

The Academic Word List (Averil Coxhead, 2000):
a list of 570 high-incidence and high-utility academic word families
for Secondary School, Higher Education, Career

There is a very important specialized vocabulary for learners intending to pursue academic studies in English at the secondary and post-secondary levels. The *Academic Word List*, compiled by Coxhead (2000), consists of 570 word families that are not in the most frequent 2,000 words of English but which occur reasonably frequently over a very wide range of academic texts. These 570 words are grouped into ten sublists that reflect word frequency and range. A word like *analyze* falls into Sublist 1, which contains the most frequent words, while the word *adjacent* falls into Sublist 10 which includes the least frequent (amongst this list of high incidence and high utility words). The following ten sublists contain the headwords of the families in the *Academic Word List*. In other words, the ten sublists contain the most frequent form of the word, more often a noun or verb form, although there may be one or more important related word forms. For example, the headword *analyze* would also include *analyst*, *analytic*, *analytical* and *analytically* in the word family.

The *Academic Word List* is not restricted to a specific field of study. That means that the words are useful for learners studying in disciplines as varied as literature, science, health, business, and law. This high utility academic word list does not contain technical words likely to appear in only one, specialized field of study such as *amortization*, *lexicon*, *onomatopoeia*, or *cartilage*. Two-thirds of all academic English words come from Latin, French (through Latin), or Greek. Understandably, knowledge of the most high incidence and high utility academic words in English can significantly boost a student's comprehension level of school-based reading material. Secondary students who are taught these high-utility academic words and routinely placed in contexts requiring their usage are likely to be able to master academic material with more confidence and efficiency, wasting less time and energy in guessing words or consulting dictionaries than those who are only equipped with the most basic 2000-3000 words that characterize ordinary conversation.

Sources: Coxhead, Averil. (2000). A new academic word list. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34, 213-238.

Averil Coxhead's website: <http://language.massey.ac.nz/staff/awl/index.shtml>

1. analyze approach area assess assume
 authority available benefit concept consist
 context constitute contract data define
 derive distribute economy environment
 establish estimate evident factor finance
 formula function income indicate individual
 interpret involve issue labor legal legislate
 major method occur percent period
 principle proceed process policy require
 research respond role section sector
 significant similar source specific
 structure theory vary

2. achieve acquire administrate affect
 appropriate aspect assist category chapter
 commission community complex compute
 conclude conduct consequent construct
 consume credit culture design distinct
 equate element evaluate feature final
 focus impact injure institute invest item
 journal maintain normal obtain participate

perceive positive potential previous primary
 purchase range region regulate relevant
 reside resource restrict secure seek
 select site strategy survey text tradition
 transfer

3. alternative circumstance comment
 compensate component consent
 considerable constant constrain contribute
 convene coordinate core corporate
 correspond criteria deduce demonstrate
 document dominate emphasis ensure
 exclude fund framework illustrate
 immigrate imply initial instance interact
 justify layer link locate maximize minor
 negate outcome partner philosophy physical
 proportion publish react register rely
 remove scheme sequence sex shift specify
 sufficient task technical technique
 technology valid volume

4. access adequacy annual apparent
approximate attitude attribute civil code
commit communicate concentrate confer
contrast cycle debate despite dimension
domestic emerge error ethnic goal grant
hence hypothesis implement implicate
impose integrate internal investigate job
label mechanism obvious occupy option
output overall parallel parameter phase
predict prior principal professional project
promote regime resolve retain series
statistic status stress subsequent sum
summary undertake

5. academy adjust alter amend aware
capacity challenge clause compound conflict
consult contact decline discrete draft
enable energy enforce entity equivalent
evolve expand expose external facilitate
fundamental generate generation image
liberal license logic margin mental medical
modify monitor network notion objective
orient perspective precise prime psychology
pursue ratio reject revenue stable style
substitute sustain symbol target transit
trend version welfare whereas

6. abstract acknowledge accuracy
aggregate allocate assign attach author
bond brief capable cite cooperate
discriminate display diverse domain edit
enhance estate exceed expert explicit
federal fee flexible furthermore gender
ignorance incentive incorporate incidence
index inhibit initiate input instruct
intelligence interval lecture migrate
minimum ministry motive neutral
nevertheless overseas precede presume
rational recover reveal scope subsidy tape
trace transform transport underlie utilize

7. adapt adult advocate aid channel
chemical classic comprehensive comprise
confirm contrary convert couple decade
definite deny differentiate dispose
dynamic equip eliminate empirical extract
file finite foundation globe grade
guarantee hierarchy identical ideology
infer innovate insert intervene isolate

media mode paradigm phenomenon priority
prohibit publication quote release reverse
simulate sole somewhat submit successor
survive thesis topic transmit ultimate
unique visible voluntary

8. abandon accompany accumulate
ambiguous appendix appreciate arbitrary
automate bias chart clarify commodity
complement conform contemporary
contradict crucial currency denote detect
deviate displace drama eventual exhibit
exploit fluctuate guideline highlight implicit
induce inevitable infrastructure inspect
intense manipulate minimize nuclear offset
paragraph plus practitioner predominant
prospect radical random reinforce restore
revise schedule tense terminate theme
thereby uniform vehicle via virtual visual
widespread

9. accommodate analogy anticipate assure
attain behalf cease coherent coincide
commence compatible concurrent confine
controversy converse device devote
diminish distort duration erode ethic
found format inherent insight integral
intermediate manual mature mediate
medium military minimal mutual norm
overlap passive portion preliminary protocol
qualitative refine relax restrain revolution
rigid route scenario sphere subordinate
supplement suspend team temporary
trigger unify violate vision

10. adjacent albeit assemble collapse
colleague compile conceive convince
depress encounter enormous forthcoming
incline integrity intrinsic invoke levy
likewise nonetheless notwithstanding odd
ongoing panel persist pose reluctance
so-called straightforward undergo whereby