

Letter to the Tutor / Teacher

You are going to make a huge impact on your little student(s). This is why:

The size of a student's vocabulary is a strong predictor (some say the strongest predictor) of his/her academic success. So by focusing on building vocabulary, you will be "setting him/her up for success!" A huge gap exists between the students who have a strong vocabulary and the ones with a weak vocabulary. This gap begins when some children enter school with strong foundational vocabularies (words usually learned through conversation in the home) and widens daily as the "haves" learn new things faster and easier, and the "have-nots" continue to struggle. This lack of foundational vocabulary results in poor reading comprehension and low reading and writing test scores.

So **you** will be instrumental in turning your little student from a "have not" into a "have." You will be helping him/her build a storehouse of words to draw upon when reading, writing, and learning in general. You will be making a true difference in a child's life!

This is a guide to use with the *Illustrated Dictionary of Everyday Things*. I wrote this book based on over 27 years of teaching students just like the one(s) you are helping. I made a list of common, everyday things my students didn't know, and that list became this book. I was many times astounded by the things they did not know. My latest surprise was when the word "ceiling" was in a book, and not one of 24 first graders knew what it was. When I pointed up and asked what that was called, they said "roof." Don't assume your student knows even the most common word, s/he just might not know it! You will be surprised at how much your tutee does not know. Many children don't even know the less major body parts like ankle, wrist, waist, etc. S/he REALLY needs your help!

Following the suggestions in this guide will be imperative to the success of this project, but more importantly to the success of your student(s). Other teaching aids (student worksheets, etc.) can be found at www.ChildrensLiteracyPublications.com. See Teacher Page.

There are four major parts of this project.

1. **Teaching the parts of objects.** You will do this through simply looking at the picture with parts labeled and talking about it. Then you and your tutee will draw or trace the object into the sketch pads to activate the new words learned. This is very important for retaining the information! (Pictures without labels are provided if you want to label with the student(s)).
2. **Leading your tutee/students into really thinking** about the parts and the names of the parts. By following my suggestions in this guide, you will be helping your tutee in amazing ways. In addition to giving him/her a storehouse of words to draw upon, you will also be building word consciousness, building word relationships, building broader concept knowledge, extending concepts, and more...! Just follow the guide and it is really easy.
3. **Encouraging your tutee/students to talk** about the object. In this guide, I have given you questions to ask and topics for discussion.
4. **Reviewing** the objects and parts you have taught. Your tutee/student(s) will retain the information if it is reviewed over time (the most effective form of review). Following the guide provides for review. For example, asking student to compare/contrast different objects on different pages in The Illustrated Dictionary. Forms are provided in this Teaching Guide.

I would suggest that you:

- sometimes, let your tutee/students choose the object to be studied at first. You can choose, too. There is a Table of Contents in the front of the book or he can just look through the book. Maybe when you have finished one object, you could let him choose what to study next. See the section, “If you can” for the reason why. *Be sure to study body, face, hands ASAP.
- take two teaching sessions for each object, then after teaching 3 different objects, take a session to review all 3 objects.
- review the previous object briefly when you are ready to teach a new object.
- use the suggestions in this tutoring guide for each object. Ask as many of the questions and guide as many of the discussions as you can. You will be asking a lot of “Why do you think” questions. This gives students a chance to talk and explain their thinking to you. This is **wonderful** because struggling students rarely share to that extent in class. Also, this gives you an opportunity to see if he/she REALLY knows what you have taught about the object. Another way to get the student talking is to ask him to make up and **tell** you the definition of some of the labels [talk only]. S/he should generate the definition NOT look it up. Ex: paw. If he/she says, “It is what you call the foot of a dog,” that’s great. Then ask him to make up a sentence using the word. If s/he can do this, SUCCESS!
- play the **Why do they call it that** game when appropriate. Ex: “Why do you think they call it a kickstand?” If s/he says, “because you kick it and it keeps the bike standing up,” then you are sure he knows that part, what it is called, and its purpose.

If you can:

- use realia (real objects) to teach the parts or to review the parts. Many of the objects to be studied are things available to you all the time (parts of body, clothing, etc.), but other objects could be brought from home. If you choose the object to be studied, you will know to bring the real object(s), but if the student chooses the object, perhaps you could bring the real object(s) the next session and use as review.
- read the suggested stories (or talk about pictures in the book) with your tutee if there is time. You could even use the story or picture book as review later. The school library will have most of these. If you can’t find these, perhaps you can find others or go to the public library. Any Mother Goose book with pictures will be very helpful. You don’t have to read a story for every object, but you might find the object in a picture book and simply show and talk about it.
- combine objects. Ex: back, front, side of car can be taught together. Objects with only a few parts labeled can be combined with another object that is appropriate. Ex: Parts of a Needle with clothing. Parts of a hat with clothing.
- bring in colored ads from the newspaper (if you get it) showing the object being studied. You could even have your tutee cut out pictures as examples of the object (Ex: different kinds of shoes, or kitchen appliances, or different cars), glue them on paper and label them like s/he did in his own book. This could also be used as review.