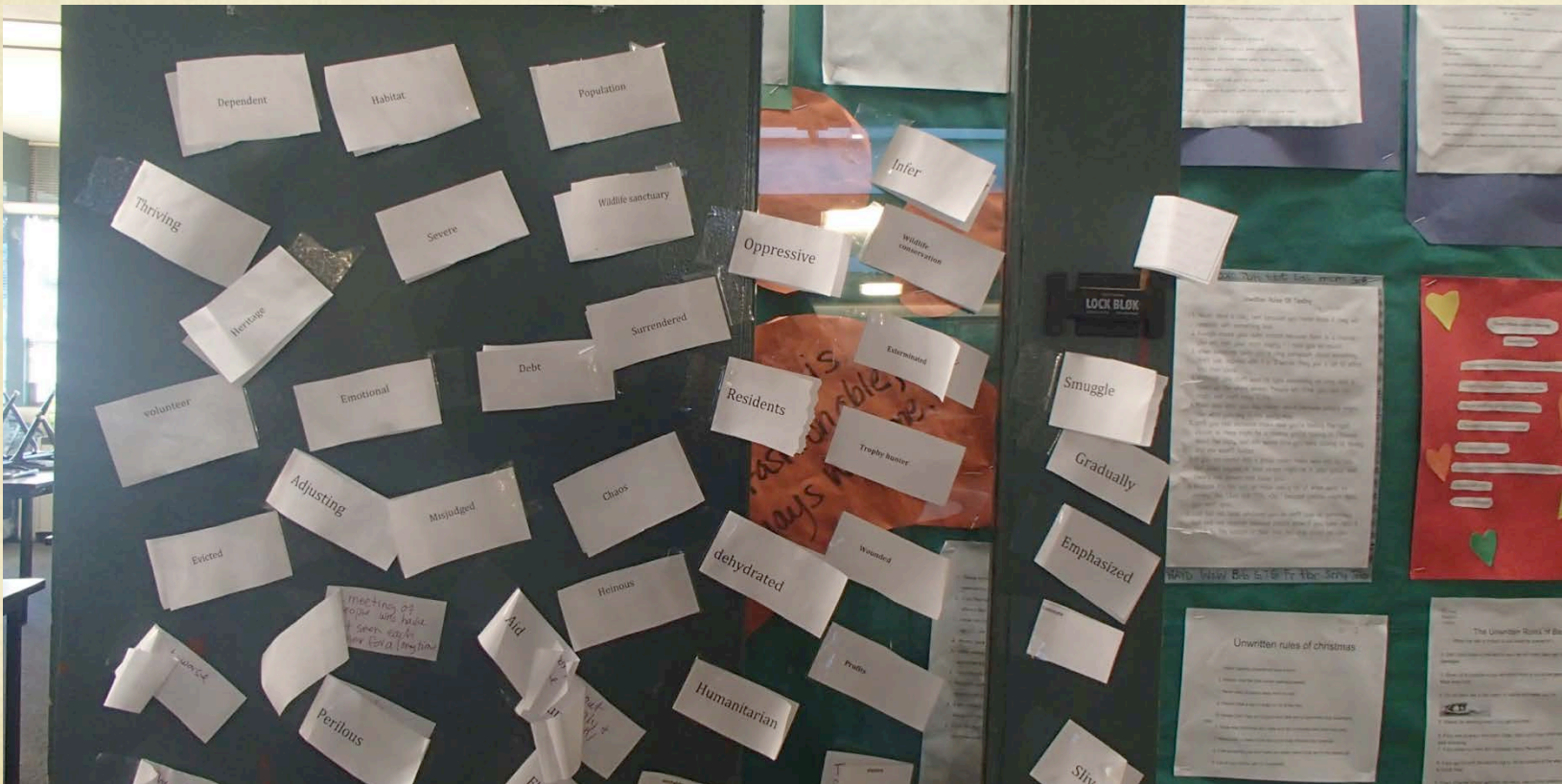
# Assessment activities

- Generating questions: to quiz other students
- Monitoring comprehension: Summarizing
- Metacognition: what do I understand

# How I to use text sets

- Silent reading- 3-4 days a week for 15 minutes- scholastic magazines
- Reading log: response to reading
- Whole class reading units of 3-5 articles, videos and graphics
- Explicit vocabulary instruction: approx 5-7 words per article
- Lots of activities to focus on vocabulary

# Word wall



# Reading log

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What I read today is similar to...</li> <li>• I have also experienced...</li> <li>• What I read today reminds me of...</li> <li>• Something new I learned today..</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My favorite part so far...</li> <li>• This is confusing because...</li> <li>• When I learned __, I felt...</li> <li>• I lost interest when ____. As a result, I ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I predict that ____ because...</li> <li>• Since __ happened, I think __ will happen...</li> <li>• After I learned that _____, I predicted that _____ will happen...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My favorite quote is, "_____" (page ).</li> <li>• The phrase, "_____" captured my attention because...</li> <li>• The author's use of _____ made me feel ____ because...</li> </ul>
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D a t e	Reading Response:	Article read today _____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
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D a t e	Reading Response:	Article read today _____
	_____	_____
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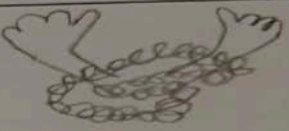
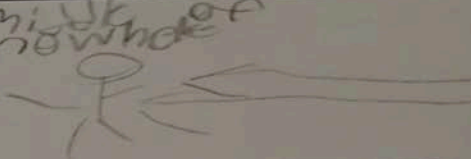
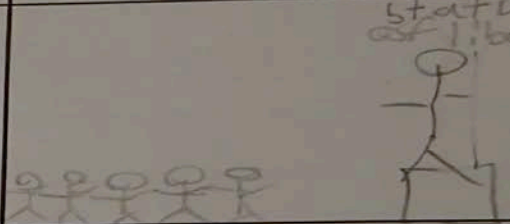




*Arizona Border Residents*

<b>Word</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Example or illustration</b>
<b>humanitarian</b>	People who seek to promote or help other people	
<b>aid</b>	Help, support, or assistance	
<b>residents</b>	A person who lives somewhere permanently or for a long-time	

I make  
vocabulary  
sheets and  
students glue  
them into  
their writer's  
notebook

Vocabulary for "Desperation at Sea"

	Definition	Picture example
ation	Poor treatment because of race, political, or religious beliefs	
	To force people to leave an area that they live.	middle of nowhere 
	Protection given by a government to someone who has left their country to escape harm or persecution.	status 
	An approximate judgment or opinion of the worth, amount, or size of something.	how many are in the 
likely to move or fall		

Images to go with vocabulary words

# Vocabulary Summaries

Oct  
23, 2015

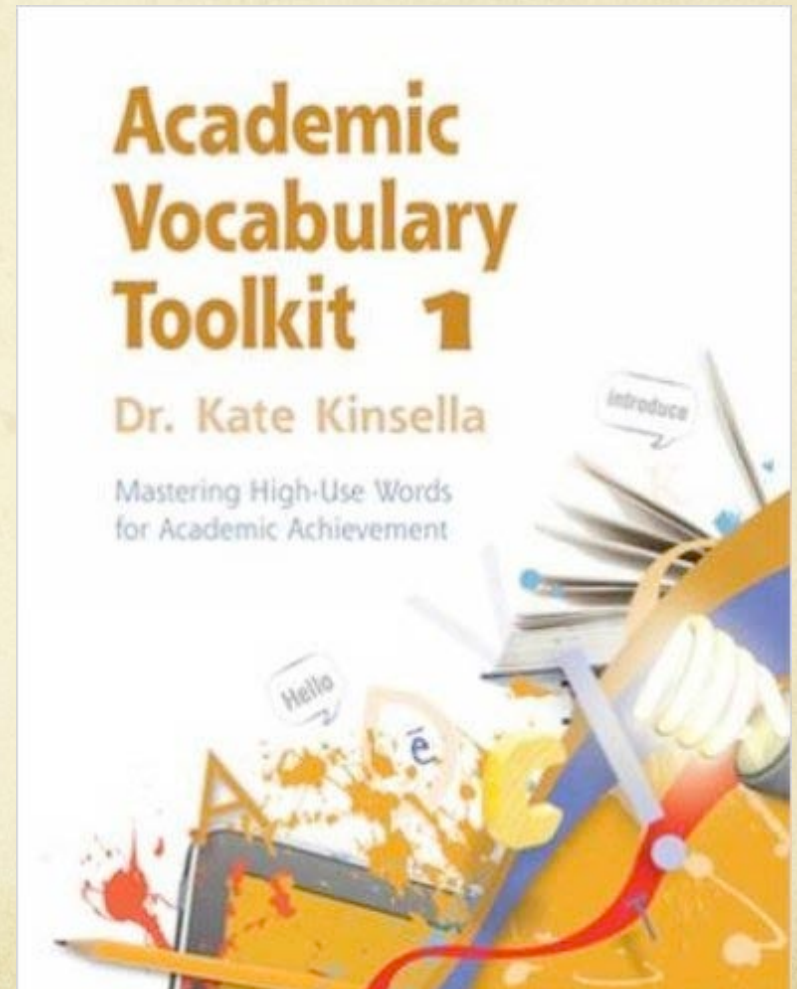
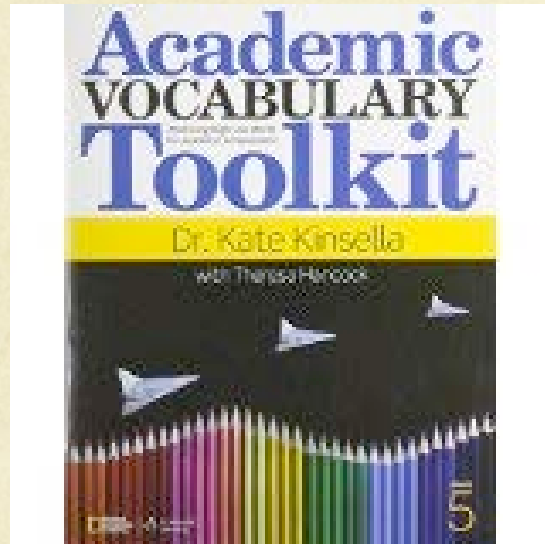
growing hope Vocabulary Page  
17

3

Chandra went to the doctor and the doctor found her diabettes a bad and serious disease. When Chandra eat vegetables it give her a big impact. Chandra started a donation fund to help people in need. Chandra started gardens for people. lots of people buy healthy produce to help people make healthy food.

# Academic Vocabulary

- Kinsella's toolkit



## Quiz Maker

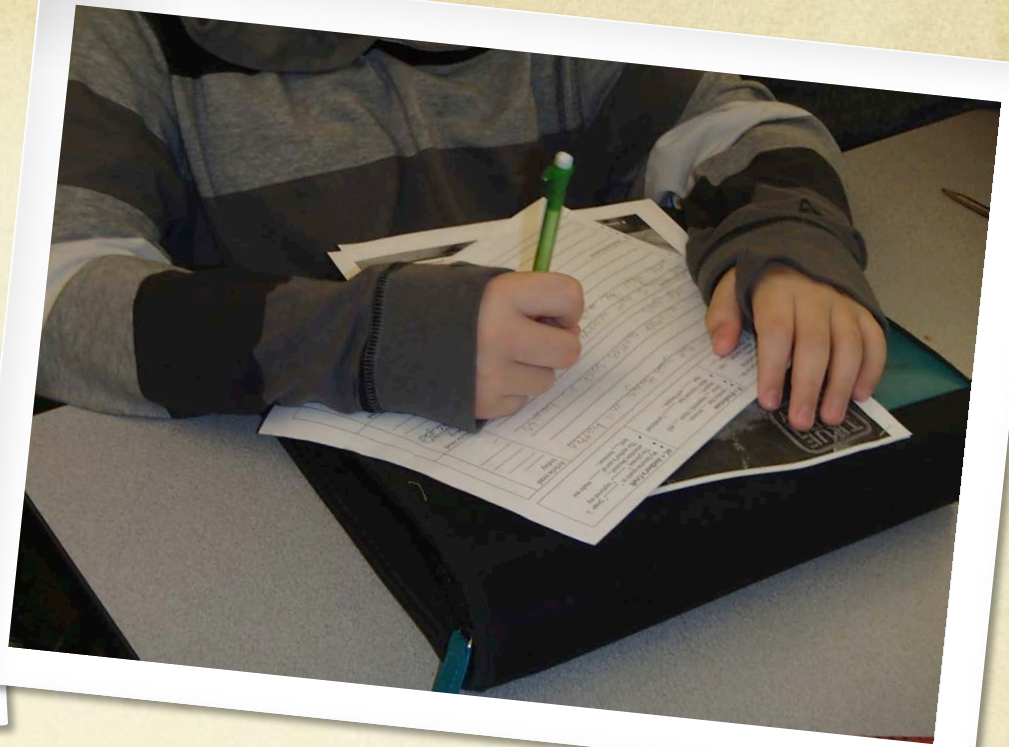
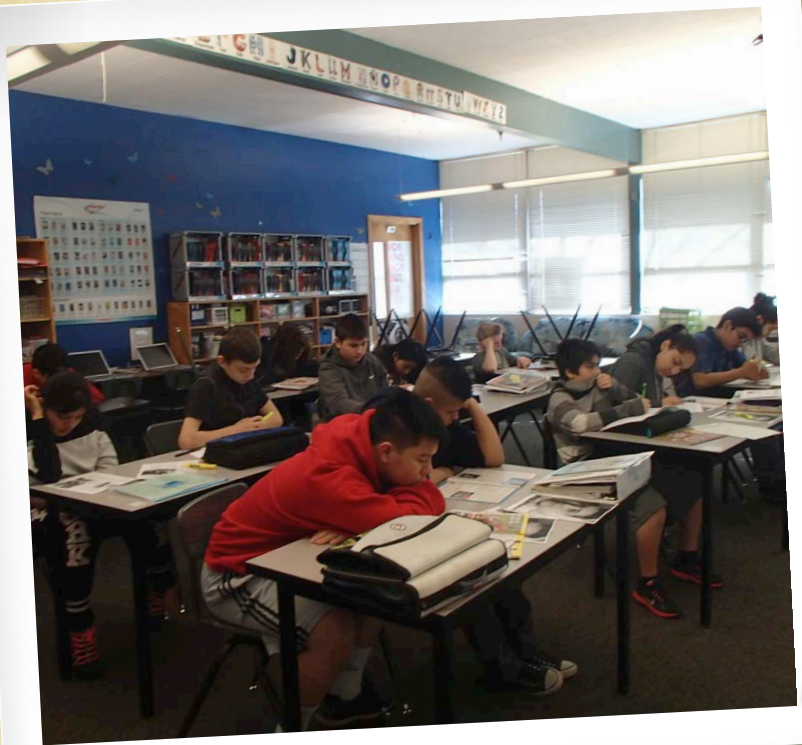
Write 3 questions that would make sure another student understood the article \_\_\_\_\_.

### Criteria:

Your classmates should be able to find the answer to the question from the resource.

- Include answers for each question.
- Include the where you can find the answer in the resource.

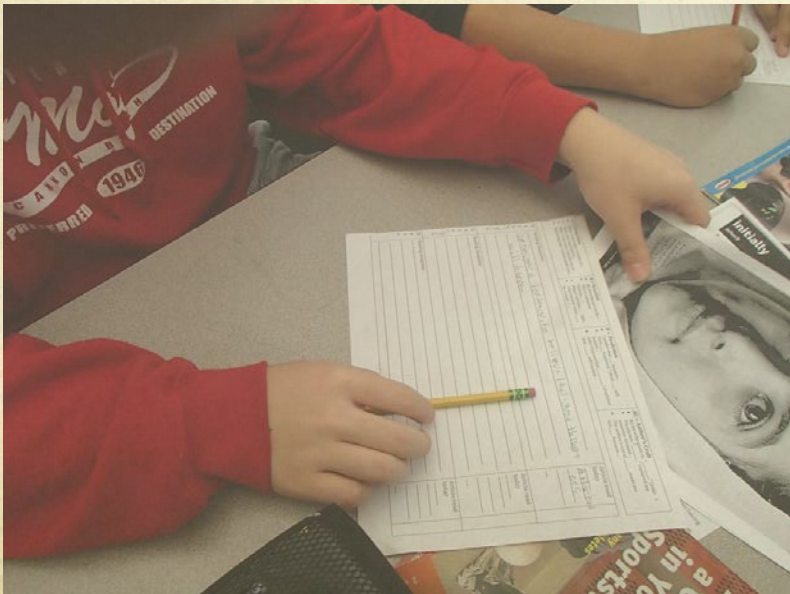
Question	Answer
1.	
2.	



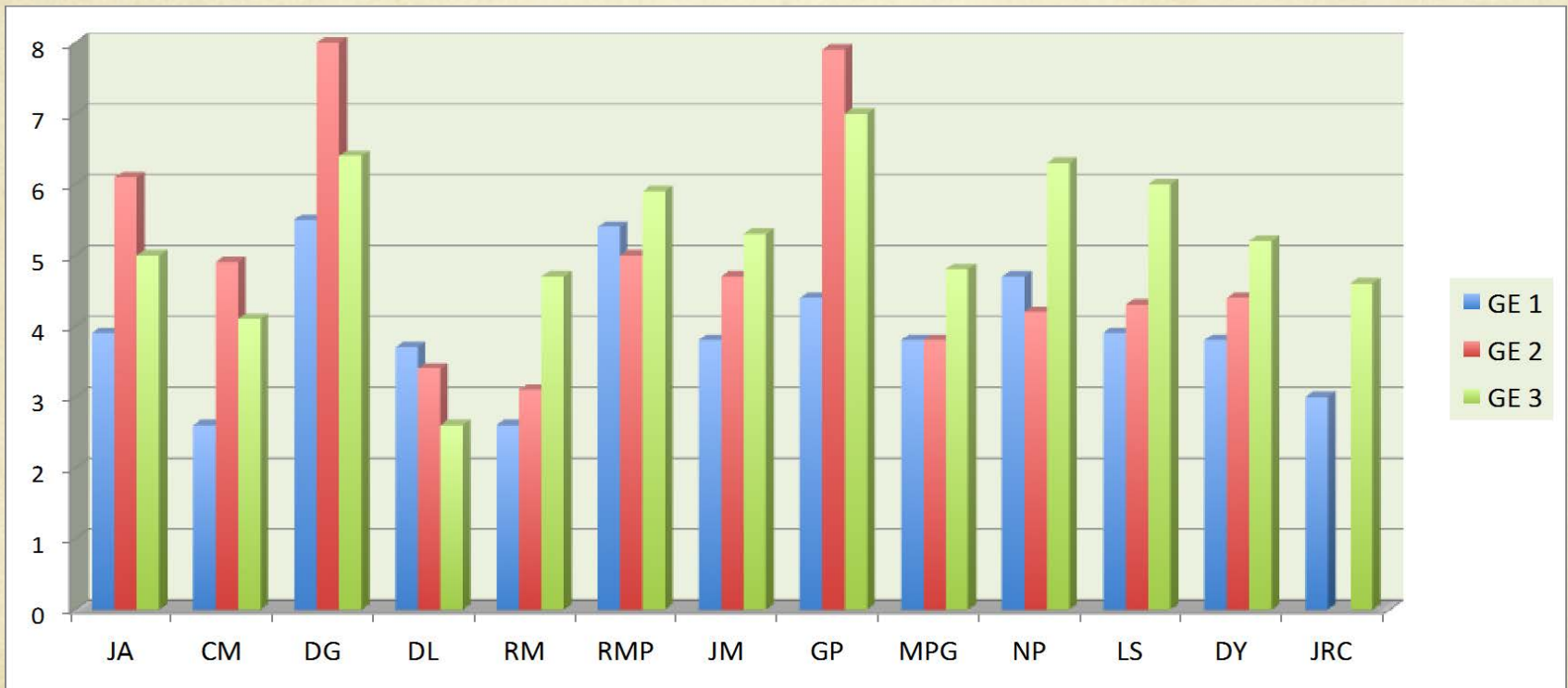
## Silent reading 3-4 days a week

Students are given a reading task or use one of the reading log prompts

# Results

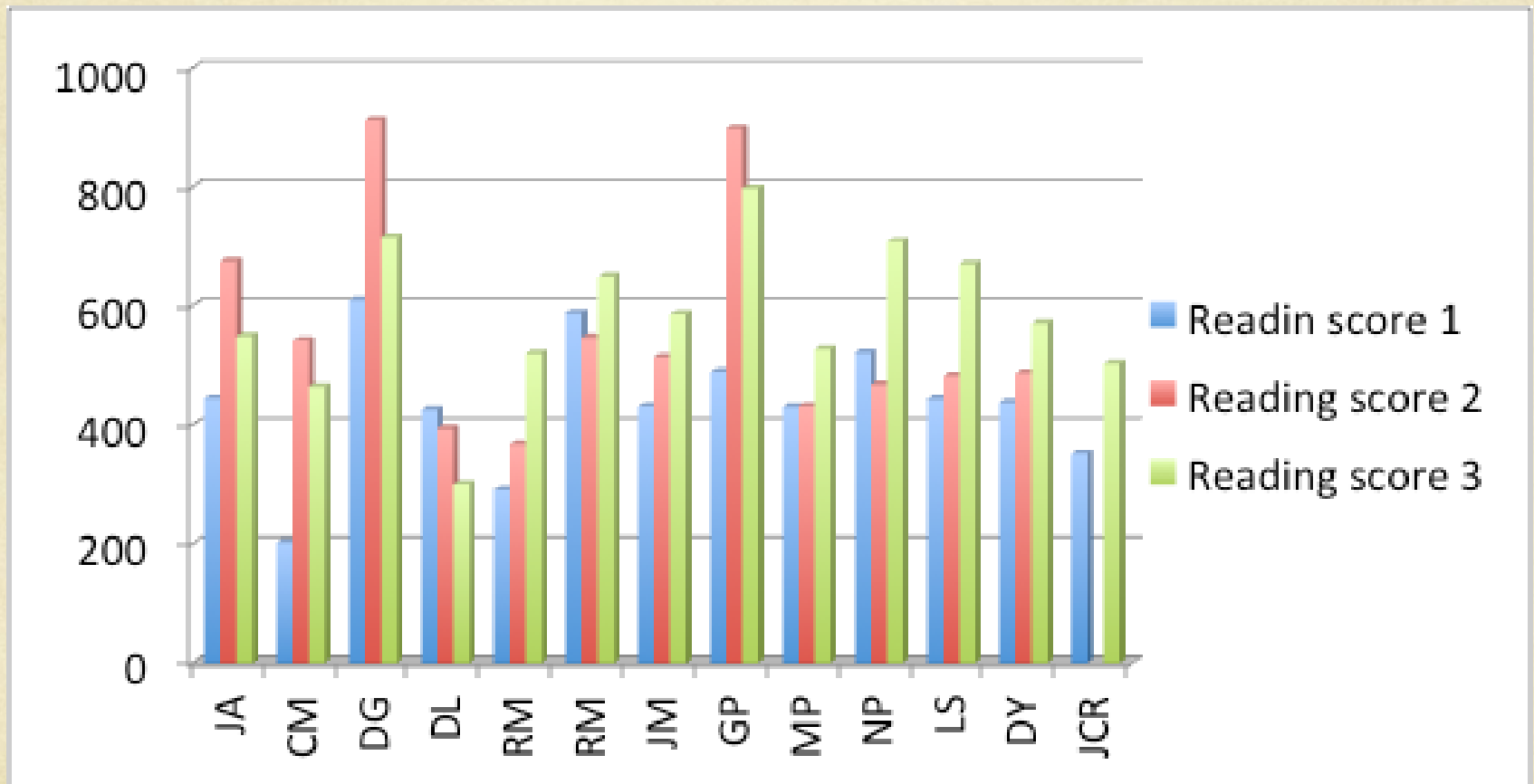


# Student STAR scores: Reading grade equivalent





# Student growth



Raw STAR scores

# Links to Immigrant/refugee text set Unit

## Overview of unit

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oICvLnbe34mU3G1gMJsTgs9c4gKQM\\_yLNLeL-X13LQ/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oICvLnbe34mU3G1gMJsTgs9c4gKQM_yLNLeL-X13LQ/edit)

## Slides with vocabulary slideshows

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1NiL26lsaOLzSs6iAm58br8YpzEOJ5vn8FsYFdI1J4Xk/edit?usp=sharing>