Introducing Academic Vocabulary: harmless

1. **Say the word, have students repeat it chorally, clap the syllables, write the word, and situate it in its context**
   Harmless (adj.) In our text, it says the whale shark is harmless.

2. **Explain the meaning with student friendly definitions**
   When something is harmless, it is not able or likely to cause injury or danger.
   (Repeat twice, then have students echo sentence in segments.)
   (More nuanced meanings can be developed after the introductory lesson.)

3. **Explain the meaning in context**
   In the text, the author describes the whale shark as harmless.
   Even though it is the biggest fish on earth, it is a plankton feeder and harmless to divers.

4. **Provide sentences in which the word is used in other contexts**
   Here are some other ways that we can use the word harmless.
   - My friend Steve is 6’9 and quite large. People think he looks mean too, but he is harmless.
   - Lots of people are afraid of spiders, but the venom of most spiders is harmless to humans.
   - Donating blood is harmless to the donor and yet gives a gift of life to a dying person.

5. **Students provide their own sentences as teacher guides them with a) questions suggesting contexts; b) sentence frames**
   Think about who or what you think is harmless. (Provide think time.) Use this sentence frame: ________ is harmless because ________. (Chant frame together. Brainstorm a list: my family, my teacher, kittens, baby birds. Call on a few students to model.)
   Now think about why you are harmless to others. (Provide think time.) Use this sentence frame when you tell your partner: I am harmless to others because ______________. (Chant frame together. Brainstorm a list: I am honest, I am a good friend.

6. **Ask short-answer questions to hone understanding**
   Think about whether or not this is harmless. Say harmless or not harmless.
   - goldfish
   - People who lie
   - Great white shark
   - Untied shoes

7. **Repeat the word chorally**
   When you go home today, and your mom or dad or whoever takes care of you asks you what you did at school today, you’ll tell them that you learned a new word, and that word is (choral response) harmless.