

Considerations for Selecting Vocabulary Words

Topic	Questions to Ask
Representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the word representative of a family of words that students should know? • Is the concept represented by the word critical to understanding the text? • Is the word a label for an idea that students need to know? • Does the word represent an idea that is essential for understanding another concept?
Repeatability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the word be used again in this text? If so, does the word occur often enough to be redundant? • Will the word be used again during the school year?
Transportable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the word be used in group discussions? • Will the word be used in writing tasks? • Will the word be used in other content or subject areas?
Contextual Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students use context clues to determine the correct or intended meaning of the word without instruction?
Structural Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students use structural analysis to determine the correct or intended meaning of the word without instruction?
Cognitive Load	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have I identified too many words for students to successfully integrate?

Source: Fisher, D., & Frey, D. (2008). *Word wise and content rich*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.