

How well is the Vocabulary Component of the Scott Foresman's Reading Street 2011

Basal Reading Series Supported by Research?

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The Research Base for Scott Foresman's Vocabulary Instruction 2

This Master's Seminar Paper titled

How well is the Vocabulary Component of the Scott Foresman's Reading Street 2011

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## **Abstract**

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Director of Master's Seminar Paper B. Smith

Schools use Basal Reading programs to help keep up consistency through grade levels by means of instruction and format. These reading programs are a guide teachers use to help with their instruction. Some teachers are given firm instruction to not detour from the program given to them. How are these massive companies coming up with what is best for instruction? By using the Scott Foresman's Reading Street 2010 reading series a closer look will be taken as to how well this series is backed by research. What research says is best for vocabulary instruction in elementary schools has been compared with the vocabulary component of this reading series. A checklist with components found in research for quality vocabulary instruction was used to compare with the reading series.

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## **Chapter I: Introduction and Statement of Problem**

One of the most influential philosophers of the Twentieth Century, Ludwig Wittgenstein is quoted as saying, "The limits of my language are the limits of my mind. All I know is what I have words for" (Wikiquote). Many would say that vocabulary is a foundational element of education. Being exposed to a large vocabulary is extremely beneficial in one's ability to relate with others and express thoughts. Research has been done on which is the best and the most effective way to introduce children to vocabulary while in the classroom. Children will be able to build upon the vocabulary they have developed through personal experiences in the home when vocabulary is a focus in the classroom.

### **My Thoughts on Vocabulary**

I have just begun my career as an educator and have been teaching the second grade for the past three years. In the past three years, my school has been trying a variety of new things to help improve the school's reading program. While trying to improve the school's reading program there has been a change made in the Basal Reading series. This series was chosen to be used based on the involvement of technology in instruction. It was also chosen for the way it breaks down the five main components of reading which are: vocabulary, phonics, phonemic awareness, comprehension, and fluency.

In the past three years, these types of programs have guided my instruction during reading. Although helpful in providing our school with a consistent program used throughout the different grade levels, I have still been interested in how these programs conduct their research. Vocabulary is one of the five main components of reading and is

addressed in part of the Reading Street's Basal Reading program I used this past year.

The importance of vocabulary in early education has led me to become curious in finding out how well grounded this reading program is in its research. How well is the vocabulary component for the primary grades of Reading Street's 2010 reading program grounded in research?

### **Definition of Terms**

1. Basal Readers are reading text books that are organized by pairing stories with reading concepts and are used in an elementary classroom setting.
2. Direct Instruction is a teaching strategy where the teacher is demonstrating or modeling the new information for the student.
3. Explicit Instruction is a type of instruction during which the teacher uses a structured lesson in an engaging way to teach students.
4. Graphic Organizer is a strategy to visually organize information in chart form.
5. K.W.L Chart is acronyms for a type of graphic organizer used to chart what students know about a topic, what they want to learn about the topic, and what they have learned after the concept has been taught.
6. Morpheme is the smallest linguistic unit of a word when they are put together they form the word and its meaning.
7. Schema is a term used when one uses their past experiences to relate to a new experience or new concept.
8. Morpheme Analysis is a strategy used when finding the meaning of an unfamiliar word by breaking the word apart into its morphemes.

### **Limitations**

From this research, there have been some limitations. This research has been done to focus only on one specific area, vocabulary. Many other components of reading are in this series. From the findings of this research, there will only be the vocabulary component, which is looked at. This study is also only looking at what the reading series is guiding the instructor to do in the classroom. There are not observations done as to what parts of the series the teacher implements in the classroom. The information collected from this series is based on the second grade Scott Foresman's Reading Street 2010 materials, no other grade level.

## Chapter II: Review of Literature

There has been a lot of research done about vocabulary over the years and much of it has attempted to answer different questions. I, however, wanted to look at the research that specifically addressed the best ways to instruct vocabulary in the classroom; more specifically, in an early education setting.

### **Good vocabulary Instruction:**

To begin my research, I found an article that addressed the five main components of reading. In this article entitled, *What Principals Need to Know about Reading Instruction*, Carbo (2005) addressed all five components and discussed what research has found to be clear efficient ways of teaching reading.

In this article, the author addresses how a school principle can have a large influence on which reading programs are used throughout the school. It discussed the principle's need to have some knowledge on what research has shown as effective ways to teach these five components of reading: fluency, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension. In this small section about vocabulary instruction Carbo lists what she calls "good vocabulary instruction" She says that good vocabulary instruction,

1. Engages children in discussions about words, uses videos, visuals, and anecdotes to expand word meaning.
2. Provides readings of materials that help students become increasingly familiar with a variety of high-level words.

3. Provides strategies for deciphering unknown words, such as understanding prefixes, suffixes, and roots.
4. Uses many hands-on vocabulary games and weekly challenges to encourage children to expand their vocabulary.
5. Teaches a child when and how to use dictionaries and reference aids (p. 48).

This article introduces the importance of the five components of reading in Early Education. This is one of the reasons Reading Street's 2010 series was chosen. It also starts with a clear list of what research has found to be good vocabulary instruction in elementary school classrooms. To learn more about how good vocabulary instruction might present in the classroom, more research has been done.

### **Explicit Instruction**

From the many articles read on vocabulary instruction the phrase "Explicit Instruction" was mentioned frequently. One article Taylor and Rickelman (2009) wrote discussed using explicit instruction to promote vocabulary learning. In this article Taylor and Rickelman say that, "explicit instructional activities that visually display new words while allowing students the opportunity to compare and contrast these new words to already known words, can provide a beneficial means for increasing the vocabulary knowledge of struggling readers" (p.207). Here they are addressing the benefits of using explicit instruction while teaching students new vocabulary. Later in the article, explicit instruction is addressed more in detail as to what kinds of explicit instruction works best. This article addresses that explicit instruction needs to, "foster active engagement and word study on the part of the student" (p. 207). Instead of just listing vocabulary words

for students and explicitly teaching them their meanings, teachers need to make sure the students are being more actively engaged in the process of learning these new words.

How do students become more engaged in this type of explicit instruction? This article further addressed what types of activities could actively engage students when learning new vocabulary. Nichols, Rickelman, and Taylor, quoted Guthrie & Wigfield as stating, "Activating students' prior knowledge with vocabulary terms can help them to make connections between their own experiences and subject area content"

(p. 209). Using a form of activating a student's prior knowledge will help in the beginning steps to explicitly teach a child a new word. The teacher brings forth the experiences in the student's schema and uses them to help relate to a new vocabulary word. This article suggests that a way to help activate a students' prior knowledge with new words is to teach them through, "Morpheme analysis, in which students explicitly learn the meanings of morphemes commonly found in certain words,"( p.208). By becoming knowledgeable about these morphemes when new words are encountered the students can activate this previous knowledge in breaking down a new word to find its meaning. By being taught how to use morphemes as a tool, students can break down new words and add them to their vocabulary.

Another form of active, explicit instruction this article addresses is the use of graphic organizers. Nichols, Rickelman, and Taylor discuss many different types of graphic organizers that would be useful in actively engaging students. They state that, "the type of text structure can be established by familiarizing students with a standard set of general organizers and establishing routines for their use" (p. 212). By learning how

to set up and use graphic organizers, students will be able to use them independently when learning new words. Some of the graphic organizers discussed in this article are KWL, “an acronym for What we Know, What we Want to know, and What we Learned” (p. 213).

A vocabulary self-awareness chart that allows students and teachers to keep track of vocabulary words in a subject and assess if they have learned the words or not through a check-list type of style is another tool that can be used. Nichols, Rickelman, and Taylor (2009) state that by using this kind of chart, “students can self-monitor and focus on terms for which they cannot give a definition or an example; teachers can provide additional instruction and support for terms students in the class find challenging” (p. 216-217). A final actively engaging activity this article addresses as a good way to teach vocabulary is the use of vocabulary cards. Students can use these cards as flashcards, which is an old, but effective way of teaching new words to students.

“Each of these strategies semantic feature analysis, the Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart, and vocabulary cards helps students learn words explicitly by connecting terms to more than a dictionary or glossary definition” (Nichols, et al., 2009, p.218). Nichols, Rickelman, and Taylor (2009) addressed forms of vocabulary instruction that through their own research are beneficial for students' acquiring new words in classroom environments. The students use their prior knowledge in all of these types of activities when learning new vocabulary; this helps them become connected on a deeper level with words being introduced for the first time.

The idea that students participate in their acquisition of new words is appropriate for students in early childhood. Young students need to be active in their learning in order to stay focused long enough to retain the information at hand. The many different types of instruction this article provides, as efficient ways to teach new words, seem to be simple enough to involve in an early education classroom. Activating a students' schema was mentioned in Nichols, Rickelman, and Taylor (2009) as a good way to introduce a new word into instruction. This made sense, as students are able to better comprehend stories when there is some previous knowledge before reading. It is understandable that when learning new words, using students' previous knowledge would be beneficial.

A study done by (Goodson, Wolf, Bell, Turner, & Finney, 2010), on the effectiveness of using a vocabulary program to help improve the development of students' vocabulary also addressed the use of explicit instruction. The study took a school with low-level achievement scores and introduced them to a program designed to help accelerate their vocabulary acquisition. The program is called, Kindergarten PAVEd for Success, or K-PAV. (Goodson et al., 2010), state that K-PAVE was,

built around three components that support the acquisition of vocabulary in young students: instruction on a large set of thematically related target words through provision of definitions, examples, and visual images and through embedded instruction using storybook reading, extension activities, and teacher conversation; Interactive Book Reading to build vocabulary and comprehension

skills; and Adult-Child Conversations to build vocabulary and oral language skills (p.1).

The authors of this study wanted to look at the progression of the students' learning of expressive vocabulary, listening comprehension, and academic knowledge. This study included 1,000 kindergarten student participants from 35 school districts in Mississippi. In each of the schools that participated in the study, randomly selected classrooms used the K-PAVE program. Specific training on how to teach students new words and how to develop other skills of comprehension using the K-PAVE program was given to the teachers in this study. When measuring vocabulary in this study, students were tested on their expressive vocabulary, which meant they needed to recall a vocabulary word and know the meaning of the word.

This study also used explicit vocabulary instruction when teaching their kindergarten students. Like the previous article, this study fully engaged students with the vocabulary words through explicit instruction. These students, however, were engaged in their learning through different ways than the previous article mentioned.

As part of K-PAVE, teachers are trained in five strategies for the Explicit Vocabulary Instruction component: quick definitions, novel-name nameless-category (N3C) strategy, repeated exposure to the words embedded in book reading, extension activities, and teacher-student conversations or discussions using the words (Goodson et al., 2010, p.54).

In this study, they gave the teachers ten target words to address while teaching which usually revolved around a theme. Students were then read a story multiple times,

each time reinforcing the vocabulary words allotted for that time. There were also a lot of discussions between students as well as with the teacher. The students were all encouraged to use these vocabulary words as much as possible in their talking with one another. Another way the teachers were to instruct their students was by giving the students quick and simple definitions that they would be able to understand. The Novel-Name Nameless-Category was another way to help instruct new vocabulary. This report states that this, "strategy involves placing a picture or object that is unknown to the students among pictures or objects with which the students are already familiar. Students begin to associate the new word with a new object or picture" (Goodson et al., 2010, p. 55).

Goodson et al. (2010) stated how this study impacted the vocabulary acquisition of the Kindergarten students in this report, "The standardized effect size was 0.14 standard deviation, which corresponds to an additional month of growth in vocabulary during kindergarten" (p. 69). This study saw improvements in students' vocabulary using explicit instruction.

By using explicit instruction, this report showed an improvement of students' vocabulary word knowledge. The activities used to instruct vocabulary to students would be beneficial for students in younger grades. The use of visuals, discussions, and repeated readings were all ideas used to teach vocabulary words.

Another article that addressed similar strategies to the article above was by Scott Greenwood. Greenwood (2002) discussed direct instruction, discussed planning for instruction by stating, "In planning vocabulary instruction, teachers need to use

techniques that actively involve students with newly introduced words” (p.259). This is similar to the articles previously reviewed because it mentioned active involvement from students.

Greenwood (2002) includes the use of word webs and vocabulary cards as effective ways to engage students. These two activities discussed in this article were also discussed in the previous articles reviewed. This article continued to discuss the benefits of trying to relate new vocabulary words with the students' previous knowledge. By beginning with comprehension and using previous experiences of the student, he further states that, “Vocabulary instruction, therefore, should help students make the connections between unknown words and the knowledge they already possess.” (p. 259). These articles show a consistent relationship between using active involvement, hands on work with words, and the use of a students' prior knowledge as key factors in learning new vocabulary.

There are similarities seen between the articles reviewed about explicit instruction. One similarity included is the use of visuals when learning new vocabulary words. Another strategy was engaging students through the use of extension activities. Some other strategies seen multiple times in each article included: graphic organizers, conversations among students and teachers, and flashcards. A final similarity is activating prior knowledge of the student. Strategies like these should be seen when looking at the vocabulary component in the Reading Street's Basal Reader, because they have been shown in multiple studies to be beneficial learning tools.

### **Drama & Direct Instruction**

Research that agrees with direct instruction, but suggests a more artistic addition when engaging the students as active learners is seen in an article by Alber and Foil (2003). In this article they suggest that, "Using drama activities to teach target vocabulary words can be an effective and motivating instructional practice for all students, especially those with learning problems" (p. 22). By creating a memorable experience when introducing a new word, students recall the word meanings later on. Alber and Foil (2003) also mention that through becoming actively involved, students are engaged with the new word and its meaning. Not only would a teacher introduce a new word with a memorable experience, Alber and Foil also suggest that the teacher, "Demonstrate a physical action or dramatic movement that represents the meaning of the word, and have students imitate that action" (p. 23). By becoming actively engaged the student is able to recall the vocabulary word better. The students in Alber and Foil's study used vocabulary words in writing and through speech. This was a strategy seen in previous reviewed articles.

Continuing on actively engaging instruction, an article by Nile Stanley (2004) agrees with the previous article. Engaging students through movements when learning vocabulary words is discussed in this article. Stanley (2004) addressed adding poetry as an art form when introducing new vocabulary words. In Stanley's article, children are writing poetry along with reading the poetry. Stanley addressed the need for students to be actively engaged in words and reading. He mentioned that by forming movements with the words in the poem students recognized words better in the future. It is also

suggested that students engage in poetry writing. By being engaged in the process of learning these new words in the context of poetry, students are forming a better understanding of the word's meaning. Just as we have seen in previous studies, by getting the children involved actively with new words their vocabulary knowledge becomes more advanced.

### **Explicit Instruction and Read Alouds:**

According to previous research, explicit instruction has proven to be necessary when teaching vocabulary. The following articles address different strategies for explicit instruction and add other types of instruction when teaching students new vocabulary words.

Two teachers, Choen and Byrnes (2007), address explicit instruction, read alouds, and repeated readings. The teachers completed an action research study where two different procedures to assess vocabulary learning were used. The teachers chose to use, "read-aloud trade books containing targeted vocabulary words with daily direct word learning strategies. This was compared to a traditional definitional approach with 12 bilingual and 4 monolingual children." (p. 1).

Three approaches to vocabulary instruction were addressed in this study. The definitional vocabulary strategy approach chose words and gave them to the students. Students were told to find the word's definition in a dictionary, and use them in a sentence of their own. The contextual vocabulary strategy approach is where adults read a number of books aloud to a student and the new vocabulary words are taken from

context. The final approach, direct vocabulary learning, is the explicit approach where students are taught new words and taught strategies for word learning.

With these approaches, a study developed using two groups: a definitional group and a group with contextual and direct instruction. Choen and Byrnes (2007) found students who were in the contextual group learned more words because they were using it in daily discussions with one another and in their writings.

Choen and Byrnes (2007) also provided evidence of the benefits of teaching new vocabulary through a specific direct, explicit approach. By providing the students with an explanation of a new vocabulary word and active engagement with a word, students retained the new information. Choen and Byrnes (2007) introduced a new form of vocabulary instruction found to improve students' ability to learn new words, contextual teaching.

Continuing with the contextual teachings of vocabulary, "A Closer Look," (2004) discussed this strategy also. Stated in this article was, "Reading aloud to students is another way they learn unfamiliar words. Teachers should talk with students about the story before, during, and after reading it aloud," (p. 23). This article continues to support this type of contextual teaching as an effective way to teach vocabulary.

Kindle (2009) also addressed how the use of contextual teaching is an effective way to teach students new words.

Kindle began this article by quoting Biemiller, Boot, Bravo, Heibert, and Pearson (p.20) saying, "Reading aloud to children provides a powerful context for word learning" (p.1). Kindle chose four out of six primary grades in a small private school and

observed ways of teaching new vocabulary to students during read-alouds. Throughout the study, there were a number of strategies observed. Kindle did not provide evidence of students' improvements in learning new vocabulary through reading aloud, but focused on the number of different strategies being used to introduce new words.

From this article, Kindle provided a list of what she saw teachers using as they were reading aloud and introducing new vocabulary. She gave a list of nine strategies in this article, "questioning, providing definition, providing synonym, providing examples, clarifying or correcting students' responses, extending a student-generated definition, labeling, imagery, and morphemic analysis" (p.205-206). All strategies were effective ways to teach vocabulary, but during this study some confusion was noted. Some of the teachers taught the vocabulary words as they saw fit by personally pulling words out of stories they thought the students might find difficult.

Some recommendations for better instructional strategies and less confusion while reading were listed in this article as well. Strategies mentioned to be used before reading were, "Identify words for instruction, consider the type of word learning required, identify appropriate strategies, having a plan B, and infuse the words into the classroom" (Kindle, 2009, p.210).

Kindle continues to support the idea of explicit, direct instruction stating, "Effective vocabulary instruction includes teaching new words directly by providing explicit, clearly written definitions and well-chosen examples and nonexamples, as well as helping students learn words indirectly by teaching word-learning strategies students can use to learn words on their own" (p. 23). A type of explicit instruction discussed in

this article is reconstructing vocabulary tasks. With this strategy, the student rewrote the definition of a new word that is different from the dictionary's definition. This is another form of active engagement of the student, as discussed in earlier articles on explicit instruction. Kindle mentioned strategies for actively engaging students, "Can include using new words in sentences, matching words with definitions, sorting examples and non-examples of new concepts, or discussing what new words mean with classmates" (p.24). The student has used the new vocabulary word in a number of ways making this new word a part of the student's permanent vocabulary.

Additional support for explicit instruction with active engagement as effective means of instruction for vocabulary is found in this article. It also includes read-alouds as a way to introduce and teach new vocabulary to students. An additional strategy introduced by Kindle is repeated exposure. It is mentioned that, "repeated readings can help young children's vocabulary growth," (p. 23). Further research done on vocabulary instruction, shows repeated readings as an effective instructional tool.

In Reading Psychology journal an article was written by Biemiller (2003) continuing to discuss repeated readings. Biemiller supported repeated readings as ways to expand and learn new vocabulary. "In this study, stories were re-read three times with the same 8 or 9 words being explained with each reading" (Biemiller 2003, p. 326). Students in this grouping showed large gains in vocabulary acquisition compared to the control group. Once again, it is evident that there are benefits to reading aloud and using repeated readings as a tool for vocabulary instruction.

Biemiller (2003) also says in this article that, "There is evidence that reading books orally to children several times and explaining 5–10 word meanings while reading can be effective with primary level children" (p. 330). This is a combination of reading aloud, repeated readings, and explicit instruction. .

All of the articles reviewed suggest that they have found benefits in reading aloud to students when teaching vocabulary. They have also included some benefits seen in directly teaching the meaning of a set group of words while reading aloud to students. These repeated findings in the review give a list of things to look for in the Reading Street 2010 Basal Reader. There should be some list of vocabulary words, a way to use direct instruction to teach the meanings of these words, and a story given to the teacher to read-aloud containing these vocabulary words. In addition, this reading series should include repeated reading in its program where the vocabulary words are present.

### **Read-alouds and Repeated Readings:**

"Previous studies of teaching vocabulary (word meanings) using story books in the primary grades reported gains of 20%–25% of word meanings taught" (Biemiller and Boote 2003 pg.1). This quote began an article entitled *An Effective Method for Building Meaningful Vocabulary in Primary Grades*. Biemiller and Boote (2003) continued to address ways to teach vocabulary effectively. Their research study tied together the three constant themes of effective vocabulary instruction, which are repeated reading, reading aloud, and explicit instruction.

Biemiller and Boote (2003) addressed a study done on repeated reading and vocabulary acquisition. They studied grades K-3 in a Canadian Catholic school system.

The teachers did repeated reading with the explanation of new vocabulary words. The study was conducted to find out if the number of times a story read aloud repeatedly had an effect on new vocabulary words. All books chosen in this study were narrative fiction. Before the study began, students were given a pretest. Once stories were read and explanations were given, the students were given a posttest on vocabulary meanings. Biemiller and Boote (2003) saw that, "average gains of 12% of word meanings were obtained using repeated reading. Adding word explanations added a 10% gain for a total gain of 22%. Reading books two or four times had different effects in different grades, with kindergarten children profiting most from four readings, whereas by Grade 2 there was no apparent benefit of four versus two readings, no effect on gains due to pretesting was found" (p. 50). There were benefits from repeated readings in this study, the amount of times the reading needed to be done, however, varied by grade level.

Biemiller and Boote (2003) had shown students' gains in vocabulary acquisition through repeated readings and explanations given by the teacher during a read-aloud. It was interesting to see how different grade levels had showed a difference based on the amount of times the stories were read aloud.

### **What to look for from the Research:**

When deciding how well the Reading Street's 2010 Basal Reader is grounded in research the repeated findings in research will be used. Using consistent findings on types of vocabulary instruction will help formulate a list of items to look for. There is a constant theme of strategies used in each of the articles reviewed. When reviewing the Reading Street's program, one should look for ways of guiding explicit instruction,

utilizing repeated readings of stories with a set word list, and implementing read-alouds.

With the read-alouds the teacher can engage with the students by beginning to directly instruct the meanings of words. There should also be some usage of visuals, games, or other ways to engage the students in the process of learning new words seen in the Reading Street 2010 series.

## **Chapter III: Methodology**

### **Setting:**

The Basal Reading Series by Scott Foreman's Reading Street will be analyzed to see if the vocabulary sections and guidance for instruction include the research based strategies that are discussed in the review of literature section of this paper. The Second Grade Scott Foresman Reading Street 2010 Teacher's Edition will provide the instructional materials reviewed in this study.

### **Study Design:**

A checklist was developed and used as a tool to discover if research was used in the Teacher's Edition of the Scott Foresman's Reading Street Basal Reader. (See Table #1 p.26). The Second Grade Teacher's edition was then looked at closely for words, guidance, pictures, and ideas that relate to the types of strategies found in research as effective vocabulary instruction. Each vocabulary lesson from this series was examined to see what types of strategies were being used and how well they were matched with the research. The checklist was constructed based upon the effective strategies mentioned in the research found on effective vocabulary instruction. When a strategy was mentioned in the Teacher's Edition and matched the research strategies found, it received a checkmark for that specific area. If the Teacher's Edition did not show that particular strategy then no checkmark was given. Next to each checkmark, the words, frequently, sometimes, or irregularly are shown. This is to represent how often these strategies are seen throughout the series. By comparing the research to what is in the Scott Foresman's

Reading Street we will be able to answer our question, how well is the Reading Street's 2010 vocabulary reading program grounded in research?

## **Chapter IV: Results**

The teacher's manual used in the Reading Street's reading program was read to see how it guided the teacher to instruct vocabulary. There was a comparison done between the suggested teaching strategies and materials given with the reading series and research done on effective vocabulary instruction. The checklist included research based forms of good vocabulary instruction that helped in deciding if the vocabulary component of the series was grounded in research.

By looking through the Reading Street's Teacher's Manual there was quite a bit of guidance and material when it came to the vocabulary component of instruction. The manual provided the instructor with many ideas and strategies found in the research reviewed. This series matched six out of eight areas under the "Explicit, Direct instruction" section of the checklist. There were 2 out of 5 strategies matched in the "Read Aloud" section of the checklist. There was one out of the two strategies matched with the "Repeated Reading" section of the checklist. All research based strategies found in the series were either seen frequently or sometimes, but never at irregular intervals.

Table #1: Research Based Strategies Compared to Strategies used in Scott Foresman

<b>Research Based Strategies Title</b>	<b>Research Based Strategies Subgroup</b>	<b>Does Scott Foresman’s Teacher Edition Use This Strategy?</b>
Explicit, Direct Instruction		
	Activate Prior Knowledge	✓ frequently
	Use of Graphic Organizers	✓ frequently
	Vocabulary Cards	✓ sometimes
	Using words in a sentence	✓ frequently
	Forming new definitions in own words	
	Acting Out Words	
	Visuals are used with vocabulary words (videos, pictures, etc.)	✓ sometimes
	Games or extension activities using vocabulary words	✓ sometimes
Read-Alouds (contextual Instruction)		
	Vocabulary words derived from story prior to reading	✓ frequently
	Vocabulary words taught out of context in story	
	Continued discussion with words during read aloud between teacher	

<b>Research Based Strategies Title</b>	<b>Research Based Strategies Subgroup</b>	<b>Does Scott Foresman’s Teacher Edition Use This Strategy?</b>
	Continued discussion with words during read aloud between students	
Repeated Readings		
	Repeat reading with vocabulary words at least two times	✓ frequently
	The vocabulary is being revisited each time the story is read.	

## Chapter V: Discussion and Conclusions

Through research provided, I was able to answer the question driving this research, "How well is the vocabulary component in Reading Street's 2010 Basal Reading Program Grounded in Research?"

There was a lot of information for the teacher to guide him or her during their instruction of vocabulary in this series. This program addressed three separate types of vocabulary in its instruction: oral vocabulary, reading vocabulary, and academic vocabulary. Each week the series had chosen sets of vocabulary words for each category.

The oral vocabulary was referred to as the Amazing Words section. In this section, a group of eight words deemed to be beyond the students' reading ability were chosen. Three out of the eight words were used in a song, which was given as a teaching tool in the book titled, *Sing with Me*. In this oral vocabulary section, a set routine was provided for the teacher when introducing and using these words daily. Not all of the words were introduced all at once. There was three, two, or one word introduced throughout the four days during which the instruction took place. In the routine given in the Teacher's edition three steps were involved. The steps were: introduce, demonstrate, and apply. In the introduce section, the teacher is advised to relate the word being introduced to either the song or story that the students are familiar with. In other words, the teacher is using the word in context. Then the book supplies the teacher with a "child-friendly" definition for that word. In the second section, the teacher is given examples to provide that show the meaning of the word. In the final section, apply the teacher is given multiple questions to ask the students using the word being introduced.

These three sections provided a systematic guide to how to introduce and teach these words. Here we are seeing that the researched based idea of direct instruction is being used. The teacher is directly teaching the words to the students. Another part of the Teacher's Edition gives the teacher guidance with providing more questions for the students to answer. The students are expected to use these amazing words in response to the question. Further engagement is involved where the students are asked to finish a sentence by plugging in an amazing word taught that day. By plugging these words into sentences, the teacher is asking students to become actively engaged and use these words in sentences of their own.

Each day provides the teacher with these steps as to how to introduce and instruct these types of oral vocabulary words. The eight words selected are taught days 1-4 and are assessed on day 5 using an oral check in which the teacher asks questions to the students using the amazing words and the students are to respond to the question.

The reading vocabulary part of this reading series is called Lesson Vocabulary. For this, the Teacher's Manual provides a list of six to seven words that are included in the weekly story provided in the students' reading books. These words are introduced before the story is read. The Teacher's Edition also provides steps on how to introduce and instruct these types of vocabulary words. These words are introduced all at once on the first day of instruction. They are used during three of the five days of instruction. The fourth day of instruction there was no review of these words. The fifth day was the assessment of these words using conversational questions with the teacher.

There were many different types of ways to work with these words. Some examples seen in the books were making a "Word Rating Chart," which sorts the vocabulary words into categories that are labeled words I know, words I have seen, and words I don't know. This is seen in our checklist under the graphic organizer section. The students are being asked to use a visual during this explicit instruction to help remember new vocabulary. Another activity provided for the teacher to directly provide the students with definitions of each word. There was also an activity where students were to use the given words in a sentence. Another activity provided the students with their vocabulary words and gave them the opportunity to look the meanings to these words in the glossary located in the back of their reading books. This series also provides the teacher with vocabulary cards which have both a picture and the vocabulary word written on the card. On the back of these cards, there are definitions and the words used in sentences. These cards, however, are not provided for the Lesson Vocabulary words until the middle of the reading series. Under the games, extension activities and vocabulary card section on the checklist, it is only listed "sometimes." This is because the vocabulary cards for these words are not introduced until the middle of the reading series. One final way to review these types of vocabulary words was using technology. This series had a website where the students were able to use these words in a vocabulary trivia game. This game asks the students to match the correct vocabulary word with the sentence, question, or synonym given. There is also a matching game where the students match the vocabulary word with its definition. This activity is provided on the Scott

Foresman's website for the third and fifth day of instruction. These are visuals, videos, and pictures and are listed as being used frequently throughout the series on the checklist.

The final vocabulary given to the teachers in this reading series is the academic vocabulary. This section provides the teacher with a list of words that are seen in reading and language arts concepts. Using these words, the students are asked to activate prior knowledge and tell what they know about these words on the first day of instruction. The teacher then is guided to clarify the meaning behind these words. The students are asked to carry out these types of vocabulary words through their readings. For example, one academic vocabulary word in this edition is sequence. Once the students are introduced to the word they are later expected to perform the task of sequencing their story they read on days two and three of instruction.

The Reading Streets 2010 series matched 8 out of 15 elements found in research as effective ways of vocabulary instruction. There were explicit and direct ways of instruction, read alouds, and repeated readings seen in this series.

The teacher's edition suggested that the teacher activate the students' prior knowledge when introducing new words. This was one strategy mentioned in previous research as an effective way to introduce new vocabulary words. The teacher is asked to do this with the students when using all three of the categories of vocabulary. The teacher is even provided with questions to guide the students into using prior knowledge. This strategy is checked on the checklist and is used frequently throughout the course of the series.

Also discussed in research, was direct and explicit instruction. The checklist used specific types of direct and explicit instruction. The teacher's edition provided the teacher with many different ways to use explicit and direct instruction of the vocabulary. Each type of vocabulary addressed in the teacher's edition included a way to introduce the word directly and explicitly. There were different engaging ways for students to learn new words in the series as well. For the lesson vocabulary and the amazing words, the edition gave fill in the blank sentences where the vocabulary placed in the appropriate sentence. In addition, there was the use of graphic organizers when introducing the lesson vocabulary. The graphic organizers were mentioned in research as an active way to help students learn new words. The vocabulary cards introduced half way through the reading series provided students with visuals. The cards were just for the lesson vocabulary words and as mentioned before, did not come into use until halfway through the series. These cards were mentioned in research as a good way to promote vocabulary learning, and are seen in the checklist. They however are marked as seen only sometimes, because they are brought into the instruction half way through the series. The series also had a technology component that allowed students to use the vocabulary words in an engaging way through games.

The repeated readings and read alouds addressed as forms of effective vocabulary instruction in research were seen in this series. The teacher is given a set list of vocabulary words called lesson vocabulary. These words are seen in the students' main selection story. The teacher is given an audio of the story for students to listen to and follow along simulating a read aloud. The teacher's edition provided time during two

days during the week for students to repeat listening and reading along with the main selection story. This gives the students a chance to hear the vocabulary words being used in context repeatedly which research has found to be effective. This was found every week, and was checked on the checklist as being seen frequently throughout the series.

Through the guidance in the teacher's manual, activities and materials were given to help provide students with effective vocabulary instruction backed by research. Teachers were given a lot of information about how to introduce and teach vocabulary to their students. The large amount of information that was given in this reading series may have caused some limitations to this study.

The teacher's edition provides the teacher with many effective research backed ways of instructing vocabulary. Limitations to this study are seen because although this series provides teachers with this information and these activities, there is no way to know if the teacher is using all of the information in the manual when forming instruction. Teachers who use this series will have guidance grounded in research as to how to instruct their students, but there is no way of knowing if the teacher is implementing all that is given in this series. A suggestion for future research would be to observe how different teachers use what is provided for them with this series. Now that it is confirmed that this series is well backed in research, a step that can be taken next is to find out how well teachers are utilizing the information given to them. Future research could take different classrooms and observe if teachers are using the suggestions given in the series during their teaching. How much of the suggested research backed vocabulary instruction is being used in the classroom during instruction?

It can be assumed that if the vocabulary component of this series is well grounded in research that other components will be as well. More research can be done on other components of the series as other components may not be as well backed by research.

### **Implications for Practice**

Basal reading programs are prevalent in many education systems throughout the country. These series help schools to be consistent throughout the grade levels. It is important for administrators to know the research behind certain types of instruction. By familiarizing themselves with research, administrators can compare reading series like the Scott Foresman's Reading Street, to help decide which program is best grounded in research.

It is also important for our educators to realize that although we may have certain ways we see fit for instruction, there may have been new findings in research that the Basal-reading program may be providing. It is important for educators to see that this program provides guidance and other materials for effective vocabulary instruction. Knowing this, educators should utilize all of the materials and ways of instruction to the best of their abilities. This will allow the students to be given proper, research-based instruction.

By knowing the strong research based background on vocabulary this series has, teachers can improve instruction just by studying and implementing what the teacher's manual provides them. In addition, administrators can push to have teachers use this type of instruction in the classroom, because there has been research supporting it. If

educators utilize these suggested forms of vocabulary instruction, students will grow their vocabulary exponentially which will likely benefit overall literacy in the future.

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