

Building an Academic Vocabulary

Six Steps [Dr. Marzano](#) describes a six-step process in the instruction of vocabulary ([Building Academic Vocabulary](#)). The first three steps are to assist the teacher in direct instruction. The last three steps are to provide the learner practice and reinforcement.

Step 1: The teacher will give a description, explanation, or example of the new term.

Step 2: The teacher will ask the learner to give a description, explanation, or example of the new term in his/her own words.

Step 3: The teacher will ask the learner to draw a picture, symbol, or locate a graphic to represent the new term.

Step 4: The learner will participate in activities that provide more knowledge of the words in their vocabulary notebooks.

Step 5: The learner will discuss the term with other learners.

Step 6: The learner will participate in games that provide more reinforcement of the new term.

Step 1: The teacher will give a description, explanation, or example of the new term.

- Provide learners information about the term.
- Determine what the learner already knows about the term.
- Ask learners to share what they already know as a means of monitoring misconceptions.
- Ask learners to share what they already know to use this knowledge as a foundation for more learning.
- *Utilize examples, descriptions, but **not definitions**. **Definitions are not a recommended method for vocabulary instruction as they do not provide learners an informal, natural way to learn new vocabulary.***

Step 2: The teacher will ask the learner to give a description, explanation, or example of the new term in his/her own words.

- Remind learners to not copy, but use their own words.
- Monitor students to determine if any confusion exists.
- Provide more descriptions, explanations, or examples if necessary.
- Request that students record these in their [Academic Notebook Worksheet](#). These notebooks can travel with the learner as he/she moves through each grade level and become a compilation of vocabulary terms mastered.

Step 3: The teacher will ask the learner to draw a picture, symbol, or locate a graphic to represent the new term.

- Provides learners a nonlinguistic method of vocabulary mastery.
- Share examples of other learners' drawings or allow students to work in teams to help those who complain that cannot draw.
- Teach the concept of speed drawing for those who labor too long over their work.
- Ask learner to share their work.
- Use graphics from magazines or the Internet.
- Illustrating terms through symbols, drawing the actual term, illustrating with a cartoon, or drawing an example of the term should be encouraged.

Step 4: The learner will participate in activities that provide more knowledge of the words in their [vocabulary notebooks](#).

- Remind learners to not copy, but use their own words.
- Distribute the [Academic Notebook Worksheet](#) to assist learners in organizing their vocabulary terms.
- Encourage learners to identify prefixes, suffixes, antonyms, synonyms, related words for the vocabulary term as "new info" on the [Academic Notebook Worksheet](#).
- If English is a second language to the learner, provide an opportunity to translate the word into their native language ([BabelFish](#)).

Step 5: The learner will discuss the term with other learners.

Pair-Share Strategy:

1. THINK: Allow think time for learners to review their own descriptions and images of the terms.
2. PAIR: Put learners in pairs to discuss their descriptions, images, and any new info related to the terms.
3. SHARE: Provide opportunity for groups to share aloud and discuss conceptions and misconceptions.

Monitor as learners help each other identify and clear up confusion about new terms.

Step 6: The learner will participate in games that provide more reinforcement of the new term.

Name _____

Vocabulary Term _____

My Understanding 1 2 3 4

(Describe) _____

Draw	Other Info.
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Vocabulary Term _____

My Understanding 1 2 3 4

(Describe) _____

Draw	Other Info.
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Vocabulary Term _____

My Understanding 1 2 3 4

(Describe) _____

Draw	Other Info.
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