



# Brain Talk Vocabulary



Brain Talk

## How to effectively teach the Brain Talk vocabulary

Brain talk is a metacognitive curriculum teaching the concepts needed to think about self-regulation and goal-directed action. The concepts are introduced through specific vocabulary, and familiarity with the vocabulary is how the concepts become metacognitive tools. The more the vocabulary is used across settings, activities, and groups, the more automatic it becomes. In this way, vocabulary becomes self-talk, and self-talk becomes action.

The Brain Talk vocabulary resources are structured to follow and support the stages of vocabulary learning (2017, Sprenger). These stages are:

- 1. Encoding:** Introduce and find the meaning of concepts. The encoding process begins when Brain Talk concepts are introduced within the unit videos and accompanying lesson plans.
- 2. Storage:** Words and meanings are placed in long-term memory through dynamic and multimodal rehearsal. Storage is supported as students create Brain Talk dictionaries utilizing the vocabulary worksheets. In addition to the provided Brain Talk dictionary worksheets, instructors can incorporate vocabulary learning activities such as creating skits and identifying examples of the concepts in stories and video clips.
- 3. Retrieval:** The ability to recall and utilize words and meanings. Retrieval is demonstrated when students exhibit an understanding of the Brain Talk vocabulary and effective use of those concepts as metacognitive tools.

For more information about the stages of vocabulary learning and strategies for instruction, we recommend reading Marilee Sprenger's book [101 Strategies to Make Academic Vocabulary Stick](#).

## When to create a Brain Talk Dictionary

We recommend using one or more of the following options for integrating Brain Talk vocabulary instruction into your classroom, therapy, or home sessions:



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## **1. Introduce unit-specific vocabulary as part of the unit's primer activity**

Prime students to look for and understand target concepts by identifying unit-specific vocabulary prior to watching the video. Instructors may wish to introduce vocabulary through a variety of means including writing it on the board, inviting students to do a word search, or completing a Know/Wonder chart. Once students have been exposed to the vocabulary, they can be “detectives” as they watch for how it is used in the videos. This approach can be utilized in lieu of the recommended primer activity in the lesson plan, or in addition to the primer activity.

## **2. Introduce unit-specific vocabulary as concepts are discussed or immediately following completion of a unit**

Instructors can invite students to complete the Brain Talk Dictionary worksheets for specific vocabulary as those concepts are introduced and discussed within unit activities. Additionally, instructors may wish to have students build their Brain Talk Dictionaries by reviewing and defining unit-specific vocabulary using the provided worksheets immediately following the completion of a unit and prior to starting the next unit.

## **3. Target Brain Talk vocabulary as a “second pass” through the curriculum to deepen understanding**

After completing all of the Brain Talk units, instructors can invite students to re-watch the videos and revisit discussion topics to review concepts and support understanding of target vocabulary. As vocabulary is discussed, students can complete their Brain Talk Dictionary worksheets. Throughout this process, instructors can explain to students that thinking about your thinking is the key to learning how to be a decider, and that understanding of the vocabulary leads to effective self-talk, which leads to mindful action.

**\*Note: regardless of the method utilized to teach the Brain Talk vocabulary, instructors can encourage students to define concepts in their own words in lieu of, or in addition to, using the provided definitions.**



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## How to measure concept mastery

Given that mastery of learning and implementing new concepts occurs along a continuum, educators and therapists may wish to consider their students' progress using a rubric similar to the example below:

1	Does not demonstrate comprehension of the concept or use of the concept as a metacognitive tool
2	Demonstrates emerging comprehension of the concept, but does not demonstrate effective use of the concept as a metacognitive tool
3	Demonstrates comprehension of the concept and emerging use of the concept as a metacognitive tool when provided with outside support
4	Demonstrates comprehension of the concept and effective use of the concept as a metacognitive tool when provided with outside support
5	Demonstrates comprehension of the concept and independent, effective use of the concept as a metacognitive tool

### Resources:

Sprenger, M. (2017). 101 Strategies to Make Academic Vocabulary Stick.  
Publisher: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development