

Case Study 5.1: New words with Ms Khumalo

Ms Khumalo has chosen a storybook called [My Teacher](#). She thinks the children will enjoy reading this story because it relates to their experience. It is a story about a teacher who has braids in her hair. Before she reads the story to the children, she reads it herself aloud. While she reads it, she identifies words that she knows are new for the children. She writes these new words on cards for the word wall, and writes these word cards: 'teacher', 'hair', 'braided', 'beads' and 'she'. She also writes word cards for the colours of the beads: 'green', 'white', 'red' and 'yellow'.

There are 55 children in Ms Khumalo's class. She has designed other activities for children to do while she is reading the story with a smaller group of 20 children. She organises her class like this:

- She forms two groups of ten children each. She provides paper and crayons, and asks them to draw a picture of their teacher.
- She divides another ten children into pairs and asks them to choose a story from the reading corner to look at together. (They can read the story if they can, or look at and discuss the pictures.)
- She knows that the remaining five children like to read by themselves, and she asks them to choose a story to read individually.

While the children are busy she takes her group of 20 children outside to read *My Teacher*. She begins reading by showing the children the picture on the cover, and asks the children to guess what the story is called. She reads the title of the storybook, points to the word 'teacher', and shows the children the 'teacher' word card. She shows the children the other word cards she has written, and reads each one with the children. She asks a child to hold each of the word cards, and to keep it safe. She asks the children to talk about the meaning of each word, asking, for instance, 'What are the coloured balls in the teacher's hair called?' Then she reads the story with the children, showing the pictures and pointing to the new words when they appear, and showing the word card for that word. While she is reading the storybook, she asks questions about the story. Afterwards, she asks the children to read the new words again, and to use them in new sentences; for example, she asks a child 'Who is your teacher?', and encourages the child to answer by saying 'My teacher is Ms Khumalo.'

Then she divides her group into two smaller groups. She asks one group to choose a word card and to draw a picture of the word. She makes sure that they choose words that they can draw.

While they are busy, she works with the remaining ten children. She chooses the two word cards that begin with the sound 'b' – 'braided' and 'beads'. She shows the word cards and asks the children, one by one, to read the word. She asks the children to clap the syllables for each word: 'braid-ed' (two claps) and 'beads' (one clap). Then she asks the following questions:

- 'What sound can you hear at the beginning of the word "beads"? I can hear "b". Can you say the sound "b"?'
- 'What sound can you hear at the beginning of the word "braided"? I can hear "b". Say the sound "b".'
- 'What other words do you know that begin with the sound "b"?'

She will follow up tomorrow with the children who drew pictures of their teacher, and the children who drew pictures of other words, and help them to talk about their pictures and write some words to go with the picture.

She asks the children who were keeping the word cards to put them on the word wall. The children will be able to use the words on the word wall to write about their pictures. Her word wall is shown in Figure 5.1.



Figure 5.1: Ms Khumalo's word wall