

Talk & Play With Words

A Buzzword Activity Book



About This Book

This adventure book is designed to build on your child's natural curiosity to grow vocabulary.

The words and definitions will help you talk about your surroundings. Try some of the fun activities and tips created by Buzzword Pittsburgh partners to explain the meaning of the words and connect them to your child's experiences. Pick a different vocabulary word every few days. Use it in context, and encourage your child to use it too.

Who Are We?

Buzzword Pittsburgh excites children and families as they experience the words that are all around them. Through talk and play about math, science, and art, young children will expand their vocabularies and conversation skills. The program engages families and community organizations in Pittsburgh's Homewood neighborhood and the greater community.

The Buzzword Pittsburgh collaborative consists of six partner organizations with expertise in the arts and sciences. These partners provide interactive learning opportunities that encourage imagination, investigation, creation, and reflection.

This initiative is supported by PNC Grow Up Great®.



PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE



OPERATHEATER





Absorb

to take in, or soak up.

Activity

Use your fingers or a dropper to drop water on objects in your house, testing their **absorbency**. Much like the grassy ground **absorbs** the rain, paper, cardboard, and fabric will **absorb** water. Materials like plastic, glass, or metal will not **absorb** water, and will form puddles instead. How many **absorbent** objects can you find?



CARNEGIE SCIENCE CENTER
One of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

Family Tip

Young children are fascinated by water! On the next rainy day grab your umbrella and talk with your child about what you see outside. You might notice puddles on the sidewalk, or droplets of water on your window. You can help your child develop his or her thinking skills by asking questions like:

Where does the rainwater go after it falls?

What do you think happens to the rain when it hits the ground?

Why do you think there are puddles on the driveway, but not in the grass?

Why do our shirts get wet, but the rain rolls right off our rubber boots and raincoat?





Artist

someone who makes creative, special things, such as drawings or sculptures.

Family Tip

Why make art with your little **artist**? Working with scissors or clay uses fine muscle control and strengthens eye-hand motor coordination. By holding paintbrushes and learning how to control paint, clay, markers and other art tools, children gain the skills necessary for later writing activities as well as a feeling of control over themselves and their world.



Activity

Making comparisons and noting differences helps to increase understanding of new vocabulary. Talk with your child about different jobs in your community. Compare clothes or tools that identify those positions.

Circle the tools that young **artists** use to make art!



Activity

Color the dancers, then see if you can **balance** like them!

Family Tip

One way your child can understand and memorize a word is by acting it out! Use a soft object like a bean bag to **balance** on your body. Try to **balance** the object while walking or marching!

PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE

Balance

when something can stay upright on its own and not fall over because it has equal, or the same, amount of weight on both sides.



Camouflage

to disguise or hide by blending in with the background.

Family Tip

There are cool things hiding everywhere around you, from insects on leaves to birds in trees! While on a walk or in your yard, try to find many things hiding all around you!

Take a walk around the block or go out in your yard and find the best spots to be **camouflaged**. Don't find too good of a spot though – you could blend right in!

Activity

Play the game “Now You See Me, Now You Don’t.” Take three common household items, such as a spoon, brush, or small toy; while your child is in another room, hide the objects in plain sight. Give your child one minute to find what you’ve hidden. Then, let your child hide the items and you try to find them!



Clay

a material that can be made into different shapes when wet and used to make things like bowls and flower pots.

Activity

Gather some clay items such as plates, vases, and mugs. Which items are made of **clay**? Can you tell just by touching them? What does the texture of a **clay** item feel like? Talk about the different materials of each item; compare their look and feel.

Family Tip

There are objects all around you that can help your child's vocabulary retention! For example, **clay** comes from the ground, normally where water has once flowed. It is made of the same ingredients as soil. **Clay** can come in many different colors depending on where it is found. Green **clay** can be found in France; white and pink **clay** can be found in China; blue **clay** can be found in Siberia; and red, brown and grey **clay** can be found in the United States.

children's
museum®
PITTSBURGH





Collage

a piece of art that is made with a variety of different materials (such as paper) to make a larger picture.

Family Tip

Art helps engage children and can promote and enhance learning. Labeling pictures, illustrating stories, and connecting pictures to new vocabulary words are all great tools to promote literacy. Next time you read a story together, try making a **collage** to represent the characters and the setting from the story.

Activity

1. Together with your child, gather different materials from around the house (wrapping paper scraps, newspapers, colorful magazine pages) and glue.
2. Cut the materials into different shapes. Name the shapes as you go!
3. Put the shapes together to make a **collage** of your favorite pet or animal in the frame below.



An illustration of a brown tree with green leaves and two orange fruits hanging from its branches. A blue ladder leans against the tree. On the ground, there is a brown basket filled with orange fruits and a single orange fruit next to it. The background is a solid blue sky and a green grassy field.

Fruit

something that grows on
a plant or a tree and holds
seeds.

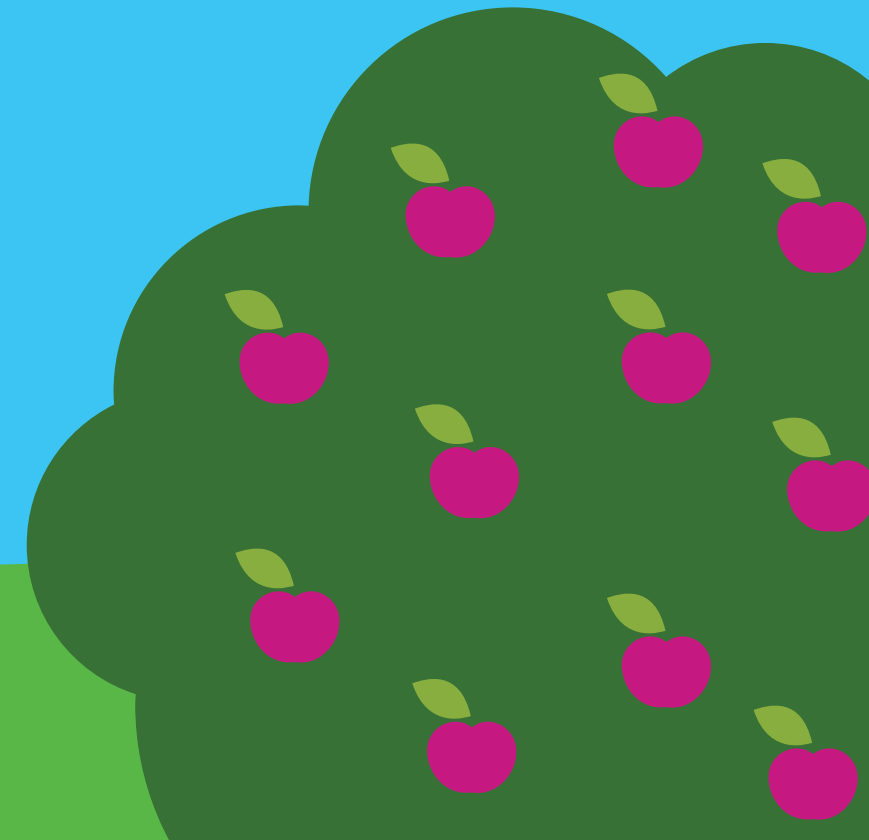
Activity

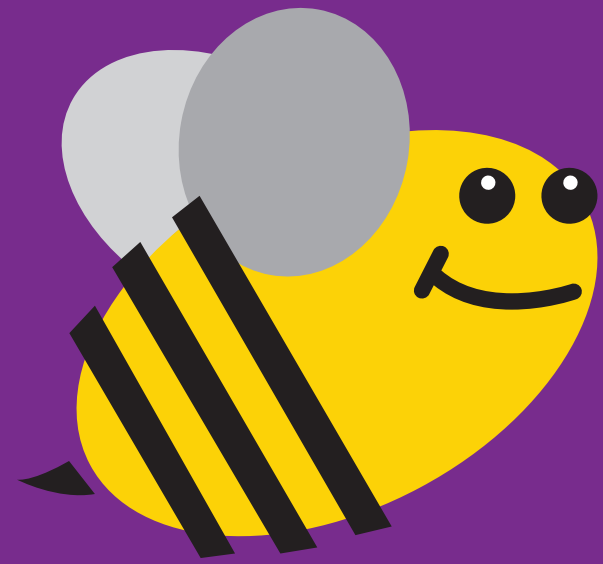
Taste test some **fruits** (kiwi, starfruit, papaya, or fig) and talk about their individual tastes. Observe each **fruit's** outer skin – the color and texture. How many different colors do you see? Create a scavenger hunt for the grocery store. What **fruits** do you see? How do you know they are a **fruit** if you can't see inside?

Family Tip

Scientifically speaking, a tomato is actually a **fruit**. Its seeds make it so! Cut open a tomato to see the seeds. Talk about the differences between **fruits** and vegetables. How can you tell? Is this a **fruit** or vegetable?

children's
museum®
PITTSBURGH



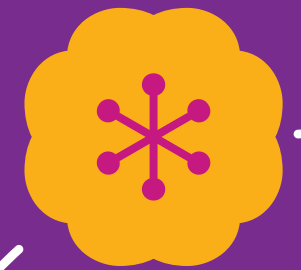


Insect

a small bug that has six legs, two antennae on its head, and sometimes has wings.

Activity

Make your own **insect**. Cut out Buzzy the Bee and tape him to a popsicle stick to fly through your house.



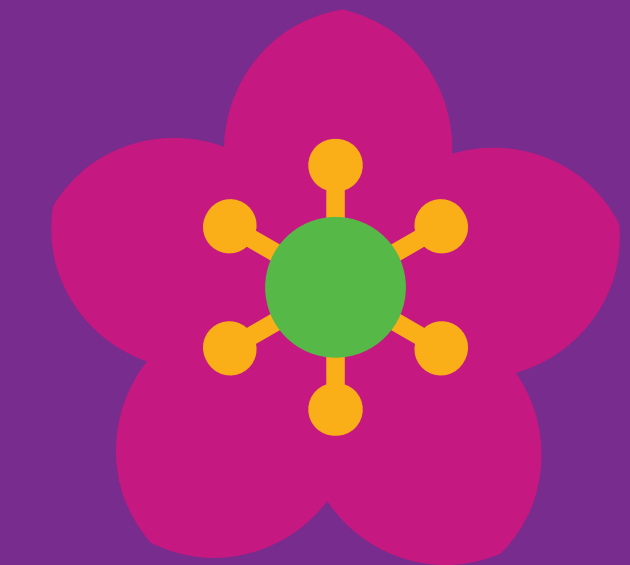
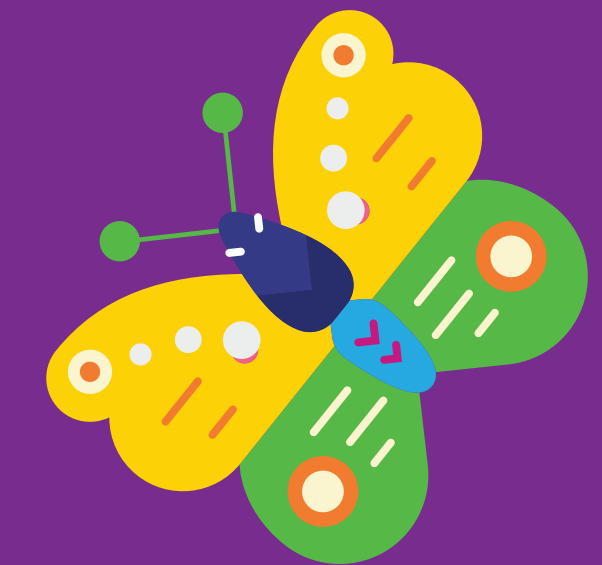
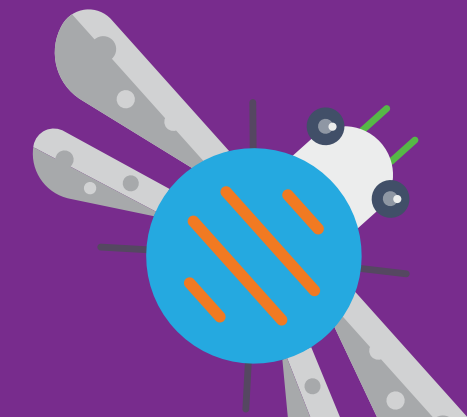
Family Tip

Insects are everywhere! Take a trip to your local park or a walk around the block. While doing so count the number of different **insects** you see along the way!

Insects make a lot of interesting movements! Some crawl, some jump, and some even fly! Play pretend with your child by crawling like ants, jumping like grasshoppers, and flying like bees!

When children find something scary or gross, like **insects**, they are often hesitant to interact with it. Explain to them that some things are different and when we have these feelings we can observe and be scientists and say, "ah, interesting!"

 PittsburghParks.org



Instrument

an object you can use
to make music.

Activity

Make a shaker **instrument** by filling a dry, empty water bottle with rice. How does the sound change if you use beans, cereal, or marshmallows instead?

Family Tip

Studies show that keeping a steady beat strengthens language fluency and math skills! So use your **instrument** to tap the beat to your favorite songs or march in a parade. 1-2-3-4! 1-2-3-4!

OPERATHEATER





Shadow

a dark shape that is created when a light shines on something.

Activity

Try tracing **shadows** with sidewalk chalk! On a sunny morning, trace your child's feet on the sidewalk, and then trace the outline of their **shadow** (silly pose optional). When you return in the afternoon, position your child's feet inside the outline you traced of them earlier. What has happened to the **shadow**?

Family Tip

The sun and your household flashlight both produce light and are perfect for **shadow** investigations! Young children know it gets dark at bedtime, and they can see the sun during the day, and the moon at night. You can guide your child's learning about light by asking questions such as:

What would happen to your shadow if we moved the flashlight?

How can we make your shadow bigger? Smaller?

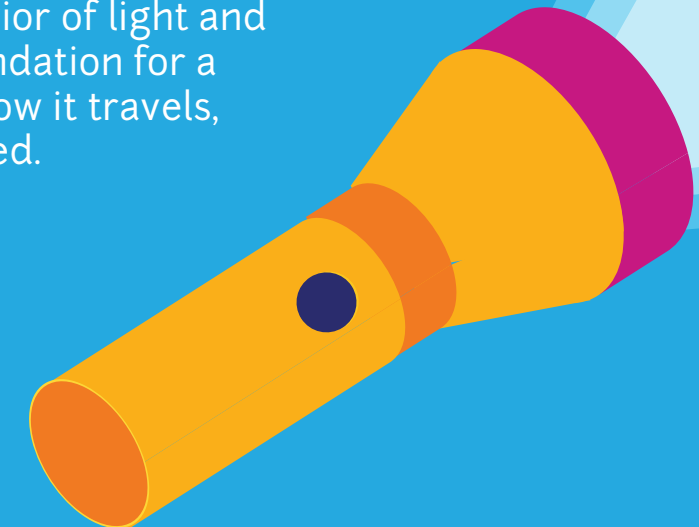
If you wiggle your body, what will your shadow do?

Where do you think your shadow went?

As children investigate the behavior of light and **shadows**, they are laying the foundation for a later understanding of energy- how it travels, and how it is absorbed or reflected.



CARNEGIE SCIENCE CENTER
One of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh



Symmetrical

when one side of something is the same as the other side.

Activity

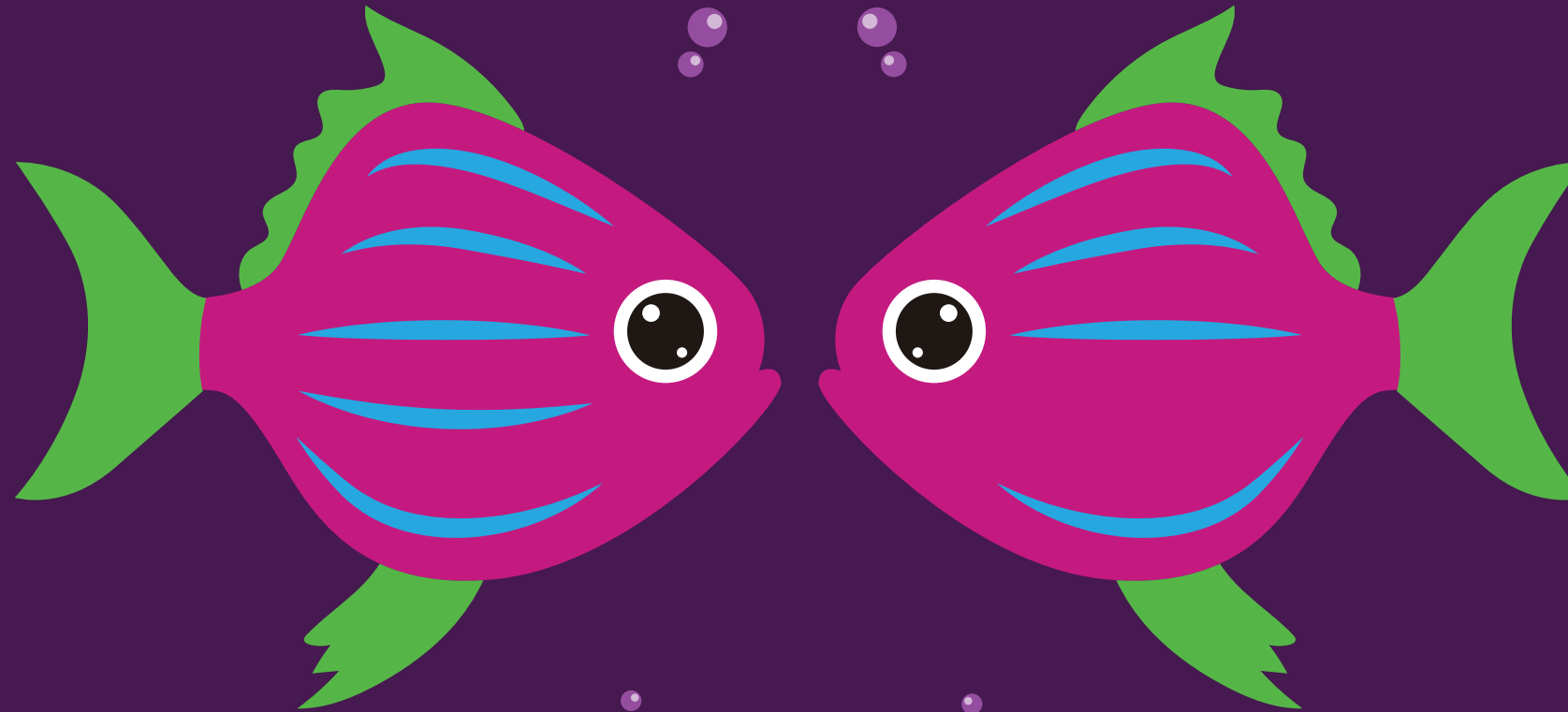
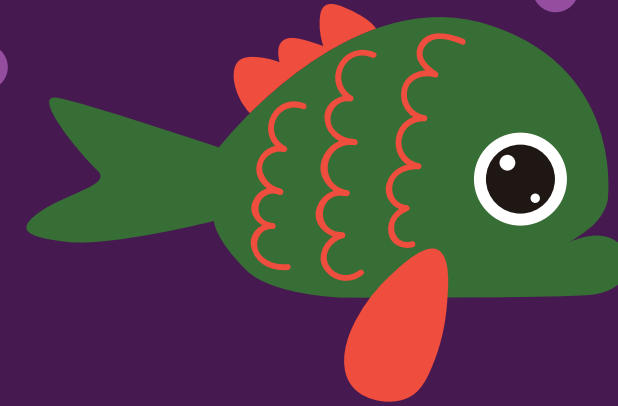
Observe the images on the left and right sides of the page and circle the differences.

PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE

Family Tip

It is important for your child to make comparisons between the sizes, colors, and shapes of various objects.

Play the mirror game! Have your child copy your movements like they are your reflection. See if they can lead the game too.





Activity

On a blank piece of paper, draw a picture of yourself on a stage! What kind of costume would you wear?

Theater




a place you can go to see a play, a dance or another kind of performance.

Family Tip

There are many easy ways to make a word come to life in your home! For example, use masking tape or small rugs to mark out a stage area on the floor in your home! Act out your favorite stories, sing a song or take turns telling about your day.

OPERA-THEATER

Research Says

-  From birth to age five, young children's brains are rapidly developing. During this time, little ones are more open to learning and becoming inspired.
-  Talking with a child helps increase vocabulary development and communication skills needed throughout life.
-  A child's early vocabulary skills grow in real-life settings through positive interactions and conversations about the world.

Remember the 3 Bs



Be Present!

Use pictures, words, and definitions to investigate math, science, and art! Engage your child's curiosity by saying new words, repeating them, and explaining their meanings.

Be Playful!

Have fun with vocabulary! To make words come to life, you can talk, write, read, play, and sing with your child.

Be Proactive!

Explore fun and easy activities that use one word and build upon it. Your child's world will open up – there will always be new words with fresh meanings and exciting ways to apply them daily.



Contact Us

As your child's world of words expands, visit buzzwordpgh.org to explore the many ways Buzzword Pittsburgh can support you and your family through our programs.

Twitter @buzzwordpgh

Facebook facebook.com/buzzwordpgh

Instagram @buzzwordpgh

Email buzzword@trustarts.org

Supported By



To learn more about PNC Grow Up Great® and their vocabulary initiatives, visit pncgrowupgreat.com

Our Partners

Carnegie Science Center

carnegiesciencecenter.org

Children's Museum of Pittsburgh

pittsburghkids.org

Opera Theater of Pittsburgh

otsummerfest.org

Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre

pbt.org

Pittsburgh Cultural Trust

trustarts.org

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy

pittsburghparks.org

The bottom of the page features a colorful, stylized illustration of a city skyline and playground equipment. On the left, there are several colorful shapes representing buildings in shades of orange, purple, blue, and green. On the right, there is a yellow arch representing a playground structure.