

Pre-teach vocabulary

1B – Pre-teach vocabulary and the subject knowledge that is required to access main ideas

Before reading, teachers should consider which words contained within a text should be pre-taught. This helps to reduce cognitive load during reading, supports pupils' comprehension, and means we don't have to keep stopping during the reading to give lengthy explanations of words.

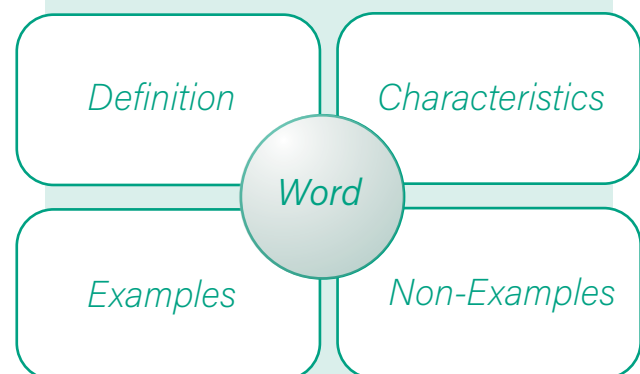
However, this isn't as simple as merely pre-teaching all words that are likely to be new or unfamiliar. Some words will be useful only in *this* text, in this moment, and will therefore only warrant a brief definition – these can be thought of as '*fingertip words*' (see 5A).

Some words however, are intrinsic to the understanding of a text, and will also have utility beyond this particular text, and elsewhere across a unit of study.

Teachers should invest time before reading in pre-teaching these high leverage words. Examples in different subjects follow.

Example 1: History

In a Year 8 class, pupils are reading an informational text as part of a unit on the Nazis. Before reading, the teacher teaches the word 'dictatorship,' using a **Frayer model** to give examples and non-examples. This word allows for an understanding of how the Nazis exerted power over Germany, and is applicable to other units.



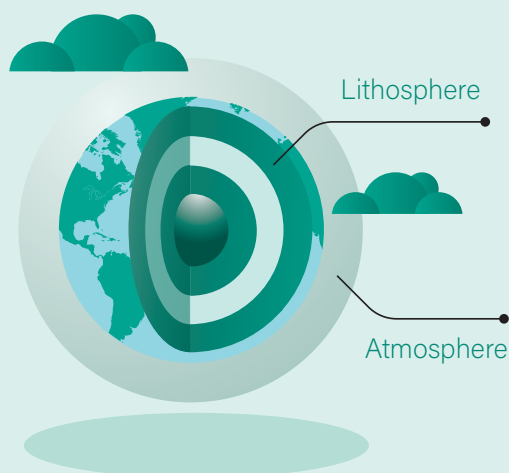
The Frayer Model

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Example 2: Geography

In a Year 8 class, pupils are reading a text as part of their unit on natural hazards. Before reading, the teacher teaches the word 'asthenosphere', exploring the morphology of the word, where 'astheno' means weakness, and 'sphere' references the shape of the earth.

This is supported by diagrams showing where this layer sits in the earth's structure. Knowledge of the suffix 'sphere' also helps pupils connect their understanding to words like 'lithosphere' and 'atmosphere.'



Example 3: English Literature

In a Year 11 class, pupils are reading a text about 19th century criminology to illuminate the historical context of the novella *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde*.

Before reading, the teacher teaches the word 'physiognomy', giving a simple definition, and asking pupils to 'sound out' the word together. They then explore the morphology of the word, and use illustrations from the Victorian era to support understanding.

The word is important as it is used multiple times in this text, and will be used later by pupils when writing their own essays about the novella.

"phys - i - og - no - my"