

**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*, *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 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