

G*argantuan, scrumptious, ominous, and lavish* are not part of any typical kindergartner's or first grader's vocabulary. But they are marvelous words, and they are fun to say. If you want to introduce your child to the many pleasures of using fancy words, I suggest playing I DREAM OF FREDERICK. Here's how: every few days you will present a new and amusing word to your child—*exquisite*, for example.

Tomorrow at breakfast, you might announce, "Last night I had the strangest dream. In it, Frederick, the mouse in the

I DREAM OF FREDERICK

GRADES

kindergarten and first

SKILLS

**developing vocabulary and an
interest in words**

Frederick

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story, came to me and said, 'I want you to teach Vivian, your lovely child, a wonderful word.' I asked what word, and the mouse said, '*Exquisite*.' Then he said, '*Exquisite* means "beautiful." Vivian has an *exquisite* smile.' After that I woke up. But Frederick is right, you do have an *exquisite* smile."

A week later at lunch you might say, "Frederick came into my dreams again. He had a new wonderful word for you: *preposterous*. He said, '*Preposterous* means "very, very silly." It is *preposterous* to invite a blue whale to dinner.' And then I woke up."

That is all there is to I DREAM OF FREDERICK. After you share a word, leave the game behind for a few days. Then have another dream. What if your child forgets every word you introduce? It does not matter. Increasing your child's vocabulary is not the goal of this game. The goal is to help him have fun with the English language and its glorious abundance of splendid words.

