Academic Vocabulary

Researchers such as Kinsela, 2003; Becks, 2002; Marzano, 2005; and Scarcella 2003, stress that vocabulary knowledge is strongly correlated to academic achievement. Academic language or vocabulary is essential to reading comprehension, learning, and applying concepts. This type of vocabulary used during instruction is known as Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). It differs from the language used in daily social interactions, known as Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS). The WIDA Consortium categorizes academic vocabulary from content areas into three categories – *General*, *Specific* and *Technical* language. ESOL teachers can use *WIDA's Performance Definitions* to guide their planning for systematic and explicit vocabulary instruction. As the students progress towards attaining English language proficiency, their use of more complex vocabulary must also increase.

Engaging English language learners with vocabulary across the curriculum in multiple contexts and language domains helps them build word consciousness (metalinguistic skills) as well as gain a deeper understanding of concepts. Closing the vocabulary gap for ELLs will level the playing field by providing them a strong foundation for the knowledge and skills needed in the 21st century.

The list on the following page delineates the type of vocabulary needed to access each content area during the marking period. Specific Language Vocabulary words are listed by content because they are important to learning the vocabulary in context during the marking period, however, they may also be used in other content areas.

General Language Vocabulary *Words required for basic communication. They are often learned through context.*	Specific Language Vocabulary *They are academic words that appear in high frequency across content areas and need to be taught explicitly.* (Listed in orange.)	Technical Language Vocabulary *Words limited to a specific content, low frequency, and best taught in a relevant context.* (Listed in black.)
• Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) • Highest frequency vocabulary • General content vocabulary	• Appear frequently across content areas (e.g., describe, synthesize, analyze, pattern, solution) • Multiple-meaning words used in a variety of contexts and contents • Provides an efficient way to express a known concept	• Low frequency words or phrases • Limited to a specific content • Best taught in context as needed

Click on link for professional development:
- **What is Academic Language? Webcast**
  - http://www.colorincolorado.org/webcasts/academiclanguage/
- **Articles on academic vocabulary building**
  - http://www.scoe.org/docs/ah/AH_kinsella2.pdf
  - http://innovativocab.wikispaces.com/file/view/MarzVocabiGami.pdf
  - http://www.aea267.k12.ia.us/literacy/files/Vocabulary/choosingwords/Which_Words_to_Teach.pdf
- **Models and strategies for Vocabulary Awareness and Mastery** - This model for vocabulary instruction promotes vocabulary building and comprehension (see Slides 19 and 20 when visiting link below)
  - http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/development/resources/ELLs/player.html
  - http://www.elltoolbox.com/vocabulary-activities.html
- **The Language of Mathematics: Indirect Comparison - Which line is longer?**
  - https://mymcps-instruction.mcpsmd.org/sites/ic/_layouts/mcps.olc.home/resourceview.aspx?ResourceID=2690&ViewPage=1
- **Academic Language Function Toolkit**
  - http://orh.sweetwaterschools.org/files/2012/06/Academic-Language-Functions-toolkit.pdf

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General Language Vocabulary
Select words based on students' needs to communicate in the classroom and school and to complete specific tasks.
discuss, compare, measure, sort, solve, brainstorm, draw, write, listen, highlight, paraphrase, predict, ask, answer, sing, clap, instrument, water, safe, similar, different, graphic organizer, notes, question, problem, ruler

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Thinking and Academic Success Skills Vocabulary – <u>Flexibility</u> and <u>Intellectual Risk Taking</u>
consider, adjust, adapt, accept, invent, diverse, responsive, open, multiple perspectives, attempt, try, predict, uncertainty, challenge, novel task

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Specific Language Vocabulary and Technical Language Vocabulary by Content

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Art

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memory, imagination, mood, 2–D, 3–D, observation, visual texture, actual texture, line, pattern

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Health Education

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choice, safe, sun, challenge, stress, stressor, roles, responsibilities, fit, healthy, unhealthy, muscular strength, flexibility, pulse, heartbeat, muscle, bone, communicable disease, non-communicable disease, medicine, health care/services, doctor's office, hospital, government, taxes, insurance

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Information Literacy

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fiction, nonfiction, change, facts, reasons, topic, research, inquiry question, positive, negative, prior knowledge, background knowledge, patrons' catalog, keyword, call number, print/online source (e.g., book, e-book, print encyclopedia, digital encyclopedia, print magazine, digital magazine, online database), *Pixie, Photo Story*, *PowerPoint*, *VoiceThread*, *Clicker 5*, *Kidspiration, Word,* citation information (e.g., title, author, publisher, year of publication, page, database, organization, web site)

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Math

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long(er), short(er), tall(er), deep(er), wide(r), skip-count, equation (e.g., addend, known, unknown, sum), estimate, measure, (e.g., length, measurement unit, standard unit, centimeter, meter, inch, foot, meter stick, ruler, yardstick, measuring tape), time, (e.g., analog clock, digital clock, minute hand, hour hand, minute, hour, quarter, half, a.m., p.m.), partition, equal parts/shares, halves/a half of, thirds/a third of, fourths/a fourth of, rectangular array, number line, line plot

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Music

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improvisation, lyric, verse, pitch, pitch pattern, pentatonic, rhythm, strong beat, weak beat, duple meter, triple meter, time signature, tempo, dynamics, crescendo, decrescendo, instrumentation, melody, solfege, notate, staff, bar line, measure, quarter note, eighth note, half note, dotted half note, rest, tie, ostinato

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Physical Education

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healthy, speed, direction, rope, fit, aerobic fitness, cardiorespiratory endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, physically active/inactive, heartbeat, pulse, muscle, bone, single bounce, double bounce, static balance, dynamic balance, base of support, center of gravity, weight transfer, routine

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Reading

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title, author, actions, challenge, background knowledge, dictionary, illustration, character, setting, event, problem, solution, evidence, author's purpose, point of view, key detail, reason, context, text features (e.g., table of contents, caption, keywords, index), poem, rhyme, rhythm, beat, synonym, antonym, adverb, adjective, root word, prefix, inference, thick question, thin question

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Science and Engineering

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prediction, observation, change, surface, globe, map, astronomy, Earth, sun, moon, observable property, physical feature, crater, liquid water, solid water, vapor/gas, life science, plant, seed, animal, grow, basic needs (e.g., survive, light, air, food, nutrients, space, shelter), water, habitat, nonliving, living, woodland, grassland, wetland, ocean, rain forest, desert, brine shrimp, life cycle, development (e.g., dormant, cyst, embryo, larvae, hatch, nauplii, molt, exoskeleton), minute organism, crustacean, variable, control

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Social Studies

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book, newspaper, telephone, cell phone, television, radio, internet, classified section, advertisement, courier pigeon, telegraph, invention, technology, communication, transportation, printing press, resource, natural resource, capital resource, human resource, specialized worker, produce, production, goods, product, service, private, business, government, taxes, market, open-air/farmer's market, consumer, trade, barter, economic decision, economic want

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Writing

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change, positive, negative, illustration, voice, inquiry question, opinion statement, introduction, description, facts, details, reasons, main idea, ending, conclusion, citation information (e.g., title, author, publisher, year of publication, page, database, organization, web site), collective noun, plural noun, linking word, adjective, verb, adverb, contraction, apostrophe

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Note: Use this document to select the requisite academic vocabulary necessary to make the content of the curriculum comprehensible for ESOL students. Words are listed in the order they are addressed during the marking period and grouped according to the context in which they are taught. Specific Language Vocabulary used across contents is listed in **Orange** and Technical Language Vocabulary is listed in **Black.**