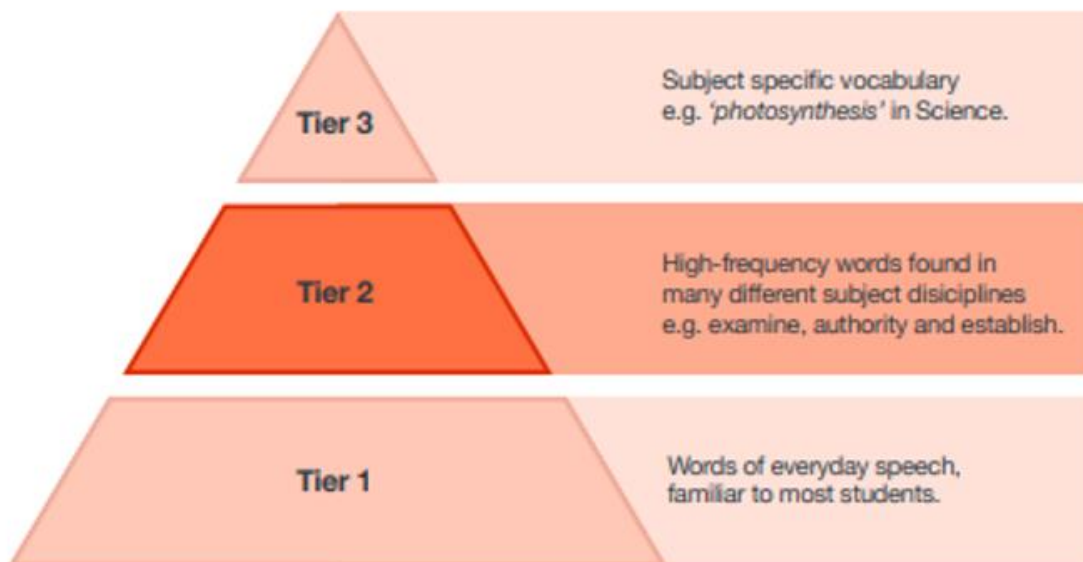


## Why is teaching vocabulary so important for our pupils here at Glynwood?



- ▶ The size of a pupil's vocabulary in their early years of schooling (the number and variety of words that the young person knows) is a significant predictor of academic attainment in later schooling and of success in life. Most children are experienced speakers of the language when they begin school but reading the language requires more complex, abstract vocabulary than that used in everyday conversation.
- ▶ Department for Education research suggests that, by the age of seven, the gap in the vocabulary known by children in the top and bottom quartiles is something like 4,000 words, with children in the top quartile knowing around 7,000 words.
- ▶ For this reason, when seeking to build cultural capital in order to close the gap in EYFS and key stages 1 and 2, we need to understand the importance of vocabulary and support its development so that children who do not develop this foundational knowledge before they start school are helped to catch up.



- Both implicit approaches (e.g. reading stories to children and promoting reading for pleasure) and explicit approaches to teaching vocabulary (e.g. directly teaching new vocabulary) are essential for developing and broadening children's language. There is also a need to explore vocabulary in reading, writing, for spoken language and across the curriculum.
- Vocabulary should be taught all the time and across the curriculum, especially when teachers are reading out loud and discussing unfamiliar words (this might also include pre-teaching vocabulary before the children have read a word.)

## **Vocabulary – Strategies that are used at Glynwood**

As well as implicit and incidental strategies (see below) to teaching vocabulary, we also use explicit strategies to ensure that children are developing vocabulary rigorously.

### **Year One and Year Two**

- Adult modelling of vocabulary
- Robust vocabulary instruction through use of definitions and living sentences.

### **Year Three and Year Four**

- Word of the week
- Adult modelling of vocabulary
- Robust vocabulary instruction

### **Year Five and Year Six**

- Adult modelling of vocabulary
- Identification of key vocabulary
- Vocabulary working walls in classrooms.



## **Incidental vocabulary learning**

You cannot explicitly teach *all* the words! With over a million words in the English language, teachers make careful selections regarding subject specific vocabulary and those sophisticated Tier 2 words. It is clear that reading rich texts, both in the classroom and beyond the school gates, is critical for language and vocabulary development. Put simply, [the more words you read, the more you learn](#).

[When reading complex texts, pupils can struggle to learn new, unfamiliar words](#), so helping pupils with strategies to notice and record interesting vocabulary is likely to prove valuable. It may be having pupils keep a 'word hoard' of their own – or use vocabulary book marks – or simply record words in the back of their books, for discussion and questioning later. Setting up a 'classroom dictionary' in domains like geography, science or maths, could help move the incidental learning to something more intentional.

Teachers need to [flood the classroom with vocabulary alongside explicit teaching](#). Putting in [lots of reading miles on the clock really matters to maximising vocabulary learning](#), so well structured daily reading opportunities (with care taken over reading choices) can grow pupils' vocabulary, though it may not be immediately visible (remember that opening analogy of height and daily growth?).

When teachers talk about words – their subtleties, misnomers, histories, and more – building on reading high quality texts, these conversational turns unlock important shades of meaning for pupils that can fend off misconceptions and lead to greater understanding when reading. Many of these opportunities will arise spontaneously. You simply cannot predict all the words pupils will know and not know. However, with awareness that some of these 'teachable moments' could be missed, we should aim to wed incidental learning to explicit teaching.