



Support

**Grade 3**  
**Academic**  
**Vocabulary**

## What is Academic Vocabulary?

Academic Vocabulary includes the words, phrases, and language structures that are used in learning. It includes the formal language that is used in education, whether orally, in textbooks, and in assessments.

Academic Vocabulary is distinct from the informal language that is used at home, on the playground, and in daily conversation. Slang and colloquialisms are not part of academic vocabulary. Students may be quite adept with the English language in the informal register long before the academic register is developed. It takes specific instruction to build academic vocabulary.

## Teaching Academic Vocabulary

There are three methods of teaching academic vocabulary, and all three are necessary for vocabulary development. **Explicit instruction of words, explicit instruction of word-learning strategies, and indirect instruction of vocabulary** are all essential to developing academic vocabulary.

**In explicit instruction of words**, teachers select terms that are taught using definitions, examples, and proper usage. These terms may be content-specific (e.g., addend, subtrahend) or conceptual (e.g., summarize, explain). This instruction includes using the terms in context and multiple exposures to cement the learning. If word banks or vocabulary notebooks are used, these are the terms that are included with definitions, usage, and non-linguistic representations to help the learner remember the term and its meaning and usage.

**In explicit instruction of word-learning strategies**, teachers introduce, model, and prompt for the use of strategies that are used when a student comes to an unknown word. Context clues, word parts, cognates, text features, and related words are used to help the student attach meaning to the unknown word. Students must practice using the strategies across the curriculum whenever they are presented with unknown words. For the English Learner, special attention must be given to helping him determine which are the important words. Names and poetic or flowery description can be difficult to navigate, but may not be essential for comprehension of the big ideas being presented.

**In indirect instruction of vocabulary**, students are exposed to language through discussion, reading, being read to, multimedia resources, and education-related experiences. This is a very natural way to learn language, but it also varies widely depending on the language experience of the student.

## Reinforcing Academic Vocabulary Instruction

Students should record terms that are taught directly. The record of the terms should be in a format that the student can easily access and understand. The vocabulary may be collected in a notebook, on note cards, in word banks, or other collections, but they must have meaning for the student. If each student has an individual record of the terms, leave room for new information. Students should add new concepts, deeper meaning, graphics, or new usages to the record as the vocabulary develops.

When a term is revisited or a new or deeper meaning is explored, the students should be prompted to record the new learning. Students may also use graphic organizers to help them see the connections between related terms. This is especially helpful when studying a topic with many academic vocabulary terms. **The Standards Plus EL Portal has many graphic organizers that can be used.** Each graphic organizer is presented in a blank format and a completed format as an example of how it may be used:

- Concept web
- Concept tree
- Venn diagram
- Organized List
- Idea hand

Games are an engaging way to revisit vocabulary, and a few simple games can be used all year with different sets of vocabulary. Vocabulary Bingo can be set up so that the students listen for vocabulary terms or their definitions. The bingo cards may have a different term written in each square, or they may have a different definition in each square. The teacher can call the definition of the term, and the students must mark the matching term, or the teacher may call the term itself, and the students must mark the definition that goes with the term. **Examples of these two types of bingo games are found in the Standards Plus EL Portal .** Charades or picture charades work well for terms that can be acted out or drawn. Crossword puzzles and rebuses are great for review, too.

## Reinforcing Academic Vocabulary Instruction

In the spirit of competition, students can compete for class, table, or personal “points” for finding or using academic vocabulary. For example, a student may come in from the playground and say, “Wow! A lot happened at lunch today. Let me **summarize** what happened...” If summarize is a term that the class is studying, the class, that student’s table group, or the student could earn a “point” for correct usage of an academic vocabulary term. Students may also earn points for finding academic vocabulary terms in reading material, hearing academic vocabulary terms that others use, or using them in their writing.

## Grade 3

# Language Arts - Academic Vocabulary

### A

**Abstract Noun:** Ideas and feelings that cannot be perceived by the senses (sight, taste, touch, smell, sound).

**Act:** Big parts of a play.

**Action:** A thing that a character does.

**Address:** The place where a person or company is located, the place where a delivery may be made.

**Adjective:** Describes a noun (beautiful, scary, cautious)

**Adverb:** Modifies a verb; adverbs often ends in an -ly (quickly, slowly, happily)

**Aesop:** A man who wrote many fables many years ago (Aesop's Fables).

**Affix:** A word part added to a base or root word that changes the meaning of the base or root word.

**Antecedent:** The noun that a given pronoun replaces.

**Article:** a, an, the

**Author:** Person who writes a story.

### B

**Base or Root Word:** a word that has meaning without adding anything to it; a word that has meaning on its own and can have an affix added to the beginning or end.

### C

**Cause and Effect:** One act or event that leads to something else happening.

**Chapter:** Sections of a book. Chapters often have a title or a number.

**Character:** The people or animals that complete the action in a story.

**Characters:** People in a story.

**Characteristics:** The words that can describe people or things.

**Comma:** The punctuation used to indicate a series of items, a break in a sentence, or a quotation.

**Comparative Adjective:** A word used to compare two nouns (The turtle is slower than the hare.).

**Comparative Adverb:** A word used to compare two actions (Jeremy ran faster than Julie.).

**Comparison:** How things are alike and how they are different.

## Grade 3

# Language Arts - Academic Vocabulary

**Complex Sentence:** A sentence that includes two or more independent clauses, which are joined by a subordinating conjunction.

**Compound Sentence:** A sentence which includes two or more independent clauses.

**Compound Words:** Words that are made when two words are put together to make a new word.

**Concluding Sentence – Informative/Explanatory:** The final sentence that restates the topic and lets the reader know that the text is complete.

**Concluding Sentence – Opinion:** The final sentence that restates the topic and ties together the reason the author holds his/her opinion.

**Conclusion:** How the story ends; the closing of a written text that ties all of the ideas together.

**Conflict:** A problem the characters must solve.

**Consonants:** all of the other letters in the alphabet.

**Context:** The words and ideas around an unfamiliar word in text.

**Coordinating Conjunction:** A word that connects independent clauses (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so).

## D

**Degree of Certainty:** How sure you are about something.

**Detail:** Information that describes or explains an idea in text; information that further explains a reason; information that supports the main idea.

**Dialogue:** Conversation between characters; the words that a character speaks in a written format.

**Drama or Play:** A story that is acted out or read aloud.

## E

**Events:** Things that happen to the characters.

**Exclamation Point:** The punctuation used at the end of an exclamation.

## F

**Fable:** A story that uses animals to teach a lesson called a moral.

**Fact:** True information.

**Folktale:** A story told over and over that teaches a lesson or explains something.

## Grade 3

# Language Arts - Academic Vocabulary

### G

**Geographical Location:** A specific place.

### H

**Holiday:** A day that commemorates a special event. Often people do not work or go to school on holidays.

**Hyperlink:** A word or image that links one webpage to another webpage or subject when you click on it.

### I

**Illustration:** Pictures that help to tell a story.

**Informational Text:** Text that teaches about a topic.

**Informative/Explanatory Text:** Text written to inform the reader or explain a topic.

**Irregular Verbs:** Verbs that change form in the past tense (run → ran).

### K

**Key Words:** Words that you type into a search engine to find information.

### L

**Line:** Part of a Stanza.

**Linking Words and Phrases:** Words and phrases that connect ideas in a written text (e.g., because, also, therefore, another, for example).

**Literal:** What a word really means, the dictionary definition.

### M

**Main Idea:** The central point of a passage or text.

**Mood:** The way a story makes us feel; the feeling that words or sentences bring out in the reader or listener.

**Myth:** A story that uses made up gods or goddesses as part of a fictional story.



## Grade 3

# Language Arts - Academic Vocabulary

### N

**Narrative Writing:** Text written to entertain or relate events.

**Narrator:** The person telling the story; a person who tells a story.

**Nonliteral:** The meaning of a word or phrase that is figurative, not the dictionary definition.

**Noun:** A person, place, thing, or idea (Sam, boy, park, flowers)

### O

**Opinion:** How you feel about a topic.

### P

**Period:** The punctuation used at the end of a statement.

**Plot:** How the characters, events, and setting interact in telling the story.

**Plural Noun:** Two or more persons, places, things, or ideas

**Point of View:** Outlook or attitude of the narrator or character; outlook or attitude of the reader or writer.

**Possessive:** A word that shows that something belongs to someone or something.

**Prefix:** An affix added to the beginning of a word; a word part that is added before a base or root word that changes the meaning of the word.

**Product:** An item or brand of items that are sold.

**Pronoun:** A word that replaces a noun (he, she, they, it)

### Q

**Question Mark:** The punctuation used at the end of a question.

**Quotation Marks:** The punctuation used to indicate the words that someone says.

### R

**Reason:** Evidence the writer uses to support his/her opinion.

**Regular Verbs:** Verbs that don't change form in the past tense (jump → jumped).

## Grade 3

# Language Arts - Academic Vocabulary

### S

Scene: Parts of an act.

Search Engines: Websites that help navigate the internet.

Sequence Words: Words that indicate when something happened (e.g., first, second, next, later).

Setting: Where a story takes place.

Simple Sentence: A sentence which includes one independent clause.

Singular Noun: One person, place, thing, or idea

Stanza: Section of a poem.

State of Mind: How you feel at this moment in time.

Story Map: A way to organize the parts of the story.

Subordinating Conjunction: A word that connects clauses by making one clause of a lower value or importance than the other (since, although, if, because, after, unless, when, while, as, until, where).

Suffix: An affix added to the end of a word; a word part that is added after a base or root word that changes the meaning of the word.

Superlative Adjective: A word used to compare three or more things (The snail is the slowest of all.).

Superlative Adverb: A word used to compare three or more things (Fiona ran fastest of them all).

### T

Table of Contents: List of chapters, topics, and page numbers; a list of chapters and page numbers found at the front of a book.

Temporal (Time Order) Words: Words that help the reader know when events occurred.

Text Features: Text or formatting that helps a reader navigate a text (e.g., headlines, subheadings, bulleted lists, bold print).

Title: The name of a work of art or writing; a word or abbreviation added to a person's name that tells about who he or she is, e.g., Dr., Mrs., etc.

Topic Sentence – Informative/Explanatory: The sentence that introduces the topic.

Topic Sentence – Opinion: The sentence that introduces the writer's opinion.

Trait: The characteristics or qualities that a character displays.

# Grade 3

## Language Arts - Academic Vocabulary

V

Verb: An action words (run, jump, leap, sleep)

Vowels: a, e, i, o, u and sometimes y.

W

Writing Topic: The subject of a written text.

## Grade 3

# Mathematics - Academic Vocabulary

### A

**Addend:** A number to be added in an addition number sentence.

**Additive:** Adding parts together to create a whole or total.

**Analog:** A clock that uses numbers and hands to show the time.

**Area:** the amount of surface covered by a shape without going outside the boundaries of the shape; the amount needed to cover a shape.

**Array:** A set of numbers or objects in columns and rows that follow a specific pattern; a display that uses organized rows and columns to show a total.

**Associative Property:** The grouping property of multiplication: the factors in a multiplication problem can be grouped in any way without changing the product.

**Associative Property of Addition:** The addition of a set of numbers is the same regardless of how the numbers are grouped.

### C

**Category:** A group of data.

**Clock:** A measurement tool that shows time.

**Closest hundred:** When rounding to the nearest hundred, the closest hundred is the hundred (0, 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600, 700, 800, 900, 1,000) that is closest to the given number.

**Closest ten:** When rounding to the nearest ten, the closest ten is the ten (0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100) that is closest to the given number.

**Commutative Property:** The order property of multiplication: the order of the factors in a multiplication problem does not change the product.

**Commutative Property of Addition:** The addends can be added in any order without changing the sum.

**Compare:** To indicate if one value is greater than, equal to, or less than another.

**Compose:** To put numbers together.

**Conversion factor:** The number of smaller units it takes to make one of the larger units of measure.

**Customary units:** The units of measure used in the United States, including feet, inches, gallons, pints, pounds, and ounces.

## Grade 3

# Mathematics - Academic Vocabulary

### D

**Data:** Information we collect to answer questions or analyze.

**Decompose:** To break numbers apart; to break apart into smaller parts.

**Denominator:** The bottom number in a fraction.

**Digit:** The numerals 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 that are used to write numbers in standard form.

**Digital:** A clock that shows the time using digits or numbers.

**Distributive Property:** Numbers being multiplied may be decomposed and multiplied as long as each addend is multiplied by the same amount and the partial products are added together.

**Distributive Property of Multiplication:** You can multiply a sum by a number and it is the same as multiplying each of the addends of the sum and combining the partial products.

**Divide:** To find the number of equal groups of objects in a total.

### E

**Elapsed Time:** The difference between one time and another.

**Endpoint:** Numbers that are placed on a number line.

**Equation:** A number sentence with an equal sign.

**Equivalent:** Having the same value; the same size.

**Expanded form:** A number written to show the place value of each digit.

### F

**Factor:** A number being multiplied in a multiplication equation.

**Fraction:** Part of the whole or part of a group.

### H

**Hour:** 60 minutes.

**Hour hand:** The shorter hand on an analog clock that indicates the hour.

## Grade 3

# Mathematics - Academic Vocabulary

### I

**Identity Property:** One times a number will always be that number.

**Identity Property of Addition:** The sum of zero and any number is that given number.

**Identity Property of Subtraction:** If you subtract zero from any given number, the difference is that number.

**Interval:** Equal distances from one number to another; used with number lines.

**Inverse Operation:** An operation that undoes another operation; addition and subtraction are inverse operations; multiplication and division are inverse operations.

### K

**Key:** A place on a graph that explains the scale.

### L

**Length:** The distance from one point to another in a straight line.

**Line plot:** A number line used to display numeric data.

**Liquid volume:** The measure of liquid, also called capacity.

### M

**Mass:** The weight of an object.

**Metric units:** Units of measure in which each unit is smaller or larger by a factor of ten, including meter, centimeter, liter, milliliter, grams, and kilograms.

**Minute hand:** The longer hand on an analog clock that indicates the minute.

**Multiple:** The product; created by multiplying two whole numbers.

**Multiply:** To find the total number of objects in a number of groups.

### N

**Numerator:** The top number in a fraction.

## Grade 3

# Mathematics - Academic Vocabulary

### P

**Partition:** To share equally; divide into equal parts.

**Perimeter:** The measured distance around all sides of a shape

**Picture graph:** A graph that uses pictures to show data.

**Place value:** The value of a digit in a number.

**Product:** The solution in a multiplication equation.

### Q

**Quadrilateral:** A four-sided polygon.

**Quotient:** The solution in a division equation.

### R

**Rectangle:** A quadrilateral with four right angles and opposite sides equal.

**Rectilinear:** Formed by straight lines; having the characteristics of a rectangle.

**Regroup:** To group a ten in a specific place value in the place value that is one higher or one lower than the original number, e.g., 12 tens can be regrouped as 1 hundred and 2 tens.

**Rhombus:** A quadrilateral with four sides of the same length.

**Right angle:** An angle that measures exactly  $90^\circ$ .

**Rounding:** Determining the closest ten or hundred to a given number.

**Rounding Place:** The place value of the digit you are rounding.

### S

**Scale:** The number of units that each picture represents on a graph.

**Skip-count:** To count by a number other than one.

**Square:** A quadrilateral with four right angles and four equal sides. A square is both a rhombus and a rectangle.

**Square unit:** A unit of measure used to describe area. A unit with four equal length sides.

**Standard form:** A number written using base-ten numerals.

**Symbol:** A box, question mark, letter, or other mark that represents an unknown number.

## Grade 3 Mathematics - Academic Vocabulary

T

Tiling: Placing a grid of the same size squares over a shape. Tiling is used to determine area.

U

Unit fraction: A fraction that represents one part of the whole.

W

Whole Number: A counting number that has no fractional parts; 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.

Written form: A number written using words rather than numerals.

Z

Zero Property: Zero times a number will always be zero.