**05 - PIL – Vocabulary instruction - introduction**

**TRANSCRIPT**

- For children, vocabulary knowledge means understanding and using words of different forms: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, and having a word repertoire for precisely representing thoughts, needs, interests and ideas. Children's precision of word use increases from toddlerhood through to adulthood as their word knowledge develops. An object may first be described as big, later as large, then gigantic and finally as monstrous. Although big, large, gigantic and monstrous mean more or less the same thing, these word variations give children greater precision in representing their thoughts. Children's vocabulary sizes are strongly predicted by their word exposures. Young children learn words from what they hear. Older children and adults learn words from what they read. Because the language children experience in the world around them contributes greatly to the amount and type of word learning, considerable variation exists in children's word knowledge. Why is vocabulary so important? Words are how children express themselves, gather information, play dramatically, and explore the world around them. Building a strong foundation of concepts and the words that label them is crucial because children learn new words more easily if they already have a solid bank of words to build on. And finally, words are what children comprehend when they read at later ages. Vocabulary knowledge during early childhood is positively related to later skills in reading comprehension. Children learn vocabulary words in two ways. Many words are learned incidentally, through overhearing, play, conversations and social interactions. However, everyday talk is inadequate to sustain effective vocabulary development. Some words, those that are very important for gaining meaning and developing sophisticated language need to be explicitly taught using child friendly definitions, definitions that children can easily understand. Research findings point to the need to create classrooms that support and encourage sophisticated word usage through a rich oral language environment, including independent and shared story reading. Storybooks provide children with the words they can use to explore both basic and abstract vocabulary concepts.

- The following is a modelled vocabulary session.

- Today we're going to read a new book. It's titled "Funky Chicken Chooks in Space." As I'm reading this story, I want you to listen for three very special words: wonderful, astonished, flourished. "Funky Chicken Chooks in Space" written by Chris Collin illustrated by Megan Kitchin. On a warm summer's day, out beyond Humpty Doo, Funky Chicken was dreaming of things he could do. He woke with a start and a brilliant thought of becoming the first ever Chook astronaut! A spectacular voyage he'd make just in case he had any family living in space. He'd fly around the planets and have a good look, to seek out an extra terrestrial Chook. The first thing to do was to warn Bob and Sue of this wonderful trip he was planning to do. Wonderful means something is very, very good and makes you feel happy. Sue was astonished: "But this is absurd! "I don't know what gets in the head of that bird!" Let's say the word that means something is very, very good and makes you feel happy. Wonderful. Everybody has and does things they think are wonderful. I think going to the beach for a holiday with my family is wonderful. I'm going to tell you about some things. If you think it is very, very good and would make you happy say "That's wonderful." If you don't think it's wonderful don't say anything. A camping trip to the beach. Cleaning your room. Seeing a beautiful rainbow. Can you tell us about a time when you did something that was truly wonderful. Where were you and what were you doing? What's the word you can say if something is very, very good and makes you feel happy?

- It is important that a child revisits and practices new vocabulary words on a daily basis. A child needs many repetitions and exposures to a word in order to learn it.