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.
edit, revise, infer, inference, summarize, paraphrase, visualize, explain, solve, make, record, share, practice, rehearse, presentation, compare, discuss, sort, graphic organizer, notes, timeline, eco-column, terrarium, aquarium, throw, catch, sing, types of punctuation, capitalization, formal/informal English

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Thinking and Academic Success Skills Vocabulary – Elaboration and Effort/Motivation/Persistence
combine, add, expand, enrich, embellish, details, refine, steps, goal, challenge, diligent, strategy, obstacle, reaction/response, accomplishment

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Specific Language Vocabulary and Technical Language Vocabulary by Content

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Art

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mood, point of view, art elements and design principles (e.g., unity, proportion, positive/negative space), possible projects (e.g., green design, mola, genre scene, gesture drawing, sculpture, Chinese brush painting, collagraph, additive/subtractive printmaking)

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Health Education

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risky situations (e.g., emergency, non-emergency, risk, electricity, gun, fire evacuation plan), personal well-being (e.g., avoidance strategies, harassment, abuse, assault, media message, body image), nutrition (e.g., calcium, nutrient, vitamin, mineral, calorie, Nutrition Facts label)

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Information Literacy

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evaluate, opinion, inquiry process (e.g., information need, inquiry question, print/digital source, search engine, thesis statement, point of view, fact, reason, evidence, examples, main idea, conclusion, LiveBinder), community profile/business analysis (e.g., data, interpret, specialized business, scarcity), source list (e.g., citation, intellectual property, copyright, publisher, license)

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Math

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month, year, week, day, formula, place value (e.g., decompose, compose), measurement (e.g., perimeter, area, mass, volume, weight, length, width, height), standard units of measurement (e.g., square units, inches, feet, yards, ounce, pound, ton, millimeter, centimeter, meter, liter, kilogram, gram), telling time (e.g., second, minute, hour), division and multiplication (e.g., equation, digit, quotient, divisor, dividend, remainder, multiple, factor, product), representing calculations (e.g., area model, rectangular array)

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Music

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theme, verse, meter, melody, dynamics, tempo, articulation, rhythm, crescendo, decrescendo, syncopation, andante, moderato, allegretto, allegro, presto, accelerando, ritardando, mode, major, minor, ostinato, rondalla, forte, fortissimo, piano, accelerando, standard notation

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Physical Education

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goal, overhand throw, forearm pass, overhead pass, underhand serve, overhand serve, catch

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Reading

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text elements (e.g., key detail, evidence, inference, theme, main idea, author's message), (a) play (e.g., cast of characters, narrator, setting, stage directions, dialogue), poem (e.g., verse, stanza, rhythm, meter, simile, metaphor), informational text (e.g., inquiry question, cause/effect text structure, perspective, firsthand account/primary source, secondhand account/secondary source), proverb, root word, antonym, synonym

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Science and Engineering

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non-living, living, technology, ecological levels (e.g., organism, population, habitat, community, ecosystem, biome, biosphere), meeting needs in an environment (e.g., terrestrial, aquatic, survive, reproduce, natural event, human-influenced event), scientific investigation (e.g., inquiry question, observable, testable, hypothesis, test, control), human impact on environment (e.g., land formations/elevation, soil composition, pollutant, run-off, fertilizer, road salt, acid rain)

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Social Studies

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technology, community profile (e.g., location, population, settlement, land use/availability), goods and services (e.g., specialization, business, government, natural resource, capital resource, limited resource, unlimited resource, producer, consumer, interdependence, unlimited wants, scarcity, competition, opportunity cost), explorers (e.g., voyage/journey, origin, destination, Native American society), source information (e.g., firsthand account/primary source, secondhand account/secondary source), map elements (e.g., title, author, date, index, compass rose, scale, legend/key, grid)

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Writing

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(a) play (e.g., stage directions, dialogue), character sketch (e.g., character trait, setting, character motivation), poem (e.g., narrative poem, rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, simile, metaphor, onomatopoeia, personification, repetition), community profile (e.g., business proposal, inquiry question, introduction, thesis statement, opinion, point of view, hook, background information, body paragraph, facts, data, details, reasons, examples, conclusion, source list), text structure (e.g., description, sequence, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution), transition word/phrase, prepositional phrase, noun, adjective, adverb, pronoun, homophone, sentence fragment, run-on sentence

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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.**