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## *Introduction*

In order for students to acquire new knowledge and learning, they must be able to understand what they read, hear, and are asked to do in the classroom. According to Robert Marzano, a leading researcher in education and author of several books on academic vocabulary, students must comprehend academic vocabulary in order to understand instruction and academic texts. Often, students have a hard time writing to prompts or responding to instructions because they don't know exactly what is being asked. This is because they don't understand the meanings behind instructional verbs or how these words are used in an academic context.

### *What Is Academic Vocabulary?*

Academic vocabulary is the language of the classroom. It includes academic language—the specific words and phrases that students encounter in their academic reading, assignments, and daily classroom activities—as well as the grammar and language structures that make up classroom discussions. Academic vocabulary incorporates words not always used in everyday conversation, and sentences may be more complex. In some cases, students encounter words that have different meanings than they do in other contexts.

Academic vocabulary refers to words and phrases that are used in the process of learning. Benjamin Bloom, an educational psychologist, worked with colleagues to create and publish a taxonomy that provides a framework for classroom instruction. Bloom's Taxonomy has been updated to reflect the action words students encounter in their learning while maintaining a hierarchy of higher-order thinking. Each level contains key words found in academic tasks for that level of critical thinking. Current standards emphasize the need for students to develop critical-thinking skills. Bloom's Taxonomy labels the levels of higher-order thinking as remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating.

Teachers and students use academic language to discuss new knowledge and concepts, develop ideas, talk about texts, and engage in classroom activities. This book will focus on terms used specifically in classroom instruction. Many of these terms are included in Bloom's Taxonomy, which enables teachers to identify objectives and plan instruction that develop critical-thinking skills and to assess student learning. Direct instruction in academic vocabulary supports students by helping them understand what they are expected to do.

This book contains three main components: strategies to help teachers explain academic vocabulary; lessons that present definitions, examples, and practice of academic instructional verbs; and a glossary, which includes related, non-specific academic language to further develop students' working vocabulary.



## How to Use This Book

*Know the Lingo! Mastering Academic Vocabulary* contains strategies, specific lessons and activities, and a glossary to help teachers illustrate and teach instructional verbs and other academic vocabulary. Introduce and discuss the concept of academic vocabulary with students. Explain that in school, teachers ask students to do certain things in the classroom. When teachers tell students what to do or how to do something, we call these sentences *instructions* or *directions*. It is important for students to understand what the words used in directions mean, so they will be able to successfully do what is being asked. In these lessons, students will learn the meanings of words teachers use when giving instructions. Other times, students read words that tell them what to do; these are called *written directions*. When first starting these lessons, help students understand the nature of and expected response to a *prompt*. A prompt is a sentence that tells students which action to take. Review also the concept of *task*, meaning a specific piece of work to be done, often assigned by another person. The glossary lists additional academic vocabulary students encounter in the context of instruction, activities, and other classroom materials. Students need to understand the meanings of these words in order to successfully complete academic tasks within the classroom. Copy these pages for students and explain to them that they will keep their glossaries handy to help them understand academic words used in the prompts and tasks in the lessons.


The strategies and examples listed on “Strategies to Teach Academic Vocabulary” (pages 6–7) offer support for students who need additional assistance in making connections between words, their meanings, and expected actions. They may be used with various instructional verbs and other academic vocabulary to teach students and help them incorporate academic vocabulary into their daily learning.

The “Academic Instructional Verbs” section (pages 8–103) highlights grade-appropriate instructional verbs that students will find included in many prompts. These words include *describe*, *indicate*, *evaluate*, and *summarize*. The word list is compiled from grade-level standards and Bloom’s Taxonomy. Lessons are presented in an order that correlates to the frequency with which students might encounter the word. For example, most prompts ask students to “report,” so that lesson is one of the first taught. Each verb is explained in the following ways:

- **Define:** Students are provided with a definition of the instructional verb.
- **Study:** Students are asked to review sample prompts and tasks that include the instructional verb as well as sample responses to the prompts and tasks.
- **Practice:** Students practice answering prompts and completing tasks that contain the instructional verb.
- **Check:** Students participate in a small-group or whole-class activity to confirm their understanding of the instructional verb.
- **Review:** Students are reminded of how the instructional verb is used.
- **Collaborate:** Students collaborate in pairs to further demonstrate their understanding of the instructional verb.



## *How to Use This Book (cont.)*

Preview each lesson to ensure you have the needed materials on hand. When this icon appears , prepare or complete the activity as directed. Guide students through the sample prompts and sample answers provided in each lesson to help students understand the meaning of the academic verb. Then preview the practice prompts and tasks to which students will respond. Ensure students have the “Academic Concepts Glossary” (pages 104–108) for reference as they complete individual, whole-class, small-group, or paired activities. Designate a place for students to store their glossaries for easy access during classroom instruction and activities. Sometimes a sample prompt or activity includes a short reading passage for students. Most reading passages fall within the fifth-grade reading range based on Lexile measures (830L–1010L). For further review, consider using this comprehension check format as a follow-up to the lesson activities:

### *Check Your Work*

Think about your answers to the following questions. Discuss your thoughts with a partner or other classmates, or write your responses in a journal entry.

- Did you know what to do?
- Was it easy or hard to understand what the word or phrase means?
- Could you tell someone else what to do if they heard this word?
- In your own words, what does this word mean?

*Note:* Any Common Core State Standards addressed in lesson activities are listed on pages 110–112.

### *Academic Vocabulary Notebooks*

Consider having students keep academic vocabulary notebooks. Notebooks will help students with word recognition in future encounters. Encourage students to refer to their notebooks during various cross-curricular activities.

- Create and maintain a class “journal” to observe and discuss academic vocabulary in practice throughout a school day.
- Have students copy the word and a simple definition for reference in small-group discussions and activities.
- Have students write observations and new information about academic vocabulary.
- Have students write comments about their experiences with academic vocabulary in classroom activities.
- Encourage students to make connections across content areas.
- Have students discuss and compare their observations with classmates.
- Have students compare terms within or between subject areas.
- Provide activities that engage students in using terms from their notebooks.
- Have students edit and revise their notebooks to reflect new learning.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Collaborate

## DEFINE

**Question:** What does it mean to collaborate?

**Answer:** When we collaborate, we work together to do or make something. Often, we collaborate in learning situations.

## STUDY

**Sample Prompt:** Why might people collaborate with others to create a tiny house?

**Sample Answer:** They can get ideas and learn the best way to do things.

**Sample Prompt:** How do people collaborate in tiny-house communities?

**Sample Answer:** They may share cooking facilities or garden space.

## PRACTICE

- ① **Task:** Read the definition of a tiny house below. Then collaborate with a classmate to write a description of a tiny house in your own words.

The tiny-house movement is a trend in which some people live in very small houses. At 400 square feet or less, a tiny house is less than one-fourth the size of an average house and is also less expensive. Some tiny houses are as small as 100 square feet. In such a small space, people live simply with far fewer possessions. A tiny house is very efficient; everything is smaller, and every bit of space counts.

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- ② **Prompt:** What do you think you would or would not like about living in a tiny house?

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- ③ **Task:** Consult with your partner to collaborate and explore the topic of tiny houses. Take notes about your conversation.

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- ④ **Prompt:** What have you learned about collaborating by working with a classmate to complete Practice Tasks #1 and #3?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Collaborate (cont.)

### CHECK

Look back at what the word collaborate means.

- ① Collaborate with a small group to learn why people might choose to live in a tiny house.
- ② Read magazine articles or look at websites to research tiny houses in today's culture. 
- ③ Talk with others in your group about their previous knowledge or experiences with the tiny-house movement.
- ④ Collaborate to decide which information from your research and discussion would be most important and interesting to include in an overview of tiny-house communities. Take notes on your discoveries.

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### REVIEW

- When we collaborate, we work together with others to achieve or do something.
- Often, we collaborate in learning situations.
- Often, when we collaborate, we work together to produce or make something.

### COLLABORATE

When we look back at what this word means, we see that it means to work together with others to do something.

- ① Collaborate with a partner to design a tiny house. Which features of a tiny house would be most important? Why?

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- ② Use your notes from #1 above, Practice Prompt #2, and Practice Task #3 to explain your ideas as you collaborate to create a diagram of your tiny house. Draw your diagram on a separate piece of paper.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Argue



## DEFINE

**Question:** What does it mean to argue?

**Answer:** When we argue, we give our opinion about something. We might give reasons or other evidence for or against a stated opinion.



## STUDY

**Sample Prompt:** What would you argue natural gas companies should do to protect the environment?

**Sample Answer:** To conserve water, natural gas companies should try to reuse water in gas-production processes. They should carefully manage the transmission of chemical fluids, used to reduce the likelihood of potential leaks, that might pollute the environment.

**Sample Prompt:** What reason(s) can you give to argue against the United States importing liquefied natural gas?

**Sample Answer:** This form of natural gas requires processing before and after shipment, which adds to its overall cost and energy use. There is also the cost of shipping the natural gas to its end user.



## PRACTICE

① **Task:** Read print and online materials about natural methane gas.

② **Prompt:** What reasons would you give to argue in favor of methane gas production?

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③ **Prompt:** What reasons would you give to argue against methane gas production?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Argue (cont.)

### CHECK

Look back at what the word argue means.

- ① In a small group, read and discuss the paragraph below. Then answer the questions using a separate piece of paper.

Natural gas is a fossil fuel that produces less carbon dioxide than coal or oil. New technology has made it more cost effective to extract shale gas, a form of natural gas found in shale rocks. Some geologists estimate the United States has enough shale resources to last for the next one hundred years. Not everyone feels the benefits of shale gas production are worth it, however. The drilling process requires large amounts of water. This reduces the availability of water for other uses. Another concern is that chemicals used in the process will contaminate drinking-water supplies and natural habitats. Natural gas is a clean-burning fuel, and the large amounts available make this natural resource a valid option to pursue.

- ② What evidence does the author present to argue for his or her opinion?
- ③ What evidence does the author use to argue against others' opinions on this issue?
- ④ Discuss the paragraph and questions with your group. Argue for your opinion, using reasons and evidence from the passage as well as any knowledge you have of the topic.
- ⑤ Work together to write a statement to argue for a group opinion.
- ⑥ Share your opinion statement with other classmates.

### REVIEW

- When we argue a point, we give reasons for or against it.
- We can give evidence when we argue for our opinion.
- When we argue, we try to prove we are right by giving reasons.
- We can argue by writing ideas in order to change someone's opinion about what is true or what should be done.

### COLLABORATE

When we look back at what this word means, we see that it means to give reasons for or against a stated opinion.

- ① Read a classmate's responses to Practice Prompts #2 and #3.
- ② Do you agree or disagree with your partner's responses? Write a reply to argue if his or her reasons and evidence make sense. Use a separate piece of paper.