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 *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

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">**General Language Vocabulary**
Select words based on students' needs to communicate in the classroom and school and to complete specific tasks.
identify, explain, estimate, read, write, listen, research, paraphrase, investigate, observe, predict, compare, sort, infer, visualize, analyze, exaggerate, compose, paraphrase, summarize, share, question, ask, answer, examples, strategy, topic, notes, graphic organizer, parentheses</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">**Thinking and Academic Success Skills Vocabulary – Flexibility and Collaboration**
open, responsive, diverse, adaptable, solicit, support, respectful, perspectives, options, shared responsibility</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">**Specific Language Vocabulary and Technical Language Vocabulary by Content**</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Art**</td><td>**theme, mood, style,** compose, composition, space, color, light, shadow, sketch, illustration, architectural design</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Health Education**</td><td>personal well-being (e.g., self-fulfillment, self-talk, intellectual well-being, social well-being, emotional well-being, physical well-being, environmental well-being, spiritual well-being), needs and wellness (e.g., physical needs, social needs, emotional needs, personal wellness, social wellness), emotions (e.g., basic emotions, complex emotions, stress, stressor, eustress, distress), drugs (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, underage, over-the-counter drugs, prescription medicine, peer pressure)</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Information Literacy**</td><td>**inference,** multimedia project, inquiry focus, (request for) proposal, research terms (e.g., researchable question, keyword, *Noodle Tools,* source, bias, citation), informative writing (e.g., thesis statement, main idea, opinion, fact, quote, conclusion)</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Math**</td><td>**compose, decompose, (to) round,** describing numbers (e.g., value, greater than, less than, equal to, equivalent, even, odd), numbers and operations (e.g., digit, standard algorithm, equation, numerical expression, expanded form, standard form, word form, addition, addend, sum, subtraction, difference, multiplication, factor, product, partial product, division, dividend, divisor, quotient, remainder), place value (e.g., ones, tens, hundreds, thousands, ten thousands, hundred thousands), measurement (e.g., length, width, height, volume, area, formula, cubic units, square units, centimeters, inches, feet), shapes (e.g., rectangular prism, face, edge, base), decimals (e.g., decimal point, whole number, fractional part, tenths, hundredths, thousandths), representing operations (e.g., area model, rectangular array, number line)</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Music**</td><td>**musical tradition, culture,** vocal expression, melody, tempo, dynamics, articulation, texture, orchestration, lento, largo, andante, moderato, allegro, vivace, presto, retardando, accelerando, pianissimo, piano, mezzo piano, mezzo forte, forte, fortissimo, crescendo, decrescendo, blending timbres, contrasting part, treble staff, solfeggio, compound meter, American colonial, waltz, blues, ballet, bandoneon</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Physical Education**</td><td>**healthy lifestyle,** physical fitness, muscular strength, muscular endurance, cardiorespiratory fitness (e.g., aerobic, maximum heart rate, warm-up, cool down), flexibility, stretch</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Reading**</td><td>**inference,** genres (e.g., adventure story, traditional story, tall tale, legend, biography, speech, informational text, newscast), plot elements (e.g., exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, setback, reversal, foreshadowing), discussing text (e.g., character, narrator, protagonist, antagonist, point of view, opinion, setting, events, key details, reasons, evidence, quote, dialogue, theme, main idea, summary, author's purpose, mood, tone), text structure (e.g., sequence, description, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution), homograph, hyperbole</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Science and Engineering**</td><td>**heat, sound, light,** motion (e.g., uniform/variable/periodic motion, distance, time, direction, speed, force, friction, gravity), research terms (e.g., qualitative data, quantitative data, independent variable, dependent variable), forms of energy (e.g., electrical, nuclear, chemical, magnetic, gravitational, mechanical, potential energy, kinetic energy)</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Social Studies**</td><td>**independent, liberty, collaboration, conflict, compromise,** colonists and Great Britain (e.g., New England/Middle/Southern Colonies, loyalist, patriot, command decision, opportunity cost, activist, boycott, turning point event, rebellion), goods and services (e.g., specialization, trade, yeoman farmer, urban artisan, natural/human/capital resources, currency, taxes), research terms (e.g., primary/secondary source, speech, opinion, point of view, evidence, key details, reasons)</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Writing**</td><td>**inference, conflict,** genres (e.g., adventure writing, informational writing, opinion writing), plot elements (e.g., exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, reversal), discussing text (e.g., character thoughts/feelings/actions, protagonist, antagonist, setting, theme, key details, dialogue, dialect, quote), informational writing (e.g., introduction, point of view, thesis statement, body paragraph, facts, key details, examples, reasons, evidence, main idea, conclusion, headings), punctuation, interjection</td></tr>
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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.**