

VOCABULATORS®

These are great fun to make and provide creative experiences for your class to enjoy and interact with words. Try making one or two and adding a few more as you introduce new subjects and themes throughout the year. This is a great project for 4th and 5th grade kids to make in small groups to add to your classroom set.

Mediums for Vocabulators:

cous cous
rice
orzo
bird seed
sugar
Kosher salt
alphabet macaroni
pasta
raw grits
sequins
unpopped popcorn
dried beans or peas



How to Dye Raw Pasta, Rice, or Grits:

Pour any kind of raw, dry pasta into a glass bowl in your sink. Cover the pasta with rubbing alcohol. Rubbing alcohol is inexpensive and it usually takes only 1-2 bottles, depending on the size of the bottles. Add one bottle of liquid food coloring for blue, green, yellow, purple, and orange. Add two bottles of liquid food coloring for red or black. Publix and Winn-Dixie now sell black liquid food coloring as well as neon colors that work well. Be sure to use two full bottles of red food dye if you choose to dye your pasta red.

Let the pasta soak in the alcohol dye for an hour. Stir every 15 minutes. Drain the pasta with a slotted spoon onto a cookie sheet that has been lined with a thick layer of paper towels. Spread out the pasta. Let this dry overnight in a well-ventilated area or out in your garage. The next day, transfer the dyed pasta to another cookie sheet or a low, flat box and let it air out for several days. Now it is dyed, very hard, and ready to use.

To Make the Vocabulators:

Choose large, clear, cylindrical, plastic canisters. These are available on our website, www.melissaforney.com for \$5.00 plus shipping.

Fill your canister 2/3 full with the medium you choose for your theme. Add 6-15 toys and miniatures that go with your theme. Use small objects. Make sure to not overfill the canister. Don't use anything toxic.

Print the words you will use for your theme on your computer or a Dymo labeler. Glue or stick them on two layers of heavy scrapbooking paper that have been glued together so they are very stiff. Be sure to glue the words to both sides of the double paper so they can be read from either side through the canister. Cut these apart with a paper cutter and add them to the canister with the toys and medium of the same theme.

GLUE THE LID OF YOUR VOCABULATOR SHUT with a hot-glue gun. Now you are ready for your kids to have fun interacting with the words and toys!

How to Use Vocabulators:

Let small groups of children play with the Vocabulators on the floor or the rug. The object is for one kid to turn the Vocabulator over on its side so that not much is showing but the medium. Gently shake the canister from side to side so that the words and toys will "pop up" to the surface. Take turns reading the words that pop up, look at the toys, discuss how to use these words in our writing, etc.