

What Are Some Guidelines for Making and Using A Word Wall?

- Be selective! Only display key vocabulary.
- Add words gradually:
 - Grades K–2 (3–6 words a week)
 - Grades 2–5 (6–10 words a week)
 - Grades 6–8 (10–15 total words for all subjects)
 - Grades 9–12 (12–15 total words for all subjects)
- If using a Word Wall made of high-frequency words, use a grade-appropriate sight word list.
- Word Wall cards should be cut according to their word shape for grades K–3 (but not limited to those grades only).
- Make words accessible by putting them where every student can see them—in large black letters, using a variety of background pastel colors (not dark colors—difficult to see print on, or psychedelic colors—irritate the eye) so that the most often confused words such as *their*, *what*, *when* are different colors. Upper grades will use color to categorize vocabulary terms.
- Be thoughtful about how many Word Walls you display at one time and how they are arranged. Avoid clutter! Too much of a good thing can cause sensory overload. Students will actually avoid looking at the clutter or they become immune to it—it disappears!
- For grades K–1, begin the Word Wall with names of the students in your classroom (photos of each child next to their names draws even greater attention to what is important—learning).

Keep Word Walls:

- Accessible
- Highly Visible
- Clutter-free
- Referred to often
- High Expectations

- Do many different types of activities with words of the week that will help them learn the word, meaning, and how to spell it correctly.
- Word Wall activities should be multi-sensory experiences
- Students should be always expected to spell and write the Word Wall words correctly during writing activities.
- **Make them memorable, useful, and practical.**