



Word Nerds: Teaching All Students to Learn and Love Vocabulary

By Brenda J Overturf, Leslie Montgomery, Margot Holmes Smith

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Word Nerds takes you inside classrooms at a high-poverty urban school and shows how two teachers implement creative, flexible vocabulary instruction that improves their students' word knowledge and confidence, enhances classroom community, and increases achievement. Leslie Montgomery and Margot Holmes Smith weave vocabulary into each school day using multisensory instruction that includes music, art, literature, movement, games, drama, writing, test-taking skills, and technology. Along the way, they turn every student into a lover of language.

With support from literacy specialist Brenda Overturf, Leslie and Margot have developed a five-part plan introducing new words in context, adding related synonyms and antonyms, engaging students in several days of active learning, celebrating new words, and assessing vocabulary development that teaches all students to learn and love vocabulary.

This easy-to-read reference explains how to plan, teach, and assess based on the latest research in vocabulary instruction and learning. Forget copying definitions from the dictionary and completing boring worksheets! Word mastery comes from intimate knowledge of language. From prediction to practice to performance, students from all backgrounds can discover how to make words their own. After incorporating Leslie's and Margot's vocabulary plan into your daily instruction, you and your students can become word nerds, too!

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Editorial Review

Review

'*Word Nerds* raises the level of vocabulary instruction by setting the bar high for teachers, challenging us to provide students with the desire to study vocabulary and apply their knowledge not only to standardized tests but to daily writing and conversation.' --MiddleWeb

About the Author

Brenda J. Overturf began her career as a classroom teacher, working for eighteen years at the elementary and middle school levels, before she coordinated K-12 reading for Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville, Kentucky. She also served as chair of the M.Ed. in Reading program at the University of Louisville and is a former member of the International Reading Association Board of Directors.

While at IRA, she chaired a Common Core State Standards Task Force and continues as chair of the IRA Common Core Standards Committee.

Brenda holds an Ed.D. degree with specialty in literacy education from the University of Louisville, and is currently a literacy consultant providing professional development and assistance to schools and districts nationwide.

Leslie Montgomery is an intermediate-grades teacher at Gavin H. Cochran Elementary in Louisville, Kentucky. After beginning her undergraduate degree in California and working for the Homes for the Homeless Residential Camping Program in New York City, Leslie returned to Louisville and earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in teaching from the University of Louisville.

Leslie is a National Board Certified Teacher in literacy and an alumna of the Kentucky Reading Project and the Louisville Writing Project. She was a recipient of the 2010-2011 Gheens Innovation Award for strategic vocabulary instruction.

Leslie has presented with her colleagues on vocabulary instruction at the International Reading Association conference, the Kentucky Reading Association conference, the Kentucky Reading Project, the Louisville Writing Project, and other professional development venues throughout the district.

Margot Holmes Smith is a reading and math intervention teacher for fourth and fifth grades at Atkinson Academy for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Louisville, Kentucky. Prior to becoming an intervention teacher, she taught third and fourth grades at Atkinson.

Margot earned a bachelor's degree in biology and a master's degree in teaching from the University of Louisville. Throughout her teaching career, Margot has had the opportunity to participate in the Kentucky

Reading Project and the Louisville Writing Project. She has presented with her colleagues at the International Reading Association conference, the Kentucky Reading Association conference, the Kentucky Reading Project, the Louisville Writing Project, and several other schools in the district.

She was a recipient of the 2010-2011 Gheens Innovation Award for strategic vocabulary instruction. Margot is currently completing her M.Ed. in reading at the University of Louisville.

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