

## 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.

<b>General Language Vocabulary</b> <i>Words required for basic communication. They are often learned through context.</i>	<b>Specific Language Vocabulary</b> <i>Academic words that appear in high frequency across content areas and need to be taught explicitly. (Listed in orange.)</i>	<b>Technical Language Vocabulary</b> <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"> <li>• Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS)</li> <li>• Highest frequency vocabulary</li> <li>• General content vocabulary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appear frequently across content areas (e.g., describe, synthesize, analyze, pattern, solution)</li> <li>• Multiple-meaning words used in a variety of contexts and contents</li> <li>• Provides an efficient way to express a known concept</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low frequency words or phrases</li> <li>• Limited to a specific content</li> <li>• Best taught in context as needed</li> </ul>

**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://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](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](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.*

read, write, listen, ask, answer, question, compare, sort, categorize, discuss, investigate, observe, report, judge, catch, throw, sing, breath support, vocal expression, computer, graphic organizer, storyboard

**Thinking and Academic Success Skills Vocabulary – Synthesis and Metacognition**

self-determine, self-monitor, self-manage, self-evaluate, monitor, analyze, organize, synthesize, integrate, combine, summarize, rearrange, clarify, adapt

**Specific Language Vocabulary and Technical Language Vocabulary by Content**

<b>Art</b>	<b>criteria, judge, experiment, value</b> , style, mood, visual interest, additive printmaking, subtractive printmaking, printing plate, contrast, emphasis, ceramic, slab method, coil method, pinch method, score-slip-smooth method, glaze, kiln, sculpture, sculptor
<b>Health Education</b>	<b>consumer</b> , personal health (e.g., human need, health care issue, environment, risk, condition, health enhancing behavior), nutrition (e.g., healthy diet, food groups, nutrients, cycle of hunger, calorie, dietary intake, dietary output, carbohydrates, minerals, proteins, fats, vitamins, calcium), physical fitness (e.g., muscular endurance, muscular strength, cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, body composition)
<b>Information Literacy</b>	<b>genre, universal design</b> , intellectual freedom, research terms (e.g., researchable question, print/digital resource, primary/secondary source, keyword, compiler, relevance, completeness, accuracy, discrepancies), citation terms (e.g., author, illustrator, editor, translator)
<b>Math</b>	representing operations (e.g., table, area model, area drawing, array, number line, bar diagram), numbers and operations (e.g., equation, sum, difference, estimate, round, place value, digit, decompose, dividend, quotient, divisor, remainder), fraction terms (e.g., numerator, denominator, common denominator, equivalent fraction, fraction strip, equal share, whole, partition, multiplicative relationship)
<b>Music</b>	<b>theme, mood, variation</b> , form, solfege, pitch, forte, piano, allegro, lento, major mode, minor mode, diction, theme and variations form, syncopation, rhythm pattern, melody, melodic phrase, rhythmic phrase, note(s), staff, notation, whole note, partner songs, orchestration, score, descant, accent, fugue, chord, inversion
<b>Physical Education</b>	<b>cues, feedback</b> , overhand throw, forearm pass, overhead pass, underhand serve, overhand serve, distance
<b>Reading</b>	technical text, myth, mystery text terms (e.g., foreshadowing, red herring, cliffhanger), discussing text (e.g., key details, textual evidence, point of view, summary, theme, main idea, tone), plot structure (e.g., exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution), simile, metaphor, idiom, adage, proverb, text structure (e.g., cause/effect)
<b>Science and Engineering</b>	<b>troubleshoot</b> , electricity (e.g., electric circuit, closed loop, series circuit, parallel circuit, battery, wire, bulb, switch, conductor, static electricity, friction, insulator), magnetism (e.g., magnet, attract, repel, compass, electromagnet), waves (e.g., mechanical wave, electromagnetic wave, wave action)
<b>Social Studies</b>	<b>conflict, compromise</b> , colony, confederacy, British monarchy, Parliament, national government, Articles of Confederation, Continental Congress, Constitutional Convention, ratify, representation, taxation, Preamble, United States Constitution, executive branch, legislative branch, judicial branch, Federalist, Anti-Federalist, The Bill of Rights, amendment, democratic principles (e.g., rights, responsibilities, fairness, rule of law, representative government, limited government, consent of the governed, common good, due process, suffrage)
<b>Writing</b>	<b>pacing, tone</b> , folktales and myths (e.g., dialogue, universal theme, symbol, moral, origin, supernatural powers), informational writing (e.g., introduction, thesis statement, opinion, point of view, body paragraph, key details, facts, evidence, reasons, main idea, conclusion, source list), text structures (e.g., description, sequence, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution), transition words, sensory language, vivid verbs

**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**.