



Parent Pipeline



CAFÉ Strategy: Use Dictionaries, Thesauruses, Glossaries as Tools

Readers use many strategies to increase their understanding of words and texts they are reading. Although there are many different strategies to use, one of the most widely known strategies is using a dictionary, thesaurus, or glossary as a word learning tool. Readers use this strategy when they need a precise definition of a word or a list of other words that mean the same thing. In order for readers to be successful at using these word learning tools, they must first understand how they work. In class, your child has been learning how to productively use these tools. The following ideas will help you assist your child with this strategy at home.

How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. When reading with your child, model the use of these tools. Select an interesting word in the text and model how to use a dictionary to look up the meaning of the word. Then, you may want to use the computer or a thesaurus to see what other words the author could have written instead.
2. A dictionary shows the proper spelling of a word, how to pronounce the word, the syllables of a word, and the meaning of a word. Have your child practice his/her dictionary skills by looking up words you give. Ask for the spelling, definition, and syllable/pronunciation of the word.
3. Remind your child that the dictionary lists words in alphabetical order. Practice using this skill with your child by giving a list of words in random order and asking your child to put them in ABC order. Once they become good at this, make it more difficult by giving lists of words that all start with the same letter. This provides practice for looking at the second and third letters in a word.
4. Make a game out of practicing dictionary skills by seeing who can find a word first. Each player has a dictionary that is closed. One player gives a word and both players look to find the word. The first to find the word and read the definition wins.

Thank you for your continued support at home!

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