

# For Many Reasons: Building Vocabulary Before Reading

In order to help students draw on prior knowledge, make predictions about what they will be reading, and to arouse student curiosity about words, have students make "guesses" about word meaning prior to reading.

Below are some key words from *A Breath Of Fresh Air*. Write these words on the top of a large piece of paper. Ask individual students or small groups of students to make predictions about the meaning of the words and write their predictions on Post It Notes."

After students have had the opportunity to make their predictions about possible word meaning, have each student or group, post their predictions below the word and state reasons why the prediction was made.

This will serve several purposes. It will give you a clear assessment of how much prior knowledge the students possess. Students will begin thinking about the content of the articles. Also, it will motivate your students. When they encounter these words in context, they will want to see if their predictions are close to the actual meaning of the word. The words below also lend themselves to a discussion of root words, prefixes, and suffixes. (See the Word Study section for more information on this).

Students can select the best predictions when they have finished reading. This is a good way to model the prediction process, too. So many students want to "get it right" that they are fearful about delving into unknown territory and making a wrong guess. You can demonstrate that when making predictions it is acceptable to be wrong. You can also eliminate "Post It Notes" that contain incorrect predictions as students are reading. This will model the importance of adjusting predictions as we read.

nonrenewable

fossil fuels

biomass

particulates

greenhouse effect

emissions

decompose

efficiently

deforestation