

# Decoding English: How Spelling and Meaning Shape Reading Success

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# Decoding English

## I. Critical Features of English Vocabulary

- Written language is more complex than oral.
  - English has a very large lexicon.

## II. What an Etymological Language Means for:

- Orthography
  - Morphology
    - Semantics



# I. Critical Features of English Vocabulary

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## Different Labels But the Same Concepts

### English Learners

Example 1: "I'm going to catch a crab today," yelled Sailor Paul. Soon his nets were full and taut, and Paul hauled them up on the deck. "Get away, silly squid," scolded Sailor Paul. "Don't sprawl on my yawl!" (Sailor Paul and the Crab, Paulson, 2009)

Example 2: The children are drawing pictures. Ann draws a green lawn. What's on the lawn? A little deer or a fawn is on the lawn. Ben draws a pile of yellow straw. What is in the straw? A fawn lies in the straw. (Drawing Pictures, Hibert, 2009)

In the United States as we approach a new decade—2020—about 10% of our students enter school speaking native languages other than English (McFarland et al., 2018). English learners (ELs) may not have English labels for concepts, but they do have labels for concepts in their native languages. In the usual materials and approaches of English/Language Arts, ELs are asked to learn to read words for which most young children do not have associated meanings in their native language, such as *lawn* and *yawl* in Example 1. Instructional demands such as those represented by the first excerpted text can intensify the challenge for ELs. Example 2 illustrates a text where students' knowledge of activities (e.g., drawing) and aspects of nature (e.g., animals, growing things) are the foundation for learning new concepts such as *fawn* and *lawn*.

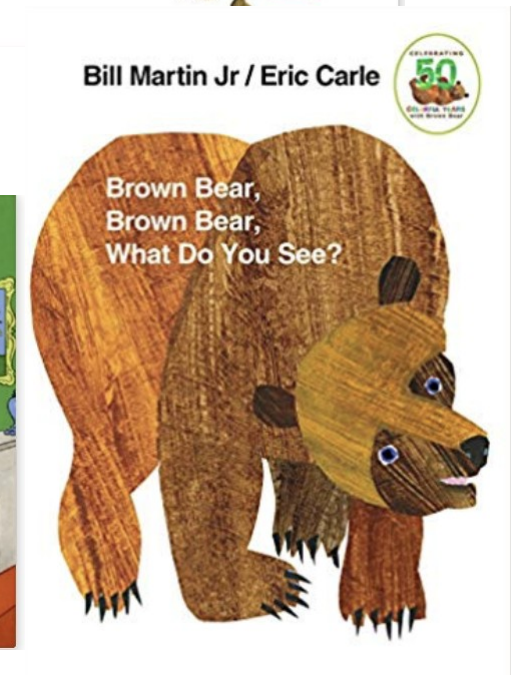
Additionally, evidence points to strengths of ELs, such as their acuity in attending to the sounds of language, which often are not recognized in schools. This chapter develops a perspective in which strengths that ELs bring to language learning are the foundation for the design of learning experiences for those students and in which

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**A. The vocabulary of texts is more complex than the vocabulary of typical conversations.**









B. The size of the English  
vocabulary in writing is....



gargantuan



enormous

humongous



massive

immense



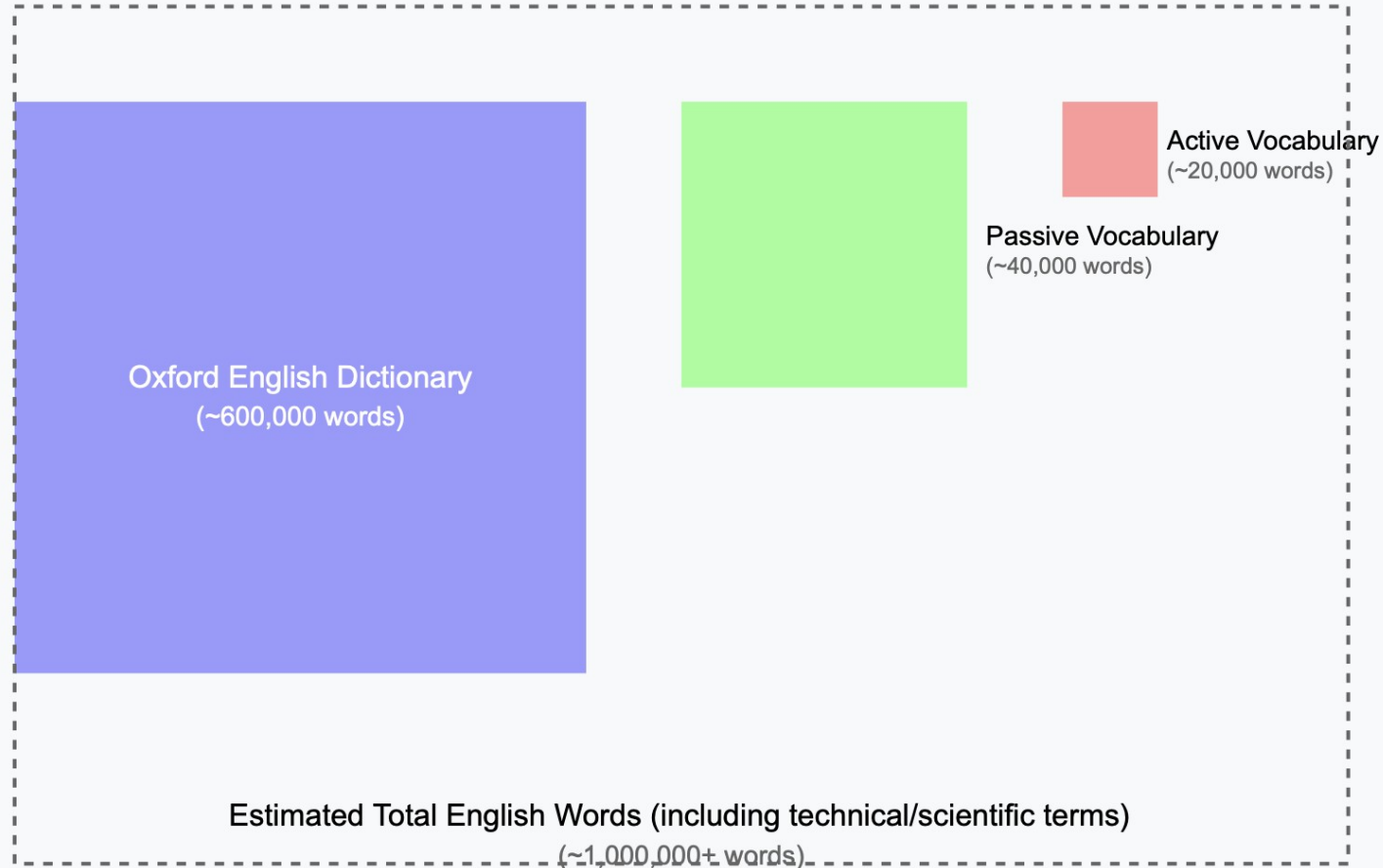
monumental

colossal



## The Scale of English Vocabulary

Each box represents relative size of vocabulary categories



**And this doesn't include multiple meanings of words (e.g.,  
root: 14 meanings (WordNet)  
word: 11 meanings (Word Net)**



**Why the  
complexity  
? English is  
an  
etymologic  
al language**







# The Sources of English Vocabulary





## II. What an Etymological Language Means for:

- Orthography
- Morphology
- Semantics





# Orthography

# Layers of English: Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondences (GPC)

Types of Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondences	Anglo-Saxon	French/Latin	Greek
One to one correspondence	<i>cat, hat, man</i>		
Two adjacent vowels:	<i>meet, team</i>	ie: <i>piece</i> eu: <i>feud</i> ou (each pronounced differently): <i>cough, though, through, bough</i>	eu: <i>euphoria</i>
Final e	<i>bite, hope</i>	<i>serve, dance</i>	
Consonants	gh: <i>rough</i>		ph /f/: <i>philosophy</i>
Unique		eau: <i>bureau</i>	y as a medial vowel: <i>myth</i>

# English is a quasi-orthographic language.

- English words are **always alphabetic** but the patterns, especially of vowels, can vary considerably ( $\approx 106$  patterns).

## **The cat was on the table.**

- The letter 'a' in these words:
  - cat (/æ/ sound)
  - was (/ə/ sound)
  - table (/eɪ/ sound)

## **It was rough when she coughed through the night, even though she had used her inhaler.**

- The 'ough' pattern:
  - through (pronounced /u:/)
  - though (pronounced /oʊ/)
  - rough (pronounced /ʌf/)
  - cough (pronounced /ɒf/)



# Solutions to the complexity: Scientists' recommendation s

- Automatic connections come from substantial interactions with print: “Readers become orthographic experts by absorbing a lot of data, which is one reason why the sheer amount and variety of texts that children read is important...**Major statistical patterns emerge as the child encounters a larger sample of words.**” (Seidenberg, 201, *Language at the speed of sight*, p. 92)

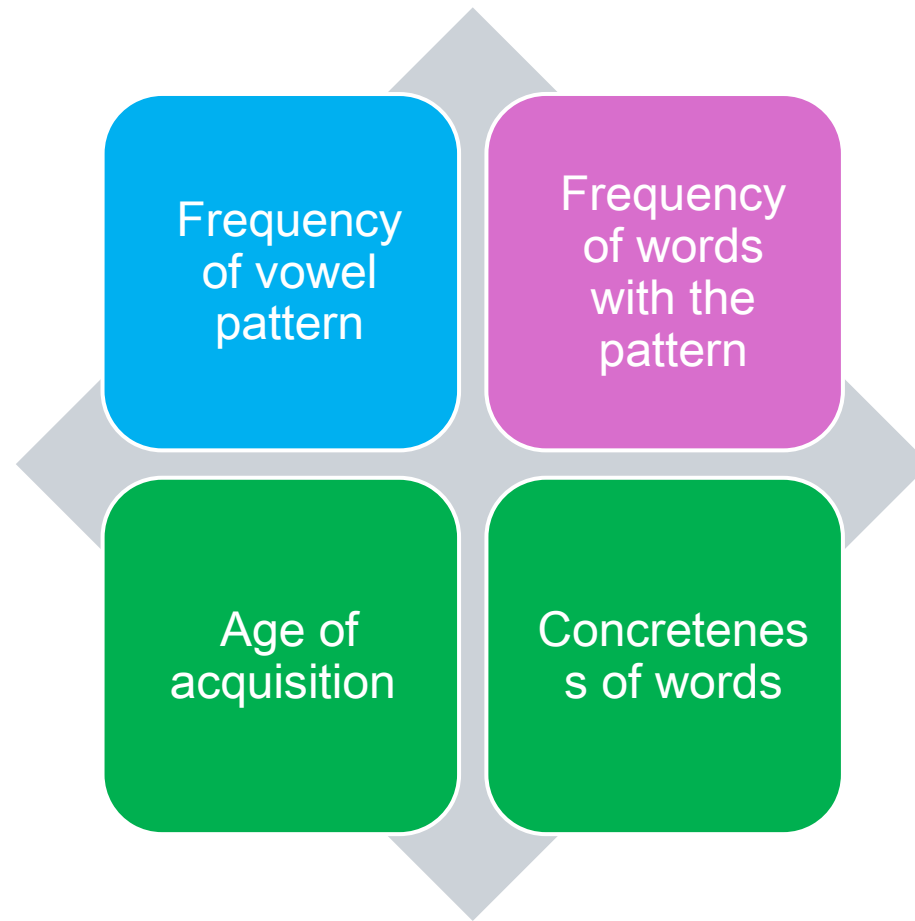
- It follows that **phonics instruction should aim to teach only the most important and regular of letter-to-sound relationships**, because this is the sort of instruction that will most directly lay bare the alphabetic principle. Once the basic relationships have been taught, the best way to get children to refine and extend their knowledge of letter-sound correspondences is through repeated opportunities to read.” (*Becoming a Nation of Readers*, 1985 p. 38)

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# Word Features in Texts That Shape Beginning Reading



Total Appearances  
of Monosyllabic  
Words with  
Phoneme  
**eɪ**

Graphe me	Phoneme	#Total appearances in 1 million words
ai	rain	1267
a + final e	rate	3743
ay	ray	5184
eigh	reign	264
ea	break	905
ey	they	6052
a (open syllable)	ratio	
e	cafe (e at end)	

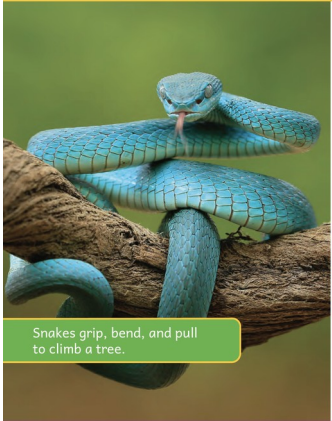


Number of  
Monosyllabic  
Words with  
Phoneme  
**eɪ**

Grapheme	Phoneme (exemplar word)	#Total appearances in 1 million words	#Unique words-- Monosyllabic
ai	rain	1267	26
a + final e	rate	3743	26
ay	ray	5184	24
eigh	reign	264	13
ea	break	905	3
ey	they	6052	5
a (open syllable)	ratio		0
e	cafe (e at end)		0

Number of Monosyllabic Words with Appropriate AoA & Concreteness for Phoneme **eI**

Grapheme	Phoneme	#Unique words-- Monosyllabic	#Total appearances in 1 million words	#words: age of acquisition =6 or less (high concreteness)
ai	rain	26	1267	13 (9)
a + final e	rate	26	3743	14 (7)
ay	ray	24	5184	14 (10)
eigh	reign	13	264	2 (2)
ea	break	3	905	2 (1)
ey	they	5	6052	1 (0)
a (open syllable)	ratio	0		
e	cafe (e at end)	0		



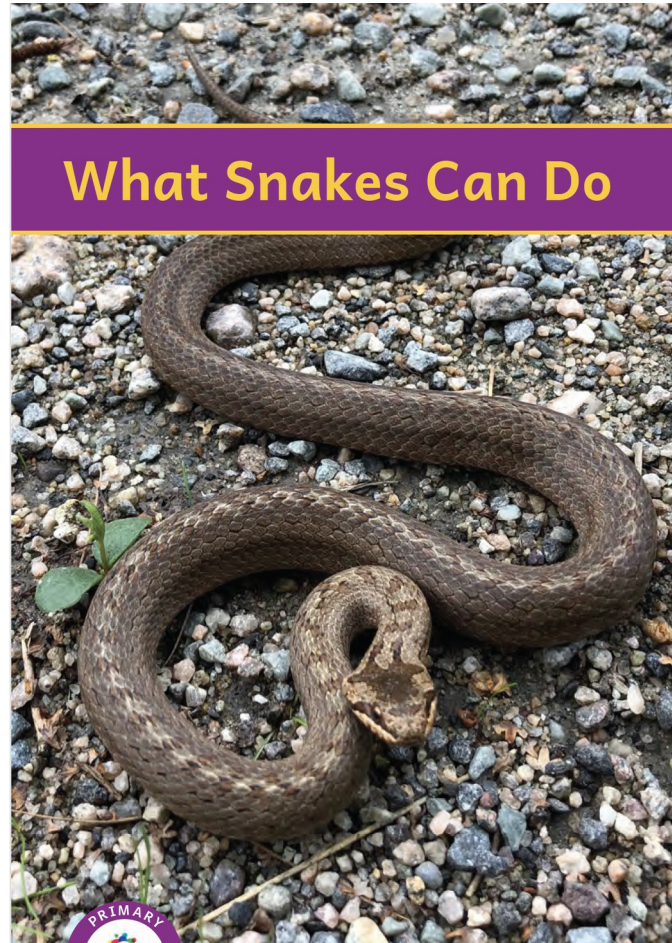
Snakes grip, bend, and pull to climb a tree.

Snakes do not have arms or legs.  
Yet they can do lots of things.  
Some snakes can climb trees.



Most snakes have from 300 to 400 bones.

Snakes look like a long tail with a small head.  
But inside that long tail are many bones.  
Snakes have many more bones in their spines than people do.  
These long spines mean that snakes can move in special ways.



## LEVEL C-6: Snakes | Book 1

written by Elfrieda H. Hiebert & Wendy Svec

# TopicReads- Primary: Open- access @textproject.org

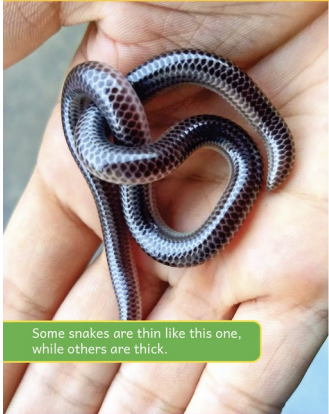


Some snakes dive under water.

Snakes do not have fins, like fish.  
Yet some snakes can swim in the sea.  
Some snakes like to float on the water.

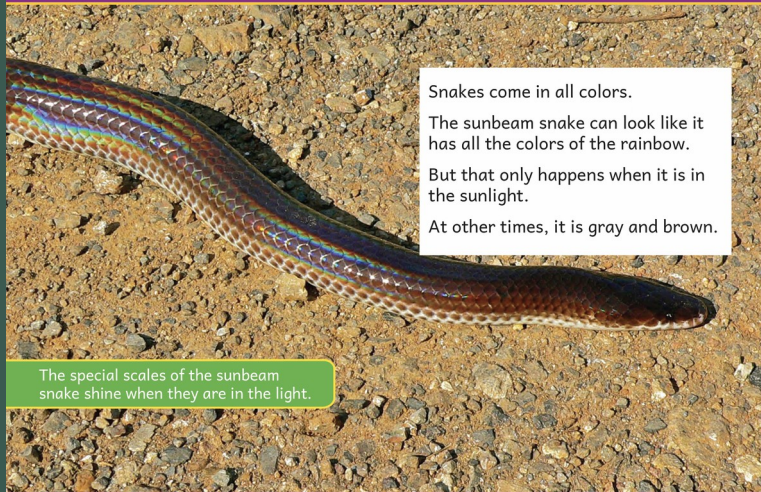






Some snakes are thin like this one, while others are thick.

Snakes come in many sizes. Some snakes are as short as a pen. Other snakes are very long. One snake grows as long as a mini-van.



The special scales of the sunbeam snake shine when they are in the light.

Snakes come in all colors. The sunbeam snake can look like it has all the colors of the rainbow. But that only happens when it is in the sunlight. At other times, it is gray and brown.

# Snake Style



LEVEL C-6: Snakes | Book 2

written by Elfrieda H. Hiebert & Wendy Svec



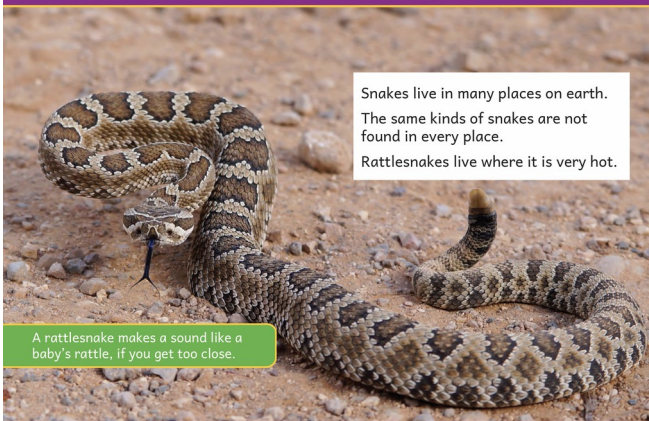
The skin of snakes is covered with scales. The scales of snakes can have different shapes. Some snakes have scales with dots and spots. Others have scales with stripes.





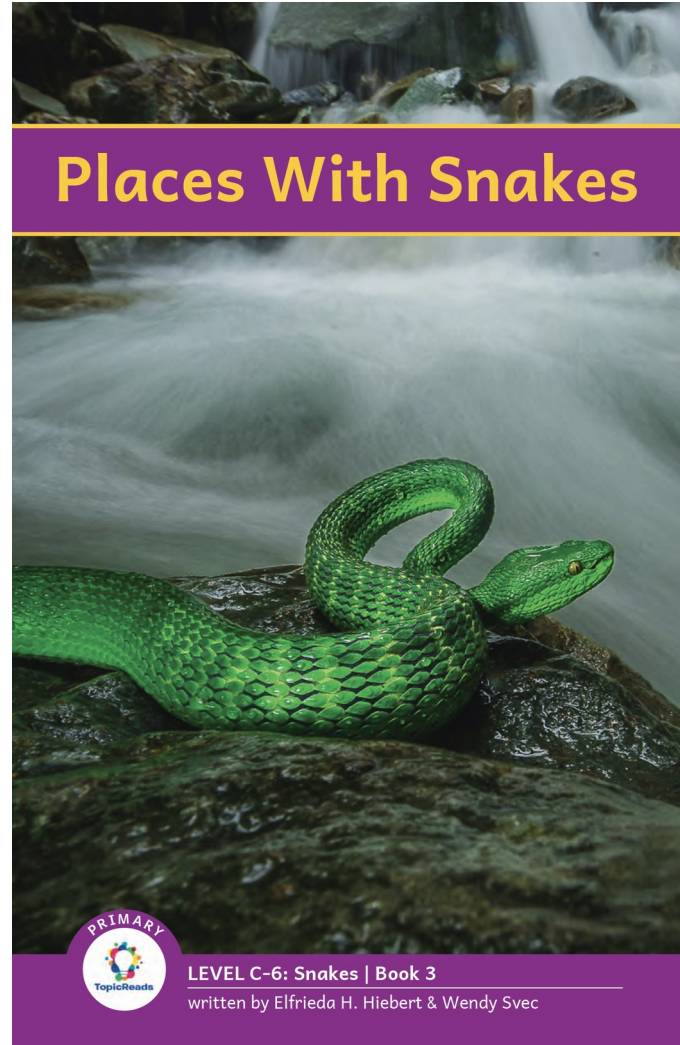
Garter snakes like damp, grassy places.

Garter snakes like places where they can get water.  
Often they live close to streams or ponds.  
But they can also be found in parks and gardens.



A rattlesnake makes a sound like a baby's rattle, if you get too close.

Snakes live in many places on earth.  
The same kinds of snakes are not found in every place.  
Rattlesnakes live where it is very hot.



## Places With Snakes



LEVEL C-6: Snakes | Book 3

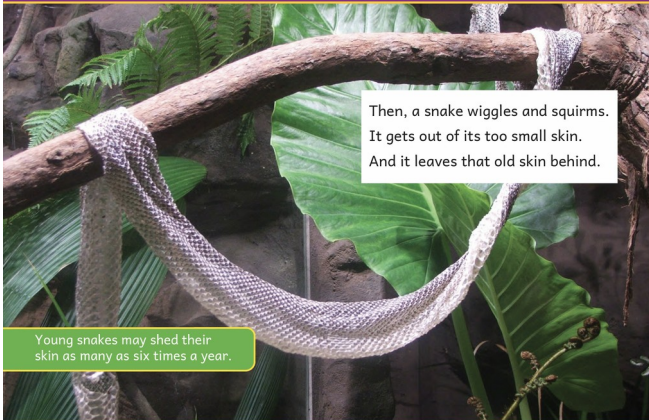
written by Elfrieda H. Hiebert & Wendy Svec



Only a few snakes live where it is very cold.  
Snakes are cold-blooded.  
They need to be in warm places to stay alive.







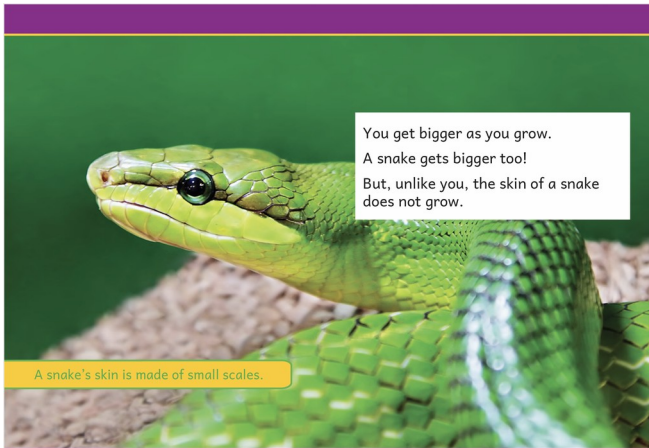
Then, a snake wiggles and squirms.  
It gets out of its too small skin.  
And it leaves that old skin behind.

Young snakes may shed their  
skin as many as six times a year.

5. Level C-6 Book 4, Skin Shedding



6



You get bigger as you grow.  
A snake gets bigger too!  
But, unlike you, the skin of a snake  
does not grow.

A snake's skin is made of small scales.

1. Level C-6 Book 4, Skin Shedding



2

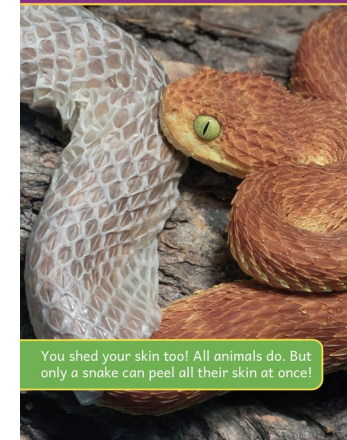


## Skin Shedding



LEVEL C-6: Snakes | Book 4

written by Elfrieda H. Hiebert & Wendy Svec



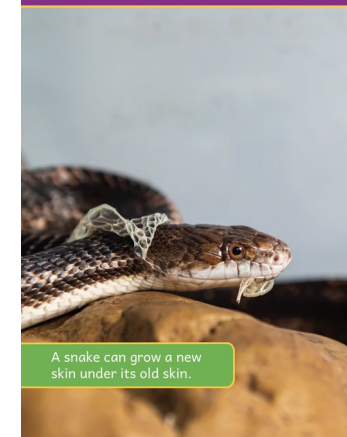
A new skin is under the old skin.  
It has the same colors and shapes.  
But now it fits just right!

You shed your skin too! All animals do. But  
only a snake can peel all their skin at once!

7. Level C-6 Book 4, Skin Shedding



8



So, a snake must shed its skin.  
First, it rubs on a tree or rock.  
This helps the old skin to get loose.

A snake can grow a new  
skin under its old skin.

3. Level C-6 Book 4, Skin Shedding



4

## Stance Toward GPC Coverage in Current Curriculum

- “Intensive intervention program: Approximately 9,000 words of decodable text: **two decodable reading selections/passages per sound-spelling** determined by the instructional sequence of letter-sound correspondences who will need this instruction. Careful attention must be given to this age group for which these decodables are designed to ensure the content is age-appropriate and engaging for students in **grades four through eight.**”
  - California Department of Education Framework for English/Language Arts, 2015)
- “Instruction in Grades K–2 **explicitly teaches the 150 spellings for the 44 sounds of English**, following an intentional progression to ensure student success.”

Amplify CKLA (2024). Developing foundational skills with explicit, systematic instruction. Retrieved from <https://amplify.com/programs/amplify-core-knowledge-language-arts/>

The background is black and features several abstract geometric elements. A large circle with a thin white outline and a thick light green inner border is centered on the left. To its left, two horizontal white zigzag lines extend from the edge. Below the large circle, a small solid light orange circle is positioned. To the right of the large circle, there is a light orange ring with a white outline. Further right, a set of five parallel white diagonal lines is visible. In the bottom right corner, a large, solid light orange circle is partially shown.

# Morphology

# Layers of English: Morphology

Morphological Form	Anglo-Saxon	French/Latin	Greek
Affixes	un- <i>unhappy</i> -ness: <i>happiness</i>	de- <i>deactivate</i> -tion: <i>action</i>	a- <i>atypical</i> ism: <i>capitalism</i>
Inflected endings	<i>walked, walks, walking</i>	<i>alumnus/alumni</i> <i>alga/algae</i>	<i>crisis/crises</i> <i>criterion/criteria</i>
Compounding/ Complex phrases	homework, cowboy	weather patterns* food chain	<i>telephone, microscope</i>

- In German, these concepts are compound words, not complex phrases:  
weather patterns: Wettermuster  
food chain: Nahrungskette

# Start early: Anglo-Saxon morphological forms

## **Inflected endings:**

- stopping
- stopped
- stops

## **Compound Words:**

- stoplight
- stopwatch
- backstop
- doorstep
- stopover
- pitstop
- bus stop
- truck stop
- stop sign

## **Simple affixes:**

- er - teacher, worker
- ful - helpful, beautiful
- ly - quickly, slowly
- y -sunny, rainy
- un- unhappy, unlock
- mis- misuse, misplace





## The Big Red Sign

Sam and Meg were on their way to school. Sam saw the big red sign at the corner.

“STOP!” said Sam. “We need to stop here and look both ways.”

Meg stopped next to Sam. They watched as cars stopped at the sign too.

“The cars are stopping because of the sign,” said Meg.

“Now it's safe,” said Sam. “Let's go!”



ID 249517294 | Kid © Anna Tolipova | Dreamstime.com

## **Tomas, The Helper**

Tomas saw his little brother reaching hopelessly for a toy. His brother was still sleepy and the toy was on a dusty shelf. It was too high for him to reach.

Tomas quickly ran over. “I can be your helper!” he said. His brother was thankful when he got his toy.

Then the two children played happily. Tomas liked being a helpful, older brother.

# French-Latin affixes:

## Limitations of an affix-only instructional approach

### 1. **re-**

- a. Again or repeat:
  - rebuild
  - rewrite
- b. Back or return to a previous state:
  - retreat
  - restore

### 2. **dis-**

- a. Apart/away
  - disconnect
  - disperse
- b. Not/opposite
  - dislike
  - disapprove

### 3. **sub-**

- a. Under/below
  - submarine
  - submerge
- b. Secondary/lesser
  - subplot
  - suboptimal

### 4. **counter-**

- a. Against/opposing
  - counterattack
  - counterpoint
- b. Reciprocal/corresponding
  - counterpart
  - counterbalance

# Creating Morphological Families

**announce**

## **Verb Forms**

announces  
announced  
announcing

## **Noun Forms**

announcer  
announcers  
announcement  
announcements

## **Re- Forms**

reannounce  
reannounced  
reannouncing  
reannouncement

## **Pre- Forms**

preannounce  
preannounced  
preannouncing  
preannouncement

## **Un- Form**

unannounced



# Morphological Family Members

Fill in the blank with the correct word.

Words to choose from:

announced

announcement

announcer

announces

announced

unannounced

1. The baseball \_\_\_\_\_ spoke clearly into the microphone.
2. The principal made an \_\_\_\_\_ about the pizza party.
3. My cousin made an \_\_\_\_\_ visit with her new puppy.
4. The teacher \_\_\_\_\_ the winner of the art contest every Friday.
5. Mom \_\_\_\_\_ that we could get ice cream after dinner.
6. The student is \_\_\_\_\_ the weekly lunch menu over the speakers.



# The World's Greatest Mispronouncer



Jake groaned as the game show announcer butchered his aunt's company name for the third time. “Welcome back to 'Win Big or Go Home!' featuring our amazing sponsor, PURE-zone Air Purifiers!”

“It's PURI-zone!” Jake shouted at the TV. “Like PURIFY and ZONE together! How hard is that?”

The announcer's mispronunciations got wilder as the show went on. “And now, a special deal from PRIME-zone. I mean, PRIZE-zone Air Purifiers!”

Jake couldn't take it anymore. He started recording the mistakes on his phone. The announcer was getting more flustered by the minute: “Visit PRISM-zone's website... sorry, PURPLE-zone...”

By the end of the show, Jake had created a video, which he called “World's Greatest Mispronouncer.” The video went viral overnight.

The next day, the announcer made an announcement: “I hereby announce that I've been pronouncing PURI-zone incorrectly. Though in my defense, I didn't call it PURGE-zone!”

Jake's aunt wasn't mad. In fact, she hired the announcer to make some funny pronunciation videos. Their partnership led to the most successful ad of the year.



## A Voice Against Bullying

Maya couldn't stay quiet any longer. She had seen kids make fun of the new student's lunch every day for a week. On Friday, she stood up in the cafeteria and denounced their behavior.

"I want to announce something," she said, her voice shaking but strong. "The way you're treating Alex is wrong. Making fun of someone's food from their culture is not funny. It's mean and it has to stop."

At first, the cafeteria went silent. Then her best friend Tony stood up. "Maya's right," he announced. "I denounce this bullying too. My dad packs me some weird lunches. I'd feel terrible if people made fun of them."

One by one, other students shared stories about special foods from their families. By the end of lunch, even the kids who had been doing the teasing renounced their mean behavior and apologized to Alex. Sometimes it just takes one person to denounce something wrong to make a real change.

# Greek roots: 5 most-prolific

## 1. **bio-** (meaning life)

- biology, biography, biosphere, biochemistry, biofuel, biodiversity

## 2. **logos/logy-** (meaning study of or speech)

- psychology, biology, theology, geology, anthology, genealogy

## 3. **micro-** (meaning small)

- microscope, microphone, microprocessor, microorganism, microwave, microcosm

## 4. **tele-** (meaning far or distant)

- telephone, television, telescope, teleport, telegram, telepathy

## 5. **auto-** (meaning self)

- automobile, automatic, autobiography, autopilot, autonomous, autoimmune





## Love to Travel? That's Hodophilia

Ever feel super excited when you're going on a trip? There's a special word for people who love to travel - hodophilia! This word comes from two old Greek words: Hodos which means road and philia which means love. When you put them together, hodophilia means loving to travel and being on the road.

People who have hodophilia are called hodophilists. Just like how we add "ist" to make words for people who do something (like artist or scientist), we add ist to hodophilia to describe someone who loves traveling.

Hodophilists are happy when they're taking trips. They love planning trips and get excited just thinking about their next adventure. Do you get excited when your family says "Let's go on a trip?" That's a hodophilist in action!





## Are You Scared of Santa and His Beard?

If seeing a big bushy beard makes you want to run and hide, you might have pogonophobia. This funny-sounding word comes from two Greek roots: pogon means beard and phobia means fear.

Some people get super nervous around beards. It might be Santa Claus's or the beard of an uncle. Whoever it is, pogonophics act in certain ways when they see someone with a big beard. Their hearts beat faster and they just want to go away! It's weird but true. Some people's brains tell them beards are scary. At least now you know what to call it!





## The Time-Eaters

Ever heard of a time-eater? That's what a chronophage is called. It's something that eats up a lot of time in someone's life. This word comes from two Greek roots: *chronos*, which means time and *phage*, which means eater.

Are there any chronophages in your life? Is there a video game that takes up three hours, even when you think you only spent three minutes on it? Does a TikTok scroll gobble up your whole afternoon? Even your little brother asking "why" a million times can be a chronophage!

Funny to think about time being eaten, right? But now you know. Those time-munching activities have a special name!



# Semantics

# Layers of English: Semantics

Anglo-Saxon	French/Latin	Greek
king	regent	monarch
flash	realization	epiphany
wreck	disaster	catastrophe



# Long-standing Approach in Selecting Words to Teach: “Cherry-picking”

slender

gallant

chimed

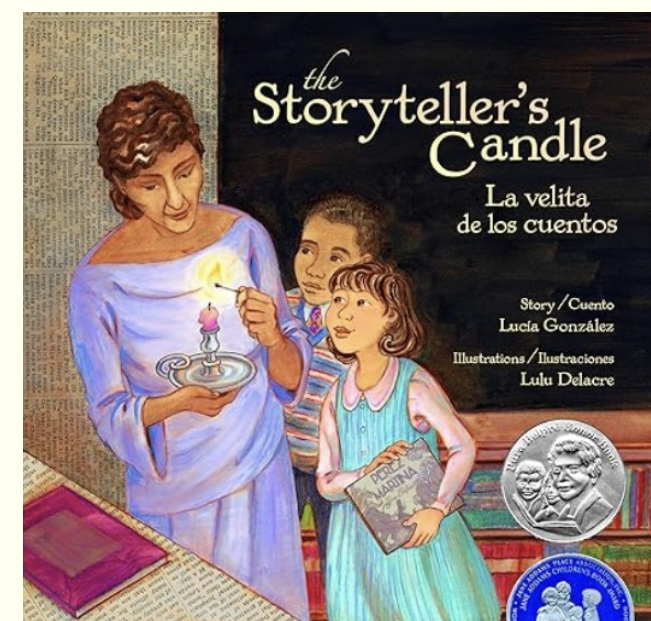
preparations

flickered

concluded



slender  
gallant  
chimed  
preparations  
flickered  
concluded



## Research on the efficacy of “cherry-picking vocabulary”:

- on comprehension (Wright & Cervetti, 2017)
- on vocabulary (beyond taught words) (Cervetti et al. (2023)

# Support from AI: Questions & Specifications

**FH:** I'm a third-grade teacher. Many of my students are not at the level of vocabulary required for strong comprehension. I'm working with a story entitled The Storyteller's Candle. The lesson plan says I should teach: slender, gallant, chimed, preparations, flickered, and concluded.



Can you help me in identifying **which of these words are ones that may be challenging** for students but **are also words that will extend beyond third grade and support their reading in the middle grades and beyond:** announcement, parade, chimed, characters, costumes, applause, gallant, fiesta, preparations, event, rehearsed, donations, celebrated, decorations. **I also want to help my students' background knowledge on the topic of what is part of a performance like a play and a cultural event.**

Let me help analyze these words from multiple angles - their long-term academic value, their role in building knowledge about performances, and their importance to the story itself.

First, let's look at the publisher's selected words:

- "slender" - Limited academic utility, mainly descriptive
- "gallant" - Literary word but limited modern use
- "chimed" - Specific to sound, limited academic use
- "preparations" - ✓ HIGH VALUE - used across subjects and contexts
- "flickered" - Specific to light/movement, limited academic use
- "concluded" - ✓ HIGH VALUE - important for academic writing and reading

Now, from your additional words, here are the most valuable ones for long-term academic success:

1. "announcement" - ✓ HIGH VALUE - formal communication across contexts
2. "event" - ✓ HIGH VALUE - used across all subjects
3. "preparations" - ✓ HIGH VALUE (overlaps with publisher list)
4. "celebrated" - ✓ HIGH VALUE - cultural and historical contexts
5. "donations" - ✓ HIGH VALUE - civic and social studies contexts

For building knowledge about performances, these words form a crucial conceptual cluster:

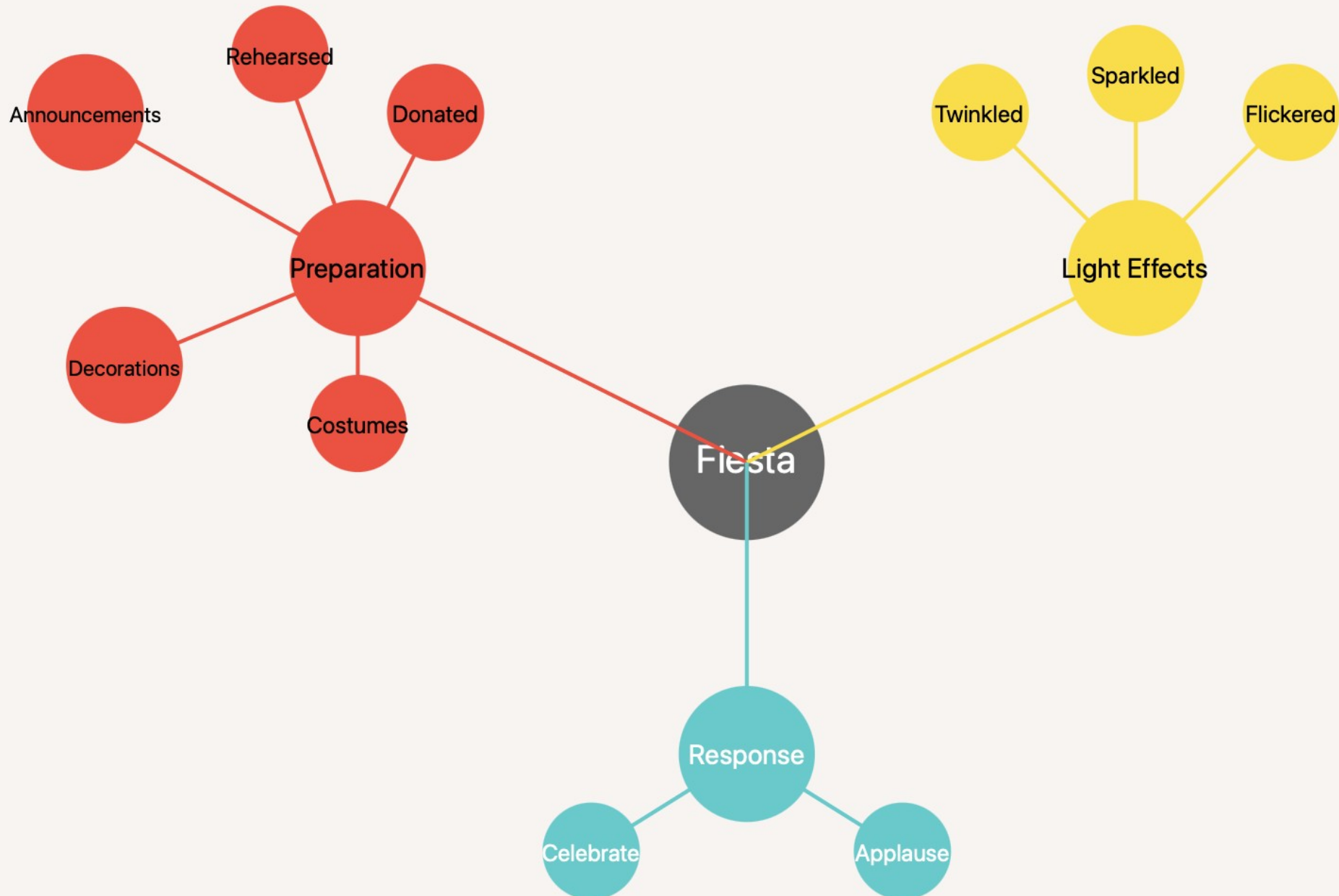
1. "rehearsed" - Understanding performance preparation
2. "characters" - Understanding story elements and roles
3. "costumes" - Understanding visual representation
4. "applause" - Understanding audience participation
5. "decorations" - Understanding setting creation



Cultural celebration vocabulary that builds background knowledge:

1. "fiesta" - Understanding cultural celebrations
2. "celebrated" - Understanding commemoration
3. "event" - Understanding organized gatherings

# AI's Graphic Representation of the Vocabulary



**FH** Now can you make a semantic grid for words in the semantic family of the word announce. I want 7 words, 3 of which are ones that struggling third-grade readers can read.

shout\*

proclaim

broadcast

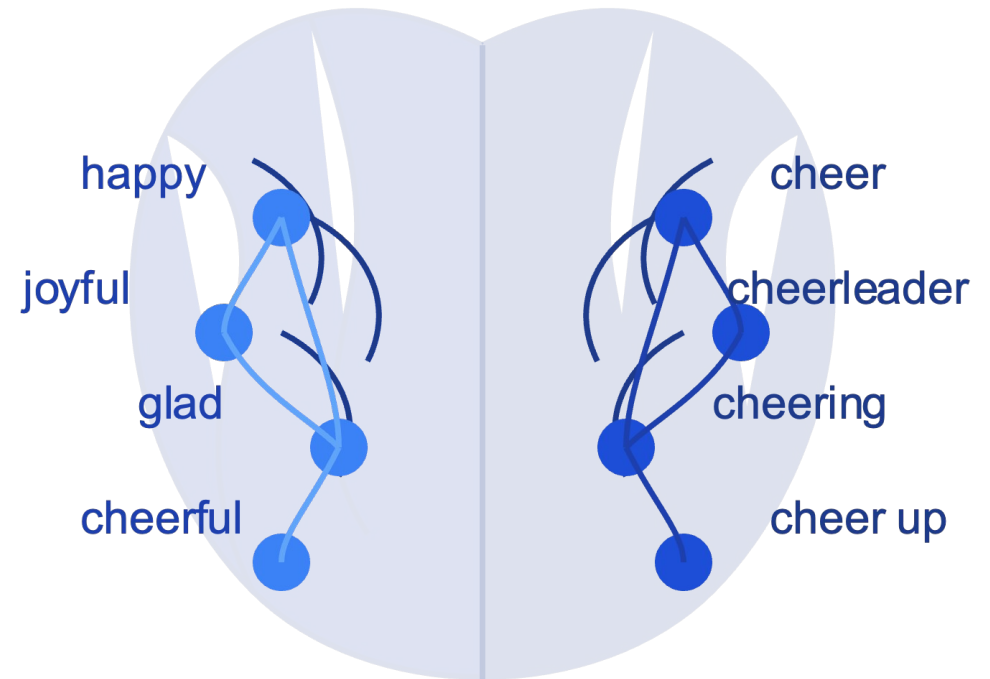
announce

notify

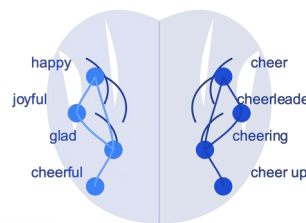
tell\*

say\*

# My Neural Neighborhood s







# My Neural Neighborhood: *The Storyteller's Candle*

## broadcast

### Verb Forms

broadcasts  
broadcasted  
broadcasting

### Noun Forms

broadcaster  
broadcasters  
broadcast  
broadcasts

### Re- Forms

rebroadcast  
rebroadcasts  
rebroadcasted  
rebroadcasting

shout\*

proclaim

broadcast

announce

notify

tell\*

say\*

## proclaim

### Verb Forms

proclaims  
proclaimed  
proclaiming

### Noun Forms

proclaimer  
proclaimers  
proclamation  
proclamations

### Ex- Forms

exclaim  
exclaimed  
exclaiming  
exclamation  
exclamations

## announce

### Verb Forms

announces  
announced  
announcing

### Noun Forms

announcer  
announcers  
announcement  
announcements

### Re- Forms

reannounce  
reannounced  
reannouncing  
reannouncement

### Pre- Forms

preannounce  
preannounced  
preannouncing  
preannouncement

### Un- Form

unannounced

## notify

### Verb Forms

notifies  
notified  
notifying

### Noun Forms

notifier  
notifiers  
notification  
notifications

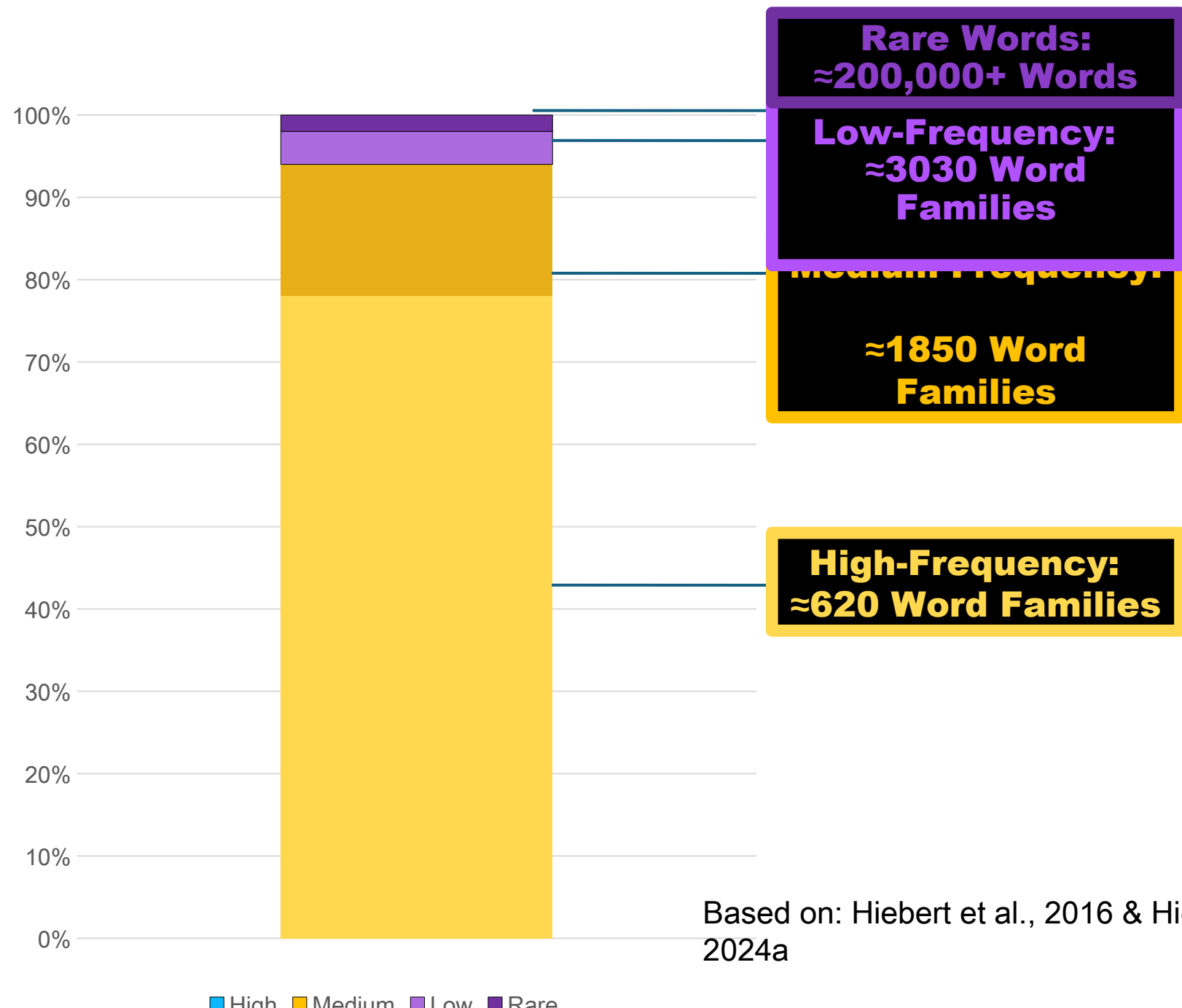
### Pre- Forms

prenotify  
prenotified  
prenotifying  
prenotification

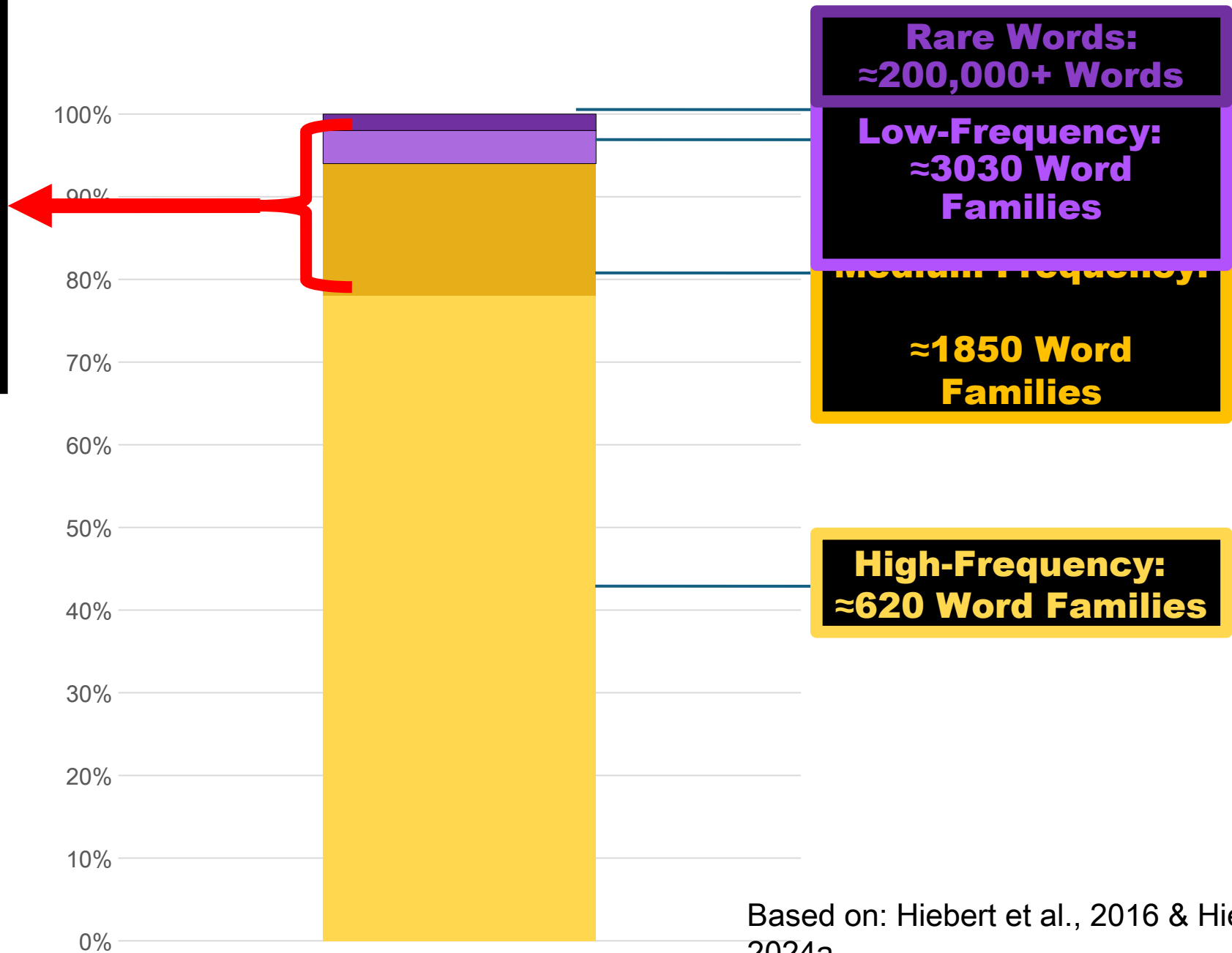


# Semantics & Concrete Words

# Distribution of English Lexicon



**Identifying  
concrete  
words in  
these zones**



Based on: Hiebert et al., 2016 & Hiebert, 2024a

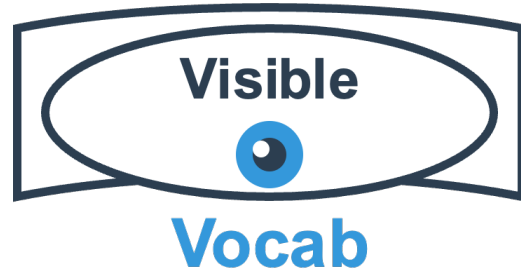
High Medium Low Rare



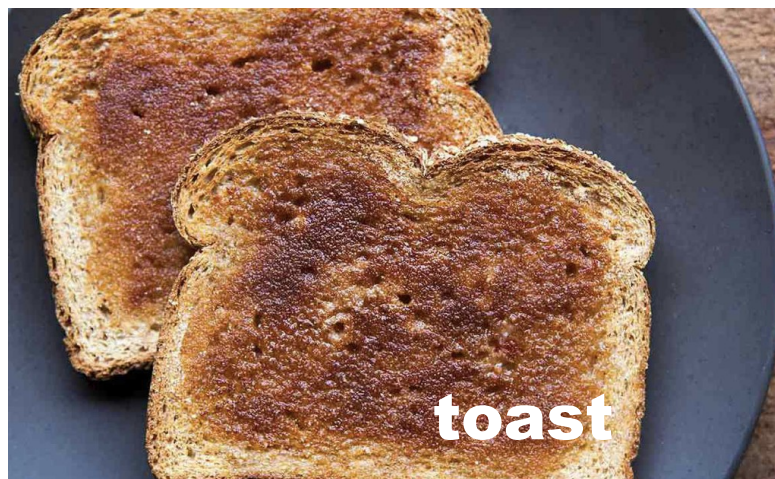
Word	Concreteness
apprentice	3.67
sentry	4.04
reverend	4.14
bishop	4.21
tenant	4.55
museum	4.6
dock	4.64
cellar	4.68
muffin	4.78
dough	4.79
loaf	4.79
cottage	4.85
buns	4.88
biscuits	4.9
toast	4.93

Word	Age of Acquisi
biscuits	4.63
toast	4.67
muffin	5.11
buns	5.79
dough	6.63
loaf	6.84
dock	8.22
cottage	8.5
museum	8.55
cellar	8.94
tenant	10.33
bishop	10.5
apprentice	10.58
sentry	11.12
reverend	12.11

Grade 1



## Things We Make With Dough







Raul\_Mellado | iStockphoto

When we bake dough, it can turn into lots of yummy things to eat!

We can make a big loaf of bread. The loaf is crusty on the outside but soft inside.

When we slice bread and cook it again, it turns into crunchy toast.

4

# What Can We Make With Dough?



Wedig and Laxton | iStockphoto

We can pat dough flat to make biscuits. Biscuits are good with butter or jam.

Isn't it amazing that all these yummy things start with dough?

8



LightFieldStudios | iStockphoto

Dough is special!

It is soft and squishy like play-dough, but we can eat it after we bake it.

To make dough, we mix flour and water together.

Sometimes we add eggs and milk too.

2



Strelcius Dumitru | iStockphoto

We can roll dough into round buns.

Buns are just right for hamburgers.

Dough can become puffy muffins.

Muffins are sweet and good for snacks

6



Grade 5



Vocab

Structures &  
Buildings





Museum: A museum is a place where we keep important things for everyone to see. Think of it like a giant show-and-tell. Some museums are big and some are small but each one shares special things. One museum might let us learn about space and stars, while another might have things from long ago in your town.

When you go to a museum, you can walk around and study items. Sometimes items are behind glass to keep them safe. Museums are like treasure houses that help us learn about our world.





**Cottage:** A cottage is a special kind of small house that looks like it came from a storybook. Cottages were first built some time ago in England for people who worked on farms and in villages.

Not every small house is a cottage. Today, we call a house a cottage when it has a certain cozy look: tiny windows, steep roofs, and small wooden doors. Many cottages sit near lakes or in the woods, where people can enjoy nature. Outside, cottages often have beautiful gardens full of colorful flowers and winding paths.



A cottage is a special kind of small house that looks like it came from a storybook. Cottages were first built some time ago in England for people who worked on farms and in villages.





**Cellar:** A cellar is a small room under a house, dug into the ground. To get into a cellar, you might have to go down steep stairs or even through a trap door. A trap door is in the floor and needs to be lifted up. Cellars usually have dirt or stone floors. People use them to keep food cool and store things like canned food.

A basement is different than a cellar. Basements have regular stairs inside the house, not steep ones. They have smooth concrete floors and nice walls. People often make rooms in basements where they can play games or watch TV. Both cellars and basements can stay cool when it is hot outside because they're underground.







**Dock:** A dock is like a path made of wood that goes out over the water. People sometimes fish from docks. Others might dive from the end of a dock into the deep water on hot summer days.

Boats need to be tied to a dock so that they do not float away. Some docks are small, just big enough for one boat. Other docks are much bigger and hold lots of boats.

The biggest docks of all are called piers.” Piers are where cargo ships stop to unload their goods. These giant ships are so heavy that their piers are made of concrete and steel instead of the wood of a dock.

Grade 8

**Visible**



**Vocab**

Roles of People





**Sentry:** A sentry is a guard who keeps watch to keep people safe. In the old days, sentries would stand on castle walls or at army camps, looking for danger.

Ceremonial sentries are guards who carry out special duties that honor tradition, such as the Guard at Buckingham Palace in London.

Today, we usually call sentries guards. There are guards in places like banks and government buildings.

Some sentries walk around checking doors and windows. Others sit in rooms full of screens, watching security cameras. Their job is as important now as it was hundreds of years ago.







**Tenant**: A tenant is someone who pays to live in a home they don't own. The person who owns the building is called a landlord. The tenant gives the landlord money to live there. Tenants might live in an apartment building or they might rent a whole house. Tenants have to follow the landlord's rules, like keeping the place clean and quiet. Most tenants sign a paper called a lease that says how long they can stay and how much they'll pay.





**Apprentice:** An apprentice learns a job by working alongside someone with more experience. Many apprentices work in trades like carpentry, where an experienced carpenter teaches the apprentice how to build things. The person teaching an apprentice is often called a master or mentor. Being an apprentice means doing real work while you learn. Some apprentices get paid while they learn, which makes being an apprentice different from being a regular student.





**Reverend:** A reverend is a religious leader who guides a community of people who share the same faith. You might hear people call their reverend "Pastor" instead, but both titles mean the same thing. A reverend leads church services, performs weddings and funerals, and helps people during hard times. Many people spend years studying before they can become a reverend.

# Decoding English

## I. Critical Features of English Vocabulary

- Written language is more complex than oral.
  - English has a very large lexicon.

## II. What an Etymological Language Means for:

- Orthography
  - Morphology
    - Semantics

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**Sincerest thank you for  
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