

Vocabulary & Structure

(with examples based on NEL K2 English Language Big Book –
Rice Dumpings)

Target vocabulary are the content words that form a child's knowledge base. In class, children learn to identify target vocabulary. These are words found in the big book and pupils remember these words through repeated reading and the help of illustrations in the big books.

Through oral interaction promoted through the Shared Book Approach, teachers ask children questions to stimulate thought and understanding. The lessons build on teacher-student conversation to provide opportunities for children to listen and respond to. In this way, teachers build on children's responses by rephrasing or clarifying so that children pick up new vocabulary. These conversations take place in a safe and non-threatening environment. Children's responses can help to feed forward in teaching, teachers can pitch their conversations/ questions at a level that is comfortable to the children. Constant interaction will expose children to a wide repertoire of words and build up their vocabulary.

During daily lessons, teachers also ask appropriately-pitched questions to help children check their understanding of the target vocabulary words. This can be done by directing the children's attention to specific concepts or illustrations, or providing language modelling for the children.

A wide vocabulary will enable a child to become a more effective communicator, reader and writer.

Language structures

By crating follow-up activities that target language structure practice from big books, teachers revise with children and provide opportunities for them to practise using new language structures. The children revise language structures by forming their own sentences using similar structures that teachers introduce. Over time, children internalise the language structures and learn to use them in different contexts that the ones they encountered in lessons.

Try using these follow-up activities after you have conducted reading activities with the children, for the NEL K2 English Language Big Book:

Rice Dumpings

Speaking Vocabulary: *rice dumpings*, [Father], Baby, [Grandma], smell, [Grandpa], [table], [plate], [kitchen]

Prepare pictures and word cards for the above speaking vocabulary words.

- Tack two sets of the the picture cards and word cards randomly on two sheets of butcher paper. Go through the picture and words cards with the class before the class activity.
- Divide the children into two groups and have them sit on the floor in a circle. Give each group a sheet of butcher paper with the pre-arranged cards. Have the children match the picture cards to the word cards.

- Tell the children to stand up and say, “We’re done!” once they have completed the task. The group then reads out the words. Have the other group do the same when they have finished matching the cards.

For a greater challenge:

- Place all the picture cards on the whiteboard and have the children name them. Place the corresponding word card below each picture card.

Group activity

- Group children into groups of 3. Provide a set of picture cards and word cards to each group. Children will spread the picture cards and word cards on their group’s table. Then, they will take turns to take one picture card, name it and match it with its corresponding word card. If time permits, get children to take turns making sentences with the card that they have chosen.

Speaking Structure(s): *(Number) (noun) for you/me/(name).*

Example: *One rice dumpling for you. / One rice dumpling for Baby.*

- (*) Write the target structures on the board:

_____ for you.
(Number) (Noun)

_____ for me.
(Number) (Noun)

_____ for _____.
(Number) (Noun) (Name)

- Read aloud Page 3 of the Big Book. Bring the children’s attention to the phrase ‘one for me’ and have the class to repeat the phrase after you.
- Invite a child to the front. Pass the child a pencil and say “One pencil for you.” Get the child to say: One pencil for me. Next, the class will say: One pencil for (name of the child). Repeat a few more times with different children using different types of stationery items that you find in the classroom. Check and correct the children’s responses appropriately.

For a more challenging task:

- After writing the target structures on the board (*), place the picture cards on the whiteboard and have the children name them. Divide the whiteboard into 2 parts. Place all the object cards on one half of the whiteboard and the people cards on the other half.
- Model the activity by choosing the picture of a teddy bear and baby. Ask:
Teacher: *What do we have for baby today?*
Elicit responses from the children using the target structure (One teddy bear for baby).
- Gather the children and have them sit in a circle. Give a ball to one child. Play some music and have them pass the ball clockwise. When the music stops, the child with the ball should walk to the front, choose an object and people card, and show the class the people card. Have the children ask:
Children: *What do we have for name of person today?*
Guide the child to reply to this question using the target structure taught.
- Have the children repeat this activity a few times. Check and correct the children’s responses appropriately.

Group Activity

- Group children into groups of 4 and give each group a set of picture cards. Get the children in each group to put the object cards in one pile and the people cards in another pile.

- Have them take turns in their groups to practise the target structure by choosing an object and people card. Encourage the children to help check on their friend's responses. Repeat until every child gets to practise the target structure.

Remember:

Depending on your children's needs, you may need to use pictures or prepare additional pictures to suit the children's interest and level of understanding.