

## Module: Reading (ESOL)

### Lesson Title: Academic Vocabulary

#### Objectives and Standards

Students will:

- Be able to accurately use and identify academic words and phrases.

#### Standards

This lesson supports the following standard(s):

- Acquire and use accurately level-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

#### Materials

- Academic Vocabulary List (for use in selecting words to use in the lesson)
- Knowledge Rating Scale (See samples at end of the lesson)
- Language dictionaries

#### Resources for Teachers

- Rasekh, Z. & Ranjbary, R. *Metacognitive Strategy Training for Vocabulary Learning*. [http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume7/ej26/ej26a5/?em\\_x=22](http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume7/ej26/ej26a5/?em_x=22)
- *The Reading Teacher's Book of Lists* by Edward Bernard Fry
- Explanation of Tier 1,2 & 3 Vocabulary: <http://standards.dpi.wi.gov/files/cal/pdf/vocabulary.pdf>
- Bloom's Taxonomy Revised: [http://www.utar.edu.my/fegt/file/Revised\\_Blooms\\_Info.pdf](http://www.utar.edu.my/fegt/file/Revised_Blooms_Info.pdf)

#### Instructional Plan

*Note: Steps in this lesson plan follow the explicit instruction model. Please see <https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/applyingresearch.pdf> for additional information about explicit instruction.*

#### Overview

In this lesson, students will increase their vocabulary knowledge and use. One lesson should take approximately 20 minutes of class time for three (3) sessions (a total of one hour). *Academic vocabulary*

refers to the words that are used in academic discourse, both written and spoken, and that traditionally have been identified from a corpus of academic texts. Many academic vocabulary words are also considered Tier 2 words. Because Tier 2 words are words that are more likely to appear in written text than oral speech, teachers of language learners, particularly at the advanced/transitioning level, need to help their students gain strong understandings of these words. An example of a Tier 2 word is ‘challenge’. Challenge can be used in many contexts such as a medical challenge, a physical challenge, an academic challenge, etc. The importance of vocabulary instruction for language learners cannot be overstated. Providing students with a strong depth of vocabulary knowledge is key to their success in the workforce and postsecondary training.

The lesson plan below may be a change from how you have been teaching vocabulary. The focus is on teaching fewer words, but teaching high utility words in great depth, so students will be more likely to retain, use and be able to identify these words in other contexts.

#### *Process*

*(Please note that a sample full lesson with Tier 2 words is included at the end of this lesson. This process can be used for all academic vocabulary lessons.)*

#### **Step 1: Activating Background Knowledge**

Provide students with ample opportunities to reflect, early in the lesson, on what they already know. Select 3-5 Tier 2 Academic vocabulary words that your students need. Ask students to complete the *Knowledge Rating Scale*. Two sample scale templates to use with students are located at the end of this lesson.

By completing this scale, students are engaging in self-assessment. You can collect the self-assessment and return them to the students after the full lesson is complete or have students save them until the end. Initially, you will need to explicitly teach how to use this scale and be very clear as to its purpose. This is not an evaluative activity.

#### **Step 2: Explanation**

Provide explanations to students regarding the strategy they will be learning: why you are teaching this skill, how will it help them become successful language learners and college and career ready (i.e. where will they encounter a need for this skill *outside* of the classroom).

For example:

*Today we are going to begin our vocabulary unit with three (3) new words. I chose these words for you because they are important words that are used frequently.*

#### **Step 3: Modeling**

Model what you want students to be able to do. For the most efficient use of you and your students’ time, it would be beneficial to type these lessons and hand them out so students can focus on content, instead of trying to write everything down. The process for modeling is as follows:

##### **Present the first word:**

- Pronounce it.

- Define it. (Longman Dictionary is one good resource for language learners)
- Read your sample sentences. Remember, the better you get to know your students, the more you are able to incorporate them into the examples so they are more tangible/meaningful.
- Ask each student to provide a sentence using the word and to make a personal connection – make sure to model your expectations first.
- You may need to provide some students with a sentence completion to support them.
- Note the varied contexts students use.
- Repeat this process for each word. This portion of the lesson can take considerable time. However, a learner needs multiple exposures to a word in order to internalize it. This practice provides extensive exposure to the target words in various contexts.

**Step 4: Practice Opportunities**

Provide students with ample practice opportunities so that they can master the target skill. There are many ways to provide this type of practice. The following are different activities that can be used.

**Quadrant Charts:**

- Complete the Quadrant Chart for each word.
- This is something that can be done in small groups, as a class, or at home. To save time, assign groups one word; however if you do this, be sure students report out and help their classmates complete each chart. Use the quadrant chart for additional support and practice for the words. Make sure to model your expectations.
- By completing a quadrant chart, you are providing additional exposure to new word meanings and beginning to incorporate writing in connection to the target words.

Word	Meaning
Examples of usage	What it is not (this portion of the quadrant can altered)

**Fill-in-the-Blank:**

- If you select 3 words, provide students with at least 6-7 fill-in-the-blanks.
- Toward the end of the activity, include two (2) blanks per sentence. Remember to use varied contexts in your examples.
- Start off as a whole group and complete the first few together. Then have students work in pairs or small groups while you monitor.

**Yes/No/Why:**

- This activity can be done in small groups, pairs or individually (written) but be sure you are able to monitor student responses. This activity gives students the opportunity to demonstrate the depth of knowledge they’ve gained in the word meanings.
- To complete a Yes/No/Why activity, write a question that uses two of the new vocabulary words; it should be a yes/no question. Students will provide you with an answer of yes or no, but must explain their response. In order to do this, students must have a strong understanding of the words.

### **Step 5: Student Independent Application, Reflection, and Self-Assessment**

Reinforce learning by having students complete the following types of activities.

#### **Read and Respond:**

- Distribute a reading at the appropriate text level. To determine a basic text level, use Microsoft Word's spelling and grammar check feature. Click options, then select the show readability statistics or use a leveled passage. Remember, this feature only provides a quantitative readability level.
- Create questions using the vocabulary words about the reading. Student will demonstrate their knowledge of the words.

#### **Return to the Knowledge Rating Scale:**

- Have students return to their original self-assessment and re-assess themselves.

#### **Homework:**

- Ask students to be aware of their surroundings.
- Ask them to try to use the vocabulary words in their daily lives.
- Ask students to listen for or look for these vocabulary words while reading. Have students copy down the sentence and the source. Have students share their examples with their classmates. Have the class create a "Word Sightings Wall" to remind everyone that they are learning these words because they are used frequently and in varied contexts.

Vocabulary, like muscles, is a use it or lose it situation! Even though a lesson is 'over', be as creative as you can to continue to include the words in your speech and in students' classroom experiences. One option is to use old vocabulary words in new vocabulary sample sentences.

### Sample Academic Vocabulary Lesson

1. **Strategy** (noun) – a planned series of actions to achieve something
  - Every student has a strategy to learn English. A common strategy is coming to every class.
  - When preparing for a job interview, a good strategy is to practice interview questions with your friends or family.
  - President Obama has many strategies to improve the country. One of his strategies is to provide health care for everyone.
  
2. **Barrier** (noun) – something that prevents people from doing something
  - The language barrier prevents many immigrants from getting a high paying job in the United States.
  - A lack of education is a barrier for many professional opportunities.
  - Every person has a different barrier they must overcome to achieve a goal.
  
3. **Values** (noun) – your beliefs about what is right or wrong, or about what is important in life.
  - Our values help to guide our lives.
  - Every person has a different set of values. Some people value money and others value family.
  - If we forget about our values, we can make poor decisions that we regret.

**Vocabulary Practice - Fill in the blanks with the correct vocabulary word.**

1. I could not work at the post office because I did not have a driver's license. This was a \_\_\_\_\_ for me.
2. During the interview, the manager asked what my work \_\_\_\_\_ were. I told her they were honesty, respect, and teamwork.
3. My teacher asked me what my goals for the semester were. I told her I wanted to start taking the Pre-CNA class and find a better job. She said she would help me decide on some \_\_\_\_\_ to make my goals happen.
4. Many people have \_\_\_\_\_. They are difficult to overcome but if we create a \_\_\_\_\_ to help us, we can succeed.
5. If the Congress has a Republican majority but the President is a Democrat, he or she will face many \_\_\_\_\_ and will need to work hard to get what he or she thinks is best for the country.
6. Becoming a famous musician or athlete is very difficult. People must plan a \_\_\_\_\_ and have strong \_\_\_\_\_ to succeed.
7. People who donate money to churches usually share the same \_\_\_\_\_ as the church.

**Vocabulary Practice - Yes/No/Why**

1. Can every barrier be solved with a strategy?
2. Do you need a strategy to have values?
3. Can values prevent barriers?
4. Can a strategy create values?
5. Does every strategy help eliminate barriers?

**Read and Respond**

Read “Let’s Get Healthy” or “Looking for a Job” then answer the questions below<sup>1</sup>.

**“Let’s Get Healthy”**

1. What are some strategies for getting healthy?
2. What are some barriers to keep us from getting healthy?
3. Do you value exercise? Why or why not?
4. Do you value a healthy lifestyle? Why or why not?

**“Looking for a Job”**

1. What are some barriers in Mark’s life?
2. What are some strategies Mark uses to find a job?
3. What are some of Mark’s values?
4. Do you value the same things that Mark values? If yes, which ones and why? If no, why not?

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<sup>1</sup> Marshall Adult Education: Reading Skills for Today’s Adult - <http://www.southwestabe.org/>

**Sample Knowledge Rating Charts**

**Knowledge Rating**

Directions: Read the words in the first column. Place a check in one of the next three columns to indicate your understanding of each word. For each word checked “Can define,” write a short definition in the “Pre-reading” column.

Vocabulary Word	No idea of meaning	Have seen this word	Can define	Pre-reading	Post-reading
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					

**Knowledge Rating**

Directions: Check the column that best describes your knowledge of the words listed.

Vocabulary Word	I know it!	I’ve heard of it . . .	I’ve never seen it before.
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

Literacy & Learning: Reading in the Content Areas. Retrieved from the World Wide Web at:  
[http://www.litandlearn.lpb.org/strategies/strat\\_2krating.pdf](http://www.litandlearn.lpb.org/strategies/strat_2krating.pdf)