

HANDOUT 5

Paths of Vocabulary Acquisition

FAST MAPPING FOLLOWED BY SLOW MAPPING (Bibliographic Notes)

“Children’s development of the meaning of a single word is best viewed as a gradual process in which word representations progressively develop from immature, incomplete representations to mature, accurate representations (Justice, Meier, and Walpole 2005). Children often can acquire a general representation of a new word with only a single exposure through a process called ‘fast mapping’ (see McGregor and others 2002). This process is followed by ‘slow mapping,’ during which representations are gradually refined over time with multiple exposures (Curtis 1987). Thus, multiple experiences with words across a variety of contexts are critical for children’s acquisition of a fine-grained representation of those words” (PLF, Vol. 1, p. 73).

HEAPS

Disconnected words | Random | Jungle of connections



CHAINS

Some connections between words | Single definition



NETS

Linkages | Concepts understood | Connected words



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Using the Environment to Create Nets

Example Target Word: Eruption, flowing, volcano

Category Connection: Ways to move

Relation Word Target: Inside, outside, on the side, angle



Discovery Table: Books, loose parts, posters, objects to manipulate

Teacher Cues: Lava flowing down the side of the volcano. The Animals are interested in the loud eruption from the inside of the volcano.

Dramatic Play Area: Space to act out scenes, dress up, and imagine

Teacher Cues: Looks like you're pretending to be inside the erupting volcano. It must be hot close the flowing lava.

Listening Area: Small space for a few children to listen to an audio book and look at pictures

Teacher Cues: Looks like you're interested in the book about the volcano eruption.

Carpet Area: Space for the group to gather and initiate play during choice time.

Teacher Cues: Looks like you're interested in the words we wrote about the volcano book yesterday. Would you like to pretend to erupt like a volcano?

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Vocabulary extends beyond the main concept--use **flowing** in new and familiar contexts.

Slide: Teachers comment how the children seem to flow down the slide, like the lava flowing out of the volcano. The slide even has a similar angle to the side of the mountain/volcano.



Garden: The teacher notices one boy playing with the water coming out of the hose. She comments on the water “flowing” out of the hose.



Science Observation: Children discuss the liquid and foam **flowing down** the side of the container.



Bonus Environment Ideas to Create a Net for Flowing



Yoga Pose-Water Fall to pretend the water is flowing off the finger tips behind the head.

Parachute to create flowing waves with the material

Dancing Ribbons to watch the material flow in the wind.

*** These ideas may also connect to ways of moving.*