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Level 2

Academic Vocabulary

25 Content-Area Lessons



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Table of Contents

Introduction

Research 4
How To Use This Book 6
Overview of Strategies 8
Overview of Assessments 32
Standards Correlations 34
Correlation to McREL Standards 35
Correlation to TESOL Standards 37

Reading

A Familiar Tale 38
Reading Informational Text 43
An Imaginary Fantasy 48
Reading Fiction 53
A Traditional Folktale 58

Writing

Your Personal Story 63
Using Descriptive Language 68
Writing a Friendly Letter 73
Organizing Expository Texts 78
The Language of Poetry 83

Mathematics

Learning to Divide 88
Estimating Numbers 93
Understanding Place Value 98
Sorting 2-D Shapes 103
Telling Time 108

Science

Sorting Rocks 113
Passing on Genes 118
Forces and Motion 123
Behind the Switch 128
Causes of Extinction 133

Social Studies

What Is Culture? 138
Then and Now 143
Comparing Folk Heroes 148
Plymouth Colony 153
Christopher Columbus 158

Answer Key 163

References Cited 170

Sample Word List 171

Contents of the Teacher Resource CD 175

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Research

This series, *Academic Vocabulary: 25 Content-Area Lessons*, provides ready-to-use lessons that help teachers develop effective strategies that build vocabulary and conceptual understanding in all content areas. Vocabulary knowledge is a key component of reading comprehension and is strongly related to general academic achievement (Feldman and Kinsella 2005). Students need to understand key academic vocabulary that crosses all content areas to fully develop conceptual understanding.

What Is Vocabulary Knowledge?

Simply put, *vocabulary knowledge* means having an awareness of words and word meanings. Yet, vocabulary skills are more complicated than simply reciting key terms and their definitions.

Vocabulary knowledge is often described as *receptive* or *expressive*. *Receptive vocabulary* includes words that we recognize when heard or seen. *Expressive vocabulary* includes words that we use when we speak or write. Students typically have a larger receptive vocabulary than expressive vocabulary (Lehr, Osborn, and Hiebert 2004); they are familiar with many words, but may not understand their multiple definitions or the deeper nuances of how those words are used in oral and written language.

So, then, what does it mean for a student to truly know a word? Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2002) state that word knowledge is not black and white; understanding vocabulary is not as simple as either knowing a word or not. The process by which students learn new words is complex and often occurs in progression. Word knowledge may range from students never having heard of a word, to students understanding all there is to know about a word, or some level of understanding that lies between the two extremes. Understanding this complexity of word knowledge helps educators develop a vocabulary program that addresses these unique learning processes. The lessons in this book support both receptive and expressive vocabulary.

What Is Academic Vocabulary?

Specialized content vocabulary, although distinct, is considered a part of academic vocabulary. Yopp, Yopp, and Bishop (2009) have developed definitions for each category. ***Specialized content vocabulary*** words are specific to a particular content area and represent important concepts or ideas. Examples of these include *boycott* (social studies), *habitat* (science), *numerator* (mathematics), *autobiography* (reading), and *narrative* (writing). ***General academic vocabulary*** includes high-utility words found across content areas and throughout students' academic reading, writing, and speech experiences. Words such as *explain*, *define*, *identify*, and *organize* are examples of general academic vocabulary.

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How To Use This Book

Academic Vocabulary: 25 Content-Area Lessons provides teachers with lessons that integrate academic vocabulary instruction into content-area lessons. This book includes 25 step-by-step, standards-based lessons. Each lesson features two vocabulary-development strategies that reflect the latest research in effective vocabulary instruction. The strategies within each lesson vary and are presented in detail on pages 8–31 and address the following key aspects of effective vocabulary instruction:

Developing Oral Language	Developing Word Consciousness
Developing students' oral language skills is crucial to assist them in navigating school texts and understanding more complex oral and written patterns of language. These strategies help students gain a deeper understanding of academic words and concepts by guiding them to use the words in a meaningful way.	These strategies provide structured opportunities to build students' awareness of academic words used in the classroom and their lives. Students are encouraged to note when they see or hear key words and to use the words themselves. This strategy helps students develop a true love of language and a keen sense of how words sound as they hear and speak them.
Teaching Words	**Independent Word Learning**
These strategies use a variety of techniques to help students build conceptual knowledge and increase their oral and written vocabularies. This type of strategy may be incorporated at different points throughout your study. Some of the strategies are more effective in introducing new words while others will benefit students as they review and make connections among words.	These strategies help students derive word meanings and explore the use of context to infer the meaning of unknown words. The strategies can be taught and reviewed throughout the school year to improve students' abilities in learning words independently.

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How To Use This Book *(cont.)*

Each two-page lesson is followed by two student activity pages as well as an assessment that allows teachers to assess students' vocabulary knowledge in effective and meaningful ways. All of the reproducible student activity pages are also included on the Teacher Resource CD.

Each lesson in this book includes two **featured academic vocabulary strategies**. An overview of each strategy can be found on pages 8–31.

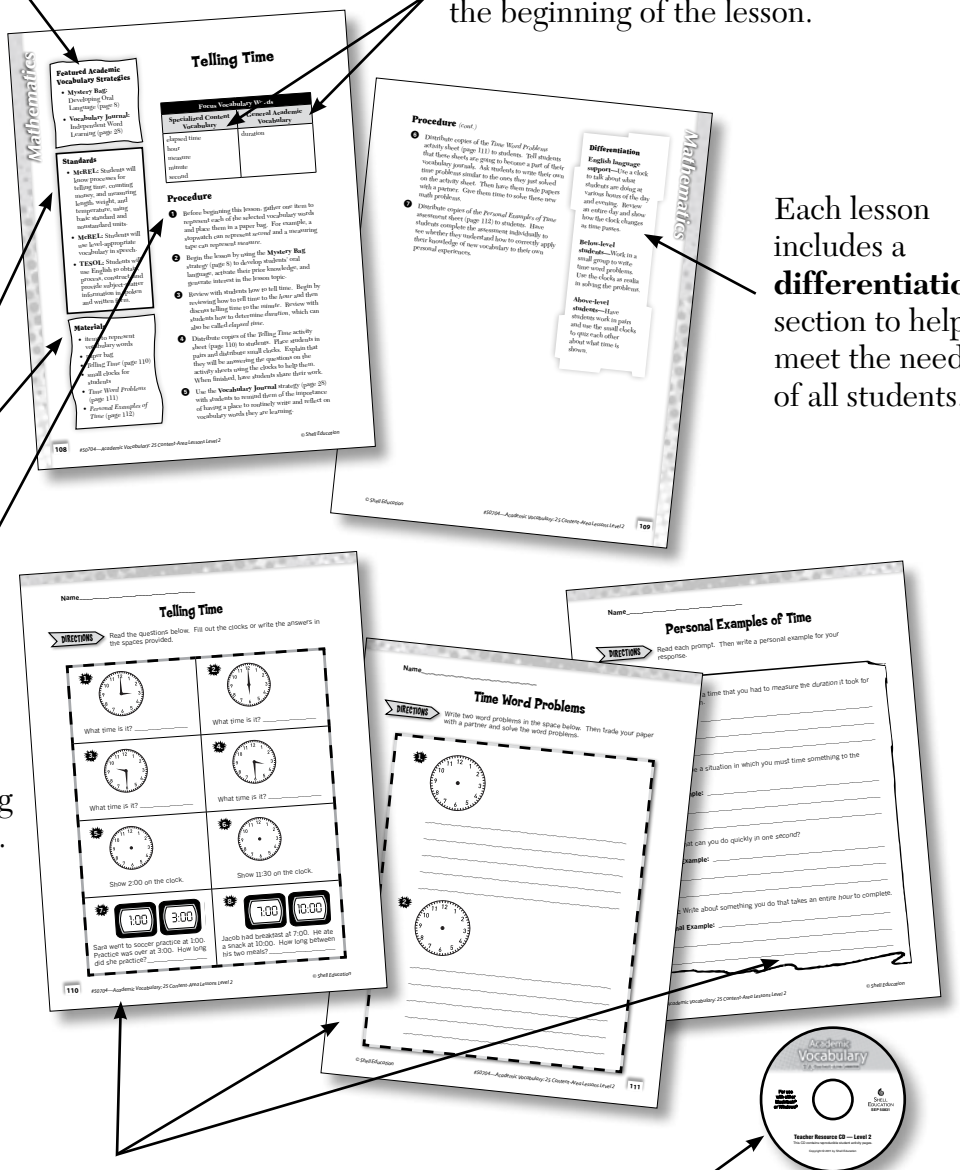
Specialized content vocabulary and **general academic vocabulary** words are identified at the beginning of the lesson.

The **standards** listed in each lesson indicate the area of focus for the lesson.

Each lesson includes a **differentiation** section to help meet the needs of all students.

The **materials** needed to complete the lesson are listed.

The **procedures** provide step-by-step instructions for teaching the content-area lesson.



Each lesson has two student **activity pages** and an **assessment page** that reinforces the featured academic vocabulary words for the lesson as well as the standard.

The **Teacher Resource CD** includes all student activity pages and assessment pages.

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The Language of Poetry

Featured Academic Vocabulary Strategies

- **Questions, Reasons, and Examples:** Developing Oral Language (page 12)
- **Vocabulary Diagram:** Teaching Words (page 24)

Standards

- **McREL:** Students will write in a variety of forms or genres.
- **McREL:** Students will use level-appropriate vocabulary in speech.
- **TESOL:** Students will use appropriate learning strategies to construct and apply academic knowledge.

Materials

- *Vocabulary Diagram: Poem* (page 85)
- *Practice with Poetry* (page 86)
- *Poetry Context Completion* (page 87)

Focus Vocabulary Words	
Specialized Content Vocabulary	**General Academic Vocabulary**
figure of speech poem verse	examine interpret

Procedure

1. Explain to students that they are going to be discussing and writing poetry. Tell the class that poetry has different styles of language to describe ideas. The ideas are presented in *verses* that help the reader *interpret* or analyze what the author is trying to say.
2. Explain that poetry uses descriptive language, such as a *figure of speech*. Tell students that figure of speech is an expression or use of language in a nonliteral sense. Explain that a figure of speech may include a simile, metaphor, personification, or hyperbole. The type of figure of speech that an author uses allows the reader to better *examine* a poem.
3. Use the **Questions, Reasons, and Examples** strategy (page 12) to further discuss these vocabulary words and help students share information and examples related to these new concepts. Some examples include:
   - When is a time you used a *figure of speech* to describe something in a story?
   - What *poems* have you read recently?
   - Why might poetry be *interpreted* in different ways by different readers?

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Poetry Context Completion

DIRECTIONS Read each context completion sentence starter. Fill in the blank with information that correctly completes the sentence.

1. **Sentence starter:** Poetry may be divided into different *verses* because

_____

_____

_____

2. **Sentence starter:** A *figure of speech* expresses ideas by _____

_____

_____

3. **Sentence starter:** A *poem* is a piece of writing that _____

_____

_____

4. **Sentence starter:** To closely *examine* something means to _____

_____

_____

5. **Sentence starter:** A reader may *interpret* poetry to explain _____

_____

_____