

Reading Content-Area Texts: What's Involved for English Language Learners?

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Aims of Today's Presentation

- I. The Five Vocabularies of School Literacy
 - II. The Fifth Vocabulary and English Language Learners in middle schools
 - III. How to support the Fifth Vocabulary with ELLs in middle schools
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I. The Five Vocabularies of School

1. Words of School Tasks

*alphabet, abbreviation,
capitalization, e-mail, genre,
illustration, learning log,
paragraph, reading strategy,
verb*

2. Content-specific words

*Cytoplasm, vacuoles,
mitochondria,
chromosomes,
geographical
representation, tectonic
plate, salinization*

3. General Academic words

*approach, accurate,
feature, generate,
locate, maintain,
similar, process*

4. Literary Words

*rasping, gingerly, rumpus,
needles, triggered, dogsled,
icebreaker, faint, fireflies,
valise*

5. Core Words

*the, where, both, children,
heard, America, gone, third,
interest, rate, available*

Origins of School Vocabularies

[Adaptation of Calfee & Drum, 1981]

1. Words of School Tasks

2. Content-specific words

3. General Academic words

4. Literary Words

5. Core Words

Greek/Latin origins

Romance origins

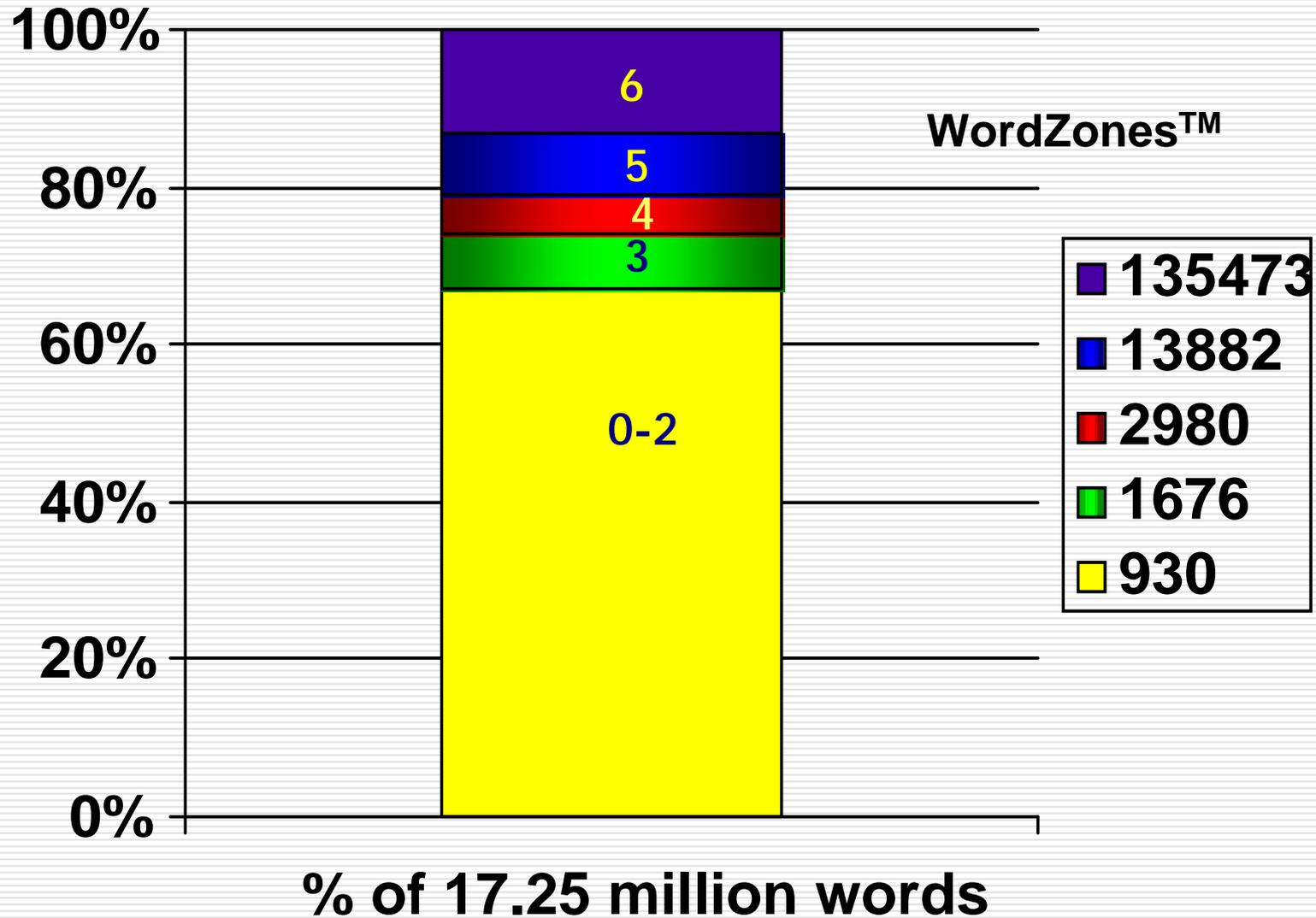
Anglo-Saxon origins

II. The Fifth Vocabulary and English Language Learners in middle schools

- A. Why is the core vocabulary critical?
- B. How are English Language Learners doing with the core vocabulary?
- C. What are the linguistic challenges presented by the core vocabulary?
- D. What are instructional challenges presented by the core vocabulary?

A. Why is the Core Vocabulary Critical?

Words in American Schoolbooks



Narrative Text: Grade 6

He lay on his side for a moment, then pulled a rasping breath and held it, listening for the attacker to return. When it was apparent that the shadow wasn't coming back he felt the calf of his leg, where the pain was centered and spreading to fill the whole leg.

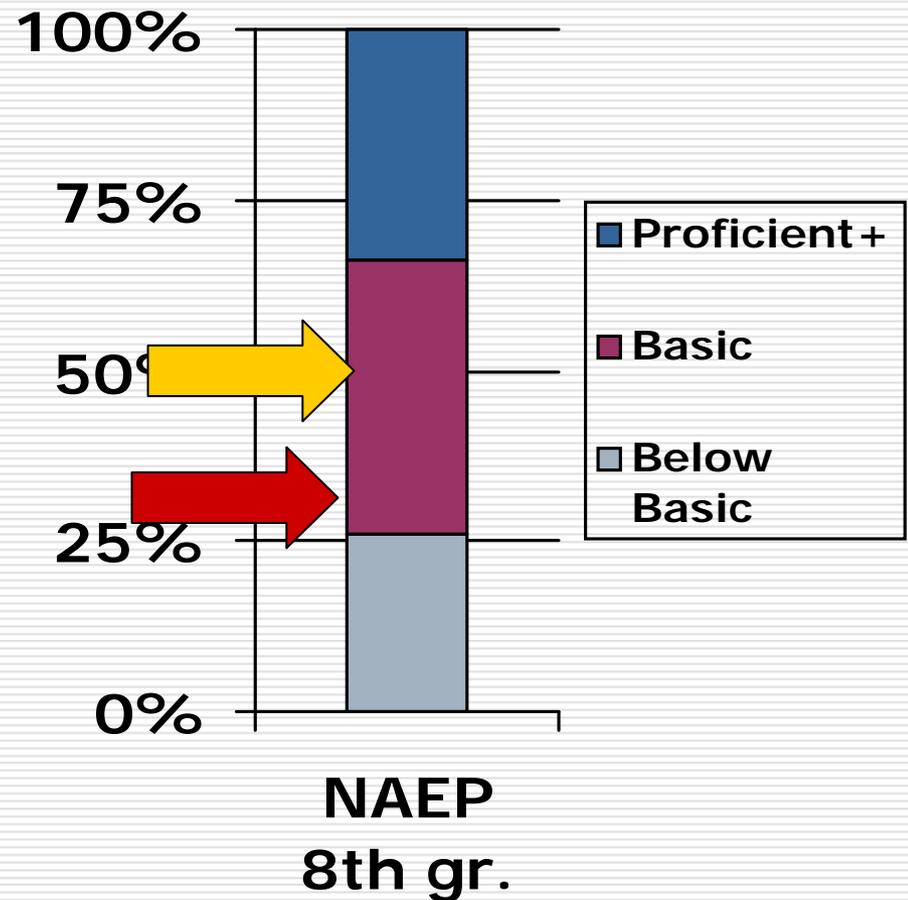
His fingers gingerly touched a group of needles that had been driven through his pants and into the fleshy part of his calf.

Informational Text: Grade 6

All cells are surrounded by a cell membrane and contain cytoplasm. Within the cytoplasm of most cells can be found mitochondria, vacuoles, and a nucleus that is surrounded by a nuclear membrane and contains chromosomes. Although there are differences between the cells of different organisms, all living things must carry out similar life processes. Therefore, it should not be surprising that all cells are somewhat similar.

B. How are English Language Learners doing with the core vocabulary?

National Assessment of Educational Progress (2007): Hispanic students had a score of 247-- approximately at 29th percentile; the 50th percentile score was 263--around the middle of the basic range



Sample Text from NAEP (2007)

When the science fair rolled around, Ellie presented her findings with computer-generated charts and graphs. Her classmates weren't very interested in her project. "It's not like they have to drive a car or put money in a parking meter, she explains. But her project was a huge hit with parents. More than 50 of them lined up that night to share their own parking-meter horror stories with Ellie.

Sample item 1: NAEP (2007)

The author included this information to

- A. show how the city saves money.
- B. describe the city budget
- C. emphasize Ellie's achievement
- D. criticize the city of Berkeley.

Percentage correct:

- At basic: 72
 - Below basic: 45
-

Sample item 2: NAEP (2007)

Choose two things **Ellie Lammer** did and explain what those things tell about her. Use examples from the **article** to support your answer.

Percentage attaining "4" (Extensive)

- At Basic: 29
 - Below Basic: 8
-

C. What are the linguistic challenges presented by the core vocabulary?

- Compound words
 - Idioms
 - Polysemous meanings
-

Compounds & Idioms

	Compound	Idiom
off	off season, off-ramp, off-line, offset, offshoot, offshore, offspring, offstage, off-the-record, off-the-wall	off on the wrong foot, off the mark, off the record, off the hook
under	underachiever, underage, undercharge, underclass, undercover, undercurrent, undercut, underdog, underestimate, undergo, undergraduate, underground, undergrowth, underhand, underhanded, underlie, underline, undermine, underneath, undernourished, underpaid, underpants, underpass, underprivileged, underrated, underscore, undershirt, underside, undersized, understaffed, understand, understatement, understudy, undertake, undertone, undertow, underwater, underweight, underworld, underwrite	under a cloud, under control, under cover, under fire, under one`s belt, under one`s breath, under one`s nose, under one`s own steam, under the sun, under the table, under the weather, under the wire, under the weather, water under the bridge
high	knee-high, waist, high, high-born, highbrow, highchair, high-class, high-definition, high explosive, high-frequency, high-grade, high heels, high jinks, high jump, highlands, high-level, highlight, high-minded, high-pitched, high-powered, high pressure, high-profile, high-rise, high roller, high school, high-speed, high-spirited, high-strung, high-tech, high tide, high-tops, highway	high noon, high and low, be left high and dry

High-Frequency Words & Polysemy

back	adverb	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1)where someone or something was before2)into the condition that someone or something was in before3)in the direction that is behind you4)doing the same thing that someone that s/he has done to you5)away from someone or something6)in or toward an earlier time
	noun	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) part of your body between your neck and legs, opposite your stomach and chest.2) part of something that is furthest from the front3) part of a seat that you lean against when you are sitting
	verb	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1)to move backwards, or to move a vehicle move backwards2)to support someone or something, especially by using your money or power
	adjective	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1)at the back of something

D. What are instructional challenges presented by core vocabulary?

- Underlying perspective of text difficulty in current core reading programs
-

Features of First-Grade Reading Texts

- Foorman, Francis, Davidson, Harm, & Griffin(2004): As much as 70-84% of the words in the first-grade texts in 2000 appeared only a single time across the instructional blocks of six different programs that they analyzed.
 - Hiebert (2005): Rate of new unique words per 100 running words in America's longest publishing core reading program:
 - 1983: 5
 - 1993: 29
 - 2000: 21
 - 2007: 23
-

Excerpts from 3 consecutive anthology selections & accompanying decodable in a core reading program

- 50 words from middle of a 290-word text
- Begin. of 3rd trimester of Gr. 1

Text 1

Cecil does tricks with our dog. They can roll over. WHIRL! WHIRL! They can beg. CREAK! FIZZ! WHIZ!
"Shake, Prince," says Dennis.

"Shake, Cecil," he says. Doing tricks is not the best thing my robot can do.

Cecil plays hide-and-seek, too. He is always IT. He gives everyone a chance

Decodable 1

"Stop!" said Spike. "You stole my stuff!"

"That scamp!" said Skip. "But I have skill and speed. I'll snatch my stuff back."

While Spike slept, Skip sneaked a stone into the bag.

Smack, smack.

"Snack time," said Spike.

"Ugh! A stone!" said Spike.

"Yes!" Skip said with a smile.

Text 2

Then off he went to market. Hop, hop, hop! Looking in the windows of every kind of shop.

He stopped on the corner where the fruit seller sells fruits of many colors. Oh, what lovely smells!

What a crowd of people dressed in their best! Choosing cheese and brown eggs fresh from the nest.

Decodable 2

Jill told me, "Don't bump the lamp."

Don't jump, dump, tramp, slump, bump.

Don't, don't, don't!

That always makes me a grump.

Then they all told me, "Don't be a
grump!"

What's a child to do?

Well, I'll find Gramp. Gramp knows I
jump, dump, tramp, slump, and bump.

Text 3

Before Armadillo could blink, Jack started a fire. He spied an old pot and filled it with water. He set the pot of water on the fire. After a while, he stuffed a big tumbleweed into the pot.

Armadillo looked into the pot. Jack took a taste and said, "It smells so good."

Decodable 3

One day Colin said, "What is that, shining in the sun?"

What did Colin see?

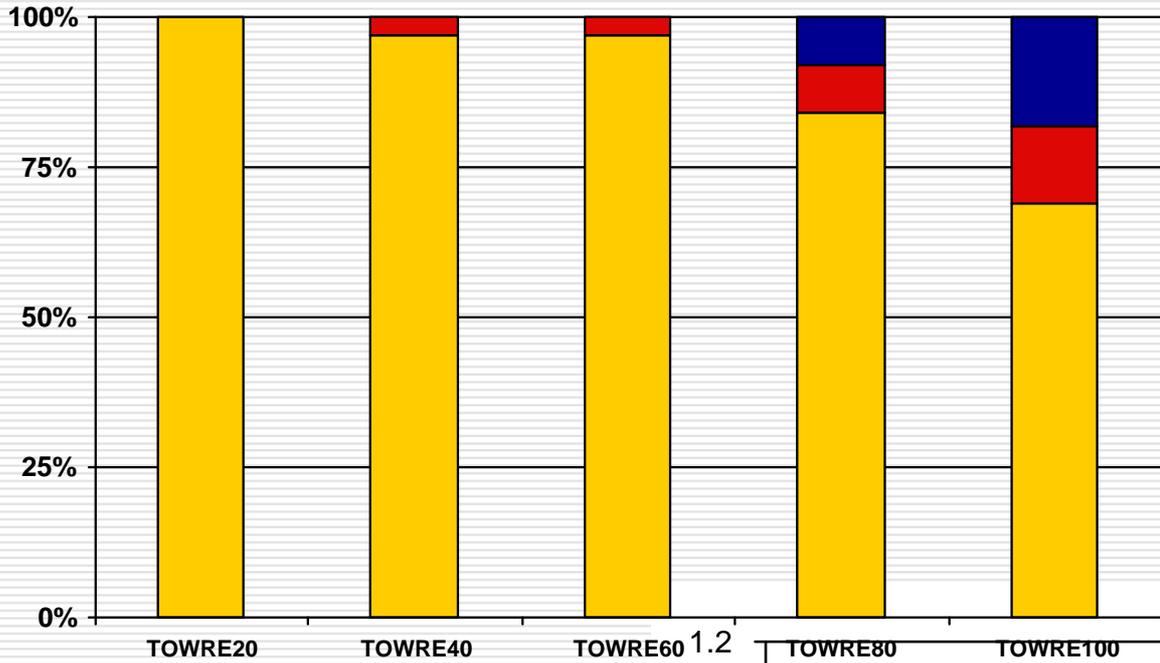
Colin Melon saw a...melon!

Colin sat beside the melon. "I like radishes," said Colin, but I like melons, too."

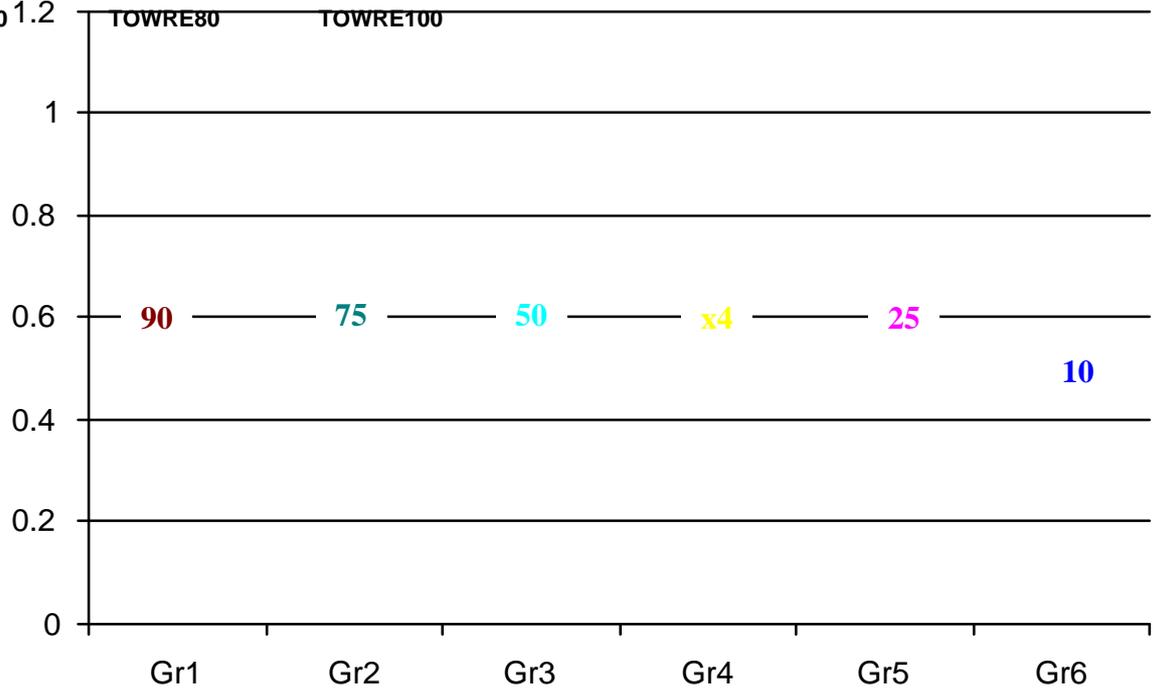
Colin looked after the melon. It got very big.

"That melon is so big!" said Colin's mom.

What Students Can Read



BENCHMARK



III. How to support the Fifth Vocabulary with ELLs in middle schools

- A. Be economical about “novel studies” and narratives.
 - B. Ensure content-area instruction
 - C. Provide extensive instruction of, and experiences with the 5th vocabulary
-

A. Be economical about “novel studies” and narratives.

- Vocabulary: Narrative texts generally have higher percentages of single-appearing, rare words than informational texts (Armbruster & Nagy, 1993; Biber, 1988).
 - Content: Narratives are (a) deliberately cultural, (b) are often intentionally ambiguous (i.e., literary quality is a function of sustaining) multiple interpretations), and (c) often use extremely economical language (Bernhardt, in press).
-

B. Ensure content-area instruction

□ Vocabulary:

- Rare and multisyllabic vocabulary tends to be repeated in content-area texts (Armbruster & Nagy, 1993; Biber, 1988)
- Tends to have more Romance-based cognates (Lubliner & Hiebert, 2008)

□ Content:

- Less cultural exclusivity and greater likelihood of access (including through hands-on experiences) (Bernhardt, in press)
 - Great likelihood that content will be needed in subsequent endeavors (Dochy, Segers, & Beuhl, 1999; Shapiro, 2004)
-

C. Provide extensive instruction of, and experiences with the 5th vocabulary

-
- i. Extensive reading: The task
 - ii. Extensive reading: The texts
 - iii. Instruction in compounds and idioms

i. Extensive reading: The task

- Definition: Extensive reading is “rapidly reading book after book” for meaning (Palmer, 1917/1968)
- Goal: To get students reading and “liking it” (Day & Bamford, 1998, p. 6)
- Evidence:
 - In 11 studies in ESL & EFL contexts, all but one found beneficial results on comprehension, vocabulary, & word recognition (Day & Bamford, 1998)
 - Findings subsequent to *National Reading Panel* report:
 - Reutzel, Fawson, & Smith (in press): Both Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR) & “Guided Repeated Oral Reading” produced similar effects on 3rd graders’ fluency & comprehension.
 - Lewis (2002): Meta-analysis showed moderately strong, positive relationship between in-school independent reading & reading achievement--especially for struggling readers, primary-level readers, and English Language Learners.
- The Task of Scaffolded silent reading: Reading from a designated set of texts for a specified period of time with a particular goal that is monitored and for which students are held accountable

ii. Extensive reading: The texts

Converging evidence that texts for (at least some of) extensive reading should emphasize core vocabulary:

Reviews:

- Hiebert & Fisher (2005): positive effects in NRP meta-analysis of fluency came from studies that used texts with high % of core vocabulary
- Menon & Hiebert (in press): In studies that led Kuhn & Stahl (2003) to recommend instructional or even frustration-level texts for fluency: Gains for treatment over control group was the predominant trend (not text difficulty)

Descriptive studies:

- Rashotte and Torgeson (1985): repeated reading was not more effective when stories had few shared words than same amount of nonrepetitive reading.
- Mathes and Fuchs's (1993): Neither text difficulty nor repeated reading made significant differences.
- Compton, Appleton, and Hosp (2004): % high frequency decodable words made unique contributions to fluency.
- Young and Bowers (1995): significant declines in rate, accuracy, and prosody with each increase in text difficulty.
- Sindelar, Monda, & O'Shea (1990): LD students recognized words faster on mastery vs. instructional texts

Texts (continued)

□ *Intervention studies:*

- Kuhn (2005; Kuhn Schwanenflugel, Morris, Morrow, Woo, Meisinger, Sevcik, Bradley, & Stahl, 2006): Wide reading is as/more effective than repeated reading of single texts
 - Menon and Hiebert (2005): Texts with high % of core vocabulary produced significantly higher performances than texts with low %
 - Stahl & Heubach (2005): students rarely texts with less than 85% accuracy and typically in 90-92% accuracy range
 - O'Conner, Bell, Harty, Larkin, Sackor, and Zigmond (2002): Students who began with lower fluency made stronger gains when text was matched to reading level; while students with higher fluency profited from either reading texts at their level or grade-level
-

Low percentage of multisyllabic, single-appearing rare words

Sharks have an excellent sense of smell. A shark's brain uses two thirds of its material for smell. A shark can smell food a quarter of a mile away. A shark can also hear things up to 1000 yards away.

Most people fear sharks. A few kinds of sharks do attack people.

High percentage of multisyllabic, single-appearing rare words

□ Fear moved his foot to the gas **pedal**, **careening** the **bus** out into **oncoming** traffic. **Headlights**. A truck. Fear made Grady hit the **brakes**. The back of the **bus** went into a **sliding** spin, **slamming** into a tree. Grady's **stomach** crushed against the **steering** wheel, **rupturing** his liver and **spleen**.

iii. Instruction in Compounds & Idioms

- Developing awareness of vocabulary relative to surrounding text: The idea that *learning more vocabulary is not just learning new words; it is often learning familiar words in new combinations* (Woolard, 2000)
 - "Words at play" (*English Journal*)
- Collecting & categorizing: Vocabulary logs & notebooks
- Focusing on key words: Some common words are highly prolific in compound words and idioms (Lewis, 1997). Another form of compounding is frequent in content areas (e.g., *carbon dioxide, air pressure, scientific method*)
- Using resources: Dictionaries for ESL (e.g., *Longman's Dictionary of American English* which uses West's (1953) 2,000 head words for definitions)

VE LO QUE DICES



See What You Say

Nancy María Grande Tabor

Cuando quieres algo que no puedes tener, puedes decir en español que "la gallina de la vecina pone más huevos que la mía"



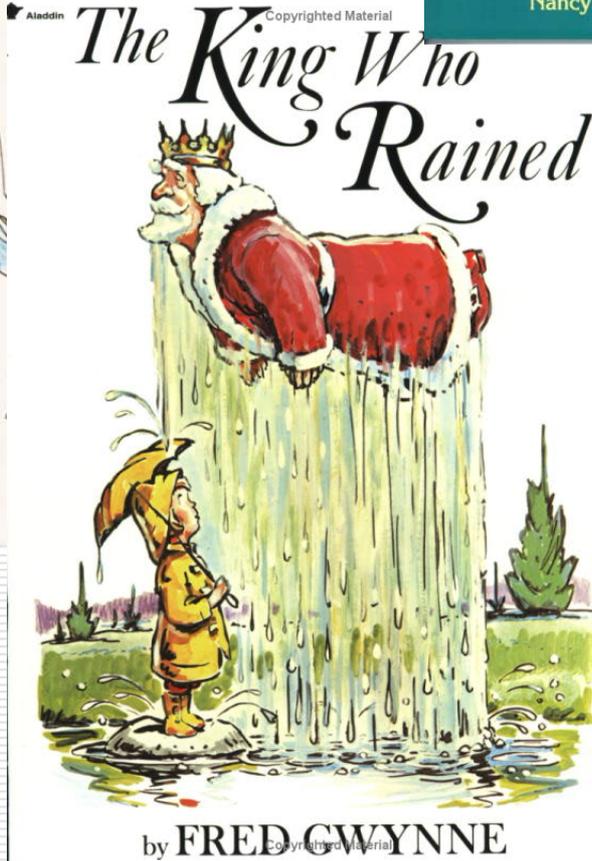
When you want something you cannot have, you might say in Spanish that "the neighbor's hen lays more eggs than mine"

y en inglés que "el pasto es siempre más verde en el otro lado de la cerca."



and in English that "the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence."

Did you ever hear such a bunch of fairy tails?



Garcia et al. (2007): High School Students Develop Cartoons and Captions based on Gwynne's books

Drawing:

- A mother with a bag of potato chips is holding one up to the wall.
- A man is walking up to a huge plant in a pot that has windows and doors like a factory.

Story Line:

- Mama says she accidentally put a CHIP in the wall.
 - Daddy said that he works at THE PLANT.
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