Planning for Vocabulary Instruction
Selecting Vocabulary Words to Preteach Before Reading

- Before instruction, preview the passage, even if vocabulary words have already been selected by the publisher.
- Read the passage and identify vocabulary your students will find unfamiliar. Ask yourself: "How difficult is this passage to understand?"
- Select words that are related to the main ideas and crucial to understanding the text.
- List words you find challenging for your students. These words may or may not be related to one another. You may not be able to teach all the words you find challenging for your students. Research supports teaching only a few words before reading to help students comprehend what they read.
- Determine which words are adequately defined in the text. Some may be defined by direct definition and others through context. Expand on these words after reading, rather than directly pre-teaching them.
- Identify words students may know based on their prefixes, suffixes, and base or root words. If structural elements help students determine words' meanings, don't teach them directly.
- Consider student needs. If words are likely to be in students' prior knowledge, they may not require direct teaching. These words can be discussed as you activate and build prior knowledge before reading or expanded after reading.
- Determine the importance of the word. Ask yourself: "Is the word going to appear again and again? Will knowledge of the word help in other content areas? Is the word important to comprehending the passage?"

Vocabulary Words to Preteach
- Words that students will find challenging
- Words crucial to understanding the main ideas
- Words that are not a part of students' prior knowledge
- Words unlikely to be learned independently through the use of context and/or structural analysis
- Words that will be frequently encountered in other texts and content areas

(adapted from 2TRA, 2001; Cooper, 1997; National Reading Panel, 2000)
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Book: ________________________________________________

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