

Professional Learning Communities Facilitator's Guide

for the What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guide: Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School

VIDEO

5:48 minutes

Full Details and Transcript

Introduction to Recommendation 1

July 2015

Video Details

Facilitator's Guide Session:	Recommendation 1, Session 1A Handout 1A.1: Video Viewing Guide – Introduction to Recommendation 1
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Description:	In this video, Joan Morris, a retired teacher specialist and a panel member for the English learner practice guide, presents a brief overview of Recommendation 1, including a description of the four <i>How-to</i> steps for carrying out the recommendation.
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Full Transcript

Joan Morris: Hello. I'm Joan Morris, a panel member for the English learner practice guide. I will be presenting brief summaries of all four recommendations, beginning with Recommendation 1. Let's get started. Recommendation 1: What is important for you to know about the four recommendations in the EL practice guide is that they are all based on current research. In some cases, the evidence based on research is strong. This is the case in Recommendation 1. It suggests that we carefully choose a set of academic vocabulary words to teach; that we teach them intensively across several days using different instructional activities.

Just to be clear, what we mean by an academic vocabulary word is one that is used when talking or writing in academic settings but not usually when talking or writing in social settings. There are four ways for how to carry out this recommendation in your classroom. For *How-to* Step 1, which is choose a brief engaging piece of informational text that includes academic vocabulary as a platform for intensive vocabulary instruction, the panel recommends that you find a short, interesting piece of text with the words that you want to focus on. For

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example, in Exhibit 1.2 the text compares zoos today with zoos in the 1960s. It causes students to think about what these two very different types of zoo settings mean for the ethical treatment of animals. Texts like these are motivating to students and carry with them content-rich material fundamental to providing deep instruction and vocabulary.

The second *How-to* step—choose a small set of academic vocabulary for in-depth instruction—addresses how to select vocabulary words. So once you find an engaging piece of text like the zoo example, you next choose a small number—between five and eight—of academic vocabulary words that you want to teach in-depth. The practice guide gives you some ideas about what types of words to select. They could be words that are used frequently, words that are used in other subjects, words that have more than one meaning, words that can be studied based on their word parts, or words that are cognates like *similar/similar*. Exhibit 1.3 on page 17 shows how Ms. Gomez used some of these criteria to choose words from the zoo text that I talked about earlier.

For the third *How-to* step—teach academic vocabulary in-depth using multiple modalities (writing, speaking, listening)—the panel recommends that after you selected the words you want to teach, mix it up. Vary how you teach them between listening, speaking, and writing activities. In Exhibit 1.4, on page 19 you can see an example of a word map for teaching the word *enormous*. In your training, you'll get a chance to see a couple of video clips of teachers teaching academic vocabulary explicitly. Strategies that are in the practice guide and that you'll see on the video clips are using student-friendly definitions; clarifying and reinforcing these definitions using examples, non-examples, and concrete representations; and last of all, using activities to promote word learning.

Finally, in *How-to* Step 4—teach word-learning strategies to help students independently figure out the meaning of words—we want to give students ways to determine the meaning of words when they are reading by themselves. Word parts and cognates are good ways to do this. You can see an example of the teacher using word parts in her lesson in Exhibit 1.6 on page 23. You'll also see a video clip of this in your training. In the "Putting It All Together" section at the end on page 24, you can see a day-by-day guide on how, as the title says, all of the parts of Recommendation 1 come together. In Exhibit 1.8 on page 24, Ms. Hunter's fifth-grade lesson focused on academic vocabulary, utilizing the zoo text that was carried out over eight days of instruction. This shows a complete example of what it means to teach words in an in-depth manner across several days.

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Disclaimer: This video, produced by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest is part of a series developed for the *Professional Learning Communities Facilitator's Guide for the What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guide: Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School*.

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