Tiered Vocabulary Words

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Tier 1: tree

This tree has pointy leaves.
Commonly used in social language, usually concrete,

& no continuous direct instruction needed.



Tier 2: vary

Trees vary in shape, size, & color.

High-utility words used across multiple disciplines, usually abstract, & continuous direction instruction needed.

Tier 3: photosynthesis

Content-specific words, usually abstract, & continuous direct instruction using examples from the discipline is

required.

Trees make fuel through a process called photosynthesis.

Beck, I.L., McKeown, M.G. & Kucan, L. (2008). Bringing words to life: robust vocabulary instruction.

New York: The Guilford Press.