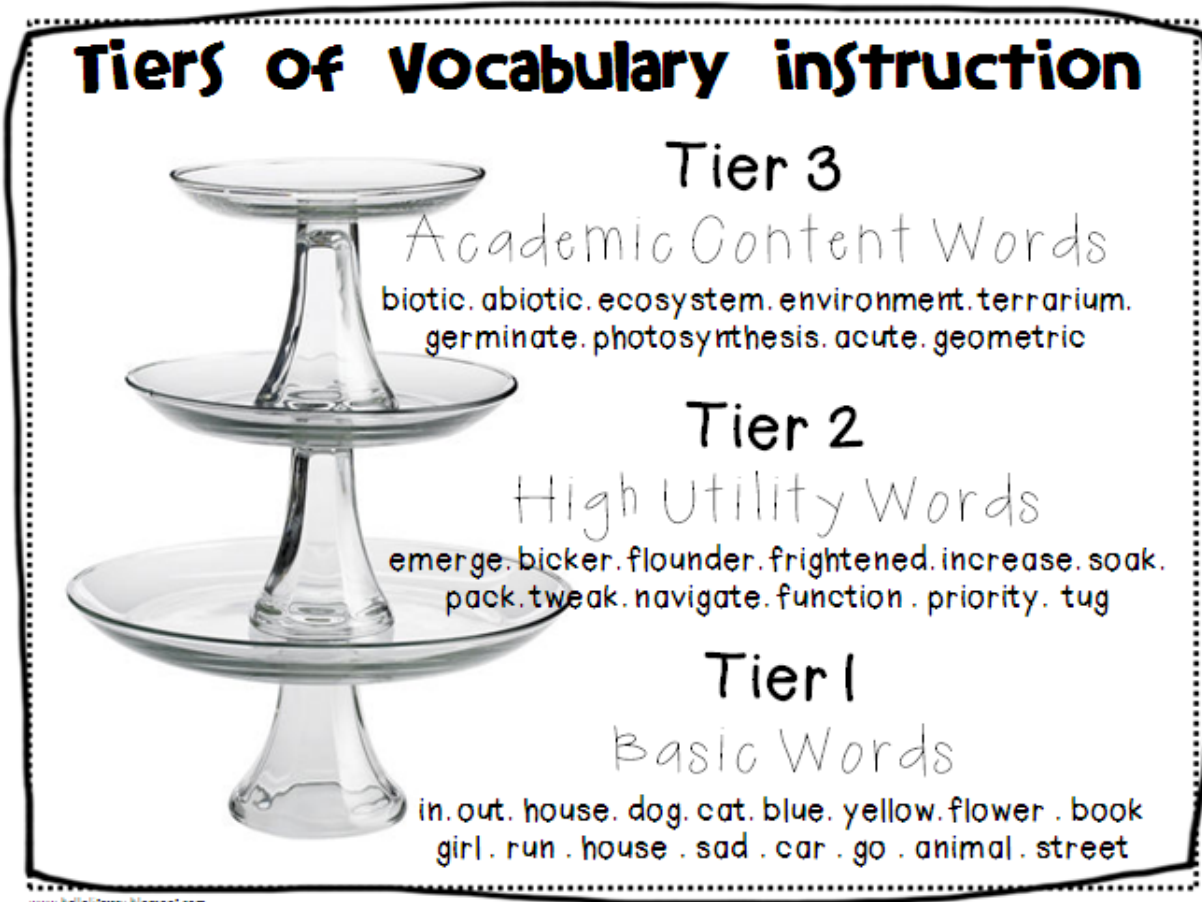


## Building Vocabulary



### Steps to Building Vocabulary

- Instruct [
1. Introduce a word.
  2. Present a **student friendly** explanation (explain **before** define).
  3. Illustrate it with examples.
- Breadth and Depth [
4. Check for deepening of student understanding through multiple opportunities.
  5. Gradually move toward students selecting their own words.

### When choosing words to teach

Ask yourself:

- Would this word occur across various subject areas?
- Do we need to comprehend this word to fully comprehend the text?
- Is the word part of a word family?
- Does it appear more in writing than speech?

Words that can be quickly explained, words with only one meaning and words that are already part of their background knowledge can be taught quickly in context.

Read the following article from [commonlit.org](https://www.commonlit.org/). Identify 3-4 tier two words you would teach.

### **TUSKEGEE AIRMEN: AN EARLY CIVIL RIGHTS SUCCESS**

The Tuskegee Airmen were a group of African American fighter pilots and bomber pilots, including their support crew, who trained at the Tuskegee Air Fields in Alabama during World War II. They became the 332nd Fighter Group and the 477th Bombardment Group in the U.S. Army Air Forces at the height of the war, and their missions were some of the most successful in the American military.

During World War I, several decades earlier, African Americans were denied the ability to become fighter pilots and help the war effort. This sparked a growing controversy in the African American community. In April of 1939, after a 20-year battle, Congress finally allocated funds to set up a special division to train African American pilots to fly fighter planes.

Most people were highly skeptical of the new unit. Racism was still very present in and out of the military, and many Army officials did not believe African Americans had the skills or the intelligence to learn everything a pilot needs to know.

## Activities to increase depth and breadth of vocabulary

### Cagey Questions

Pose questions to encourage conversation and/or compare words. Always follow with why.

Examples:

Would you rather be called persistent, nagging or pesky? Why?

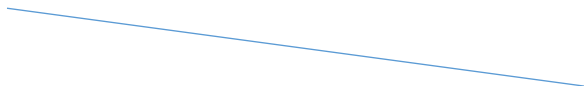
Would you have better luck if you were persistent or persuasive?

### Select and Connect

Students are given two lists of words from both present and past lessons. They select one word from each list and decide how they are connected.

Example:

A	B
Profit	loss
Debit	account
Credit	asset
Capital	savings
Investment	return



The student might say, "I am connecting profit to asset because when you make a profit on something it adds to your assets."

### Sentence Frames

Students are given part of a sentence using the vocabulary word. They finish the sentence to demonstrate understanding.

Examples:

My father was **exhausted** after he....

My employer described me as **persistent** because I...

### Odd One Out

Students are given a group of 4 or so words and decide which one doesn't fit with the others. They then have to explain why that word is the odd one out.

Example:

Running, soccer, cycling, kayaking

For instance, students might answer soccer because it doesn't end in -ing, or because it's not a verb or because it is a team sport. They might say kayaking because it has 3 syllables. Or maybe even running because it requires no equipment.

### **Silent Mindmapping**

Draw a circle on the board. Write a tier two word in the circle. Everyone should be quiet as the marker is passed and everyone adds to the map. Students should not repeat what others have written.

### **Word Maps**

Freyer Maps, Sensory Maps. Examples on [readwritethink.org](http://readwritethink.org)

### **Semantic Gradients, Word Ladders**

Helps students understand slightly different word meanings. Great for pairs. Select a Vocabulary word. Create a list of similar words. Arrange the words in a continuum either vertically or horizontally based on their range of meaning. Have students explain their rationale. Encourage discussion of subtle differences. No one right answer just a great way to discuss the difference between words and selecting the word to use.

Example: talk, whisper, yell, shout, murmur, babble

Students might put in this order: shriek

shout  
yell  
talk  
babble  
whisper  
murmur

### **Resources**

- Youtube channel- Academic Literacy Project
- Wordhippo.com
- Vocabulary.com
- Freerice.com
- Achievethecore-Academic Word finder
- Bringing Words to Life by Beck, McKeown and Kucan
- Teach Like a Champion by Doug Lemov