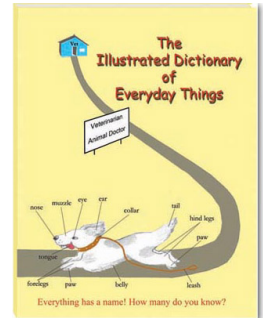


The Illustrated Dictionary Project

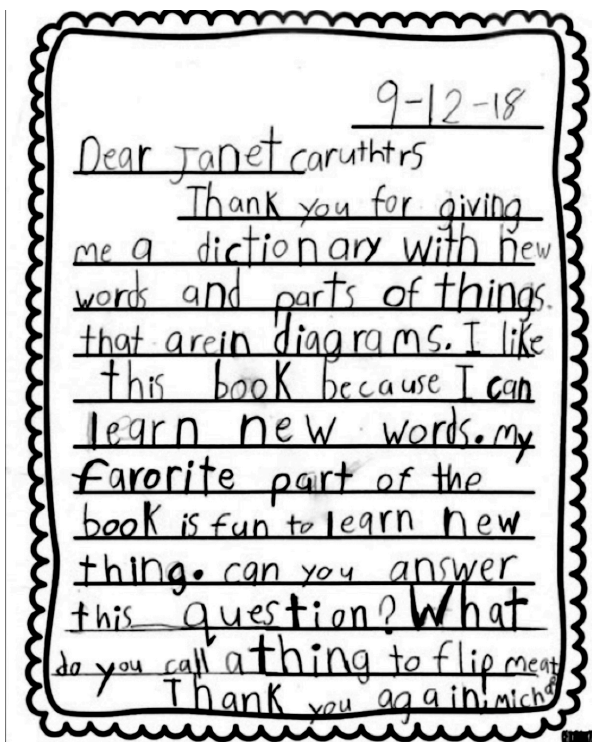
Our service club would like to give each of your 2nd grade students a copy of this special picture dictionary, *The Illustrated Dictionary of Everyday Things*. They can use it in class and take it home at the end of the school year, to be part of their home library.

It was written by a teacher who taught 26 years in Title 1 schools. While teaching, she compiled a list of names of common objects and their parts that her students (grades 2-5) didn't know, but should have. This book is built from that list, containing 62 common objects with major parts labeled. Unlike students from economically advantaged homes, many of your students may lack exposure to these **foundational words** due to a lack of high-quality conversations, bedtime stories, and other literacy-rich experiences.

If your students learn the labels in this book, they will have a **storehouse** of words to draw from for reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Knowing these essential words will improve their reading comprehension, enable them to write with more detail, and accelerate learning. In addition, the 52 "Tricky Questions" on pages 66 - 67 promote critical thinking.

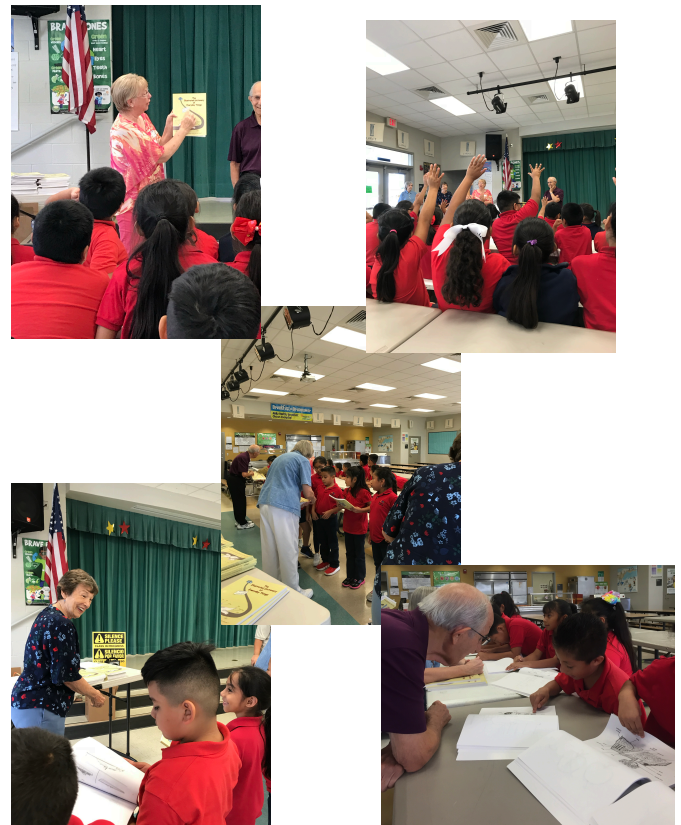


By Janet Caruthers, Ed. S.
Teacher, Academic Interventions Specialist



Children love this book. This is one of hundreds of thank you notes.

Soroptimist International and our local Kiwanis club have been busy distributing these dictionaries to 2nd graders. We are working together to help our local children build a storehouse of words to draw from when reading, writing, listening and speaking.



The Illustrated Dictionary of Everyday Things was written to address a broad and serious problem: the weak vocabularies of economically disadvantaged children. This is a problem because **the size of one's vocabulary is one of the strongest, if not the strongest, predictor of academic success.**

It was written by Janet Caruthers, Ed. S., a teacher of 34 years, with 26 of them in Title One schools. During her read-alouds, guided reading, and shared reading lessons, she started realizing that there were many basic vocabulary words that her students just didn't know - but she had assumed they did. This piqued her interest, and she started listing these unknown words on the outside of a file folder as they were revealed. The words on that file folder became the beginning of a plan to bring awareness to this problem and to help students with weak foundational vocabularies.

First, she used her file folder list to write a **teacher** resource book called *The Book of Knowledge*. After less than one school year's use, it was recognized as the major contributing factor of helping Palm River Elementary in Hillsborough County, Florida improve their reading and writing scores so much that it went from a D to an A in that year.

Years later, Janet decided to create a picture dictionary for **students**, so they could use it at school as a resource in reading and writing and later add it to their home libraries. So she created *The Illustrated Dictionary of Everyday Things*. It contains 62 common, "everyday things" with major parts labeled. Many of the common objects and their parts are included because they were part of the words listed on her file folder over the years.

Then she decided she wanted to give teachers (and tutors) ideas for **using** the *Illustrated Dictionary* to help their students, so she created *The Dictionary Toolkit*. This guide gives teachers and tutors ideas for using the pictures and labels to develop critical thinking skills, develop oral language skills, and activate and review the new words. She then aligned it with the then popular CCSS to:

- Build broader concept knowledge (peak of a mountain, peak of a roof, peak of ____)
- Acquire domain specific words
- Expand students' application of words across contexts
- Strengthen word choice when speaking and writing
- Build word relationships
- Extend concepts
- Increase understanding of compound words and multiple meaning words
- Develop critical thinking
- And more

Remembering that an important part of the successful Book of Knowledge project involved students creating their own Book of Knowledge as they learned new objects and labels, she created the *Vocabulary Interactive Notebook*. In it, students draw (or trace) and label objects, as well as adding continuums and anything else the teacher thinks should be included. The notebook is proof of their learning, can be referred to, and added to in teachable moments. Children really love it.

In addition, Janet has created a website that contains a training video for the *Dictionary Toolkit*, many free activities designed to activate and to review the new vocabulary, practical ideas for building a vocabulary word wall, making continuums (semantic gradients), information about the four broad research-based practices for building vocabulary, and more. This is a rich resource for your teachers: <https://ChildrensLiteracyPublications.com>.

Next steps to implementing The Illustrated Dictionary Project:

1. A club member will conduct a meeting with all 2nd grade teachers where the author's video will be shown, the Project's website will be discussed, and books will be distributed. (up to 45 minutes)
2. The 2nd grade students will watch an author's video and will then receive their dictionary, interactive notebook, and a mechanical pencil (up to 1 hour per presentation)
3. Students take their dictionaries home at the end of the school year.