

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.

ask, answer, question, explain, sort, solve, describe, summarize, research, revise, compare, investigate, observe, identify, edit, revise, organize, publish, dictionary, strategy, capitalization, graphic organizer, storyboard, food

Thinking and Academic Success Skills Vocabulary – Elaboration and Effort/Motivation/Persistence

embellish, elaborate, enhance, predict, expand, add, details, energy, drive, enthusiasm, interest, commitment, goal, achieve, diligent, determined, perseverance

Specific Language Vocabulary and Technical Language Vocabulary by Content

Art	theme, mood, describe, analyze, interpret, evaluate , art elements (e.g., texture, color, line, shape, space, depth), design principles (e.g., pattern/repetition, contrast, balance, movement, emphasis), critique (e.g., criticism, criteria, technique, materials, craftsmanship), composition, sketch
Health Education	<i>Health education is not taught in marking period 4</i>
Information Literacy	photograph, illustration, question, audience , research vocabulary (e.g., information need, issue, topic, opinion, point of view, fact, definition, key detail, reason, example, problem, solution, conclusion, summary), newsletter layout (e.g., title, section headers, captions), digital resources (e.g., text features, table of contents, tabs, search bar, keywords, online database, URL, <i>Encyclopedia Britannica</i> , <i>SIRS Discoverer</i> , website), citation (e.g., authority, relevance, author, title, publisher, copyright date), <i>Kidspiration</i> , <i>Word</i>
Math	reasonable answer, digit, numeral, fact(s), estimate, corners, sides, scale , word problems (e.g., operation, add, subtract, multiply, divide, unknown, known, equation, total), math operation vocabulary (e.g., addend, sum, difference, product, quotient), telling time (e.g., minute hand, hour hand, minute, hour), measurement (e.g., liquid volume, liter, mass, gram, kilogram, lighter, lightest, heavier, heaviest, length, perimeter, area, inches, square inches), shape vocabulary (e.g., quadrilateral, equilateral, rhombus, square, rectangle, 2-dimensional), representing operations and data (e.g., multiplication table, bar diagram, number line diagram, pictograph, picture graph, bar graph, table)
Music	improvisation, pattern , instrument, composer, compose, melody, lyrics, form, verse, refrain, section, phrase, rhythm, (steady) beat, ostinato, pitch, notate, measure, half note, half rest, quarter note, quarter rest, dotted half note, eighth note, folk song, jazz, scat singing, call and response, unison, canon, round
Physical Education	healthy lifestyle , physical fitness, fitness components (e.g., cardiorespiratory fitness, muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility), FITT Guidelines (frequency, time, type), racket, paddle, bat, golf putter, forehand strike, backhand strike, forehand grip, backhand grip, strike, batting stance, batting grip, hitting stance
Reading	illustration, inference , traditional story (e.g., folklore, folktale, myth, legend, fable), genres (e.g., literary non-fiction, autobiography, biography, personal narrative, journal, blog), story elements (e.g., plot, key details, character actions, character response, character trait, events, problem, solution, moral, theme, main idea, central message, mood, point of view), author's purpose, sub-heading, metaphor, affix, prefix, suffix, root word
Science and Engineering	observation, environment, local, skills, tools, material, technology, fuel, fibers , habitat, survive, invasive species, basic need, natural resources (water, soil, air, minerals, animals, plants, inexhaustible, renewable, nonrenewable), product life cycle (origin, production/manufacturing, transport, consumer/product use, reduce, reuse, recycle), trash (dump, landfill, incinerator), decomposition
Social Studies	technology, communication, transportation, market, timeline , budget/spending plan (income, earn, expenses, savings, banked consumer, unbanked consumer, economic choice, opportunity cost), producer, consumer, services, goods, production plan, increased production, natural resource, human resource, capital resource, limited resource, specialize/specialization, assembly line, global market
Writing	illustration, photographs, inference, stakeholder, audience , informational writing, opinion writing, newsletter (e.g., issue question, introduction, hook, topic, opinion statement, point of view, body paragraph, fact, definition, key detail, reason, example, problem, solution, conclusion, main idea, central idea, summary), letter vocabulary (e.g., heading, greeting, body, closing, signature line, comma), text features (e.g., title, section headers, captions), source vocabulary (e.g., authority, relevance, citation, author, title, publisher, copyright date), concrete/abstract/possessive/plural noun, pronoun, antecedent, linking word, comparative/superlative adjective, adverb

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**.