**Self-help skills**

**Vocabulary difficulties at the age of 7 are likely to be life-long!**

In KS2 it is particularly important to teach children how they can help themselves manage a vocabulary difficulty. The following strategies can be useful:

* Say something that lets others know more time is needed.
  + discuss what they could say (“I need a moment” /“Let me have a think”)
* Try to describe the word, think of a different word or use a visual aid (gesture / object)
  + Vocabulary games
  + Pictionary
  + Charades
* Encourage the child to notice when someone has not understood them and then problem solve how to fix this
  + How can we tell if someone has not understood us?
  + Group discussion and role play
* Keep a bank of ‘word webs’ which match the class topic and refer to them as a dictionary

**How to encourage the child to use these strategies more independently**

* + Initially adults will need to gently remind the child to use the above strategies. This should not be done too often or in front of peers unless the child is comfortable with this
  + Adults to model how they need extra thinking time sometimes or what they do when they cannot remember a word
  + Offer lots of praise if children use any of these strategies
  + Point out times when they allowed themselves more time or described a word and it helped them communicate

**Remember if you are openly discussing a child’s difficulties with them it is also really important to focus on things they are good at. Use lots of specific praise and encourage them to identify things they are good at.**