

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE
MANIFESTS ITSELF AS
VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE;

*THEREFORE, TEACHING VOCABULARY
IS SYNONYMOUS WITH TEACHING
BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE.*

Marzano, 2004 as cited at McREL, 2006

Tips for Helping ELL Students Learn New Academic Vocabulary Terms

When possible, provide a description, explanation, or example of the vocabulary term along with a picture or other nonlinguistic representation.

Allow ELL students to engage in activities in their native language to help them add to their knowledge of the terms they are learning.

When playing vocabulary games, organize students of the same native language into pairs or triads allowing the bilingual members of the group to facilitate the games for their more monolingual partners.

(from McREL, 2006)

Marzano, Robert J. (2004). *Building background knowledge for academic achievement: Research on what works in schools*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, Robert J & Pickering, D.J. (2005). *Building academic vocabulary: Teacher's Manual*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Need for Academic Vocabulary (Research)

- ⦿ Academic vocabulary is one of the strongest indicators of how well students will learn subject area content when they come to school (Stahl & Nagy, 2006).
- ⦿ Academic vocabulary is crucial to improving both reading comprehension and verbal IQ (Stahl & Nagy, 2006).
- ⦿ Academic vocabulary prepares students for academic success by helping them preview, build background knowledge, learn and practice vocabulary in subject area content (Marzano and Pickering, 2005).
- ⦿ Vocabulary accounts for over half of the impact of all actors that influence reading comprehension (Stahl & Nagy, 2006).
- ⦿ The more students understand academic vocabulary terms, the easier it is for them to understand information they may read or hear about the topic (Marzano and Pickering, 2005).
- ⦿ Students need assistance and practice with the academic words that help them think, write, and speak with precision in school even if those terms are not specific to the content area (Marzano and Pickering, 2005).