



Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind

Engage for Deep Understanding

#1 Understand Labels

Labels are the “what” of learning. The brain needs a name for content so that it can store it and retrieve it for the future.

Learning labels is superficial yet very important: it kick starts the process of understanding.

For example, noun-labels related to weather include *tornado, cloud, rain, hurricane, and snow* – all words that are easy to visualize.

Yet, children raised in poverty tend to have a poorer grasp of labels, connected to their smaller vocabularies which puts them behind their peers when school starts.

[“Short Term” Solutions you can use \(p. 96\):](#)

1. Informally assess students’ prior knowledge of the terms in your upcoming unit.
2. Connect their labels with other labels.
3. Capture the essentials.