

Some Vocabulary Resources

Word Consciousness

For those interested in learning more about word consciousness, see:
https://www.academia.edu/1781324/Developing_word_consciousness

How to Raise Word Conscious Kids

For information on raising word conscious kids, modeling a love for and interest in vocabulary to encourage our students to become sensitive to the language they see and hear, watch:
<https://youtu.be/J6eQmc9crVU>

Oral Language Development: Expanding Vocabulary

For information of supporting oral language:
<https://www.readingrockets.org/article/oral-language-expanding-your-childs-vocabulary>

The Magic of Words

For information on early vocabulary development, including some common myths, see:
<https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/periodicals/neuman.pdf>

Questions?

For additional information regarding the Brookfield Public Schools **WOW! Program**, please see the **WOW! Program** on the Assistant Superintendent's web page at

<https://www.brookfield.k12.ct.us/district/assistant-superintendent>
or
contact

Dr. Maureen Ruby,
Assistant Superintendent
at
rubym@brookfieldps.org



"Create Your Tomorrow"

Brookfield Public Schools



District and Community Word of the Week "WOW!" Program

Brookfield Public Schools' Mission Statement

To inspire, challenge, and prepare all students to live meaningful and productive lives.

Introduction

We are very excited to launch the **Word of the Week**, or **WOW! Program**, in the Brookfield Public Schools and Community.

The Brookfield Public School's **WOW! Program** is designed to support our students in developing a robust vocabulary, a love for words, and an appreciation and awareness of language. **WOW!** will help our students to develop "word consciousness" and become "Word Wizards."

Vocabulary plays a huge role in the lives of children and adults alike. A strong vocabulary supports our learning about our world, understanding new ideas we encounter, and engagement with and enjoyment of all the language that we hear and read. Having a rich vocabulary is essential for good communication, "getting" the humor in puns and wordplay, being successful in interviews, school, the work place and social situations, and in all forms of writing. Research has evidenced that there is a strong relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension. In fact, from research we know the following:

- Kindergarten students enter school with sizable differences in the number of words known.
- First grade vocabulary predicts high-school reading achievement.
- Once established, the differences in vocabulary knowledge among students is stable without implementing vocabulary support.

Q: What is *word consciousness*?

A: *Word consciousness* is a general awareness of words and their meanings and is a feature of language acquisition and vocabulary development. Through a partnership with families and the community, the district's **WOW! Program** will encourage students to notice words within and beyond their school environment and to become curious about vocabulary.

Q: What does *Word Wizards* mean?

A: We know from extensive vocabulary research that students need frequent encounters with words, in a variety of contexts, for those words to become "owned" by the learners. Students need opportunities to encounter words learned in school in contexts beyond the classroom. One way to focus attention on vocabulary words is for students to engage with words in their homes and communities. In this way, students learn that vocabulary learning and usage is not just a "school thing." When students encounter and use vocabulary beyond the classroom, there is a higher chance of the words becoming a permanent part of their vocabulary. Isabel Beck, a vocabulary expert, initially coined the term *Word Wizards* as a "beyond-school component" of a vocabulary program. Students gained points by bringing evidence of seeing, hearing, or using target vocabulary words outside of the classroom. Families and community members can become valuable partners in supporting Brookfield's students in developing their vocabularies and their appreciation for words and improving their *word consciousness* by supporting a *Word Wizards* strategy in Brookfield.

Q: So what is the **WOW! Program**?

A: Each week, the Brookfield Public Schools will have a "**Word of the Week**" or **WOW!**. The word will be introduced with the morning announcements, be posted in our schools and on our web page, and used in a variety of ways in our classrooms. Each week we will provide our community partners with a link to downloadable **WOW!** vocabulary page to print out and display at their place of business.

Brookfield students will be challenged to find the **WOW!** in books, magazines, papers, conversations; on TV, radio, and the Internet; and **in the community** – stores, restaurants, places of worship, and businesses.

Students will be encouraged to use the **WOW!** in speaking and writing in school, at home, and in the community. As **Word Wizards**, our students are invited to report their "findings" and "discoveries" of the **WOW! Program** to their teachers, their parents and community partners.

Q: How can you become a **WOW! Community Partner**?

A: To become a **WOW! Community Partner**, the only thing you need to do is display the **WOW!** printout in your place of business. We will email the **WOW!** printout to you each week! You could place it in your window, at checkouts, on the bus, in your waiting room, on a car window – or anywhere that you desire. Anything you might choose to do to support this effort beyond displaying the **WOW!** is welcomed and totally up to you.