

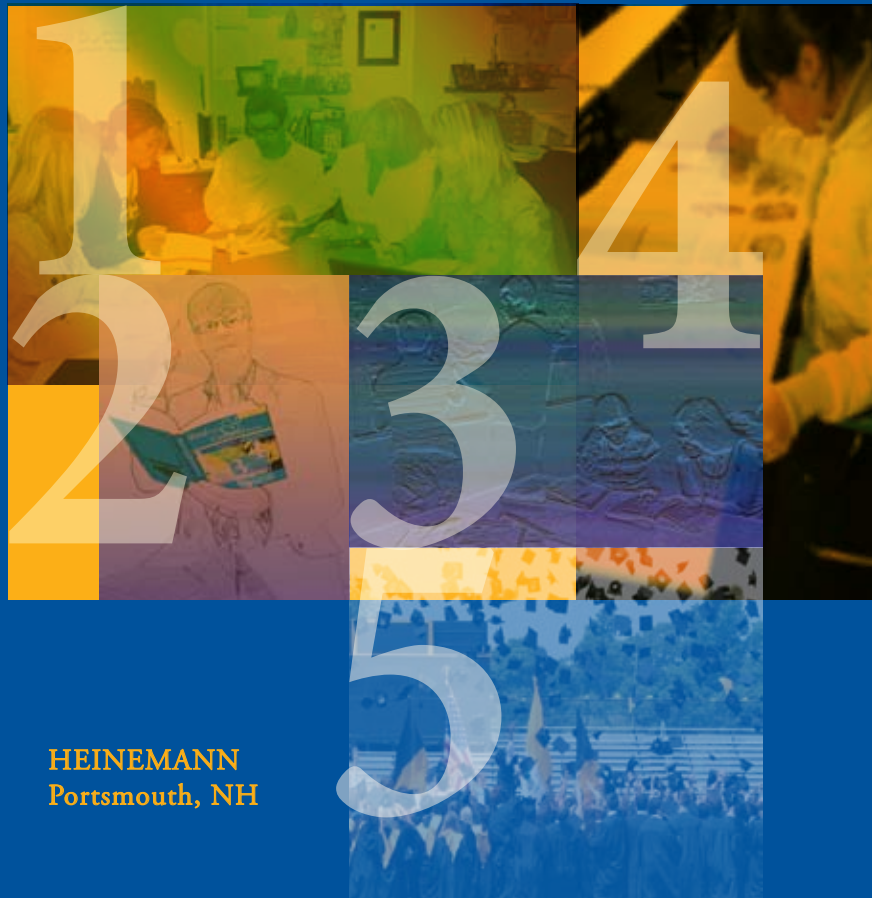
A **STUDY GUIDE** *for*

Word **WISE** *&*
Content **RICH**

GRADES 7-12

FIVE ESSENTIAL STEPS TO TEACHING ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

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Portsmouth, NH

A STUDY GUIDE *for*

Word WISE & *Content* RICH

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FIVE ESSENTIAL STEPS TO TEACHING ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

This Study Guide is intended to support your understanding of the concepts presented in *Word Wise and Content Rich: Five Essential Steps to Teaching Academic Vocabulary* by Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey.

You can use this study guide as you finish each chapter or after you complete the whole book. Prompts and questions are intended to promote personal reflection but could also be used to foster small-group discussions between colleagues.

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Words (Still) Matter in Middle and High School



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1. Fisher and Frey talk about the unmet vocabulary needs of secondary students. Discuss several of the reasons for these unmet needs within the context of your own school experiences.
2. Discuss the research that relates vocabulary knowledge to the ability of college freshmen to read informational text. What implications does this have for middle and high school classrooms?
3. As mentioned in Chapter 1, reading and writing have a recursive nature. Discuss how word knowledge might play a role in the clarification of ideas.
4. Word knowledge often lies along the continuum of shallow to deep. Discuss the degrees of understanding that have been described by researchers such as Dale, O'Rourke, and Bamman.
5. Discuss the differences between general, specialized, and technical words. Is it important to teach words from each of these categories?
6. Fisher and Frey have developed an academic vocabulary model that consists of five big ideas. The chart on the next page shows a rubric that could be used by educators to evaluate how they are integrating these big ideas across the school day as part of a schoolwide initiative. Using the rubric, how might you describe the vocabulary efforts at your school?

■ Fostering a Schoolwide Vocabulary Initiative

How do students acquire and extend their academic vocabulary across the school day?					
	5	4	3	2	1
<i>Intentional Instruction:</i> Words are identified by course and/or department.	Words are identified using a framework for selection. Word lists include general, specialized, and technical vocabulary and are shared across departments.	All courses and departments select a range of general, specialized, and technical vocabulary, but these are shared only within the department.	Some courses and/or departments have selected words, although these are driven by textbook lists (primarily technical vocabulary).	Individual teachers are applying a framework for selecting vocabulary, although these are not being shared outside the department.	Individual teachers have identified words using the textbook (technical vocabulary), and these are not known to others in the department or school.
<i>Transparent Instruction:</i> Teacher modeling and think-alouds	All teachers have received professional development in modeling and use it daily in their instruction. They share their practices with one another.	Some departments have received professional development in modeling and are using it daily.	All teachers have received professional development, but it is not yet being regularly implemented.	Individual teachers are sharing their modeling practices with one another through peer visits.	There are individual experts using teacher modeling, but there is no opportunity to share practices with others.
<i>Usable Instruction:</i> Peer talk and small-group collaboration	Oral language practices are schoolwide and all teachers integrate peer talk and/or small-group collaboration daily.	Some departments use oral language daily and are emerging as skilled practitioners.	Some departments are planning ways to integrate peer talk and small-group collaboration into daily practice.	There are individual teachers who use peer talk and small-group collaboration but there has not been an opportunity to work with others.	Instruction is dominated by whole-group lectures followed by silent, independent work.
<i>Personalize Instruction:</i> Independent and individual learning	Students schoolwide consolidate their understanding through activities that promote spiral review and metacognition.	Departments are collaborating to build professional knowledge with colleagues.	Some departments have developed a plan for how students increase vocabulary metacognition and spiral review.	Individual teachers are becoming skilled at personalizing instruction, although there is no mechanism for sharing practice.	Independent work emphasizes isolated skills and memorization.
<i>Prioritizing Vocabulary:</i> Words of the Week and Wide Reading	The school has implemented the plan and teachers receive regular professional development to refine practice.	The school has created a plan for schoolwide vocabulary and wide reading (SSR and independent reading).	The school has created a plan for either schoolwide vocabulary or wide reading.	The school is studying schoolwide vocabulary and wide reading for future planning.	There is no plan, and no current initiative to examine these schoolwide practices.

Make It Intentional

A Framework for Selecting and Teaching Vocabulary



1. Explain what is meant by *intentional vocabulary instruction*. Why do the authors suggest that teachers should teach more than just words found in the classroom textbook?
2. Discuss the decision-making model that Fisher and Frey have developed for vocabulary selection. How might this model help you select words to teach in your own classroom?
3. How might a teacher use the Academic Word List (2000) developed by Averil Coxhead of Massey University in New Zealand? Ogden's Basic English Word List?
4. In what ways would students benefit from learning about Latin and Greek root words, suffixes, and prefixes?
5. Discuss how departments or course-alike teachers might select technical vocabulary words to teach.
6. As mentioned in this chapter, teacher modeling can be an effective means by which to teach vocabulary alongside content instruction. How might you incorporate modeling, vocabulary instruction, and content teaching simultaneously in your classroom?
7. Why is collaboration between students important for academic vocabulary acquisition?

8. Fisher and Frey describe how journal writing might be used in a geometry classroom to promote independent use of vocabulary words. What types of activities might you try in your content area? How could these activities be used to assess students' vocabulary knowledge?

■ References

- COXHEAD, A. 2000. "A New Academic Word List." *TESOL Quarterly* 34 (2): 213–38.
- OGDEN, C. K. nd. "Ogden's Basic English Word List—in His Order." <http://ogden.basic-english.org/words.html>.

Make It Transparent

Teacher Modeling of Academic Vocabulary Learning



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1. Why might teachers explain their thinking when reading a piece of text? How could you use this strategy?
2. What does it mean to model context clues? Discuss the four categories for natural contexts that were developed by Beck, McKeown, and McCaslin (1983).
3. What are the five ways in which context clues are provided by authors?
4. Fisher and Frey suggest that teachers devote time to modeling morphology and word parts. What prefixes, suffixes, root words, cognates, and/or word families might you teach in your content area?
5. How could a teacher model the use of resources when deciphering word meaning?

■ Reference

BECK, I. L., M. G. MCKEOWN, AND E. S. MCCASLIN. 1983. "Vocabulary Development: All Contexts Are Not Created Equal." *The Elementary School Journal* 83: 177–81.

Make It Usable

Building Academic Vocabulary Through Peer Talk



1. Discuss the research that supports the use of oral language to foster vocabulary development.
2. Explain the characteristics of effective peer learning. Develop a plan for incorporating these characteristics into a collaborative activity for your content area.
3. Consider the *three tips for successful peer interactions*, and complete the chart below.

TIP	What Does It Mean?	How Does It Apply to My Classroom?
Tip 1: Provide Students with a Purpose Statement		
Tip 2: Remember That Variety is the Spice of Life—Especially for Adolescents		
Tip 3: Integrate Vocabulary Activities into the Content Flow		

4. Describe the use of partner and group discussions to help students clarify their understanding of vocabulary. What collaborative oral activities might you incorporate into your curriculum?
5. The use of student think-alouds and reciprocal teaching provide opportunities for students to talk about reading while clarifying vocabulary. Compare and contrast how these two strategies support vocabulary development.
6. Choose two or three graphic organizer structures from those described by Fisher and Frey. Describe how each might be suited to a certain topic in your content area.
7. Consider the following strategies for vocabulary development. Complete the chart below.

Strategy	What Is It?	How Could I Use It?
Semantic Feature Analysis		
Concept Circles		
Shades of Meaning		

8. How might written approaches to building academic vocabulary be used in a classroom? Describe two or three possible strategies for doing this.

Make It Personal

Consolidating Students' Academic Vocabulary Through Individual Activities



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1. Discuss the three characteristics of effective learners that have been identified by Murdoch and Wilson (2006).
2. Nagy (1988) described three conditions needed for students to learn vocabulary: integration, repetition, and meaningful use. Explain what these three conditions mean in terms of word learning.
3. Review the various suggestions, offered by Fisher and Frey, for consolidating individual learning through logs. Describe each strategy briefly, considering how each might apply to your content area.
4. Complete the chart on the next page for strategies that incorporate word manipulation to consolidate individual learning.
5. Generative sentences and writing frames may be used to help students consolidate learning through composing. Explain how you might incorporate these two strategies into a course that you teach.
6. Why do Fisher and Frey recommend that assessment of academic vocabulary acquisition be carried out across teacher modeling, peer interaction, and individual learning?

■ Strategies That Incorporate Word Manipulation to Consolidate Individual Learning

Strategy for Manipulating Words	What Is It?	How Could I Use It?
Word Sorts		
Word Cards		
Mnemonics		

■ References

- MURDOCH, K., AND J. WILSON. 2006. "Student Independent Learning." *Education Quarterly (Australia)*. Retrieved July 5, 2007, from www1.curriculum.edu.au/eq/summer2006/article1.html.
- NAGY, W. E. 1988. *Teaching Vocabulary to Improve Reading Instruction*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Make It a Priority

Creating a Schoolwide Focus on Learning Words

A vertical yellow bar is positioned to the left of a large, stylized blue number 6.

1. Explain how Words of the Week may be incorporated as a part of a schoolwide vocabulary effort. Is this a strategy that might work at your school?
2. Consider the discussion of word walls. How might you use a word wall in your classroom?
3. What is wide reading and how can it affect vocabulary development?
4. What role does student interest in a topic play in incidental vocabulary learning?
5. Discuss the components of an effective Sustained Silent Reading program as identified by Janice Pilgreen (2000). How might SSR be successfully implemented at your school and/or in your classroom? If there already is an effective SSR program, reflect on what makes it successful.
6. How might you incorporate independent reading into your content area? What types of reading materials would you suggest for students?

■ Reference

PILGREEN, J. L. 2000. *The SSR Handbook: How to Organize and Manage a Sustained Silent Reading Program*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Make It Your Own

How to Keep Learning About Academic Vocabulary



1. Summarize the five *lessons learned* mentioned by Fisher and Frey.
2. Which types of resources for the classroom might you acquire to support your own professional learning about academic vocabulary instruction? What materials might you acquire to support student learning?