

Video Transcript: Learning New Words

[Link to Video](#)

Transcript

Speaker: Welcome to the New Worlds Reading Initiative. Have you ever considered that young children might not understand all of the words in a book that you read aloud? If they don't understand words, that could reduce their comprehension of the story.

A strategy that you can use to support children's comprehension at home is using child-friendly definitions the first time they hear a new word. A child-friendly definition uses everyday language to explain new words.

Watch the following video of a teacher stopping throughout a story to clarify some of the more advanced vocabulary that the children might not understand. It's a strategy that you can use at home, too.

Teacher: When he heard the crash, he came dashing down the escalator. What does that word dashing mean?

Children: Going quick.

Teacher: Going quick, you're right, Jamie. And you said walking, but like walking really quick. That's why we named our rabbit outside Dash, because he's really quick. Dashing. She ran all the way up four flights of stairs. That means she went up one, up two, up three, up four. Into her family's apartment, and she went straight into her room. Corduroy blinked. Can you guys blink? Oh, you did. Blink two times. Oh, you're still awake. Good. But you'll be more comfortable with your shoulder strap fastened. What does that word fastened mean?

Children: It means connected.

Teacher: Connected, back on, wow. OK. Yeah, this is fastened, my buttons are--

Speaker: Did you notice that the teacher first asked the children what the words meant? If your child isn't quite right, you can share your own child-friendly definition using everyday language that they can easily understand. In this case, the teacher used the children's responses to create the child-friendly definition. She even went a step further to relate the word to something they had a connection to, like the class bunny outside or the buttons on a shirt.

At home, you can implement this strategy during a read aloud or even through casual conversation. Try using the word again later in a different context or by asking your child to try using the word. Don't underestimate a child's ability to retain new words. With support and practice, children are capable of having an extensive, rich vocabulary.