



*K-5*

*ELA*

*Building*

*Academic*

*Vocabulary*



# ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

Dear Educators,

In response to the Genesee County Superintendents' inquiry about modifying current efforts toward raising student achievement, the Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD) Office of Education and Learning is implementing the Building Academic Vocabulary Project.

This project is based on research by Dr. Robert Marzano (2005) and described in depth in his book *Building Academic Vocabulary*. In his book he says,

*Teaching specific terms in a specific way is probably the strongest action a teacher can take to ensure that students have the academic background knowledge they need to understand the content they will encounter in school. When all the teachers in a school focus on the same academic vocabulary and teach it in the same way, the school has a powerful comprehensive approach. When all the teachers in a district embrace and use the approach, it becomes even more powerful.*

Through his research, Marzano found that “one of the most crucial services that teachers can provide, particularly for students who do not come from academically advantaged backgrounds, is systematic instruction in important academic terms”. He developed a systematic, six step process for teaching vocabulary.

In *Building Academic Vocabulary* a list of 7,923 terms across 11 subject areas are offered as a starting point. This was one of two primary resources used in compiling the list of academic vocabulary for each grade level. The second primary resource was the State of Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs). The two lists were compared and divided into two specific categories: Critically Important and Instructionally Important. The ELA K-12 vocabulary list has been updated to reflect vocabulary from the Common Core State Standards. Common definitions have also been developed for all ELA critically important words. These are located at the end of the document.

Critically Important words are terms that are crucial or key to the understanding of a given subject area and in most cases are language found on the MEAP and MME. Instructionally Important words are terms used by teachers and recognized by students, but do not require focused attention or an in-depth understanding by students.

The hope of the Education and Learning Department is that teachers will use these lists as a starting point for teaching students academic vocabulary. We have included Marzano's 6 step process for reference and will continue to develop additional tools and resources that can be used to teach students academic vocabulary.

Sincerely,

Education and Learning, Genesee Intermediate School District

January, 2014

## **Six Step Process for Building Academic Vocabulary—Dr. Robert Marzano**

### **STEP ONE: 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.
- Instruct learning of proper noun terms through identifying characteristics of the proper noun.

### **STEP TWO: 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 the vocabulary notebook. These notebooks can travel with the learner as he/she moves through each grade level and become a compilation of vocabulary terms mastered.

### **STEP THREE: The teacher will ask the learner to draw a picture, symbol, or locate a graphic to represent the new term.**

- Provide 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 they 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.
- Illustration terms through symbols, drawing the actual term, illustration with a cartoon, or drawing an example of the term should be encouraged.

### **STEP FOUR: The learner will participate in activities that provide more knowledge of the words in their vocabulary notebooks. (For notebook and academic notebook worksheet go to: <http://www.jc-schools.net/tutorials/vocab/notebook.htm>) (Teacher Led)**

- Students continually reexamine their understanding of a given term
- Activities should be planned that engage students explicitly in the focused review of targeted terms.
- Provide opportunities to add to, or revise, the entry for the term in their vocabulary notebooks

### **STEP FIVE: The learner will discuss the term with other learners. (Teacher Guided) (Student Led)**

- Interacting with other people about what we are learning deepens the understanding of everyone involved
- Teacher provides a structure for the students to have informal and unstructured discussions
- Major goal is to encourage students to help each other identify and clear up misconceptions and confusions.
- Discussing the terms with their peers helps them to detect their errors and correct their work.

#### **Pair-Share Strategy:**

- THINK: Allow think time for learners to review their own descriptions and images of the terms.
- PAIR: Put learners in pairs to discuss their descriptions, images, and any new info related to the terms.
- SHARE: Provide opportunities for groups to share aloud and discuss conceptions and misconceptions.
- Monitor as learners help each other identify and clear up confusions about new terms.

### **STEP SIX: The learner will participate in games that provide more reinforcement of the new term. A variety of games are available at <http://www.jc-schools.net/tutorials/vocab/notebook.htm> PowerPoint Games, Word Game Boards, Excel Games, WORDO, Twister, Fly Swat.**

- Walk around the room and check their work when learners are working on their vocabulary notebooks
- Check the notebooks to evaluate accuracy.
- Listen for misconceptions when learners are playing games/activities.
- Provide an opportunity for learners to work together.

## Kindergarten English Language Arts

### Critically Important:

adjective	major event	sentence
adverb	nonfiction/informational	setting
author	noun	speaker
character	opinion	text
details	print	text-to-self connection
explanatory	predict	text-to-text connection
fiction	question	verb
letter (alphabet)	reread	word
listener	retell	
main idea (key detail)	schema/prior knowledge	

### Text Features

cover (front/back)  
icons  
illustrations  
pictures  
title page

### Text Patterns

sequence

### Instructionally Important:

alphabet	label	revise
audience/purpose	list	rhyme
book	lower case	self-monitor
brainstorm	period	shades of meaning
capitalization	picture book	sketch
chart	preview	syllables
checklist	prewrite	temporal words
date	punctuation	title
directions	question mark	upper case
inform	relationship	

### Text Structure/Patterns

cause and effect  
compare/contrast  
descriptive  
problem/solution

## First Grade English Language Arts

### Critically Important:

adjective  
adverb  
central message (reading)  
character  
closure  
details  
edit  
ending  
evidence/reason  
explanatory  
fact  
fiction

heart of message (writing)  
informational  
leads  
main idea (key detail)  
major event  
narrator  
nonfiction  
noun  
opinion  
predict  
preview  
prewrite

reread  
retell  
revise  
setting  
strategy  
support/reason  
temporal words  
text  
text-to-self connection  
text-to-text connection  
verb  
visualize

### Text Features

electronic menus  
glossary  
headings  
icons  
illustrations  
labeled photographs  
table of contents  
title

### Text Patterns

sequence

### Instructionally Important:

audience/purpose  
beginning consonant  
capitalization  
comma  
common noun  
compound word  
conjunctions  
context clue  
contraction  
draft

ending consonant  
exclamation point  
long vowel  
past tense  
period  
plural  
poem  
possessive noun  
possessive pronoun

pronoun  
proper noun  
question mark  
restate  
self-monitor  
sentence  
shades of meaning  
short vowel  
story  
strong verb

### Text Structure/Patterns

cause and effect  
compare/contrast  
descriptive  
problem/solution

## Second Grade English Language Arts

### Critically Important:

adjective	heart of the message	plot
adverb	(writing)	point of view
central message (reading)	inference	revise
character	informational	shades of meaning
comprehension	key details	summarize
details	key ideas	temporal words
edit	linking words	text
evidence/reasons	main topic/idea	text-to-world connection
explanatory	major events	voice
fact	opinion	
genre	paragraph	

### Text Features

bold print  
captions  
charts  
diagrams  
electronic  
glossary  
graphs  
icons  
index  
maps  
subheadings

### Text Structure/Patterns

cause and effect  
compare/contrast  
descriptive  
problem/solution  
menus  
sequence

### Instructionally Important:

abbreviation	narrative	style
antonym	nonfiction	suffix
closure	oral tradition	synonym
dialogue	predict	temporal words
draft	prefix	text-to-self connection
fiction	reading strategy	text-to-text connection
graphic organizer	setting	transition words
metaphor	simile	writer's notebook

## Third Grade English Language Arts

### Critically Important:

adjective  
adverb  
character motivation  
character traits  
conclusion  
dialogue  
elements  
evidence/reasons  
explicit  
examples  
explanatory

heart of the message  
(writing)  
hyperlink (search tool)  
informational  
key details  
key ideas  
main idea  
mental image(s)  
moral  
multisyllabic words  
opinion

plot  
point of view  
prefixes  
quotation marks  
research  
side bars (search tool)  
stanza  
suffixes  
summarize  
theme

### Text Features

headings  
Illustrations  
index  
key words  
preface  
subheadings  
table of contents  
timelines  
titles

### Text Structure/Patterns

cause and effect  
compare/contrast  
descriptive  
problem/solution  
sequence

### Instructionally Important:

chapter  
claim  
diverse cultures  
draft (multiple)  
fluent  
heart of the message  
inference  
linking

literal  
metaphor  
mood  
nonliteral  
oral tradition  
personification  
phrase  
predict

scene  
sentence variety  
simile  
temporal words  
text  
transition words

## Fourth Grade English Language Arts

### Critically Important:

adjective  
adverb  
autobiography  
biography  
character traits  
conclusion  
dialogue  
evidence  
flash-forward

flashback  
idiom  
inference  
integrate  
metaphor  
opinion  
paraphrase  
point of view  
quotation marks

refer  
relevant  
resolution  
sensory images  
simile  
summarize  
theme

### Text Features

appendix  
bibliography  
figures  
headings  
keys and legends  
marginal notes  
subheadings

### Text Structure/Patterns

cause and effect  
compare/contrast  
descriptive  
problem/solution  
sequence

### Instructionally Important:

affix  
antonym  
detail  
direct/indirect objects  
explicit

figurative language  
first person  
self-monitor  
synonym  
text

thesaurus  
third person  
transition words



## Fifth Grade English Language Arts

### Critically Important:

adjective  
adverb  
analyze  
antecedents  
anticlimax  
climax

evidence  
exaggeration  
integrate  
metaphor  
opinion  
relevant

simile  
symbol  
synthesize  
theme  
universal truth

### Text Features

charts  
conclusion  
diagram  
graphs  
index  
introduction  
table of contents  
timeline  
summary

### Text Structure/Patterns

cause and effect  
compare/contrast  
problem/solution  
sequence  
descriptive

### Instructionally Important:

character traits  
conclusion  
conjunctions  
detail  
dialogue  
digital  
explicit  
figurative language

idiom  
inference  
interjections  
multimedia  
narrator  
paraphrase  
point of view  
prepositions

quotation mark  
stanza  
style and voice  
text  
transition words  
electronic resources



*K-5 ELA*  
*Building*  
*Academic*  
*Vocabulary*  
*Definitions*

Word	Grade Level(s)	Definition
adjective	K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th	Word that describes a noun or pronoun.
adverb	K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th	Word that describes a verb, another adverb, or adjective.
analyze	5th	Study closely and carefully; examine and explain.
antecedents	5th	Word or group of words that a pronoun refers to. In " <i>The girls ate their dessert first</i> ". <b>Girls</b> is the antecedent of <b>their</b> .
anticlimax	5th	Disappointingly weak or ordinary conclusion or event, following events or statements that build expectations for something powerful or moving.
appendix	4th	Section at the end of a book or magazine article that gives more information.
author	K	Person who writes books, stories, plays, or other works.
autobiography	4th	Story of a person's life written or told by that person.
bibliography	4th	List of titles about a certain subject; a list of works by one author.
biography	4th	Facts and events of a person's life written by someone else.
bold print	2nd	Print shown in heavy type that stands out.
captions	2nd	Sentence or group of words that is written on or near a picture, illustration, photograph or chart to explain what is being shown.
cause and effect	2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th	Text structure. A connection between two events in which one causes the other to happen.
central message (reading)	1st, 2nd	Lesson or moral of the story.

Word	Grade Level(s)	Definition
character	K, 1st, 2nd	Person, animal, or thing that takes part in a novel, play, poem, or the like.
character motivation	3rd	Reason a character takes a particular action; motive or motivation is what drives a character to think, behave and interact.
character traits	3rd, 4th	Description of a character and how others perceive them. Description could include physical, emotion, or mental attributes.
charts	2nd, 5th	Graphic display of information.
climax	5th	In a literary or dramatic work, the moment at which a conflict reaches a crucial point.
closure	1st	Bringing to an end, feeling that the entire story has been told
compare/contrast	2nd, 3rd, 4th 5th	Similarities and differences between two or more people, places, things, or ideas.
comprehension	2nd	Understanding, making meaning out of what one has been read.
conclusion	3rd, 4th, 5th	Final part of a written work.
cover	K	Front of a book.
descriptive	2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th	Detailed account that helps create a visual image or picture for the reader.
details (narrative)	K, 1st, 2nd	Describe, tell, show the reader: setting, dialogue, character action, thoughtshot/internal thinking, physical description.
diagram	2nd, 5th	Plan, sketch, drawing, or outline designed to demonstrate or explain how something works or to clarify the relationship between the parts of the whole.
dialogue	3rd, 4th	Conversation, usually shown with quotation marks.

Word	Grade Level(s)	Definition
edit	1st, 2nd	Correct errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling.
electronic	2nd	Carried out or accessed by any type of computerized device.
electronic menus	1st	List of available choices within a computer program.
elements	3rd	Parts of a story (ie setting, plot, characters, theme, etc.).
ending	1st	Last part; conclusion.
evidence	4th, 5th	Anything that can be used to prove something. Facts and information that support a claim.
evidence/reasons	1st, 2nd, 3rd	Fact, situation, or intention that explains why something happened, why someone did something, or why something is true.
exaggeration	5th	Stretch a fact or statement beyond what is actual or true.
examples	3rd	Something or someone that is used as a model to explain what you mean.
explanatory	K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd	Informational text that explains how to do something.
explicit	3rd	Stated clearly and in detail, leaving no doubt about what is meant.
fact	1st, 2nd	Something said or known to be true. Statement that can be proven.
fiction	K, 1st	Something told or written that is not fact; a made-up story.
figures	4th	Diagram or pictorial illustration ( a text feature).

Word	Grade Level(s)	Definition
flashback	4th	Literary device that tells you what happened during an earlier time.
flash-forward	4th	Literary device that tells you what happens in the future.
genre	2nd	Categories used to classify text which can be recognized by certain features.
glossary	1st, 2nd	Alphabetical list of words and their definitions, usually placed at the end of a book.
graphs	2nd, 5th	Drawings that show a relationship between two or more objects, ideas, etc.
headings	1st, 3rd, 4th	Word or phrase before a section of writing that indicates the content of the section.
heart of message (writing)	1st, 2nd, 3rd	Big idea or feeling the writer wants the reader to understand.
hyperlink (search tool)	3rd	Computerized connector that allows one to move quickly from one place in a document to another place in the same or a different document usually with a single
icons	K, 1st, 2nd	Small pictures on a computer screen that represent documents, folders, programs, etc.
idiom	4th	Phrase whose meaning cannot be understood from the literal definition but refers instead to a figurative meaning that is known only through common use: <i>When I used the idiom "under the weather," my friend from Japan didn't understand.</i>
illustrations	K, 1st, 3rd	Picture or drawing in a book, or magazine, etc.
index	2nd, 3rd, 5th	Alphabetical list at the end of a book that shows the page where each thing in the list can be found.
inference	2nd, 4th	Combining evidence and reason with what we know to reach a conclusion.
informational	K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd	Nonfiction text that provides facts or details about a topic.

Word	Grade Level(s)	Definition
integrate	4th, 5th	Unite or combine (two or more things) to form or create something.
introduction	5th	Beginning part of book, essay, speech, etc., that explains what will follow in the main part.
key details	2nd, 3rd	Who, what, when, where, why, and how (support key ideas).
key ideas	2nd, 3rd	Central message, lesson or moral; how characters, setting, and/or events contribute to the development of the text.
key words	3rd	Important words specific to the topic.
keys and legends	4th	Table on a map or chart, listing and explaining the symbols.
labeled photographs	1st	Photograph that has labels identifying the parts or pieces.
lead	1st	Beginning sentence or paragraph that hooks the reader's attention.
letter (alphabet)	K	Symbol representing one or more sounds.
linking words	2nd	Words that connect ideas between paragraphs and/or sentences.
listener	K	Person who listens in an attentive manner.
main topic/idea	K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd	Central idea, concept or main point that the author is trying to convey.
major events	K, 1st, 2nd	Important things that happen in a story.
maps	2nd	Picture, drawing, or chart that shows different physical features, parts, or areas (cities, roads, rivers, mountains, countries).

Word	Grade Level(s)	Definition
marginal notes	4th	Small printed notes you can write in the margin or border of a page or book.
mental image(s)	3rd	Creating a picture or "a movie" in your mind; visualizing.
menus	2nd	List of possible choices.
metaphor	4th, 5th	When two unlike things are compared NOT using like or as (eg. <i>She has a heart of stone</i> .).
moral	3rd	Lesson learned from a story or event.
multisyllabic words	3rd	Words with more than one part, and each part has one vowel sound.
narrator	1st	Person or character who tells the story.
nonfiction	K, 1st	Based on facts and/or real things, people, events and places; true.
noun	K, 1st	Word that names a person, place, or thing.
opinion	K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th	View, belief, or judgment formed about something, not necessarily based on fact.
paragraph	2nd	Group of sentences in writing focused on one idea, indicated by a new line, indentation, or numbering.
paraphrase	4th	Restatement of a passage or text giving the meaning in a simpler form.
pictures	K	Painting, drawing or photograph.
plot	2nd, 3rd	Series of events that form the story in a book, play or movie.



Word	Grade Level(s)	Definition
point of view	2nd, 3rd, 4th	Way of thinking about or looking at something (perspective); lens through which a story is told ie. 1st, 2nd, or 3rd person.
predict	K, 1st	Guess what will happen.
preface	3rd	Short introduction that gives information about the author or work.
prefixes	3rd	Letter or group of letters that is added to the beginning of a base word to change the meaning.
preview	1st	Hear, see, or show something in advance such as a book or picture walk.
prewrite	1st	Thinking of and writing down ideas that you may use in a draft, brainstorming ideas.
print	K, 1st	Words that appear on the pages in the text.
problem/solution	2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th	Text structure that involves an obstacle that must be overcome.
question	K	Ask for information.
quotation marks	3rd, 4th	Punctuation used in writing to show where dialogue starts and ends; also used to indicate a title of short bodies of work.
refer	4th	Speak of, call attention to, and/or consult the source.
relevant	4th, 5th	Closely connected with, or saying something important about, the topic or subject being discussed or written.
reread	K, 1st	Read a text again for a specific purpose.
research	3rd	Careful study that is done to expand knowledge or to find and report new knowledge.

Word	Grade Level(s)	Definition
resolution	4th	Final solving of a problem or difficulty.
retell	K, 1st	Write, tell, or present a story again, often in a different way from its original form.
revise	1st, 2nd	To reread and change something in order to improve it.
schema/prior knowledge	K	Combination of the learner's preexisting attitudes, experiences, and knowledge.
sensory images	4th	Visual representation such as a photograph, drawing, or painting, pertaining to the senses.
sentence	K	Group of words which, when written down, begin with a capital letter and end with a period, question mark, or exclamation mark.
sequence	K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th	Particular order in which related events, movements, or things follow each other.
setting	K, 1st	Time and/or place of a story.
shades of meaning	2nd	Small differences in meaning between similar words or phrases (look, peek, glance, stare, glare, scowl) (chilly, cold, freezing, frigid, glacial).
side bars (search tool)	3rd	Short article that highlights some aspect of the larger news story beside or near which it appears.
simile	4th, 5th	Figure of speech in which two dissimilar things are likened; linked by 'like' or 'as'.
speaker	K	Person or character that is talking.
stanza	3rd	Lines of a poem grouped together, may be characterized by a common pattern of meter, rhyme, and number of lines.
strategy	1st	Plan, method, or series of actions designed to achieve a specific goal or effect.

Word	Grade Level(s)	Definition
subheadings	2nd, 3rd, 4th	Heading or title of a section or subdivision of a printed text.
suffixes	3rd	Letter or group of letters that is added to the end of a base word to change the meaning.
summarize	2nd, 3rd, 4th	Restate in a concise manner.
summary	5th	Short account of the main points.
support/reason	1st	Facts and information that prove a claim.
symbol	5th	Something that represents something else.
synthesize	5th	Combining a number of different parts or ideas to come up with new ideas, insights, or theories.
table of contents	1st, 3rd, 5th	List of divisions (chapters or articles) and pages on which they start.
temporal words	1st, 2nd	Of or relating to time (i.e. morning, afternoon, evening).
text	K, 1st, 2nd	Words appearing in anything written or printed.
text feature	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th	Parts of a text that have been created to locate and learn information (headings, bold print, etc.).
text structure	3rd, 4th, 5th	Manner in which information is organized and presented (cause and effect, problem/solution, sequential, descriptive, compare/contrast).
text-to-self connection	K, 1st	Connection made by the reader to a text.
text-to-text connection	K, 1st	Connection a reader makes from one text to another.

**Word****Grade  
Level(s)****Definition**

text-to-world connection	2nd	Connection a readers makes from a text to the world.
theme	3rd, 4th, 5th	Main idea or unifying ideas told through the story by the writer ( kindness, honesty, bravery, etc.). The author's overall message.
timeline	3rd, 5th	Events and their dates listed in chronological order along a line.
title	1st, 3rd	Name of a book, movie, play, or other work of art.
title page	K	Page at the front of a book that lists its name, authors and illustrators.
universal truth	5th	Understanding held by most people of the world.
verb	K, 1st	Action word.
visualize	1st	Form a picture in your mind.
voice	2nd	Individual writing style of an author which conveys the author's personality, attitude, and character.
word	K	Sound or combination of sounds that is written or spoken.

## **On-Line Dictionary Websites**

<http://dictionary.reverso.net/English-cobuild/>

[www.wordsmyth.net](http://www.wordsmyth.net)

<http://www.oxfordadvancedlearnersdictionary.com>

[www.learnersdictionary.com](http://www.learnersdictionary.com)

<http://www.merriam-webster.com/>

<http://dictionary.reference.com/>

<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/>

<http://www.yourdictionary.com/>

<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>

<http://www.encyclopedia.com>

<http://www.visuwords.com>



# GENESEE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

LEADERSHIP ♦ SERVICE ♦ INNOVATION

*Partnering for success!*

2413 West Maple Avenue  
Flint, Michigan 48507-3493  
(810) 591-4400  
TTY (810) 591-4545

Jerry G. Ragsdale, President  
Cindy A. Gansen, Vice President  
Paul D. Newman, Secretary  
Dale A. Green, Treasurer  
Lawrence P. Ford, Trustee

Lisa A. Hagel, Superintendent

For information about this publication contact  
Education and Learning at (810) 591-4408

Building Academic Vocabulary Project developed by Education and Learning, Genesee Intermediate School District, Updated January 2014 by Melissa Wing, GISD and ELA Leaders from Genesee and Lapeer Counties.