

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 <i>Words required for basic communication. They are often learned through context.</i>	Specific Language Vocabulary <i>They are academic words that appear in high frequency across content areas and need to be taught explicitly. (Listed in orange.)</i>	Technical Language Vocabulary <i>Words limited to a specific content, low frequency, and best taught in a relevant context. (Listed in black.)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) • Highest frequency vocabulary • General content vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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>

General Language Vocabulary

Select words based on students' needs to communicate in the classroom and school and to complete specific tasks.

brainstorm, topic, share, infer, write, sort, categorize, measure, explain, describe, show, observe, paraphrase, compare, read, sing, graphic organizer, notes, text evidence, hand lens, observable properties (e.g., color, shine, size, smell, texture), map, dictionary, thesaurus, word wall, racket, paddle, putter, bat

Thinking and Academic Success Skills Vocabulary – Flexibility and Intellectual Risk Taking

adapt, adjust, responsive, communicative, trusting, open-minded, diverse, perspectives, variety, uncertainty, novel task, challenge, improvisation

Specific Language Vocabulary and Technical Language Vocabulary by Content

Art	imagery, technology , art elements (e.g., color, texture, pattern, space), criticism vocabulary (e.g., describe, analyze, interpret, evaluate), illustration, sketch, tool, material
Health Education	<i>Health education is not taught during this marking period</i>
Information Literacy	project vocabulary (e.g., inquiry question, feature article, podcast, audio script, interview), technology resources (e.g., World Wide Web, online database, One Note, Microsoft Word, Clicker 5, Audacity), resource vocabulary (e.g., primary/secondary source, point of view, secondhand/firsthand account, authority, bias, relevance, intellectual freedom, Creative Commons license, source list, citation, author, title, publisher, copyright), digital/print text features (e.g., search feature, table of contents, index, images, graphics, captions, keywords)
Math	compose, decompose, pattern, rule , geometry words (e.g., point, endpoint, vertex, line, line segment, parallel, perpendicular, intersecting, ray, angle, acute angle, right angle, obtuse angle, straight angle, right triangle, degrees, protractor), decimal words (e.g., whole, decimal, hundredths, tenths), measurement terms (e.g., ruler, meter, decimeter, centimeter), tools for representing math thinking (e.g., number line, area model, table, array)
Music	style, mood, improvisation, ornamentation , conductor, composer, melody, harmony, lyrics, tempo, dynamics, ritardondo, fermata, articulation, texture, tone color, tonal center, orchestration, form, rhythm, meter, downbeat, upbeat, accent, notation terms (e.g., notate, chord, major mode, minor mode, pitch, solfege, measure, staff, half note, quarter note, eighth note, rest), musical styles/genres (e.g., round, contra dance, square dance, rondo form, spiritual)
Physical Education	healthy lifestyle , physical fitness components (e.g., cardiorespiratory fitness, muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, frequency, intensity, time, type), tennis and badminton (e.g., forehand strike, forehand grip, backhand strike, backhand grip), golf and hockey (e.g., strike, pass, dribble, shoot)
Reading	background knowledge , prose and poetry (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter, simile, metaphor, idiom, adage, proverb), drama (e.g., cast of characters, setting, description, dialogue, stage directions), informational text/ technical text (e.g., topic, reason, evidence, inference, summary), autobiography/biography/memoir vocabulary (e.g., secondhand account, firsthand account, key details, main idea, theme, point of view), text structures (e.g., comparison/contrast, problem/solution, description, chronology)
Science and Engineering	parts, combine, separate, technology , solid matter (e.g., mixture, material, substance, rock, mineral, soil), physical and observable properties (e.g., strength, flexibility, hardness, luster, streak), changes to Earth's surface (e.g., chemical reaction, temperature, pressure, weathering, erosion, deposition), paleontology (e.g., paleontologist, fossil, organism)
Social Studies	leader, duties, sea port , state government (e.g., governor, senator, delegate, executive branch, policy, judicial branch, judge, Court of Appeals, legislative branch, Maryland General Assembly, bill, law, budget, taxes), democratic ideas and practices (e.g., democracy, rights, responsibilities, citizen), colony (e.g., proprietary colony, proprietor, colonist, Native American, New England/Middle/Southern colonies, French and Indian War), geographic characteristics (e.g., region, physical characteristics, human characteristics, human-made features), goods/services and trade (e.g., economic growth, specialization, interdependence, plantation, plantation owner, cash crop, triangular trade, slave trade), migration (e.g., voluntary migration, forced migration, settler, settlement pattern, population growth, gentry, middling class)
Writing	inference , poem (e.g., narrator, literary mood, alliteration, simile, metaphor, onomatopoeia, personification, repetition, rhythm, images), informational/opinion writing (e.g., feature/news article, podcast, audio script, opinion statement, point of view, secondhand/ firsthand account, introductory paragraph, thesis statement, hook, body paragraph, facts, examples, reasons, definitions, summary, main idea, concluding paragraph), source list, primary/secondary source, citation, homograph, homophone, homonym, pronoun, adverb, adjective, sentence fragment, run-on sentence

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**.