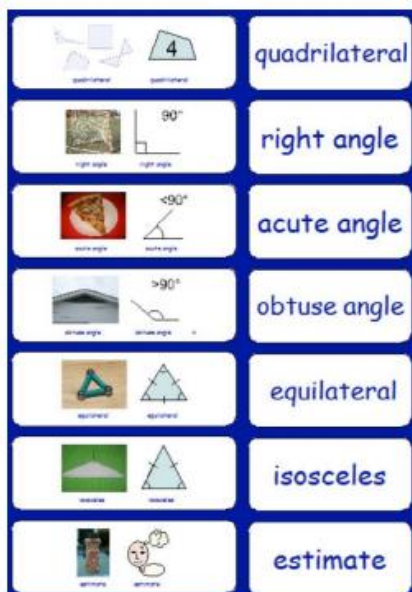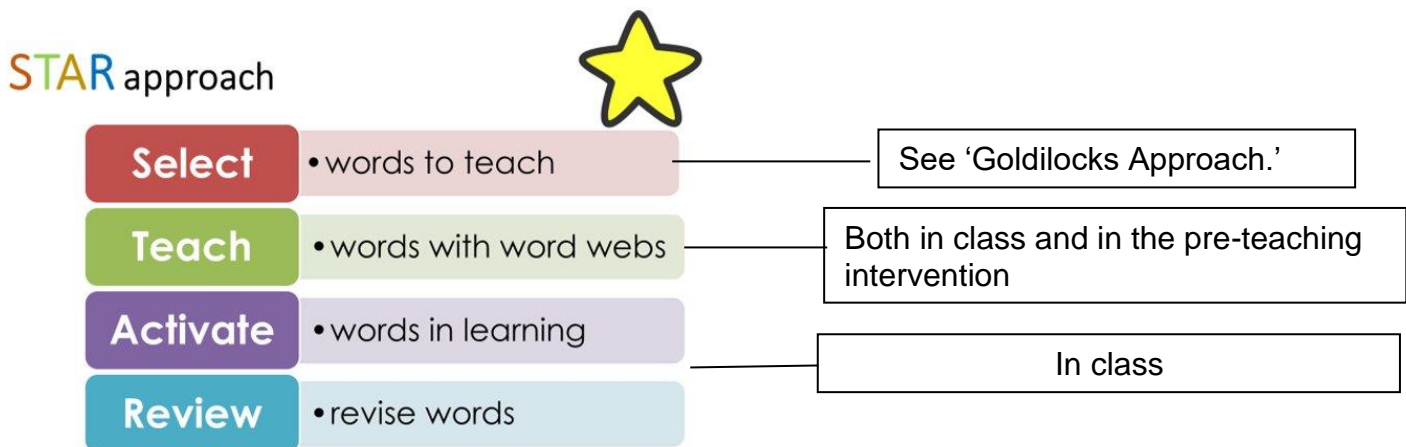# Running a Pre-Teaching Vocabulary Intervention

A vocabulary intervention aims to support the teaching of key vocabulary in class and provide opportunities for children to explore new words in greater depth, revise vocabulary learnt in class and practice using new words when talking and writing.

It is very important that the activities in the pre-teaching intervention are linked to whole class learning:

- Educators need to **work together to identify the key words to focus on**
- **The key words need to be displayed prominently in the classroom** (words and pictures) – see below
- There need to be **many opportunities in whole class lessons to hear, see, use and talk about the key words,**, both in speaking and writing activities.

This intervention follows the 'STAR' approach

STAR approach	
Select	• words to teach
Teach	• words with word webs
Activate	• words in learning
Review	• revise words

See 'Goldilocks Approach.'

Both in class and in the pre-teaching intervention

In class

S.Parsons & A.Branagan. 2013

| quadrilateral |
| right angle |
| acute angle |
| obtuse angle |
| equilateral |
| isosceles |
| estimate |

Year 5   Topic Changing State

| evaporate |
| evaporation |
| condense |
| condensation |
| state |
| change of state |

You can find out more about whole class Vocabulary Teaching Strategies by signing up for the INSPIRE 'Word Aware' workshop.

Word Wall Images are from *St John, P (2016) Pre-Teaching Vocabulary: Using visual prompts to teach independent word learning in children, What Works Edition,* www.pipstjohn.co.uk

Pre-Teaching Vocabulary Session Plan

Time: Approx. 20 minutes
Frequency: Preferably twice per week

Session Plan

| Introduce Key Words | Word Webs | Challenge Cards | Game |

1. Introducing Key Words

Using the key vocabulary list selected, ensure that you have the key words and the pictures linked to them (use the same pictures in class and in the intervention).

Say each word, match the picture to the word and ask children to point to the point on the poster which shows 'How well do I know the word?'

2. Pre-teaching 'Word Web' questions.

Select 2 – 3 key words per session. Place the word and picture in the middle of the word web and the questions cards (provided) around the outside. Work through each card as part of a group discussion (talking around the word). You don't need to use every card, every time, you can pick the questions which are most relevant!
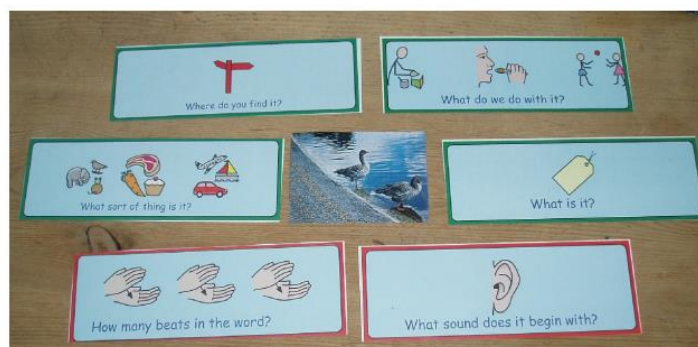
The Step 1 prompts, here being used for the word "fowl".
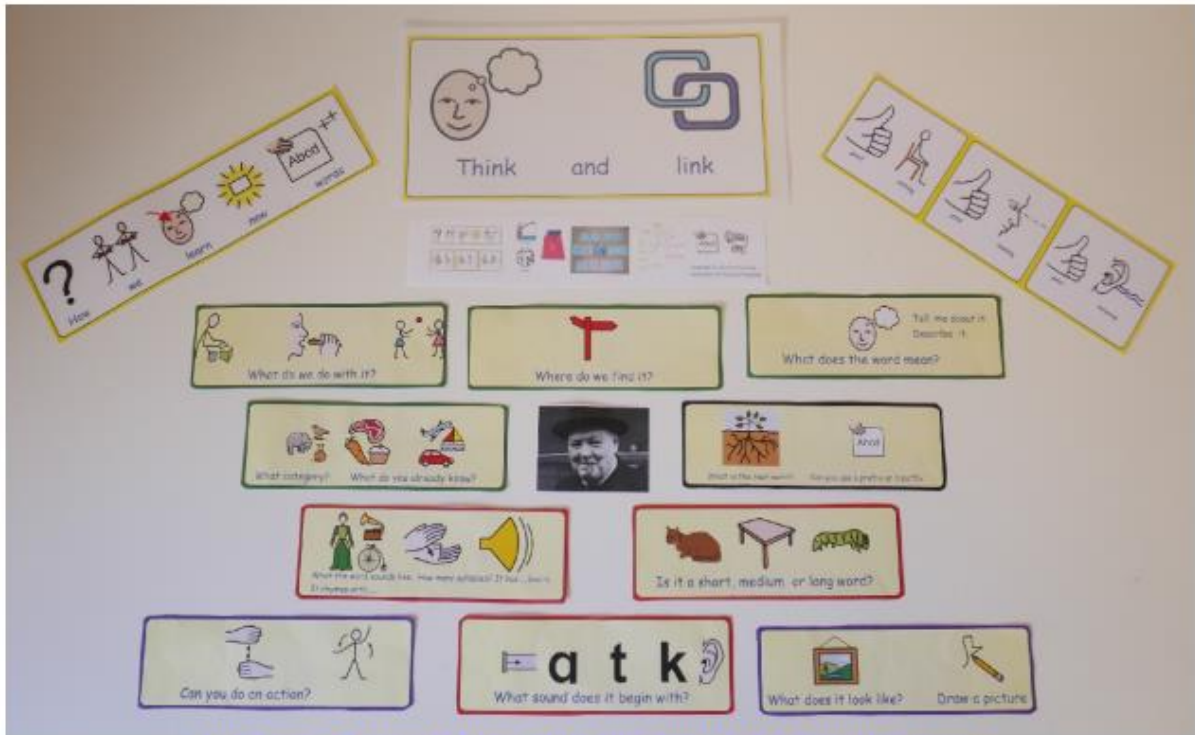
The step 2 prompts shown in action with other visual supports.
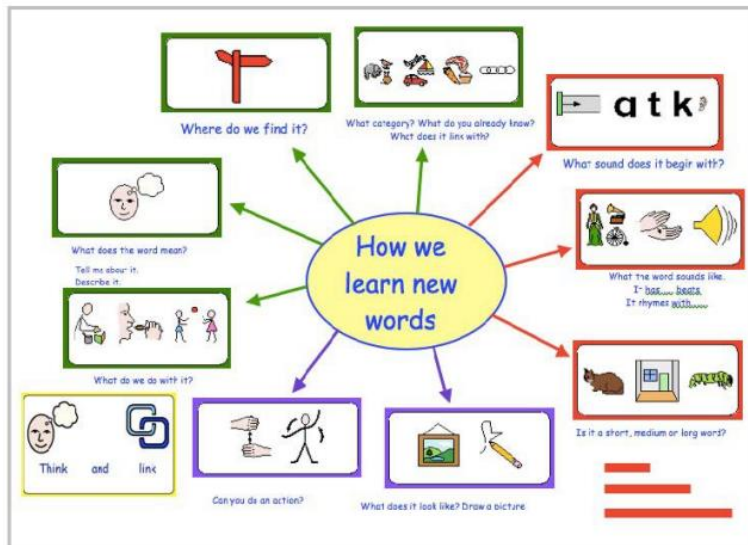
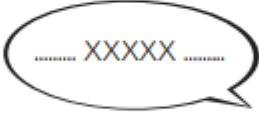A Word Wheel: all the prompts are included on a single sheet for easy desktop reference.

[Pip St John – Pre Teaching Vocabulary (PTV) group delivery - YouTube](#)

Here is a video demonstration which shows the use of Word Webs.

3. Challenge Cards

Choose one key word and place the challenge cards (provided) face down on the table. Each child takes turns turning over a challenge card and attempting the challenge.

| Challenge card	Challenge card	Challenge card
Say one thing about the word's meaning.	What is the first sound? **b, c, t**	What does the word rhyme with?
How many syllables does it have?	Use the word in a sentence. .... XXXXX	Say one thing about the word's meaning.
Act out the word.	How will you remember this word?	Which other word is a bit like this word? Huge Giant Enormous Massive

4. Games

Here are a selection of games which promote vocabulary learning skills:

The Strongest Link

Making links between words and topics.

Find 10 to 12 pictures that link with a topic. Name the pictures and put them face down on the table. Take turns to pick up 2 pictures. Name the words and think of something that links the pictures. The child with the strongest link keeps the pictures!

St John, P (2016) Pre-Teaching Vocabulary: Using visual prompts to teach independent word learning in children, What Works Edition, www.pipstjohn.co.uk
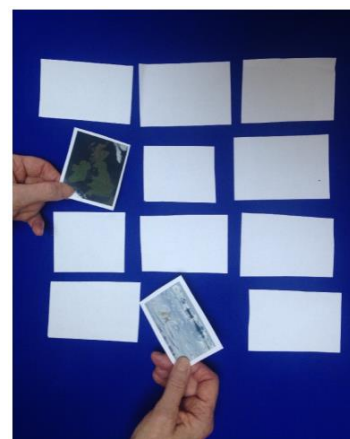
Can you link the UK and Ireland with a polar landscape?

Word Rounds

Categorisation

Word rounds

Choose one of the categories below. Go around the circle, with each player adding a category item.

Variation: After you have chosen your category set a timer for one minute. Taking turns around the group see how many words can be generated in one minute. Record the class total and then try to beat it next time.

Animals	Clothes	Furniture	Food	Transport
Sports	Countries	Shops	Parts of the body	Computer games
Films	T.V. programmes	Famous people	Anything to do with Christmas	Books
Something you cut	Something you can smell	Something you wear when it is hot	Something you can see on a beach	Songs
Somewhere you go on holiday	Something you would see at the zoo	Things you use or wear when playing sport	Things you could do with a piece of paper	Something red/ green/ blue
Something starting with 'p' (or any other letter)	Something with legs	Something you would find in a handbag	Things in a classroom	Things you could buy in a supermarket that isn't food
Shoes	Things that are cold	Insects	Things that grow	Musical instruments
Boy's/ girl's name	Cartoon characters	Famous sports men/ women	Verbs (doing words)	Adjectives (describing words)
Things that are thin	Things that are round/ square	Breakable objects	Things that can fly	Things with wheels
Toys	Things you plug in	Emotions	Pets	Jobs
Things that make you laugh	Things that are fast	Breakfast foods	Things that are exciting/ exhilarating	Things that open
Things that are boring	Liquids /things you can pour	Things that rhyme with tea/ cat/ light.	Drinks	Things that are light (not heavy)

This game is from a free resource provided by Word Aware thinkingtalking.co.uk A. Branagan & S. Parsons 2020

Words Words Words

Descriptive Words

Henry VIII

Descriptive Words

Select a historical figure or fictional character that have featured in the class' learning. Work in groups to think of words that best describe this person or character. As a class refine them to the best five. Here are some examples: Henry VIII: fat, greedy, self-centred, powerful and wealthy. Red Riding Hood: kind, happy, helpful, innocent and young.

20 questions

Inference

Traditional game in which one person thinks of an object. Others try to guess what it is by asking questions. The original player can only answer 'yes, no or maybe.' A clue may be given if the guessers are on the wrong track. Can the item be guessed in 20 questions? Keep a tally of the number of questions on the board.