

# Features of Academic Vocabulary

This Worksheet is for use with the **Features of academic vocabulary?** video, available on YouTube and Youku.

Video name: **Features of academic vocabulary**

Link to video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOT\\_Y0GytnM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOT_Y0GytnM)

Alternate link: [https://v.youku.com/v\\_show/id\\_XNjM3MDk4NTg5Mg==.html](https://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XNjM3MDk4NTg5Mg==.html)

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## Worksheet

Video name: **What is academic vocabulary**

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### Task 1: Before watching

- With a partner, discuss how you normally record new words. Do you have a special notebook for new vocabulary? What information do you write down?
- When studying vocabulary it is important to focus on the word's **meaning**. What other things are important? In particular, think about if you want to use the word in your:
  - Writing
  - Speaking

### Task 2: Features of academic vocabulary

Watch the video **from the start up to 09:38** and complete the following notes.

#### Meaning

most basic feature

most words have 1. \_\_\_\_\_ meanings

best to focus on 2. \_\_\_\_\_ meaning only (e.g. meaning in context you encountered it)

#### Frequency

**key Q:** Is it a 3. \_\_\_\_\_ word?

if the word is low-frequency then 4. \_\_\_\_\_

focus on:

- 5. \_\_\_\_\_ words (e.g. most common 2,000 words = 6. \_\_\_\_% of English, most common 3,000 words = 7. \_\_\_\_% of English)
- 8. common \_\_\_\_\_ words (e.g. words in the Academic Word List AWL)
- 9. \_\_\_\_\_ words (e.g. osmosis for Biology, aggregate for Economics)

#### Pronunciation

difficult because of large number of 10. \_\_\_\_\_ sounds

many words spelled similarly but pronounced differently

useful to make a note of 11. \_\_\_\_\_ for words with more than one syllable

#### Spelling

can be difficult as shown by homophones (words which 12. \_\_\_\_\_ but spelt differently)

#### Word form

also called 13. \_\_\_\_\_

noun, verb, adjective, adverb

#### Word family

group of words related by a 14. \_\_\_\_\_ base word

helpful to study 15. \_\_\_\_\_ and 16. \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g. -tor, -ivity)

#### Register

refers to language used for particular 17. \_\_\_\_\_ or in particular 18. \_\_\_\_\_

**key Q:** Is it an 19. \_\_\_\_\_ word?

register is generally 20. \_\_\_\_\_ but some words still unsuitable (e.g. hereinafter)

words like OK, But, So are acceptable for 21. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Usage

relates to the grammar of a word (e.g. prepare 22. \_\_\_\_\_, unwilling 23. \_\_\_\_\_)

#### Collocation

means 24. \_\_\_\_\_ words which frequently go together

e.g. cultural 25. \_\_\_\_\_, accept 26. \_\_\_\_\_

**Task 3:** Features and related skills

Complete the following table showing which skills (Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking) each feature is important for. The first two (*Meaning* and *Frequency*) have been done.

Feature	Re	Wr	Li	Sp
1. Meaning	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Frequency	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Pronunciation				
4. Spelling				
5. Word form				
6. Word family				
7. Register				
8. Usage				
9. Collocation				

**Task 4:** Example word: Conclusion

Watch the video **from 09:38 to the end** and answer the following questions about the word *Conclusion*.

- Mark the stress on the word **Conclusion**. How many syllables does it have?
- Complete the meaning: *A \_\_\_\_\_, opinion or judgment reached after \_\_\_\_\_.*
- Complete the gaps in the following sentences by changing the word form of *conclusion* from noun to a different part of speech.
  - The report \_\_\_\_\_ that there was a clear link between smoking and lung cancer, and recommended stronger action by the government.
  - While the findings suggest some link between video games and teenage violence, the evidence is \_\_\_\_\_ and it is not possible to make recommendations.
  - The report \_\_\_\_\_ shows that further research is needed in this area.
- Complete the following sentences using a suitable *collocation* from the video.
  - We \_\_\_\_\_ **the conclusion** that repeating the experiment was unnecessary and potentially harmful to the participants.
  - The most \_\_\_\_\_ **conclusion** was that an error had been made when measuring the result.
  - Although it was not possible to formulate detailed conclusions, some \_\_\_\_\_ **conclusions** were presented in the paper.
  - His speech ended with some **concluding** \_\_\_\_\_ regarding increased funding for the department.

Further reading [suggested links for further reading or study]

**Features of academic vocabulary:** <https://www.eapfoundation.com/vocab/features/>

**General Service List (GSL)** [for most common 2,000 words]

<https://www.eapfoundation.com/vocab/general/gsl/>

**BNC/COCA lists** [for most common 3,000 words]

<https://www.eapfoundation.com/vocab/general/bnccoca/>

**Academic Word List AWL:** <https://www.eapfoundation.com/vocab/academic/awllists/>

**Academic Vocabulary List AVL:** <https://www.eapfoundation.com/vocab/academic/other/avl/>

**Secondary School Vocabulary Lists SVL** [technical word list]

<https://www.eapfoundation.com/vocab/other/svl/>

**Middle School Vocabulary Lists MSVL** [technical word list]

<https://www.eapfoundation.com/vocab/other/msvl/>

**Academic Collocation List ACL:** <https://www.eapfoundation.com/vocab/academic/acl/>

**Word profiler:** <https://www.eapfoundation.com/vocab/profiler/singleword/>

## Answers

### Task 1: Before watching

a) With a partner, discuss how you normally record new words. Do you have a special notebook for new vocabulary? What information do you write down?  
*Answers will vary. Discuss with students whether they actually record new vocabulary. If possible, get students to share their vocabulary notebooks.*

b) When studying vocabulary it is important to focus on the word's **meaning**. What other things are important? In particular, think about if you want to use the word in your:

- Writing
- Speaking

### Task 2: Features of academic vocabulary

Watch the video **from the start up to 09:38** and complete the following notes.

#### Meaning

most basic feature

most words have **1. multiple** meanings

best to focus on **2. single** meaning only (e.g. meaning in context you encountered it)

#### Frequency

**key Q:** Is it a **3. common** word?

if the word is low-frequency then **4. don't study it!**

focus on:

- **5. high-frequency** words (e.g. most common 2,000 words = **6. 90%** of English, most common 3,000 words = **7.95%** of English)
- **8. common academic** words (e.g. words in the Academic Word List AWL)
- **9. technical** words (e.g. osmosis for Biology, aggregate for Economics)

#### Pronunciation

difficult because of large number of **10. vowel** sounds

many words spelled similarly but pronounced differently

useful to make a note of **11. stress** for words with more than one syllable

#### Spelling

can be difficult as shown by homophones (words which **12. sound the same** but spelt differently)

#### Word form

also called **13. part of speech**

noun, verb, adjective, adverb

#### Word family

group of words related by a **14. common** base word

helpful to study **15. prefixes** and **16. suffixes** (e.g. -tor, -ivity)

#### Register

refers to language used for particular **17. purpose** or in particular **18. social setting**

**key Q:** Is it an **19. academic** word?

register is generally **20. formal** but some words still unsuitable (e.g. hereinafter)

Words like OK, But, So are acceptable for **21. presentations or lectures**

#### Usage

relates to the grammar of a word (e.g. prepare **22. for**, unwilling **23. to do**)

#### Collocation

means **24. two or more** words which frequently go together

e.g. cultural **25. diversity**, accept **26. responsibility**

**Task 3:** Features and related skills

Complete the following table showing which skills (Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking) each feature is important for. The first two (*Meaning* and *Frequency*) have been done.

Feature	Re	Wr	Li	Sp
1. Meaning	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Frequency	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Pronunciation			✓	✓
4. Spelling		✓		
5. Word form		✓		✓
6. Word family		✓		✓
7. Register		✓		✓
8. Usage		✓		✓
9. Collocation		✓		✓

**Task 4:** Example word: Conclusion

Watch the video **from 09:38 to the end** and answer the following questions about the word *Conclusion*.

- Mark the stress on the word **Conclusion**. How many syllables does it have?
- Complete the meaning: *A position, opinion or judgment reached after consideration.*
- Complete the gaps in the following sentences by changing the word form of *conclusion* from noun to a different part of speech.
  - The report **concluded** that there was a clear link between smoking and lung cancer, and recommended stronger action by the government.
  - While the findings suggest some link between video games and teenage violence, the evidence is **inconclusive** and it is not possible to make recommendations.
  - The report **conclusively** shows that further research is needed in this area.
- Complete the following sentences using a suitable *collocation* from the video.
  - We **drew/reached** the **conclusion** that repeating the experiment was unnecessary and potentially harmful to the participants.
  - The most **logical** **conclusion** was that an error had been made when measuring the result.
  - Although it was not possible to formulate detailed conclusions, some **general** **conclusions** were presented in the paper.
  - His speech ended with some **concluding** **remarks** regarding increased funding for the department.

## Teacher's Notes

Video name: **Features of academic vocabulary**

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Video length: 13.06

Learning Outcomes

- (1) Reflect on current vocabulary study [*Task 1*]
- (2) Understand important features of vocabulary [*Task 2*]
- (3) Understand which skills each feature is important for [*Task 3*]
- (4) Apply detailed study of one word (*conclusion*) to authentic language [*Task 4*]

### Suggested sequence/timings (for teachers)

The following is a possible sequence. Total timing is 55'.

#### **1. Warm-up (10')**

Students complete Task 1. This task gets them to reflect on their current vocabulary study and prepares them for the video by considering some ideas of important features of vocabulary. If possible, have students share their vocabulary notes or notebooks.

#### **2. Video comprehension #1 (30')**

- a) Direct students to watch the video (up to 09:38) and take notes.
- b) Give out the handout and have students (in pairs) complete Task 2. Students may need to work together. Alternative approaches: (a) watch the video a second time; (b) give out handout first, pause after each feature and elicit answers.
- c) Move on to Task 3, to make sure students understand which skill each feature is important for (most are for speaking and writing, i.e. productive skills).
- d) Go through answers with students.

#### **3. Video comprehension #2 (15')**

- a) Students watch the remaining part of the video (09:38 to end).
- b) Students complete Task 4.
- c) Go through answers with students.

NOTE: If 1 + 2 take too long, 3 can be left to another lesson.

#### **4. Extension activities**

- a) Give students one or more words. Have them conduct detailed study of those words, using dictionaries or online sources. If possible, set exercises for students to complete to test knowledge of the words.
- b) Have students explore frequency information of words, using the academic word profiler shown in the video:  
<https://www.eapfoundation.com/vocab/profiler/singleword/>