How Does Language Relate to Reading?

Language is one of the building blocks for reading. Both language and word recognition contribute to reading comprehension.

The many strands woven into skilled reading

- **Language Comprehension**: Background knowledge, vocabulary, language structure, inferential reasoning, literacy knowledge.
- **Word Recognition**: Phonological awareness, decoding: alphabetic principle, spelling-sound correspondence, sight recognition of familiar words.

Skilled Readers: Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.

The early years of a child’s life are a critical time for brain development. Young children develop more than 1 million neural connections every second.

How Does Language relate to reading?

Typical Language Development

- **3 months**: Cooing and gurgling
- **6 months**: Babbling
- **12 months**: First words
- **18 months**: Knows 5 to 40 words
- **2 years**: 150-300 words, 2-3 word sentences
- **3 years**: 900-1,000 words, asks short questions
- **4 years**: 2,000 words, 5+ word sentences
- **5 years**: Identifies letters, creates longer sentences

5 Key Components of Language

1. **Morphology**
   - The component of language concerned with units of meaning within individual words.
   - *Example*: Adding -ing to bark shows that it is happening now -- (barking)

2. **Phonology**
   - The component of language concerned with the units of sound within words.
   - *Example*: The word bark has three sounds (b - ar - k)

3. **Semantics**
   - Refers to the meaning of words and phrases.
   - *Example*: Bark can mean a noise a dog makes or the covering of a tree.

4. **Syntax**
   - Refers to the rules that govern how words and phrases go together to build sentences.
   - *Example*: To describe a bark, the adjective goes before the noun -- (a loud bark)

5. **Pragmatics**
   - Refers to the way language is used to convey meaning in varying contexts.
   - *Example*: Understanding the idiom -- (The man's bark is worse than his bite.)
How to Build Language Skills in the Classroom

Read books aloud and provide students with opportunities to discuss them.

Introduce new vocabulary words and give examples of how they are used in sentences.

Have conversations! Model asking and answering open-ended questions.

Tell stories and make up stories with students.

https://literacy.virginia.edu
@VLP_UVA

Virginia Literacy Partnerships