

## chapter 9

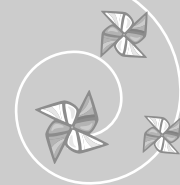


# Words Are Wonderful!

Being curious about the meaning of an unknown word is a hallmark of those who develop large vocabularies. Students become interested and enthusiastic about words when instruction is rich and lively.

—Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002, p. 13

**M**aking vocabulary instruction and activities as engaging and lively as possible has been one of my top priorities in writing this book.



Children enjoy listening for the words in Three Read-Aloud Words and getting to shout, “Stop! *Catastrophe!*” when you read a text where **catastrophe** occurs. They are intrigued by the sports articles you read to them and use to engage them in thinking about word parts. Their eyes are riveted to the board as you slowly write the letters of a word and they try to be the first one to guess the word you are writing. Introducing vocabulary with real, virtual, or visual experiences is important not only because this kind of experience is how children learn words best but also because they respond enthusiastically to these experiences. Talking with classmates to group words, create word webs, and plan pantomimes are social opportunities most children enjoy. Promoting a “Words Are Wonderful!” attitude has been a hidden agenda throughout this book because ultimately the attitudes your students develop toward vocabulary will determine how many new words and meanings they add to their vocabulary stores. Most of the new words students acquire as they go through school will be words they meet in their reading and develop meanings for using pictures, context, and word parts. It is not enough to know how to figure out the meanings of new words that are encountered while reading. The children have to want to do it! In addition to the suggestions in previous chapters for making vocabulary instruction as engaging as possible, here are some other suggestions for promoting word wonder.

## Model Your Word Wonder During Teacher Read-Aloud

Reading aloud to your students every day is critical to vocabulary growth because children who are exposed to lots of wonderful and various books and magazines are motivated to do more independent reading. Chapter 2 suggested that including a Three Read-Aloud Words lesson each week would teach children how to use pictures, context, and word parts to figure out the meanings of new words. You can get more vocabulary mileage from your read-aloud time if you stop occasionally and marvel at the wonderful choice of words the author used. In *The Bridge to Terebithia*, Katherine Patterson (1977) describes a happy feeling as “joy jiggling inside” (p. 101).

Pausing for just a moment, rereading the phrase, and marveling at how the words let you feel what the characters are feeling help your students

become aware of the power of words and how great authors choose words to paint pictures and bring you into the story. In addition, each time you stop, reread, and marvel, you are demonstrating to your students that you think words are truly wonderful.

Some books call special attention to words by presenting them in humorous or unusual ways. Countless children have delighted in Amelia Bedelia's literal attempts to dress a chicken and draw the drapes. *Donovan's Word Jar* (DeGross, 1994) is a story about a boy who becomes fascinated with words and starts collecting unusual words by writing them on slips of paper and sticking them in his word jar. Many teachers read this book to their students and then present their students with word jars for their word collections. In other classrooms, the class has a word jar. Children who find words so good they don't want to forget them jot them down on a colored strip of paper, initial them, and put them in the jar. From time to time, the words in the jar get dumped out and the person who contributed that word explains why it is such a wonderful word.

The classic read-aloud book that teachers read aloud to promote word wonder is Norton Juster's *The Phantom Tollbooth* (1961). With the Spelling Bee, the watchdog Tock, and the Humbug, Milo, the main character in *The Phantom Tollbooth*, journeys through Dictionapolis, feasting on square meals and synonym buns. Older elementary children delight in this fantasy and find the word play truly awesome. Sharing books with children that celebrate and play with words is just one more way to show your students you are a genuine word lover.

### Classroom Word Jar



Here are just a few of the many books that highlight words and word play:

*Brian Wildsmith's Amazing World of Words* by Brian Wildsmith

*Double Trouble in Walla Walla* by Andrew Clements

*Tangle Town* by Kurt Cyrus

*Night Knight* by Harriet Ziefert

All the Amelia Bedelia books by Peggy Parrish

*The King Who Rained, A Chocolate Moose for Dinner,*  
and other books by Fred Gwynn



## Model Choosing Wonderful Words for Your Budding Authors

After modeling your wonder at the awesome words authors choose to paint pictures and put the reader right into the action, capitalize on your students' enthusiasm for "just the right word" by modeling how they, as authors, can use truly awesome words in their writing. Teach some mini-lessons in which you use boring, common, not-very-descriptive words in your first draft and then, noticing these "tired" words, revise your draft by replacing the "dead" words with more "lively" ones.

Don't tell the children your intent ahead of time. Just write a piece as you normally write during a writing mini-lesson. When you finish your draft, have the class read it with you and ask them if they can think of any ways you can make your writing even better. If no one suggests replacing some of your "overused" words, you will need to suggest it yourself.

"I notice that I have some common words here that don't create very vivid pictures. **Good**, for example, doesn't even begin to describe how wonderful the cookies were. I think I will cross out **good** and replace it with **scrumptious**."

Continue replacing some of your boring, overused, or inexact words, eliciting suggestions from your students about which words need replacing and what words to use in replacing them.

Once you have modeled replacing boring words with more lively words in several mini-lessons, ask your students to try this revising strategy in one of their pieces. Have them work in partners as you circulate, giving help as needed. When they have had a few minutes to revise, select a few good examples of revision to share with the whole class.

“Show, don’t tell” is a basic guideline for good writing. Unfortunately, many children (and adults) are not sure what this guideline means. To teach your students what it means, you have to practice what you preach and *show* them how to “Show, don’t tell” instead of taking the far easier road of *telling* them to “Show, don’t tell”!

To teach children to replace “telling” words with words and sentences that “show,” write some pieces in which you purposely tell rather than show and then revise these pieces in mini-lessons with the children’s help. You might also want to use paragraphs from some of your students’ favorite authors as examples and rewrite these by replacing the showing words with telling words and sentences. After identifying the places where your students wish the writer had shown them rather than told them, read the original to them and compare the “telling” version with the “showing” version. After several mini-lessons, partner your students and ask them to help each other find examples in their own writing where they could make the writing come alive by replacing some of their telling words with showing words and sentences.

## Use “Stuff” to Build Vocabulary and Promote Word Wonder

Everybody likes stuff! Look around your house or apartment and identify common objects your students might not know the names of—even if they have the same objects in their houses! Here are some of the objects one teacher brought to school for “show and talk.”

*vases* in assorted sizes, colors, and shapes

*balls*—tennis ball, baseball, basketball, football, golf ball, volleyball, and beach ball

*art*—watercolors, oils, and photographs in frames of different colors, materials, and sizes

*kitchen implements*—turkey baster, strainer, spatula, whisk, and zester

*tools*—hammer, screwdriver, nails, screws, drill, and wrench

In addition to the names of objects, of course, lots of descriptive words are used in talking about what you do with the objects. You may want to engage your students in a game of 20 Questions, in which you think of one of the objects and they see how many questions they have to ask you to narrow down which one it is.

In addition to gathering objects from home and carting them to school, look around your school environment and think about what objects your students might not know the names for. They probably know the words **door** and **window**, but can they tell you that what goes around the door and window is the **frame**? Can they tell you that the “things” that allow the door to open and close are the **hinges** and that the thing you grab to open and close the door is the **knob**? They can turn the water in the sink off and on but do they know they use **faucets** to do that? Is your playground covered with **asphalt**? **Gravel**? **Grass**? **Sand**? What kind of **equipment** do you have in your **gymnasium** and what can you do with it?

Many of the objects you bring to school or identify in school to build vocabularies can also be found in the home environments of your students. Get in the habit of posing questions that will send students looking for and identifying similar objects in their homes.

Do you have tools (kitchen implements, balls, vases, picture frames, etc.) in your house? What do they look like? What do you use them for?

How many faucets (hinges, knobs, ledges, door frames, etc.) do you have in your house? Count them and bring in the number tomorrow. We will add up all the numbers at the beginning of math.

Is there gravel (asphalt, grass, sand, etc.) anywhere in your neighborhood?

Is there a playground or park near your house? What kind of equipment does it have?

In addition to having children identify common objects in their home environments, encourage them to talk with family members about these. “Tell your family that we have these at school too and what these things are for. Tell them about how we are using batteries—like the ones you have at home—to learn about electricity.”

Teachers are always looking for opportunities to make home–school connections. Having children take new vocabulary words they are learning into their home environments helps make school learning more relevant and extends each child’s opportunities for vocabulary development.

## Encourage Your Students to Build Word Collections

Kids like to collect stuff—baseball cards, rocks, shells, and stickers, to name just a few. Find ways to enable your students to collect words and provide opportunities for them to share their collections with other collectors.

This chapter began with suggestions for promoting word wonder by including some books in your teacher read-aloud in which words are cherished. Collecting words in a jar, just as Donovan did in *Donovan's Word Jar*, is a simple way to motivate all your students to collect words.

Another simple way to establish the routine of word collecting is to have one child each day contribute a word to the One Wonderful Word board. Divide one of your bulletin boards into spaces for each student. Make each space large enough to display a large index card and label each space with each child's initials. Include a space for yourself. Each day, working in order across and down the board, one child places an index card with his or her "wonderful word" and explains why he or she chose that word. Depending on the age of your students, you may want to specify a minimum number of letters the word must have. If you like, you can also let the designated child choose three words added by other children and explain why she or he likes these words, too. When you and each child have added the first word to the board, begin the rotation again and have each child tack the second word on top of the first word. If you begin this early in the year, your students will have been introduced to 150 or more words that their classmates think are wonderful! More importantly, your students will always be on the lookout for a wonderful word so they can impress everyone with their choice. Establishing and maintaining a One Wonderful Word board takes minimal time and preparation but pays big dividends by keeping the notion of wonderful words front and center in your classroom.

Many teachers like students to keep vocabulary notebooks. If you do this, make sure your students see themselves as word collectors rather than definition copiers. In fact, most teachers do not allow students to copy any definitions into their notebooks. Rather, the students include the sentence in which they found the word and a personal connection with the word. Students often enjoy illustrating the words in their collections with pictures and diagrams. Some older word sleuths like to include some information about the word's origin.



One Wonderful Word				
Mrs. C outstanding	AC chimpanzee	GH precarious	PJM persistent	DM drawbridge
BE generous	TW expedition	KB ridiculous	JD environment	PLM emergency
AM hibernate	RA immigrants	SJM generation	BJ firecrackers	ZC victorious
RS explorers	PD performers	JH video games	SAM delicious	JM championship
DC invention	KC brontosaurus	DH impressive	CH revolution	KL frustration

## Make Friends with the Dictionary

Think back to your elementary school days and recall your associations with the word **vocabulary**. Do you remember looking up words and copying their definitions? If the word had several definitions, did you copy the first one or the shortest one? Did you ever look up a word and still not know what the word meant because you didn't understand the meaning of other words in the definition? Did you copy that definition and memorize it for the test in spite of not understanding it? Do you remember weekly vocabulary tests in which you had to write definitions for words and use these words in sentences?

Copying and memorizing definitions has been and remains the most common vocabulary activity in schools. It is done at all levels and in all subjects. This definition copying and memorizing continues in spite of research that shows definitional approaches to vocabulary instruction increase children's ability to define words but have no effect on reading comprehension



(Bauman, Kame'enui, & Ash, 2003). Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2002) sum up the damper that typical dictionary activities can put on word wonder.

Becoming interested and aware of words is not a likely outcome from the way instruction is typically handled, which is to have students look up definitions. Asking students to look up words in the dictionary and use them in a sentence is a stereotypical example of what students find uninteresting in school. (p. 12)

There are, however, a variety of ways to promote active use of the dictionary that help students broaden their concepts and also teach students what a valuable resource the dictionary is. Students should learn to turn to the dictionary when they need a precise definition of a word. A teacher who regularly says, "Let's see what the dictionary can tell us about this word," and sends one child to look it up models the way adults who use the dictionary actually use it. (Did you ever see an adult look up a word to copy and memorize the definition? Maybe the reason so few adults use dictionaries is because that is the only way they ever saw anyone use it!) If you have a dictionary on your classroom computers, model how useful this is by asking a child to "see what our computer dictionary has to say about this word."

In many classrooms, helpers are appointed to jobs each week. Someone greets visitors and waters the plants. Why not appoint a weekly Dictionary Disciple? This person gets possession of "the book" and is always ready to be dispatched to the farthest corners of the wide world of words to seek and share facts about words.

Another activity students enjoy that teaches them how to use dictionaries authentically is based on the notion of semantic gradients (Greenwood & Flanigan, 2007). As described in an article in *The Reading Teacher*, semantic gradients are used to help students discern shades of meaning. Students are given a gradient with two opposites placed on each end. One example from this article has the gradient bounded by **despondent** and **euphoric**.

**Despondent** \_\_\_\_\_ **Euphoric**

Students are provided a word box from which they choose words to place along the gradient. For **despondent** and **euphoric**, the example words in the word box are **happy**, **elated**, **unhappy**, **glum**, and **sad**. Students work in groups to place these words along the gradient from **despondent** to **euphoric**. The completed gradient might look like this:

**despondent glum sad unhappy happy elated euphoric**

Students then come together as a class to share their thinking in deciding where to place the words. The authors suggest that when students become good at completing a gradient when they have a box of words to choose from, they can be given the gradient with the extreme examples of the opposites and, without the help of a word box, come up with words and place them along the gradient.

I am quite taken with the semantic gradient idea because I think children would enjoy talking about the words and trying to decide what shades of meaning they have, but I worry that many children would not have enough knowledge of the shades of meaning to make reasonable decisions. I have adapted this activity to include the students working with a dictionary and thesaurus to aid in making their decisions, thus making the task more “do-able” for more students and providing authentic experiences with the dictionary and thesaurus. I call this activity Rank Opposites. In Rank Opposites, students use a dictionary to help them decide where to put the boxed words. When students become more sophisticated at using the dictionary to decide where to place the boxed words, students are not given any boxed words. Rather, they use a thesaurus to determine which words to add and where to place them. Depending on the age and vocabulary sophistication of your students, you can vary the format, type, and number of words used. Here are some Rank Opposites variations.

One variation is to give the students the extremes placed on the continuum and six to eight boxed words. Students use dictionaries to find the words, read the definitions together, and decide where to place the words.

**wail** \_\_\_\_\_ **guffaw**

<b>laugh</b>	<b>giggle</b>	<b>whimper</b>	<b>smile</b>
<b>sob</b>	<b>cry</b>	<b>chuckle</b>	<b>frown</b>

**petrified** \_\_\_\_\_ **fearless**

<b>fearful</b>	<b>timid</b>	<b>afraid</b>	<b>courageous</b>
<b>daring</b>	<b>terrified</b>	<b>brave</b>	<b>valiant</b>

**sizzling** \_\_\_\_\_ **frigid**

<b>cold</b>	<b>lukewarm</b>	<b>hot</b>	<b>cool</b>
<b>warm</b>	<b>frosty</b>	<b>scorching</b>	<b>chilly</b>

In another version, you place the common opposites on the gradient and students decide where to place the others, including the extremes.

_____ <b>big</b> _____		_____ <b>little</b> _____	
<b>colossal</b>	<b>huge</b>	<b>tiny</b>	<b>miniature</b>
<b>enormous</b>	<b>gigantic</b>	<b>small</b>	<b>mammoth</b>

_____ <b>like</b> _____		_____ <b>dislike</b> _____	
<b>hate</b>	<b>despise</b>	<b>adore</b>	<b>worship</b>
<b>loathe</b>	<b>love</b>	<b>detest</b>	<b>enjoy</b>

Another possibility is to place one word in the center and then have students place other words to show some variation on this word.

_____ <b>said</b> _____			
<b>whispered</b>	<b>yelled</b>	<b>murmured</b>	<b>mumbled</b>
<b>shouted</b>	<b>screamed</b>	<b>hollered</b>	

_____ <b>walk</b> _____			
<b>scurry</b>	<b>saunter</b>	<b>stroll</b>	<b>sprint</b>
<b>dash</b>	<b>run</b>	<b>meander</b>	<b>mosey</b>

After students learn how to use the dictionary and determine shades of meaning, you can help them learn to use a thesaurus by providing them with the basic words but no box of words. Students brainstorm words they know with similar meanings and then look up these words in a thesaurus to come up with other examples. Given the common opposites **wet** and **dry**, students might construct a gradient that looks like this:

**drenched soaked soggy damp wet dry arid parched waterless**

Given the extreme opposites, **wealthy** and **destitute**, students might use the thesaurus to construct this gradient:

**wealthy prosperous affluent well-off rich poor broke penniless destitute**

Given the common word, **wonderful**, students might construct this gradient:

**good nice pleasant great wonderful splendid fantastic magnificent awesome**

For all Rank Opposites lessons, it is important for students to work in small groups to determine the words and the ranks. Remember that “talking the words” is one of the major avenues for claiming ownership of new vocabulary. When students are using shades of meaning to rank words, they will not always be in agreement. What is important is not the exact order of the words but that students are talking and thinking about shades of meaning. Be sure to communicate to your students that their thought and discussion about where to place the words—not the exact placement—is what matters.

## Let Your Students Act Up!

Word dramatizations are powerful ways to help students build vivid word meanings. Both skits and pantomimes can be used to help students “get into words.” To prepare your students to do vocabulary skits, select six words and write them on index cards. Tell your students that in a few minutes, their group will plan a skit—a quick little play—to demonstrate the word they have been given. Choose a few students to work with you and model for them how to plan a skit. Talk with your group as the rest of the class listens in. Plan a scene in which you can use the word several times. When you have a plan, act out your skit using the target word as many times as possible. Have one member of your group hold up the word every time it occurs in the skit.

Imagine, for example, that the word your group is acting out is **curious**. You decide that the skit will involve a dad and his 2-year-old walking to the post office. The dad and the toddler meet several people on their walk, and each time, the 2-year-old stops, points to the stranger, and asks questions:

- “What’s your name?”
- “Where are you going?”
- “What’s that?”
- “What are you doing?”
- “What’s in the bag?”
- “Why are you wearing that funny hat?”



The dad smiles each time and explains to the stranger that his son is curious about everything. The strangers answer the boy's questions and then remark, "He's the most curious kid I ever saw," as they walk on.

Perform the skit as the class watches. At the end of the skit, have the people in the skit ask the audience how the skit showed that the little boy was curious. Finally, ask if anyone in the audience has a story to share about a curious person.

Next, assign the class to five groups, putting one of the children who helped in the skit in each of the groups. This child gives each group a card on which the word the group will dramatize is written. Today, the teacher is focusing on adjectives and has given the groups the words **nervous**, **frantic**, **impatient**, **jubilant**, and **serene**. The groups plan their skits with a little help from the teacher, who circulates around and coaches them. As she hoped would happen, the teacher is happy to see that the child in each group who helped in the skit is taking a leadership role and helping boost the group's confidence that they can do this.

Each skit is acted out with one person in each group holding up the card each time the word is used. The group then asks the audience what they saw in the skit that made the word "come alive." The teacher asks if anyone in the class wants to share a personal experience with the target word. After the last skit, the teacher places the six word cards with others on a board labeled "Get Your Adjectives Here! Cool Describing Words to Spice Up Your Talk and Writing."

Another form of dramatization is pantomime, which is particularly useful when the words you want to teach are emotions or actions. Imagine that you want to introduce the emotional adjectives **confused**, **disappointed**, **furious**, and **frightened**. A pair of students can be assigned to each word. The rest of the class watches the pairs pantomiming the words and tries to guess which pair is acting out each word. The same kind of pantomime can be done with actions such as **swaggered**, **crept**, **sauntered**, and **scurried**. Adverbs are fun to pantomime. Imagine four pairs of students walking to school. One pair walks **briskly**. One pair walks **cautiously**. One pair walks **proudly**. One pair walks **forlornly**.

For any kind of dramatization, it is important to conclude the activity by asking all the students to relate the word acted out to their own experience:

"When have you been confused? Disappointed? Furious? Frantic?"

"When have you swaggered? Crept? Sauntered? Scurried?"

"When would you walk briskly? Cautiously? Proudly? Forlornly?"

Acting out words in skits and pantomimes provides students with real experience with many words. They remember these words because of this real experience and because they enjoy acting and watching their friends act. Keep a list of words your class encounters that could be acted out in skits or pantomimes and schedule 20 minutes for vocabulary drama each week. You will be amazed at how their vocabularies and enthusiasm for words will grow.

## Teach Children to Monitor Their Vocabulary Knowledge

One of the first steps in learning anything is recognizing that you don't already know it. Children need to notice when they come to words they don't have meanings for. Sometimes, young children get so focused on pronouncing new words that they fail to realize they don't know what it means. Children can be taught to self-assess their vocabulary knowledge using a simple scale like this one:

- 1 = I never heard of that word.
- 2 = I heard the word but I don't know what it means.
- 3 = I think I know what that word means.
- 4 = I'm sure I know what that word means.
- 5 = I can make a good sentence with that word.

This scale could be used with any of the activities for teaching vocabulary. To make this quick and easy, consider using a five-finger, every-pupil-response system. Say the word you are focusing on and ask everyone to show you the appropriate number of fingers. When you are focusing on words for the first time, be sure that you positively acknowledge all the responses so that children don't get in the habit of showing you five fingers just so they "look good." Try acknowledging their vocabulary self-assessment with comments such as these:


"I see lots of one and two fingers. That makes me happy because I know I chose a word you need when I chose **desperate**. **Desperate** is an important word and lots of you don't know it yet."

“Some of you think you know the meaning of **desperate** and some of you are sure you do. Can someone tell me what you think it means?”

“I see someone with five fingers up. Todd, tell me your sentence that shows the meaning of **desperate**.”

After you have worked with the new vocabulary words for several days, ask the children again to show you how well they know the meanings of these words and comment on how many people are showing four or five fingers. Many teachers display a chart such as the one shown here to help children remember the five-finger vocabulary self-assessment system.

**Vocabulary Knowledge Scale**

 <p>“I never heard of that word.”</p>	 <p>“I heard the word but I don’t know what it means.”</p>
 <p>“I think I know what that word means.”</p>	 <p>“I’m sure I know what that word means.”</p>
 <p>“I can make a good sentence with that word.”</p>	



## Play Games

Kids love games and there are a lot of wonderful word games. Camille Blachowicz and Peter Fisher (2004) have a wonderful list of possible games. Here is my adaptation of their list:

- *Match, Go Fish, and Old Teacher:* Match is a card game like Concentration in which children pick up cards and take them if they have a “match.” Children can construct the cards to go in the game. Match can be used to review vocabulary words taught in any area and the cards can match in different ways. Matching cards could be a picture and the word that goes with the picture (*buffalo, giraffe, peacock*); synonyms in which one word is a “tired, overused word” and the other word is a more vivid word (*happy, joyous; said, shouted; shook, trembled*); or antonyms (*even, odd; large, small; less, more; above, below*). Cards are turned over and then placed back in the same spot if they do not match. If a player gets a match, he or she takes the pair and has another turn. When all the cards have been taken, the person with the most cards is the winner. The same deck of cards that was created for Match can be used to play Go Fish. Add a card with a drawn picture of an “Old Teacher” and play a variation of Old Maid. Kids choose cards from one another and match pairs. The person left with the Old Teacher loses!
- *WORDO:* This variation of Bingo was described in Chapter 4. Choose nine words and tell the students to write them in different places on their WORDO sheet. Give definitions for words and the students cover them. The first person with a row or column covered wins!
- *Commercial Games:* Many commercial word games are appropriate for classroom use, particularly with intermediate-aged children. Popular commercial word games include Scrabble, Probe, Pictionary, Boggle, and Outburst. Newer word games are always being developed, so be on the lookout and be the first classroom in your hall to have the new, hot game!
- *Crossword Puzzles:* There are many books of simple crossword puzzles that your children will enjoy solving. Have them work together with a partner or in a trio to ensure lots of talk about the words. Several Internet sites allow you to download crossword-puzzle-creating programs.



Older children enjoy creating crossword puzzles with unit or story vocabulary. Let everyone work in small groups to create a puzzle and then let other groups solve the puzzles.

- *Computer Word Play:* Many Internet sites provide a variety of word play games and activities. Just search for word-play or word games and you will find some sites that are particularly appropriate for your students.

## Use Word Humor

A man sits down at a bar and orders a club soda. He hears a soft voice say, “My, you are a handsome man.” He looks around and does not see anyone else at the bar. He picks up his drink and hears, “That shirt is a good color on you.” The voice seems to be coming from a bowl of nuts at the end of the bar. He calls the bartender over and tells him he thinks he is hearing voices. The bartender says, “It’s the nuts. They’re complimentary!” (paraphrased from Stahl and Nagy, 2006, p. 147)

Many jokes, like this one, turn on the meaning—or in this case, the two different meanings—of a word. All children enjoy jokes, even the corny jokes. Using jokes in your classroom will promote your students’ “words are wonderful” attitude and provide everyone a much needed moment of comic relief. Jokes are everywhere.

Riddles are another kind of word humor. The ones that follow are from the Teaching English as a Second Language site (<http://iteslj.org/c/jokes-riddles.html>) but there are numerous other sites on the Internet with jokes and riddles appropriate for elementary children.

Why couldn’t Cinderella be a good soccer player?

She lost her shoe, she ran away from the ball, and her coach was a pumpkin.

What starts with E, ends with E, and only has one letter?

An envelope.

What travels around the world and stays in a corner?

A stamp.



What did the ocean say to the beach?

Nothing, it just waved!

What has many keys but can't open any doors?

A piano.

Which room has no doors and no windows?

A mushroom.

A man rode into town on Tuesday. Two days later he rode home on Tuesday. How is this possible?

His horse's name is Tuesday.

Which is faster, heat or cold?

Heat, because you can catch a cold.

Why are baseball stadiums so cool?

There is a fan in every seat.

## Promote Word Wonder

Enthusiasm is contagious! Teachers who are enthusiastic about words project that enthusiasm by conveying their eagerness to learn unfamiliar words and by sharing fascinating words they encounter outside the classroom. Young children are usually enthusiastic about new words, repeating them over and over, enjoying the sound of language and marveling at the meanings being expressed. Encourage the continuation of this natural enthusiasm. Open your class to wondering about words, to spontaneous questions about unfamiliar words, to judgments about the sounds and values of words. Make engaging activities like the ones described in this book a regular part of everyday life in your classroom and your students will conclude that words are indeed wonderful!