

2014 MTSS Symposium

September 4th-5th, 2014

Academic Language Instructional Routines

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Topics:

Simple View of Reading –

- Reading Comprehension is a product of Decoding ability and Language Comprehension skills

The Reading Rope

- Language comprehension requires multiple considerations

Academic Language Instruction:

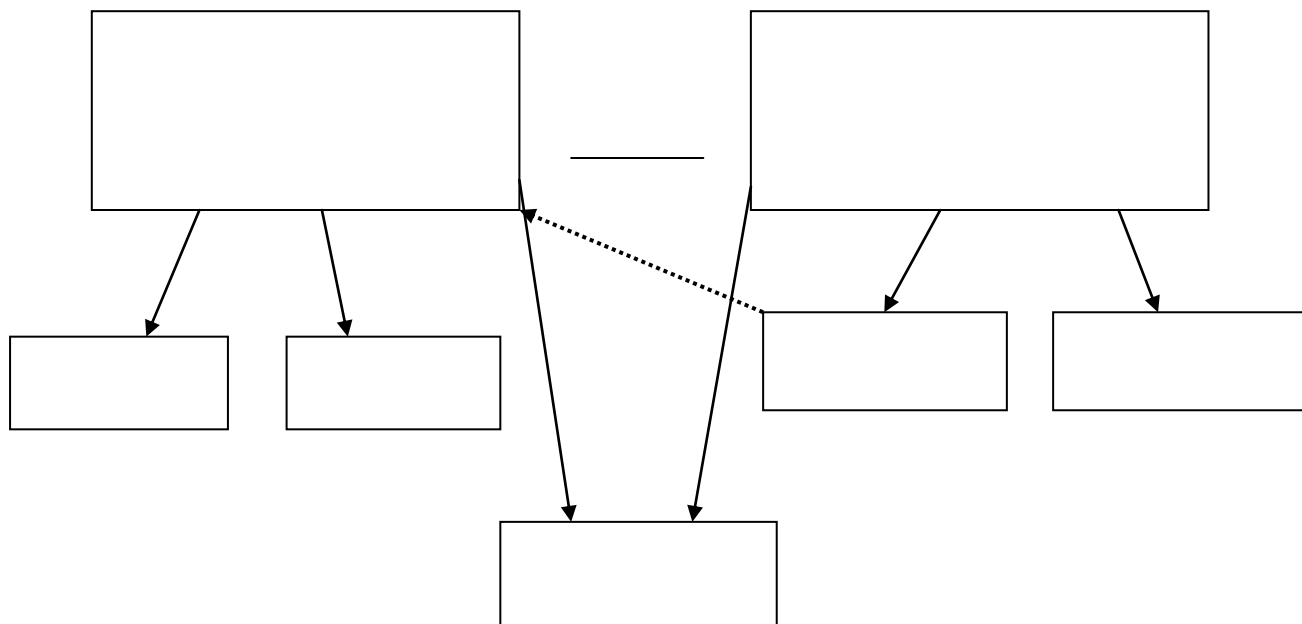
- Oral language and vocabulary
- Reading Comprehension
- Writing – Taught, supported, and applied daily across the curriculum

Goals:

Teachers will:

- Learn about academic language, define academic language, reflect on student academic language skills
- Determine instructional methods for teaching academic language daily: oral language, reading, and writing

The Simple View of Reading



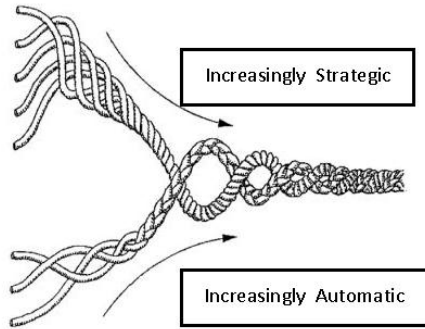
Reading Rope

Language Comprehension

- Background Knowledge
- Vocabulary Knowledge
- Language Structures
- Verbal Reasoning
- Literacy Knowledge

Word Recognition

- Phonological Awareness
- Decoding (and Spelling)
- Sight Recognition.



Skilled Reading:
Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.

Reading is a multifaceted skill, gradually acquired over years of instruction and practice.

Scarborough (2001)

What is Academic Language?

(Adapted from Academic Language: Reading Rockets)

Academic language is the language used in textbooks, in classrooms, and on tests. It is different in structure and vocabulary from the everyday spoken English of social interactions. Many students who speak English well have trouble comprehending the academic language used in classrooms, lectures, and books. Low academic language skills have been shown to be associated with low academic performance in a variety of educational settings.

One barrier to student comprehension of texts and lectures is low academic vocabulary knowledge. Academic vocabulary is sub-technical vocabulary. In other words, it is not the technical vocabulary of a particular academic discipline. Academic vocabulary is used across all academic disciplines to teach about the content of the discipline. For example, before taking chemistry or learning about a new topic, most students don't know the technical words used in these new subjects. But the underprepared students also don't know the more common vocabulary used to teach the concepts. Underprepared students are unfamiliar with words like evaluation, theory, transition, assumption, capacity, validate. Teachers assume students comprehend such academic vocabulary, but such vocabulary is not often used in the everyday spoken English of many students.

In addition, academic discussions and texts tend to use longer, more complex sentences than are used in spoken English. Complex sentence structures contain multiple ideas, embedded phrases and clauses, and tax the working memory which in turn impacts comprehension. Written texts contain multiple cohesive ties, referents, and confusing sentences that perplex readers and make it hard to grasp the author's intent. When students are taught how to negotiate the structure of written language, comprehension and writing skills can improve.

ELL: Using academic language in a student's native language

- As with reading skills, if students have acquired academic language in their first language, they will be able to acquire academic language much more quickly in their second language

At what age should academic language instruction begin?

- Preschool through 3rd grade
 - Students need to learn age-appropriate vocabulary and language that will give them a strong foundation for academic language in the future
- 4th grade through 8th grade
 - *Formal* academic language instruction should begin in 4th grade
 - Instruction should transition in order to teach students more sophisticated academic language skills, including vocabulary and grammatical structures

Several activities, enhanced by increased teacher knowledge and awareness, can be incorporated into reading and content area lessons to increase students' access to academic language, both vocabulary and structure. All of the following activities can be adapted for grades K-3 and also formal instruction in grades 4 and up.

Ten Language Activities

Incorporate the following academic language activities every day across all content areas to improve our teaching and our students' learning. How can these activities fit into your daily lessons? What activities would be appropriate for your grade level, and/or school, to adopt and use schoolwide?

Activity One: Create Awareness of Academic Language

1. Show students two samples of writing – one informal and the other academic. Work with students to identify the differences and discuss the differences. Assist students to voice the differences thus clarifying what makes *school-talk* academic. Do this often.

2. Create writing exemplars – students compare their own writing to the exemplars and assess using well defined criteria. Criteria will change and become more sophisticated as students develop their appreciation for academic language. For example: **Kng** – spaces between words; capitals and punctuation; use sounds to spell words; content stays on topic, complete sentences with at least one seven word sentence. **Fourth grade** – Informational paragraph: topic and conclusion sentences; three details; transition words; academic vocabulary used; interesting to the reader.

Activity Two: Teach Vocabulary Explicitly

Teach vocabulary every day, on an ongoing basis, explicitly and systematically, and make sure students don't just learn the meanings, but USE the word in *production*.

Use a routine for explicit instruction:

- Teacher says the word. Students listen and repeat the word three times
- Students read the word (Hear pronunciations + spelling = memory)
- Teacher uses the word in a sentence from the textbook – and/or students read the word in the passage
- Teacher demonstrates how to use the word in other sentences ad contexts
- Students use the word in sentences with a partner.
 - Play **Mingle-Mingle** regularly. Students take their vocabulary foldable or other products they have written and *mingle* around the room, no talking, until teacher says, "Stop!" Students pair up with the person closest to them and take turns sharing what they have written, using the vocabulary they are learning, or other share processes as directed by their teacher.

Activity Three: Provide a Word Bank and Model Sentences

Provide students with a word bank – a list of the terms students are learning or a bank that contains terms for review, words students have not seen for a while. Teachers and students use these words as prompts to talk about the text or learning content. Teacher models how to use the words in spoken and written sentences. Go beyond definitions.

1. Give students a word bank. Discuss the words in the bank and how they are used in the text. Talk about how you would use the words.
2. Provide students with the definitions and display model sentences for all of the words
3. In pairs, have students discuss usage of the words, the model sentences, and to take turns using the words to discuss what they are learning or to discuss classrooms events.
4. Students can be asked to write their sentences following the oral rehearsal (see Sentence Fair worksheet).

Use the following Word Bank idea, **Sentence Fair**, to help students apply the terms they are learning while processing the topic content.

Sentence Fair for

Name of Topic

Word Bank

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

- _____ 1. _____

- _____ 2. _____

- _____ 3. _____

- _____ 4. _____

- _____ 5. _____

Activity Four: Response Starters

Structure conversations for students using academic vocabulary. For example during Show and Tell teachers provide the academic language for students - "Today I am going to *share* with you a *particular experience* I had...". Teach students to use Response Starters: Post Response Starters in the room and direct students to begin their responses to your questions or other inquiries with one that would work for them. Model how to use these 'starters' to help reluctant student understand how they help organize one's thoughts for sharing.

Maybe...	Possibly...	I'm confident...
In my opinion...	I'm surprised...	This reminds me...
If...	Although...	I believe...
I question...	When...	An important...

Activity Five: Framed Summaries for Informational and Narrative texts

Paragraph frames provide structure that guide students to organize information they have read or listened to into a summary. Below are sample frames for summarizing informational texts and narrative texts. Frames can be used as a quick check of student learning, as a quiz, or as an aid for students who need help understanding and using academic language when writing summary paragraphs. Teachers can create frames to fit the texts they are asking students to re-tell or write about. To create your own Framed Paragraphs:

- 1) Select a title
- 2) Write a topic sentence
- 3) Use transitions to start the key/star idea sentences that support the topic sentence
- 4) Leave space for students to complete the key/star idea sentences and add elaboration
- 5) Frame a conclusion sentence that will help students stay focused

Narrative Frame for Younger Students:

Title _____

Three important events happened in the story we read today. In the beginning _____

_____. Then _____

_____.

After that _____

A narrative frame option for older students: As I read _____ by _____ I learned _____. To begin, _____. Next, _____. In addition, _____.

Informational Frame for Older Students:

<p>Title _____</p> <p>Today in class we read _____</p> <p>from _____ and I</p> <p>learned several things. First, _____</p> <p>_____. I also _____</p> <p>_____.</p> <p>The most important fact _____</p> <p>_____.</p>
--

A informational frame option for younger students: The article we read give two important facts about _____. First _____. Second _____.

Activity Six: Summarization - Through the process of summarization, students begin to acquire an author's language, and will acquire greater fluency with language each round. Summarizing is a difficult skill to learn and the ability to summarize builds slowly over time with lots of structure provided by teachers along with practice.

Summarization Assists:

- Provide response starters (see above, Activity Four), sentence stems, transition sets (see below). Use the Four-Step Summary (Auman, 2008; Step Up to Writing, Sopris West,). This process helps students extract the big picture information from what they have read.

- 1) Outline the IVF - Three part process creates the Topic Sentence - Identify – Verb – Finish Your Thought. The VERB fuels the thinking and directs students capsule their learning. See list of verbs to use below. If the text is a narrative, the verb will reflect a character's action.
- 2) Write the topic sentence.
- 3) Recall two to four details
- 4) Write or say the summary (Topic sentence plus a sentence for each detail plus a conclusion)

Identify topic	Give it a verb	Finish the thought
Re-write the IVF as a topic sentence:		
Details:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 		
Write a summary: Topic sentence, sentences for each detail and a conclusion sentence.		

Academic Verb List for Summaries

Post the verbs, introduce them slowly, help students know when and how to use the verbs, not all verbs work for every topic!

Level A

tells	shows	gives
describes	compares	
lists	presents	
explains	defines	

Level B

acknowledges	enumerates	traces	contrasts	names	encourages
blames	explores	asks	critiques	offers	illustrates
confirms	identifies	defends	demonstrates		proposes
endorses	provides	suggests	recommends		

Transition Sets for Summaries

Students use these sets of transition words to help create detail sentences in their summary paragraphs. Along with the popular *First – Then – Next – Finally* here are some other sets of transition words to offer students:

First – Second - Third	First of all – Also	Initially – Then – After that
One – Equally important	One way – Another way – A final method	One – One other – Along with – Last
A good – A better – the best	One challenge – Another challenge - Finally	First of all – In addition – And finally

Activity Seven: Oral Presentations

Create opportunities for students to regularly make presentations. Provide lots of structured practice prior to making presentations. Students practice in pairs, and then again with a different partner, partners prepare together to present orally. Students are directed to prepare brief summarizations of learning, tell how topics are alike and different, share most important points, share the details, clarify, etc. Tie these presentations to listening and/or reading comprehension in any subject area.

Direct students to practice in pairs using the following sentence starters before doing an oral presentation. Post these guiding ‘starters’ in the class for easy reference:

At the Beginning:

- “The topic of my *presentation* is...”
- “First, I will *provide* some background *information*”
- “I would like to *inform* you about...”
-

At the End:

- “In *conclusion*...”
- “Thank you for the *opportunity* to share my...”
- “Are there any questions?”

Helping students prepare for presentations with a partner will:

- Give them the benefit of both listening and formulating their thoughts
- Increase their confidence
- Give them more opportunities to practice using academic language

Activity Eight: Close reading for main ideas, text structures, or vocabulary.

The process of Close Reading is used to DISECT a paragraph. Teachers read a passage or a brief part of a passage aloud to students. After reading, teachers reread and lead students to close observation and dissection of the text. Here are the steps for one type of Close Reading – **Important Ideas**:

1. Read a short passage aloud to students to introduce them to the content.
2. Explain that you are going to do a Close Reading with this passage. Ask students to observe you while you model Close Reading with the first paragraph.
3. I Do: Read the first paragraph stopping at two predetermined places, model your thinking about why you chose to stop and then draw a quick picture for each in the Close Reading foldable (a two column grid).
4. We Do: Ask students to read the second paragraph with you, choosing two main points with the students and doing a quick draw for each idea in the grid space under the first paragraph.

5. Continue with the same process for the next paragraph, only, ask students to do the Close Reading independently or with a partner – You Do. Share ideas after the class is done and provide corrective feedback if needed.
6. Once the paragraphs have been *sketched*, go back and write a sentence for each idea. Students then have an outline for re-tell of the most important parts of the reading.

Other focus areas for Close Reading:

Academic Text Structure: “We’re going to be studying how this piece of writing flows and circle and draw lines. Let’s observe for words and their associates (referents, pronouns, etc), parts of speech (verbs), terms and how the author provides a word meaning in context.” For example, teachers could ask students underline all pronouns and then circle the nouns and draw lines to which they refer.

Academic Vocabulary: Lead students to read closely to discover the way synonyms are used, word families (keep, kept, keeping or insulate, insulation, insulated), and talk about the meanings of words in the passage to model and show students how to incorporate the language the author uses in their speech.

Overall Comprehension: Close reading is *also* used to dissect meaning in complex and hard to understand text. Read the passage aloud and stop frequently to dissect meaning, asking text dependent questions – questions that can be answered with evidence in the text. These questions require inference making and generalizing, clarification and summarization. Text dependent questions are not necessarily simple recall questions.

Activity Nine: Develop and Ask Text Dependent Questions

Text-dependent questions:

- Can *only* be answered with evidence from the text.
- Can be literal (checking for understanding) but also involve analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Bloom’s Taxonomy).
- Focus on word, sentence, and paragraph, as well as larger ideas, themes, or events.
- Focus on difficult portions of text in order to enhance reading proficiency.
- Can also include prompts for writing and discussion questions.

Three Categories: When you're writing or reviewing a set of questions, consider the following three categories of Text Dependent Questions and Examples:

1) Questions that assess themes and central ideas

Not Text Dependent	Text Dependent
Have you ever had a pet frog?	How do frogs protect themselves from predators?
When do we wear disguises? What were you for Halloween last year?	Explain how rain forest frogs disguise themselves.

2) Questions that assess knowledge of vocabulary

Text Dependent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Re-read the third paragraph.” “The tip of the tongue feels like a course file.” What is course? What details in the paragraph describe the cat’s course tongue?” (<i>The context provides clues about the meaning of course</i>) • “Glimmer is a very faint, little bit of light. How do the cat’s eyes respond when there is a glimmer of light?” (<i>Provide a definition as part of the question.</i>)

3) Questions that assess syntax, sentence and text structure

Text Dependent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How many traits does the author give the cat? To determine this, pay close attention to the commas in the last paragraph. The commas separate the list of feline traits.” (<i>Items in a list are separated by commas.</i>) • “What happens to the loose hair the cat licks up? Find loose hair in the third paragraph. The author calls it something else in the next sentence. What does the author call the loose hair in the next sentence?” (<i>The author uses a cohesive tie that refers to the loose hair as something else</i>) <p>Illustrations, graphics, figures, tables can provide a basis for engaging students in discourse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Look at the photograph on page 20. Why did the photographer include a picture of another kind of animal?” (<i>The text says that the giraffe lives on the savannah with many other animals. Providing a page number, directs students into the text.</i>) • “The author included a graphic showing the life cycle of a frog. How does this drawing support what we have read?” (<i>The text explains several steps in the frog’s life cycle</i>)

Activity Ten: Apply a school-wide focus and feedback system**Oral language:**

- Choose and use the academic vocabulary that teachers and other adults in the school will model for students
- **Make it Seven** – require students to use seven or more words in their responses to adults: “Can you say that in a complete sentence?”

Schoolwide Practices – Academic Structure

All teachers help students develop their oral and writing language skills by using:

- dictation exercises
- oral sentence completion activities
- written cloze passages
- summarization and retelling of passages
- frequent writing practice with intensive feedback

Plan:

Instructional techniques used across the school – by everyone: Oral language, writing, vocabulary, comprehension, other? Link content objectives to language objectives.

What have we already used schoolwide?

What do we agree to use school wide?

Academic Language: Myths and truths

Myth: It takes students a certain number of years (i.e., 7 years) to acquire academic language

Truth: The amount of time it takes students to master academic language directly depends on:

- exposure to academic language
- amount of practice in using academic language
- extent of academic language instruction and feedback

Myth: Academic language is easy to assess

Truth: Academic language is actually very poorly defined for assessment purposes

- Research is just beginning to develop that will help us identify the features of academic language that are assessable at the various proficiency levels
- When we get test scores back on proficiency, we've only got a slice of what students can do academically

Discussion questions

1. Describe how academic English differs from the English we use in everyday life. What are some misconceptions people might have about academic language development?
2. Does your school have an effective, comprehensive academic language curriculum in place? If not, how could you work with colleagues within your school to develop one?
3. Based on what you heard today, can you describe skills other than vocabulary knowledge that are essential to academic language proficiency?
4. What types of professional development activities do you think would be useful to help us learn more about effective academic English instruction?

TIPS:

Academic language includes many areas of language including:

- phonology and spelling

Examples: Pronunciation stress shifts

Anthropology v. anthropological

Morphology v. morphological

manipulate v. manipulation

Although these words are closely related and look very similar, they have spelling and pronunciation differences that may be confusing to English language learners.

Vocabulary

Points to remember:

- Vocabulary knowledge plays an important role in a student's ability to understand the language used in academic assessments
- Ongoing, systematic instruction is needed to help students expand their academic vocabulary
- Students need to know how to use a word as well as its definition

Choosing what to teach in academic language instruction

- Teachers should teach language that will help students access the text or content:

- When teaching reading comprehension, teachers should identify language that students will have difficulty understanding and will undermine student’s ability to comprehend text
- This language may include:
 - an academic vocabulary word (such as “stimulate”)
 - a preposition (“between”)
 - an adverb (“hardly”)
 - a conjunction (“and”)
 - a grammatical structure (“either...or”)

Academic vocabulary is based on more Latin and Greek roots than is everyday spoken English vocabulary. Academic Vocabulary word lists can be found at the following websites:

<http://www.uefap.com/vocab/select/awl.htm#top> – Includes additional words in the word family and also links to the definitions.

www.englishcompanion.com – An alphabetized list of academic terms with additional morpheme, prefix and suffix information included.

Importance of feedback

Points to remember:

- It’s important that academic language instruction include feedback for both oral and written expression

Example: Uncorrected errors

- A student who uses “first of all” as a single word (“firstable”) will not learn that it is an expression of three words if she is never corrected
- The objective of constructive feedback is not punishment or criticism. Instead, it allows students to learn from their mistakes

Tips for academic language and writing

- Every time you give a writing assignment, give students samples to follow so they know what is expected. Multiple samples are better

Example: Giving students writing tools

- “In this sentence, I expect you to begin with a word other than ‘I’. Another word you can begin with is, “Today...” or “My friend...”
- “In this essay, I expect a thesis statement. This is where it goes, and this is what it does. Here is an example.”
- Give students supports, such as:
 - vocabulary
 - grammatical structures
 - tips for organizing sentences, paragraphs, and multiple paragraph responses

Academic Vocabulary

A thorough survey of various textbooks, assignments, content area standards, and examinations yields the following list of words. You cannot expect to succeed on assignments if you do not understand the directions. The words fall into several categories, which are not identified on this sheet: nouns (e.g., What you read or create); verbs (e.g., What the assignment asks you to do); adjectives (e.g., specific details about what you must do); and adverbs, which provide very important information about how to do the assignment.

1. abbreviate	43. chart	85. correspond	127. essential
2. abstract	44. chronology	86. credible	128. establish
3. according	45. citation	87. credit	129. estimate
4. acronym	46. cite	88. criteria	130. evaluate
5. address	47. claim	89. critique	131. event
6. affect	48. clarify	90. crucial	132. evidence
7. alter	49. class	91. cumulative	133. exaggerate
8. always	50. clue	92. debate	134. examine
9. analogy	51. code	93. deduce	135. example
10. analysis	52. coherent	94. defend	136. excerpt
11. analyze	53. common	95. define	137. exclude
12. annotate	54. compare	96. demand	138. exercise
13. anticipate	55. compile	97. demonstrate	139. exhibit
14. application	56. complement	98. depict	140. explain
15. apply	57. complete	99. derive	141. explore
16. approach	58. compose	100. describe	142. expository
17. appropriate	59. composition	101. detail	143. extract
18. approximate	60. conceive	102. detect	144. fact
19. argue	61. concise	103. determine	145. factor
20. argument	62. conclude	104. develop	146. feature
21. arrange	63. conclusion	105. devise	147. figurative
22. articulate	64. concrete	106. diction	148. figure
23. aspects	65. conditions	107. differentiate	149. focus
24. assemble	66. conduct	108. dimension	150. footer
25. assert	67. confirm	109. diminish	151. foreshadow
26. assess	68. consequence	110. direct	152. form
27. associate	69. consider	111. discipline	153. format
28. assume	70. consist	112. discover	154. former
29. assumption	71. consistent	113. discriminate	155. formulate
30. audience	72. consistently	114. discuss	156. fragment
31. authentic	73. constant	115. distinguish	157. frame
32. background	74. constitutes	116. domain	158. frequently
33. body	75. consult	117. draft	159. general
34. brainstorm	76. contend	118. draw	160. genre
35. brief	77. context	119. edit	161. graph
36. calculate	78. continuum	120. effect	162. graphic
37. caption	79. contradict	121. elements	163. header
38. category	80. control	122. emphasize	164. heading
39. cause	81. convert	123. employ	165. highlight
40. character	82. convey	124. equal	166. hypothesize
41. characteristic	83. copy	125. equivalent	167. identify
42. characterize	84. correlate	126. essay	168. illustrate

169.	imitate	219.	notice	269.	quotation	319.	strategy
170.	imply	220.	objective	270.	quote	320.	structure
171.	inclined	221.	observe	271.	rank	321.	study
172.	include	222.	occur	272.	rare	322.	style
173.	incorporate	223.	opinion	273.	rarely	323.	subject
174.	indicate	224.	oppose	274.	reaction	324.	subjective
175.	indirect	225.	optional	275.	recall	325.	subsequent
176.	infer	226.	order	276.	reduce	326.	substitute
177.	influence	227.	organize	277.	refer	327.	succinct
178.	inform	228.	origins	278.	reflect	328.	suggest
179.	inquire	229.	outline	279.	regular	329.	sum
180.	instructions	230.	pace	280.	relate	330.	summarize
181.	integrate	231.	paraphrase	281.	relationship	331.	summary
182.	intent	232.	participation	282.	relevant	332.	support
183.	intention	233.	passage	283.	rephrase	333.	survey
184.	interact	234.	pattern	284.	report	334.	symbolize
185.	intermittent	235.	perform	285.	represent	335.	synonym
186.	interpret	236.	perspective	286.	representative	336.	synthesize
187.	introduce	237.	persuade	287.	request	337.	table
188.	introduction	238.	place	288.	require	338.	technique
189.	invariably	239.	plagiarism	289.	requisite	339.	term
190.	investigate	240.	plan	290.	respond	340.	test
191.	involve	241.	plausible	291.	responsible	341.	theme
192.	irony	242.	plot	292.	restate	342.	thesis
193.	irrelevant	243.	point	293.	results	343.	timeline
194.	isolate	244.	point of view	294.	reveal	344.	tone
195.	italics	245.	portray	295.	review	345.	topic
196.	judge	246.	possible	296.	revise	346.	trace
197.	key	247.	preclude	297.	root	347.	trait
198.	label	248.	predict	298.	rule	348.	transition
199.	likely	249.	prefix	299.	scan	349.	translate
200.	list	250.	prepare	300.	score	350.	typically
201.	literal	251.	presume	301.	sequence	351.	unique
202.	locate	252.	preview	302.	series	352.	utilize
203.	logical	253.	previous	303.	set	353.	valid
204.	main	254.	primary	304.	setting	354.	variation
205.	margin	255.	prior	305.	show	355.	vary
206.	mean	256.	probably	306.	signal	356.	verify
207.	measure	257.	procedure	307.	significance	357.	viewpoint
208.	metaphor	258.	process	308.	simile	358.	voice
209.	method	259.	produce	309.	skim		
210.	model	260.	profile	310.	solve		
211.	modify	261.	project	311.	source		
212.	monitor	262.	prompt	312.	spatial		
213.	motivation	263.	proofread	313.	specific		
214.	narrative	264.	property	314.	speculate		
215.	narrator	265.	propose	315.	stance		
216.	never	266.	prose	316.	standard		
217.	notation	267.	prove	317.	state		
218.	note	268.	purpose	318.	statement		