A High-Incidence Academic Word List

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 words). This contains the headwords of the families in the Academic Word List. In other words, this list contains 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 one, specific field of study such as *amortization, petroglyph, 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 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: www.vuw.ac.nz/lals/div1/awl

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

(Kinsella, San Francisco State University, 8/03)

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

(Kinsella, San Francisco State University, 8/03)

Frayer Model Diagram

Name: _____ Date: _____

Definitions

Characteristics

Examples

Non-Examples

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TYPES OF HELPFUL CONTEXT CLUES

Type	Description	Example Sentence
Definition	The author provides a direct definition of an unfamiliar word, right in the sentence. • SIGNAL WORDS: *is, are, means, refers to*	A conga *is* a barrel-shaped drum.
Appositive Definition	A type of definition clue. An appositive is a word or phrase that defines or explains an unfamiliar word that comes before it. • SIGNAL WORD: *or* • SIGNAL PUNCTUATION: set off by commas	At night you can see constellations, *or* groups of stars, in the sky.
Synonym	The author uses another word or phrase that is similar in meaning, or can be compared, to an unfamiliar word. • SIGNAL WORDS: *also, as, identical, like, likewise, resembling, same, similarly, too*	My dog Buck travels everywhere with me. My friend's canine buddy travels everywhere with him, *too*.
Antonym	The author uses another word or phrase that means about the opposite of, or is in contrast with, an unfamiliar word. • SIGNAL WORDS: *but, however, in contrast, instead of, on the other hand, though, unlike*	I thought the movie would be weird, *but* it turned out to be totally mundane.
Example	The author provides several words or ideas that are examples of an unfamiliar word. • SIGNAL WORDS: *for example, for instance, including, like, such as*	In science we are studying marine mammals *such as* whales, dolphins, and porpoises.
General	The author provides some nonspecific clues to the meaning of an unfamiliar word, often spread over several sentences.	Einstein rode his bike everywhere. He thought driving a car was way too complicated.

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Common Greek and Latin Roots in English

Root	Meaning	Origin	Example
astro	star	Greek	astronaut
aud	hear	Latin	audible
dict	say, tell	Latin	dictate
geo	earth	Greek	geology
graph	write, record	Greek	autograph
meter	measure	Greek	barometer
mit, miss	send	Latin	submit, mission
ology	study of	Greek	morphology
ped	foot	Latin	pedal
phon	sound	Greek	phonograph
port	carry	Latin	transport
spect	see	Latin	inspect
struct	build, form	Latin	construct
tele	from afar	Greek	telephone

LESSON MODELS

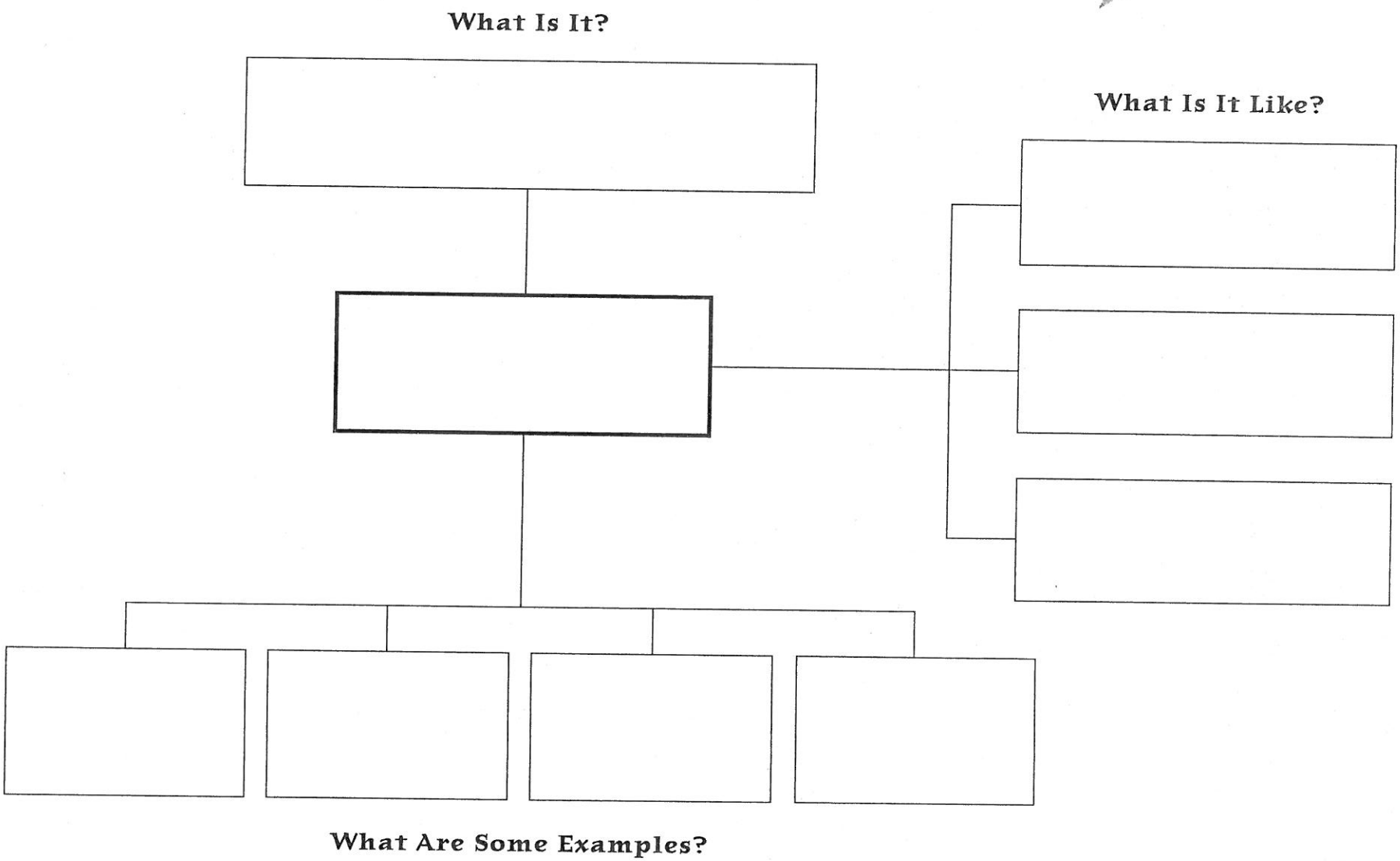
Word-Part Clues: Roots, p. 125

Latin and Greek Number Words, p. 172

Greek and Latin Roots

Greek and Latin roots are bound morphemes that cannot stand alone as words in English. Most Greek roots appear in combination with each other. For this reason, they are often called combining forms. Most Latin roots appear in combination with one or more affixes. Words of Greek and Latin origin are especially prevalent in English. About 60 percent of the words in English text are of Greek and Latin origin (Henry 1997). A relatively small number of Greek and Latin roots appear in hundreds of thousands of words (Henry 2003).

CONCEPT OF DEFINITION MAP



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PAVE MAP

1 Context Sentence:

2 Target Word:

3 Predicted Meaning:

4 Sentence Using Word's Predicted Meaning:

5 Word's Dictionary Definition:

6 Revised Sentence Using Verified Definition:

7 Word Image

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THE VOCABULARY STRATEGY

To figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word that you come across while reading:

1. **Look for Context Clues** in the Words, Phrases, and Sentences Surrounding the Unfamiliar Word

2. **Look for Word-Part Clues** Within the Unfamiliar Word
   A. Try to Break the Word into Parts. (If you can't, skip to Step 3.)
   B. Look at the Root Word. What does it mean?
   C. Look at the Prefix. What does it mean?
   D. Look at the Suffix. What does it mean?
   E. Put the Meanings of the Word Parts Together. What is the meaning of the whole word?

3. **Guess the Word's Meaning** (Use Steps 1 and 2.)

4. **Try Out Your Meaning in the Original Sentence** to Check Whether or Not It Makes Sense in Context

5. **Use the Dictionary**, if Necessary, to Confirm Your Meaning

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The Vocabulary Strategy Worksheet

Vocabulary Word

Context Sentence(s) _____

_____

_____

1 Look for Context Clues

Context Clues	Signal Words or Punctuation	Type of Context Clue

2 Look for Word-Part Clues

A. Can You Break the Word into Parts? Circle **yes** or **no**. (If you can't, skip to Step 3.)

A. Word Broken into Parts

	Word Part	Meaning
B. What Is the Root Word?		
C. What Is the Prefix?		
D. What Is the Suffix?		
E. Put the Meanings of the Word Parts Together		

Prefix + Root Word • Root Word + Suffix • Prefix + Root Word + Suffix

3 I Guess the Word Means . . .

4 My Meaning Substituted in the Original Sentence

Does your meaning make sense in the sentence? Circle **yes** or **no**.

5 Dictionary Says . . .

Was your meaning close to the dictionary definition? Circle **yes** or **no**.

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Vocabulary HOTSHOT Notebook

VOCABULARY WORD _____

Encounters	Word or Word in Family	Place and Source I Saw, Heard, or Used It (classroom • school • home conversation • book • TV • other)	How It Was Used (sentence or phrase)	It Means . . . (as used in this specific context)
First Time Date: _____				
Second Time Date: _____				
Third Time Date: _____				

Hotshot Points _____

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