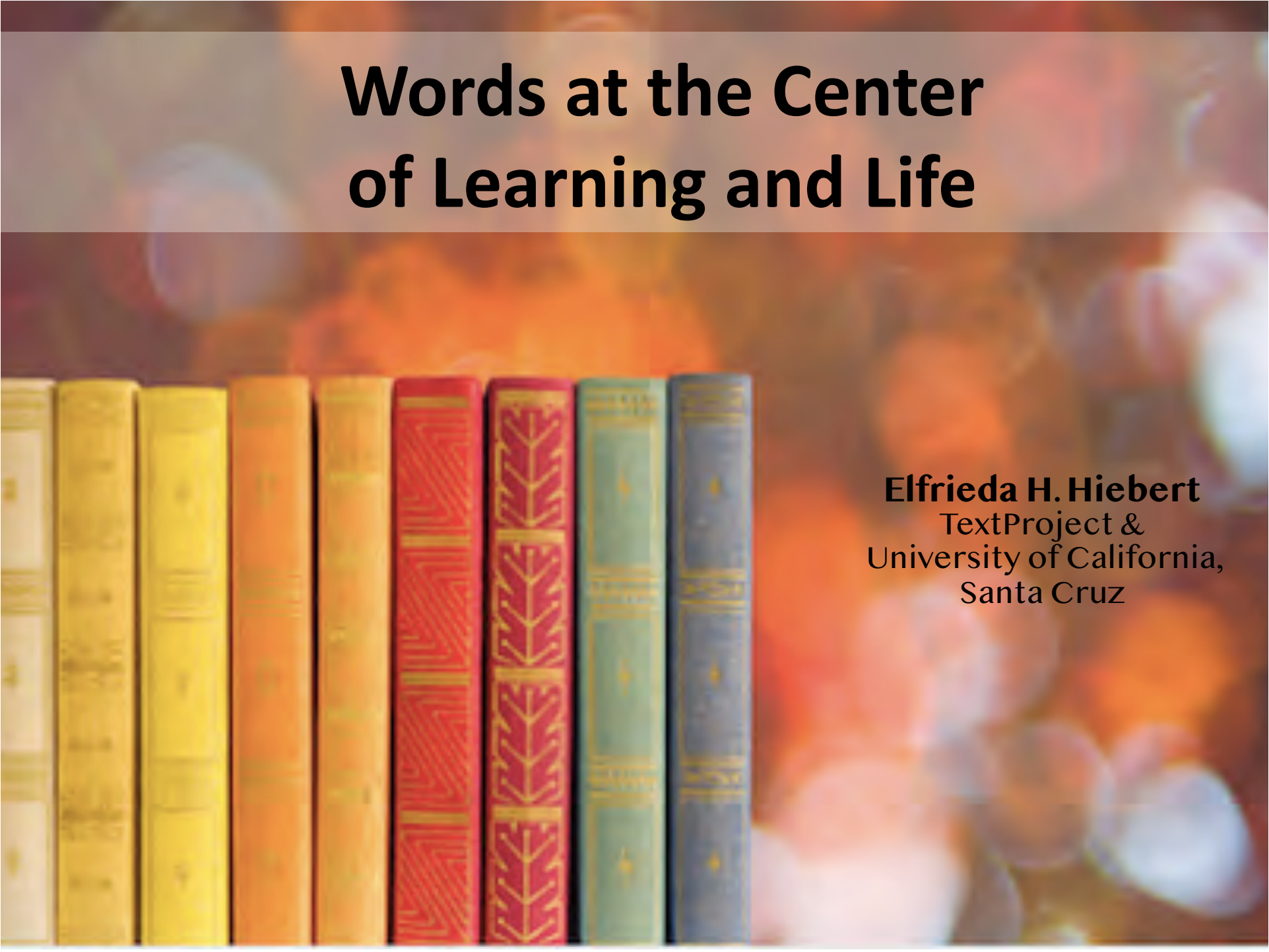


Words at the Center of Learning and Life



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University of California,
Santa Cruz

Knowledge in the Digital Age

1986



2007

2019





Discussion #1:

1. How many words do you estimate are taught in English/Language Arts instruction in a year?
2. What percent of the English vocabulary is this?



Idea 1: You can't teach all English words but you can teach students about the underlying systems.

ENGLISH HAS THREE DISTINCT MORPHOLOGICAL SYSTEMS.





SMALL CHANGE 1: Have explicit conversations about rare vocabulary in ALL texts



Conversations about New Words in New Texts

Why?

- Develop the understanding that every complex text has new, challenging vocabulary. Vocabulary instruction gives students the means for figuring out new words in text, not instruction in every single word that might appear in new texts.

When?

- Talks about the vocabulary of new texts need to occur across a school year (with extra doses prior to assessment periods).

How?

- Demonstrate the nature of vocabulary with texts.

When 10-year old Amelia Mary Earhart saw her first plane at a state fair, she was not impressed. “It was a thing of rusty wire and wood and looked not at all interesting,” she said. It wasn’t until Earhart attended a stunt flying exhibition, almost a decade later, that she became seriously interested in aviation.

Idea	Action	Open-Access Resource
1. English has more words than can be taught.	1. Teach students to expect new words in texts.	1. Talking Points for Teachers: New Words in New Texts
2. A small group of words does the heavy lifting in English.	2. Increase volume of reading	2. •FYI for Kids •ReadWorks.org
3. Rare words in narrative texts belong to synonym networks; those in informational texts in topic networks.	3. Teach students prolific synonym networks & organize topics into networks.	3. •Super Synonym Sets for Stories (S4) •Exceptional Expressions in Everyday Events (E4)

DISCUSSION 2

1. What percentage of the vocabulary is the same across end-of-year texts on assessments for Grades 3, 4, 5, and 6?

NY—Grade 3

“Come on, shark, fly!” Stella said as she tossed the kite into a little puff of wind. For a moment, the shark looked as if it was swimming up into the sky. Then, it dove back toward the grass, teeth and all. Maybe it’s too heavy,” said Robby. He tugged lightly on the string of his paper plate, which dipped gently in the air.

It’s not heavier than that one, said Stella. She pointed at an enormous monster truck kite gliding past Robby’s paper plate. The monster truck had big black wings. “I bet that kite weighs more than you do, Robby,” said Stella.

NY–Grade 4

No sooner do we sit than the lights dim, and a spotlight shines on the white wall in front of us. An enormous photograph fills up the light on the wall and starts to move.

It moves faster. When a train moves past open fields, mountains, and lakes, I **gasp**. I can almost feel the wind on my face as the train rushes by. There are **comedy skits** with famous folks from telling jokes, slipping on **banana** skins, and singing funny songs. I watch dance pictures, and one about the American Revolution with people dressed in **costumes**. I'm **dizzy**, wide-eyed and breathless, watching it all.

NY—Grade 5

Finally, they tired of it and ran off past Mrs. Majeska. She looked down at the sorry thing they had been kicking. It was another black glove, of the same size and shape as the one she had rescued. She examined it, yes, it was the mate to the other! Mrs. Majeska hesitated, then continued walking. It was only a glove, after all, not a child or a kitten or a wallet. Suddenly she stopped, turned around, and walked back to the crumpled bit of cloth. She picked it up, shook it out, brushed off the dirt. It looked almost as good as new.

NY—Grade 6

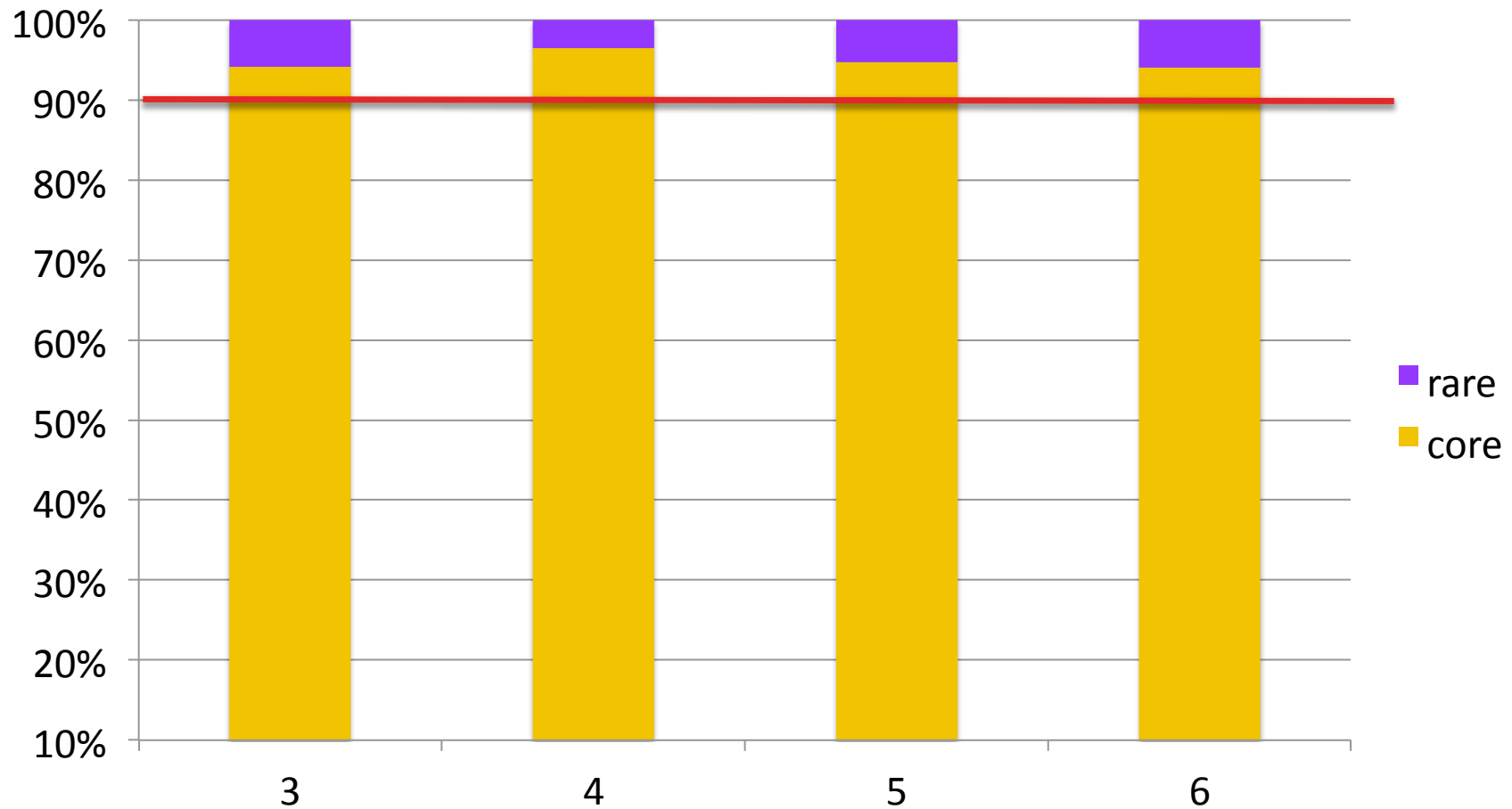
"How 'bout some fishing, Paige?" my grandpa asked. "Your two brothers are raring to go."

This is what I'd been dreading. "I don't know, Grandpa. It's pretty hot out."

"It's never too hot to fish. I brought the boat and everything. It's all hitched up behind the RV. I know how much you love riding in the boat

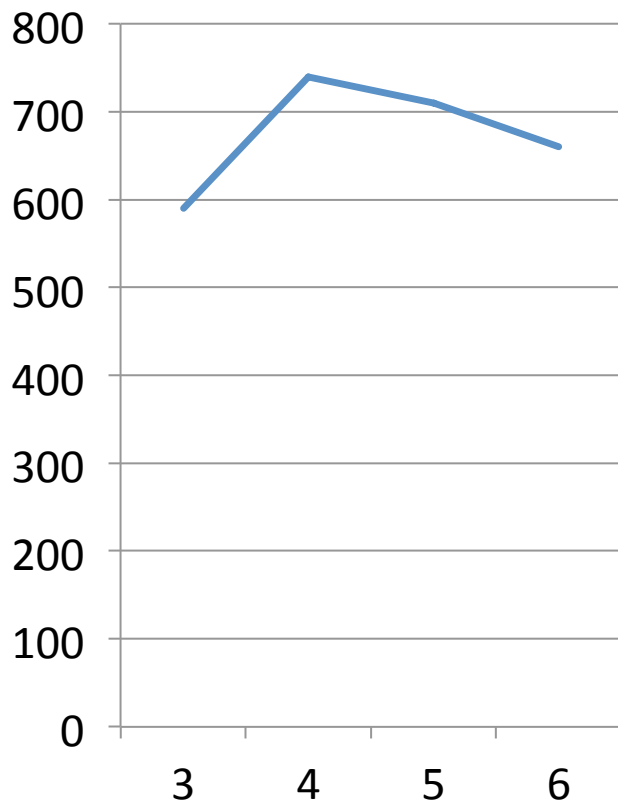
He was wrong. I hated that boat. I liked riding in boats when they were going fast. I liked riding in boats that I could water-ski behind. I'd even settle for tubing if skiing wasn't an option. But fishing boats hardly even moved.

Word Patterns in Texts

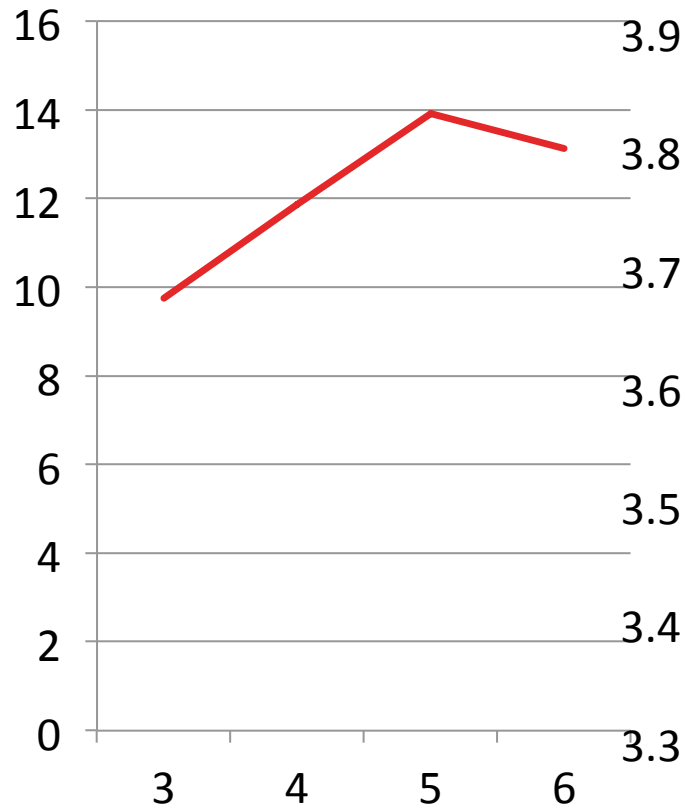


Lexiles of Texts

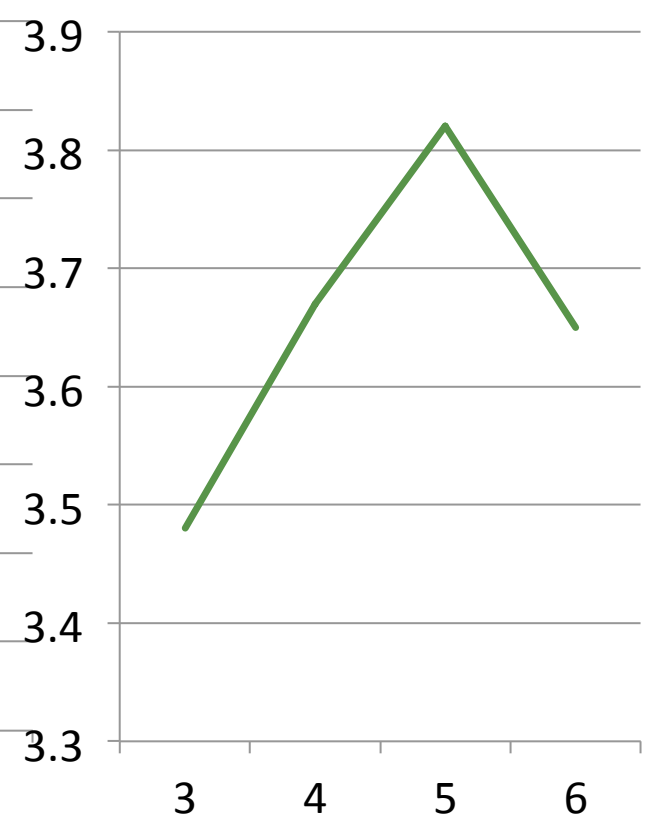
Lexile



Sentence Length



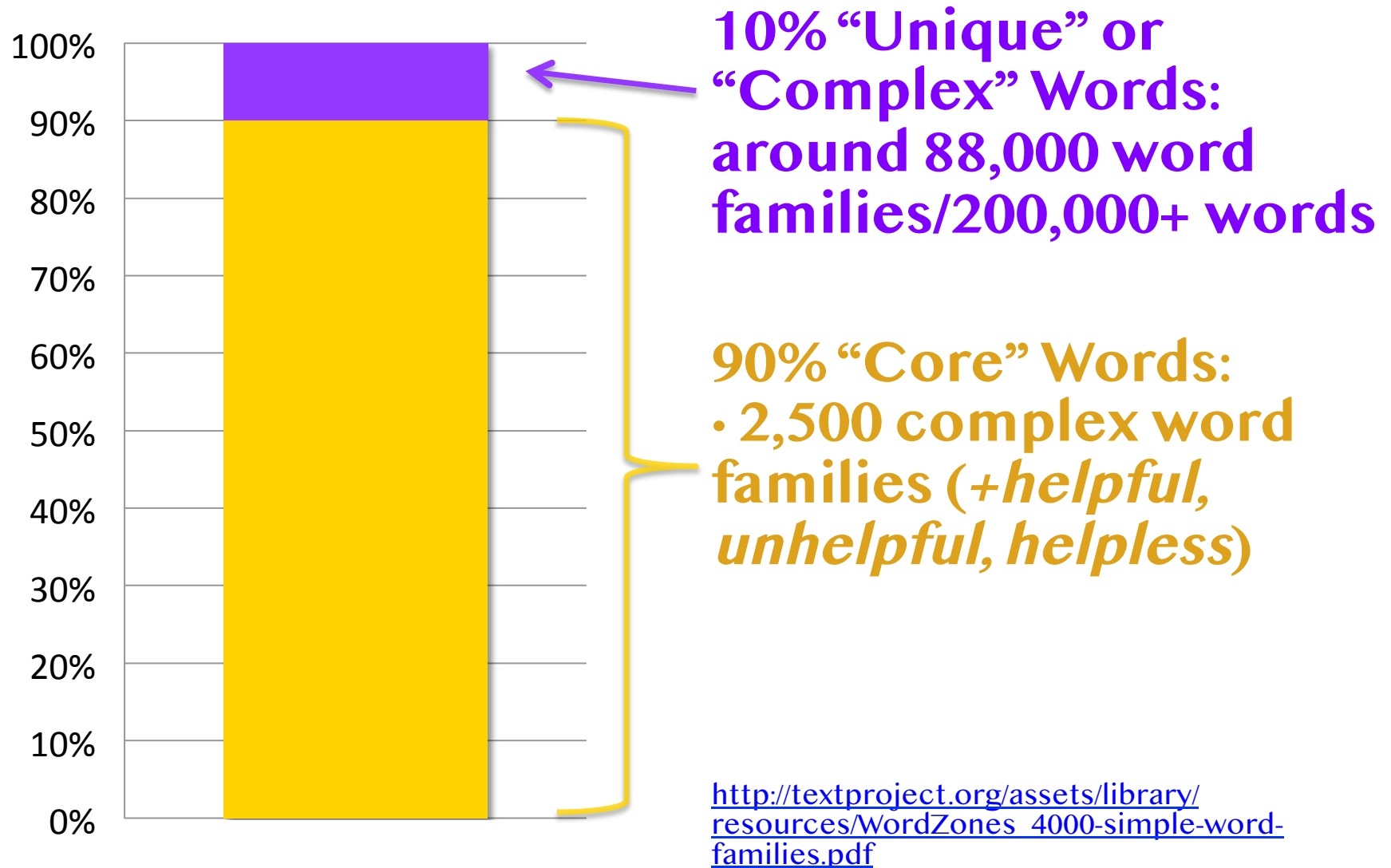
Vocabulary



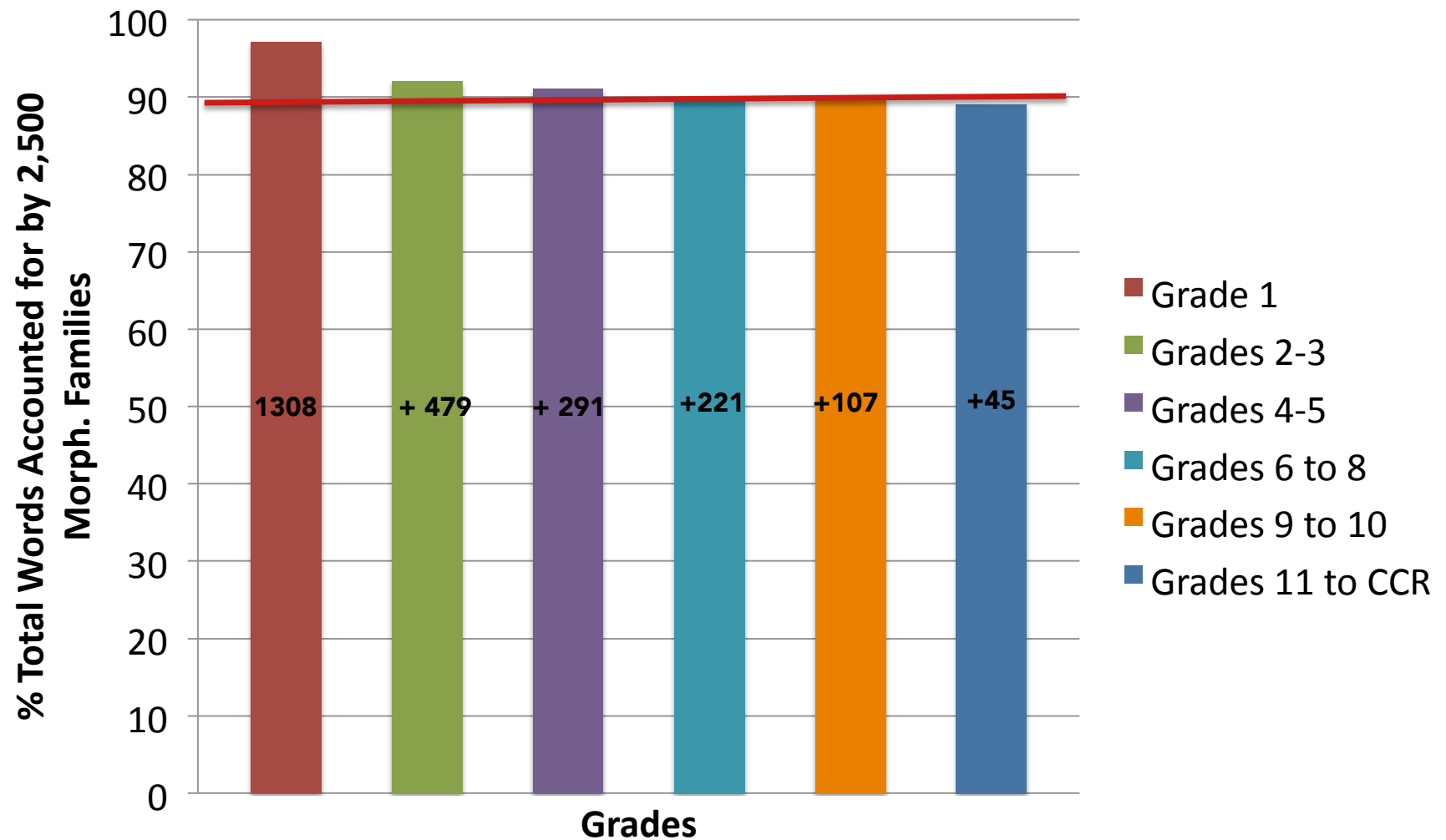


Idea 2: A small group of words does the heavy lifting in English.

The distribution of words in written English

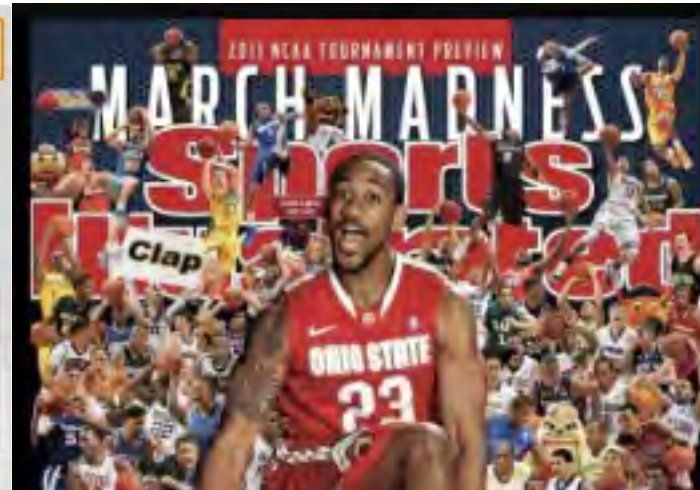


Analysis of a Million Word Corpus (Exemplars from Common Core State Standards)



Examples of the Words in the Core Vocabulary

	words
1st 100	the, by, no, through, must
101-300	long, great, put, last, family
301-1,000	power, north, story, strong, answer
1,001-1,500	valley, imagine, motion, nearby, importance
1,501-2,000	character, responsible, design, presence, trail
2001-2,500	mixture, discovery, civilization, attitude, assume



Way to increase reading?
Engage students in articles



**Readworks.org has
approximately 3,500 free
passages for Grades 1-High
School—including 450
curated sets of articles in the
Read-an-Article-a-Day
initiative**



Clouds and Rain

ARTICLE-A-DAY SET

Earth & Space Science

1st Articles range from 220L to 790L Informational



Animals from Different Places

ARTICLE-A-DAY SET

Sports, Health & Safety, Life Science, Earth & Space Science

1st Articles range from 300L to 540L Informational



Jobs and Careers

ARTICLE-A-DAY SET

Geography & Societies, Sports, Health & Safety, School & Family Life, Arts & Culture, Technology & Engineering

2nd Articles range from 270L to 650L Informational



Health and Body

ARTICLE-A-DAY SET

Sports, Health & Safety, School & Family Life, Life Science

2nd Articles range from 480L to 710L Informational

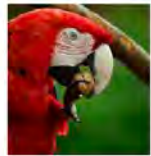


Animal Senses, Safety, and Homes

ARTICLE-A-DAY SET

Geography & Societies, Life Science

2nd Articles range from 500L to 630L Informational



Exploring Continents

ARTICLE-A-DAY SET

World History, Geography & Societies, Life Science, Earth & Space Science

2nd Articles range from 530L to 710L Informational



Inventions

ARTICLE-A-DAY SET

Winter Season, Technology & Engineering

1st Articles range from 250L to 570L Informational



Amphibians and Reptiles

ARTICLE-A-DAY SET

U.S. History, Geography & Societies, Life Science, Earth & Space Science

2nd Articles range from 430L to 760L Informational

The Article-a-Day Initiative: Sets of articles for a week around a topic; articles cover a range of complexity levels

Illustration: Article-a-Day

Dances around the World

ARTICLE-A-DAY SET

[Articles](#)

Book of Knowledge

[China's Lion Dance](#)

Hawaii's Traditional Hula Dance

The Argentine Tango

India's Classical Dance: Bharatanatyam

The Traditional Irish Step Dance

Gumboot Dance from South Africa

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3. Rare words in narrative texts belong to synonym networks; those in informational texts in topic networks.	3. Teach students prolific synonym networks & organize topics into networks.	3. •Super Synonym Sets for Stories (S4) •Exceptional Expressions in Everyday Events (E4)

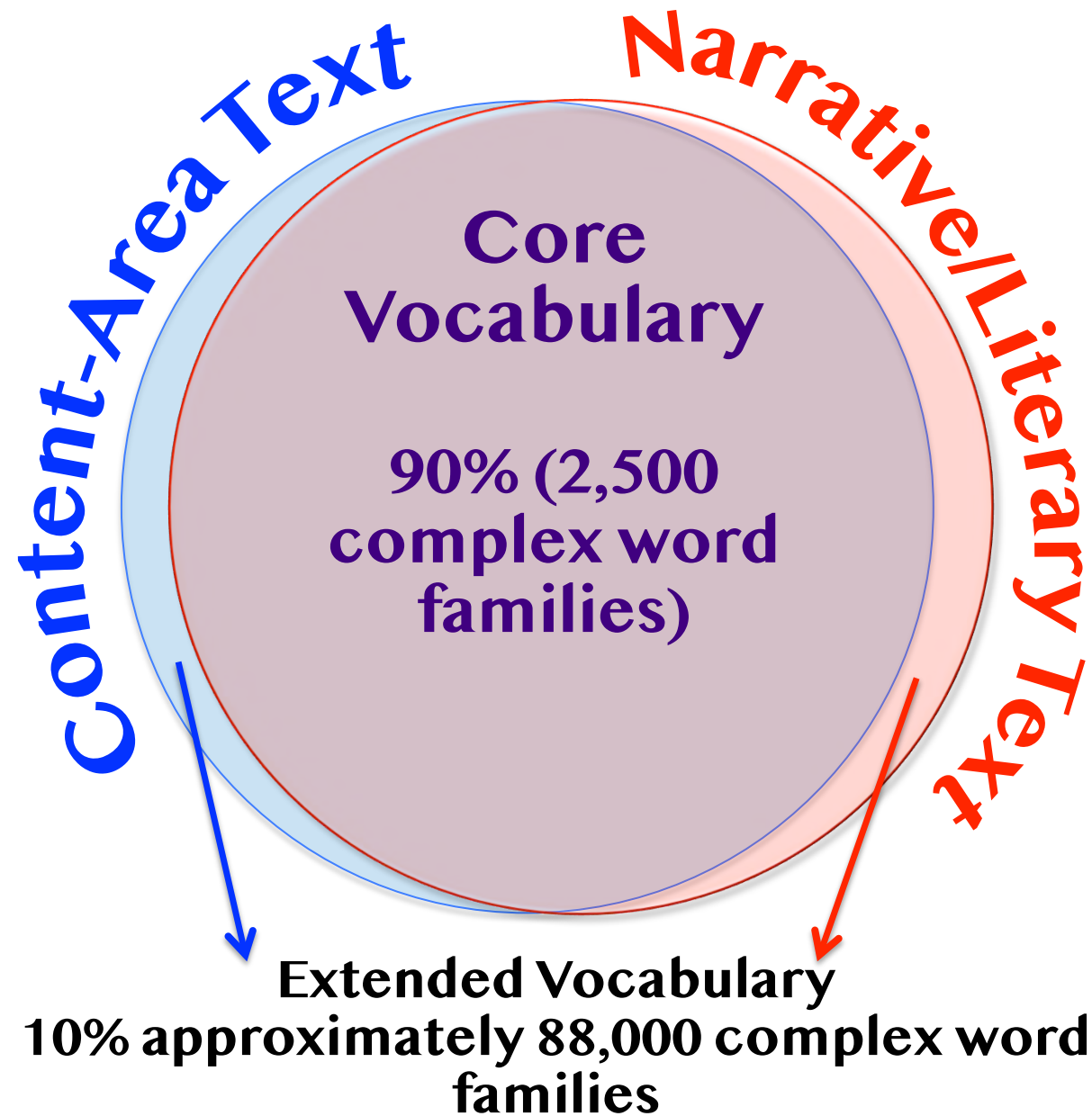
Discussion 3

- 1. What form does rare vocabulary take in narrative texts? In expository texts?



**Idea 3: Rare words are part
of networks**

The Other 10%: Rare Words in Writing



Narrative Text

Even with eyes protected by the green spectacles, Dorothy and her friends were at first dazzled by the brilliancy of the wonderful City. The streets were lined with beautiful houses all built of green marble and studded everywhere with sparkling emeralds. They walked over a pavement of the same green marble, and where the blocks were joined together were rows of emeralds, set closely, and glittering in the brightness of the sun. The window panes were of green glass; even the sky above the City had a green tint, and the rays of the sun were green.

From *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* Frank Baum)

(a)
**Networks in
narratives
are
synonyms
related to
story
elements.**

Story Word	Other Possibilities
dazzled	hypnotized awed
brilliancy	effulgence luminosity
glittering	shimmering radiance

A close-up photograph of a young child's face, focusing on the eyes and nose. The child has light blonde hair and blue eyes. The background is softly blurred, showing hints of a blue garment and a warm, yellowish light source. A semi-transparent yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the upper portion of the image, containing the title text in blue.

Small Change 3a: Teach Prolific Synonym Networks



Synonym Networks in Narrative Texts

Prolific Groups of Synonyms

Communication /Internal Processes (verbs)	Emotions (adjectives)	Movement (verbs)	Traits (adjectives)
think	happy	go	funny
argue	sad	send	smart
look	mad	start	brave
guess	hope	stop	selfish
said	fear	stay	shy

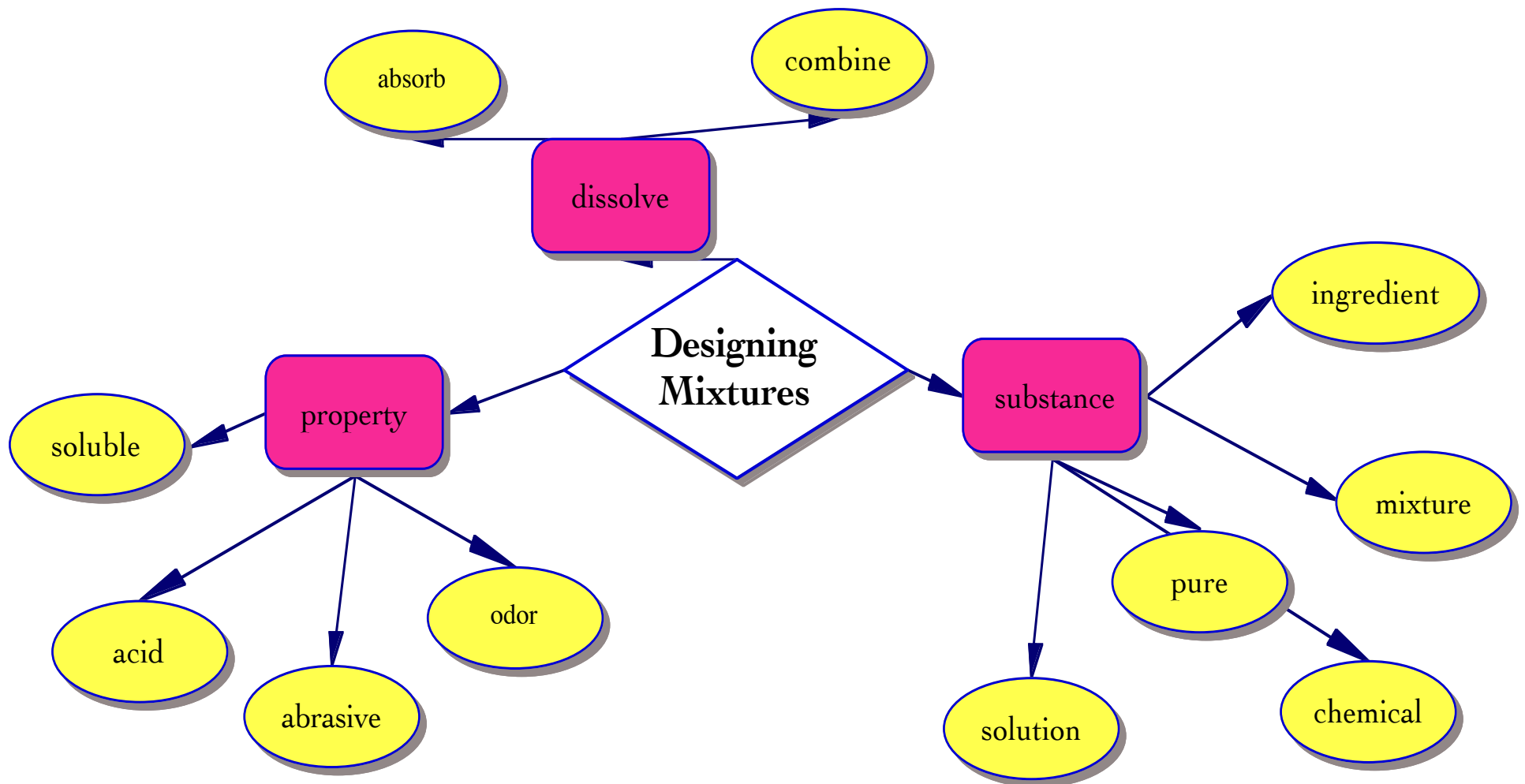


(b) The rare words in
informational texts
belong to topical
networks.

Informational Text

A simple solution is basically two substances that are evenly mixed together. One of them is called the **solute** and the other is the **solvent**. A solute is the substance to be dissolved (sugar). The **solvent** is the one doing the dissolving (water). As a rule of thumb, there is usually more **solvent** than **solute**. The amount of **solute** that can be dissolved by the **solvent** is defined as **solubility**.

An Example of a Topical Network





**Small Change 3b. Teach vocabulary in
topic networks.**



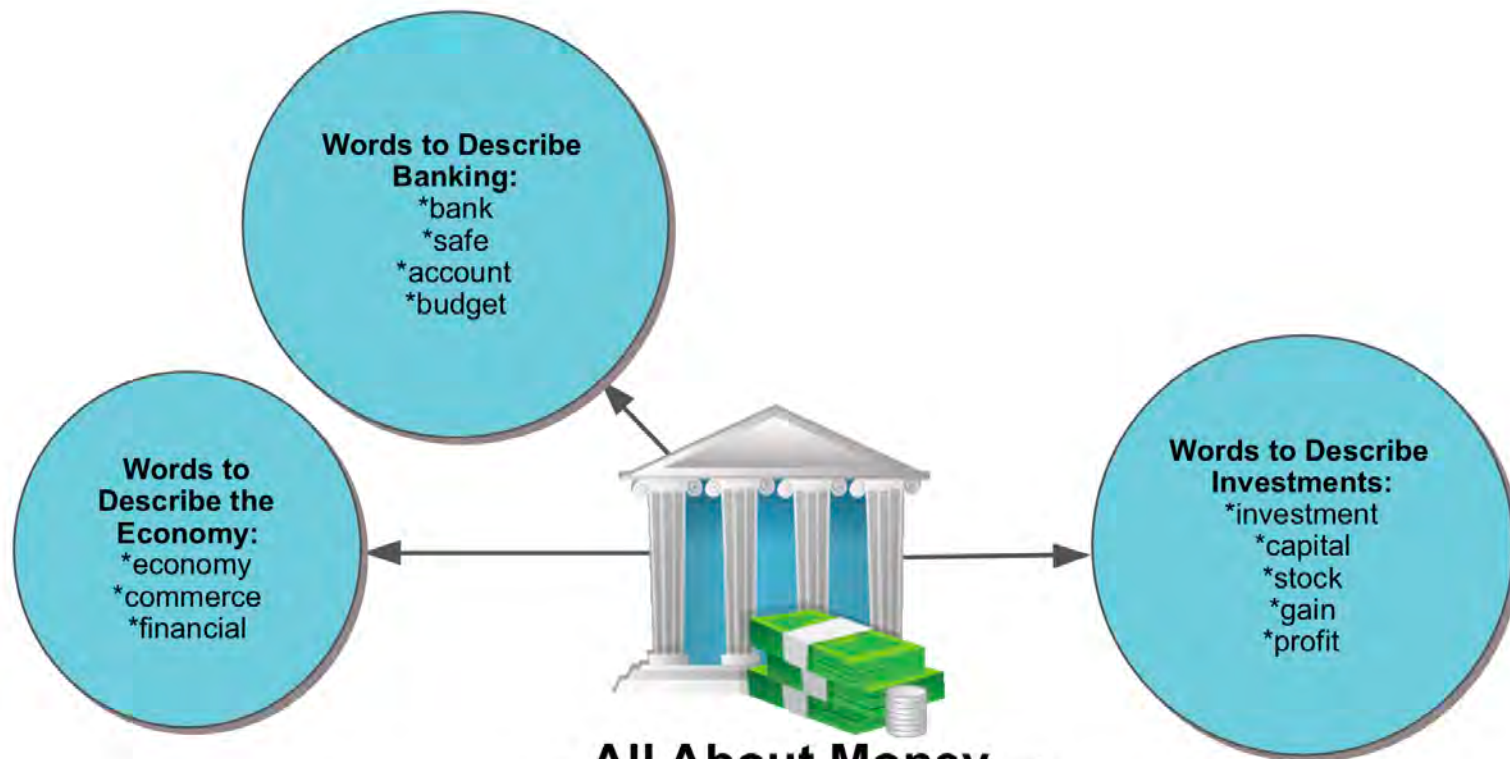
All About Money—

Words to Describe Money and Having
or Not Having Money



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**All About Money—
Words to Describe the Economy, Banking,
and Investments**



commerce

(com·merce)

Commerce describes the buying and selling of goods.

account

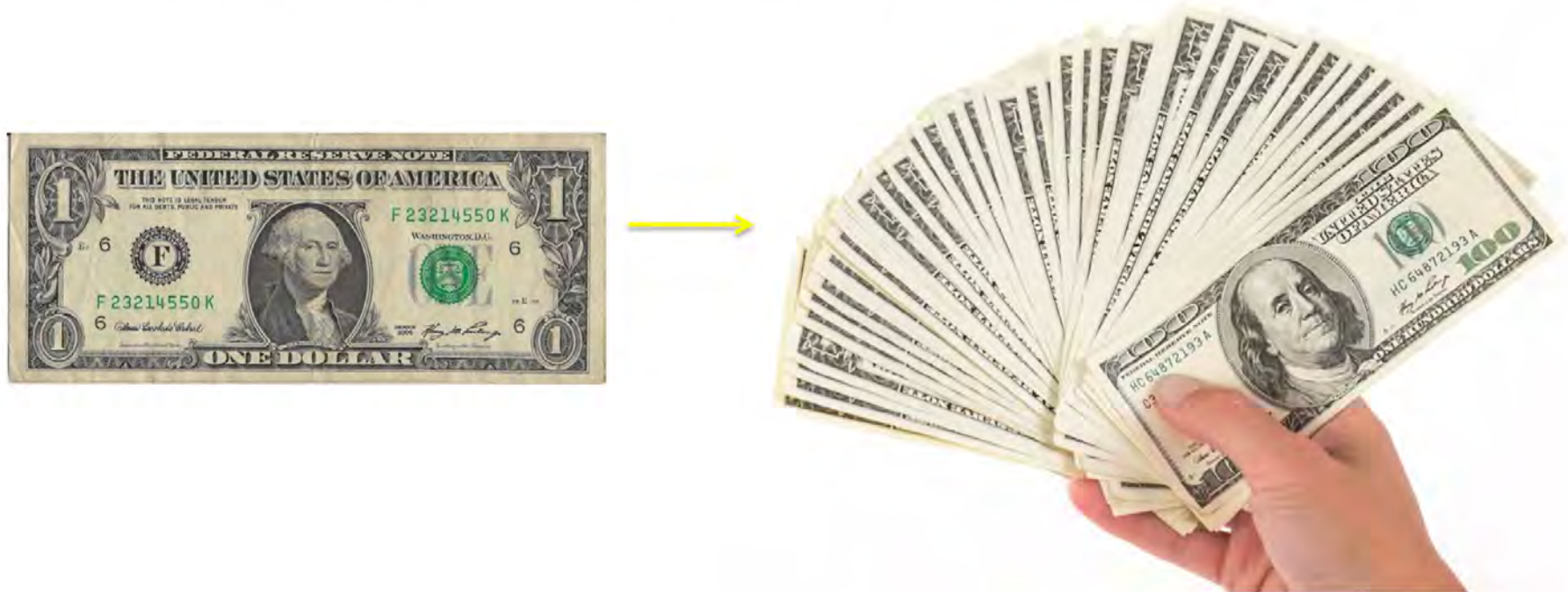
(ac·count)

An *account* is an arrangement made with a bank where you may deposit (put in) and withdraw (take out) money.



capital (cap·i·tal)

Capital is money that is made by using other money.





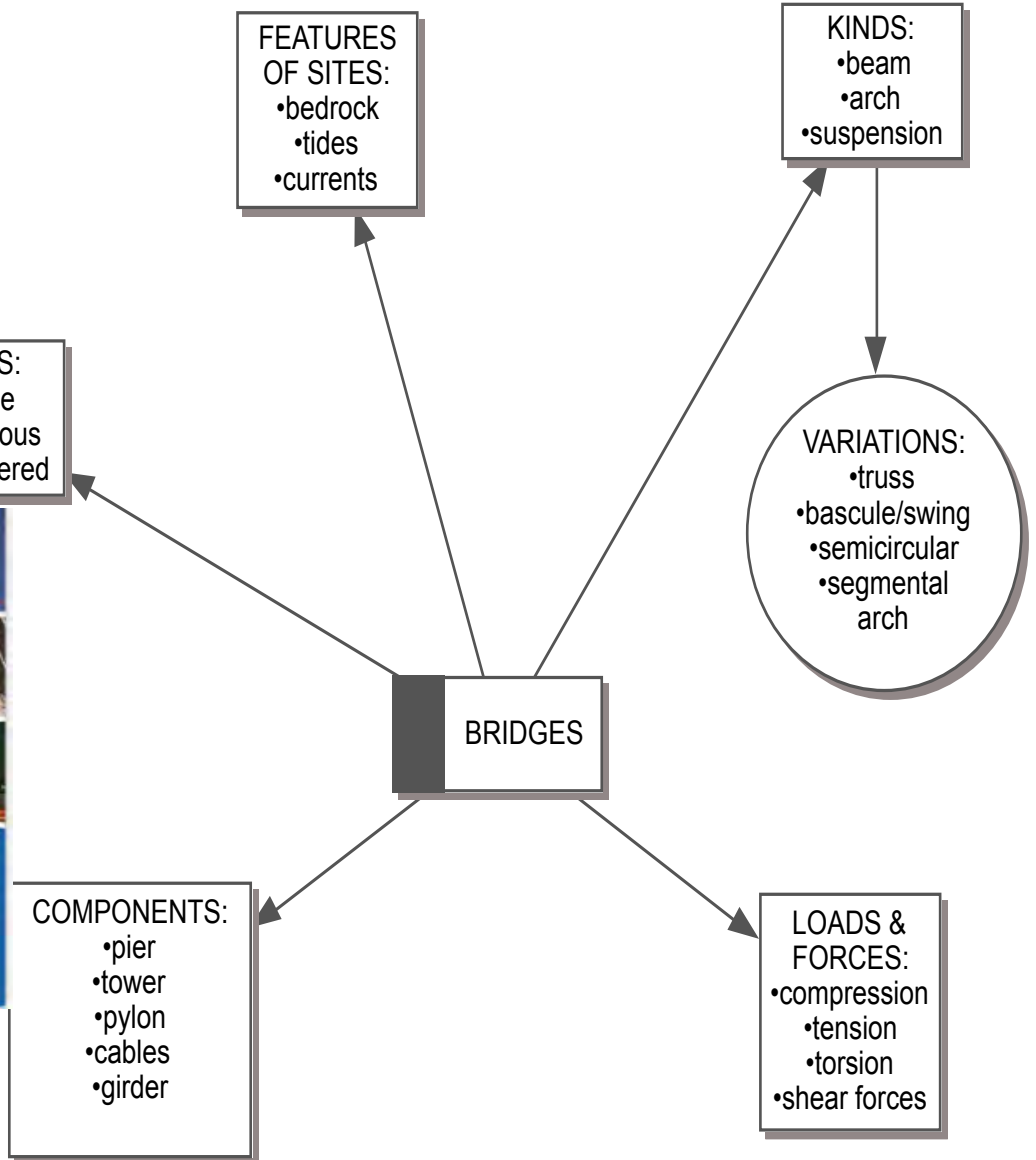
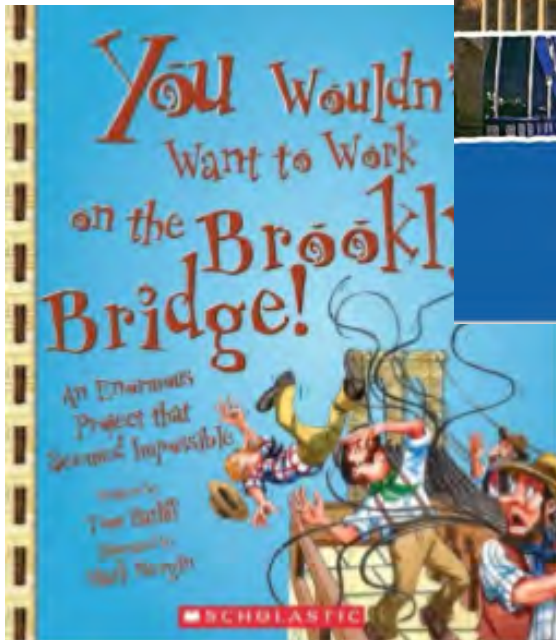
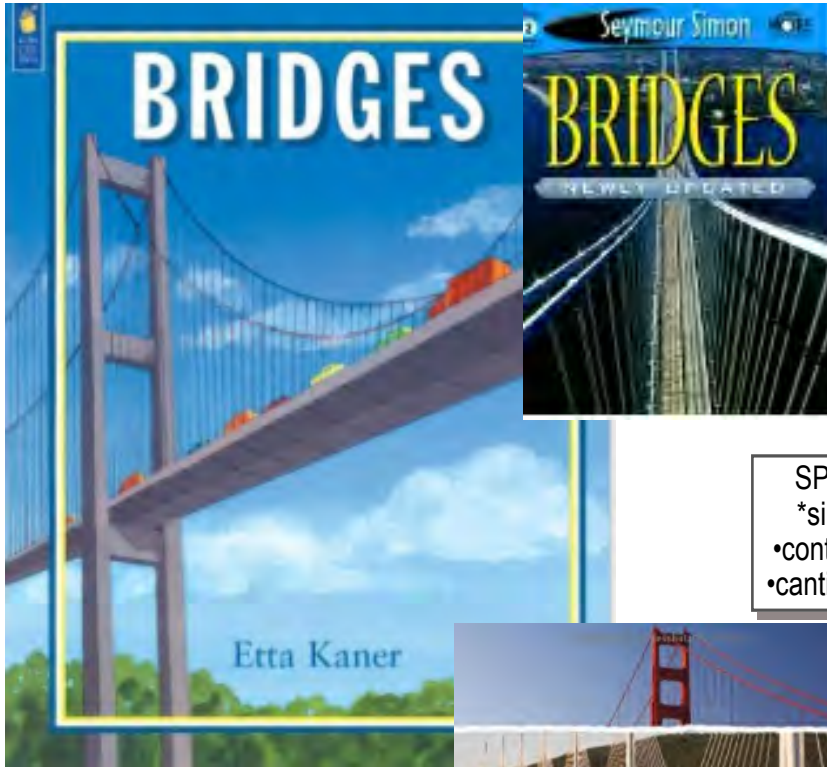
The Arts— About the Arts



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