**5 Simple Ways to Build Vocabulary Skills at Home**

In general, a child with a rich vocabulary has an easier time learning to read than one who has only a limited vocabulary. As Susan B. Neuman points out in [*Early Literacy: Building Vocabulary to Build Literacy*](http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/early-literacy-building-vocabulary-build-literacy)

"It turns out that the more words a child knows, the more words he'll be able to recognize when he sees them in print. As children learn to sound out words, they'll reach into their store of words to figure out what they mean."

As a parent, I want to equip my kids with all the tools I can for the challenges they will face in school and beyond. One tool that is easy to give them is a rich vocabulary. Parents can work on expanding and enriching their children's vocabulary without any expensive supplies or huge chunks of time.  Good news, right?

Here are some simple ways you can work on building your children's vocabulary.

**1. Read.**

Even after children are strong readers, read to and with them. I let my son choose what he reads independently, but when I read to him, I get to choose. This lets me sneak in books that challenge him and offer new words for his vocabulary.

**2. Use a rich vocabulary yourself, and don't dumb it down for your kids**.

Your children may not understand all the words you use but take time to explain their meanings. Purposefully use interesting and unusual words. Try to incorporate words from books you are reading into daily life to extend the learning.

**3. Build a word wall or word window!**

Get some paper and write down the words you are learning. We made a word window in my son's bedroom while reading about Sacagawea and John Smith because there were many new words to learn.

**4. Make a word jar.**

Flip through the dictionary and write out new words and their definitions on small pieces of paper. At dinner or bedtime, pull out a word and read about it. Try to make a sentence with it.

**5. Play this simple vocabulary game as a family.**

At dinner or another time when you are all together, have one person choose a word. Everyone else must think of synonyms (words with the same meaning). The person who thinks of the most synonyms wins and gets to choose the next word.