

Books by Paul Nation

Reading for Speed and Fluency 2nd Edition



4000 Essential English Words 2nd Edition



An excerpt from

**WHAT SHOULD
EVERY
EFL
TEACHER
KNOW?**

ELT PLUS VOCABULARY

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Paul Nation has been training teachers of English for over forty years, and he has taught in Indonesia, Thailand, the United States, Finland, and Japan. He has written numerous books and articles about the teaching and learning of vocabulary, language teaching methodology, and curriculum design. He is professor emeritus at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. His website contains many free resources for teachers.

Message from Paul Nation

For many years I have been researching vocabulary in order to find out which is the most useful vocabulary to learn, and to develop vocabulary size tests and tools for analyzing vocabulary in texts.

This set of books covers the most useful vocabulary for learners of English as a foreign language. The books are aimed at helping to learn these words as quickly as possible by providing plenty of repetitions of the words and by directing conscious attention to these words. The reading passage in each unit provides the opportunity to see each target word in a meaningful context.

These books can be used as class texts or can be used for individual study.

If you are a teacher wanting to find out more about language teaching, get hold of my book called *What Should Every EFL Teacher Know?*

If you are a learner wanting to find out how to increase your skill in using the language, go to my website and get the free book (<https://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/about/staff/paul-nation>) – *What do you need to know to learn a foreign language?*

Table of Contents

What Should an English Teacher Do?

- A. Planning and Running a Balanced Course 05
- B. Training the Learners in Language-Learning Strategies 07
- C. Testing and Monitoring the Learners 09
- D. Teaching Young Learners 10
- E. The most important improvements a teacher can make to a language course 12

How Do You Teach Vocabulary?

- A. What Vocabulary Should Learners Be Focusing On? 14
- B. How Should Learners Learn Vocabulary? 17
- C. What Vocabulary Strategies Should Learners Use? 18
- D. What Vocabulary Teaching Should a Teacher Do? 21

What Should an English Teacher Do?

Main Idea

The most important job of the teacher is to plan, and this planning involves applying the principle of the four strands. According to this principle, a well-planned course has four equal strands of learning from input (listening and reading), learning from output (speaking and writing), deliberate language study, and fluency development. Each strand should get roughly the same amount of time in a course.

Teaching English as a foreign language occurs when the foreign language, English, is not widely used in that particular country outside of the classroom. This teaching situation determines three important characteristics of EFL.

1. The classroom activities may be the only significant source of input and language use for the learners. The teacher therefore has to play a strong role in the organisation of learning.
2. Often, there is no clear learning need. English is learned because it is important, but not because the learners immediately need it for communication. There may be examination needs, but these are usually not very communicative needs.
3. The language is typically studied as a compulsory subject, so motivation and achievement may be low. Because of this, materials designed for ESL learners may not be suitable for EFL learners. ESL learners may have a higher level of proficiency and thus materials designed for them are too uncontrolled and difficult for EFL learners.

The English teacher thus can be the most important person in the learners' language learning, and so what the teacher does and how the teacher sees their role are central to learning.

✓ The teacher's jobs



1. Planning



2. Training the learners



3. Testing



4. Teaching

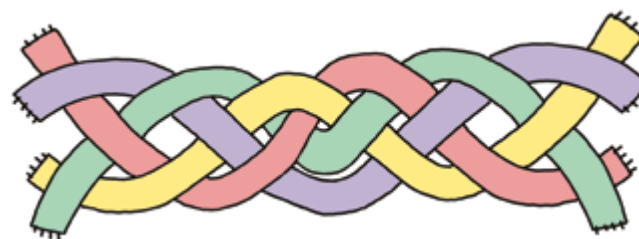
An English teacher has four main jobs. The first job is to plan and run a course that gives learners a good balance of opportunities for learning and which helps them learn the most useful language features at their present stage of learning. The second job is to train learners in strategies that will help them continue their learning and deal with communication situations outside the classroom. The third job is to test and monitor the learners to find out what they know now and how their knowledge and skill in use of the language is developing. The fourth job is to teach. I define teaching narrowly here, referring to activities where the teacher is the source of the information and the focus of attention. Typically, in such teaching, the teacher also determines the pace of the learning.

Each of these four jobs requires certain knowledge and skills, and the goal of this book is to make you very familiar with these. Let us now look at each of these four jobs in turn.

A. Planning and Running a Balanced Course

The idea of the four strands will be used as a way of balancing opportunities for learning. The principle of the four strands says that a well-balanced course consists of four equal strands: (1) meaning-focused input, (2) meaning-focused output, (3) language-focused learning, and (4) fluency development. Each of these strands should get an equal amount of time in the total course.

✓ The Four Strands



(1) Meaning-focused input

The strand of meaning-focused input involves learning through listening and reading. Learners' attention should be focused on the message of the material that they are listening to or reading. The materials should be at the right level for them in that they contain a few new language items which are easily understandable through background knowledge and context clues. A good example of an activity in the meaning-focused input strand is reading a graded reader which is at the right vocabulary level so that only around two out of every one hundred words in the text were previously unfamiliar to the reader. One quarter of the course time should be spent on meaning-focused input.

(2) Meaning-focused output

The strand of meaning-focused output involves learning through speaking and writing. Learners' attention should be focused on communicating messages to others. They should be speaking and writing about things that they know a lot about but which stretch their language knowledge. A good example of an activity in the meaning-focused output strand involves telling another learner about yourself or about something that you are very interested in. One quarter of the course time should be spent on meaning-focused output.

(3) Language-focused learning

The strand of language-focused learning involves deliberate attention to language features. That is, it involves the deliberate learning of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and discourse structure. It also involves the deliberate learning of language-learning strategies. A good example of an activity in the language-focused learning strand is learning new vocabulary and phrases using bilingual word cards. One quarter of the course time should be spent on language-focused learning. Many courses tend to spend far too much time on this strand, and one of the major purposes of this book is to show a range of activities that can be used in the other three strands of the course. An important message in this book is that teachers tend to teach too much. Three of the four strands involve message-focused learning through listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This learning does not occur as the direct result of teaching, but occurs through having to use the language. The language-focused learning strand is typically where most teaching occurs. But teaching is only one of the means of language-focused learning. Learners are also responsible for language-focused learning, and the deliberate learning of vocabulary, for example, is much more efficiently carried out through the use of word cards by learners working by themselves than through teachers teaching vocabulary. Experimental studies of vocabulary teaching typically show that out of every ten words that are taught, only about three or four are actually learnt. Most teaching is neither effective nor efficient.

(4) Fluency development

The strand of fluency development involves learning to make the best use of what is already known. This strand includes developing listening fluency, speaking fluency, reading fluency, and writing fluency. A good example of an activity in this strand is speed reading. Speed reading involves training in reading faster using very easy material which is followed by comprehension questions to make sure that faster reading is also accompanied by good comprehension. One-quarter of the time in the well-balanced course is spent on fluency development. This should be true at all levels of proficiency.

In order to apply the principle of the four strands, the teacher needs to know a range of useful activities in each strand and know how to use them effectively. The teacher also needs to know the various learning conditions which distinguish one strand from another. This knowledge can guide the teacher in the choice and use of activities.

So, the most important planning that a teacher can do is to make sure that the course contains the four strands in roughly equal quantities. This does not mean that each lesson has to contain the four strands, but it does mean that over a reasonable period of time such as two weeks or a month, there is an equal balance of the four strands.

A Word About Frequency

Not all words are of equal value to a learner. The ten most frequent words of English make up one quarter of the words on any page or in any conversation. A word like “innocuous” might be only met by native speakers once every few months. When choosing material to learn, it is important to learn the most frequent and useful items first because these will give greater value for learning. This is a kind of cost/benefit principle. This principle applies particularly to the learning of vocabulary and to the learning of grammar. Some grammar features are very common and occur in almost every sentence. Other grammar features are very infrequent and might occur only once in every ten or twenty pages of a text. The best return is gained from learning the most frequent items first.

In order to apply the cost/benefit principle, a teacher needs to know about the various levels of vocabulary which include high-frequency, mid-frequency, academic, and low-frequency words. A teacher also needs to know the important grammatical features of English that can be usefully taught and their relative frequencies in the language.

B. Training the Learners in Language-Learning Strategies

Planning is the teacher’s most important job. The second most important job of the teacher is to train the learners in the use of effective strategies. There are two major kinds of strategies: those that help the learners to learn new language features, and those that help learners deal with problems in their use of the language. A good example of a language-learning strategy is the word-card strategy. Using the word-card strategy can be done well, or it can

be done badly. If the strategy is used well, it can result in large amounts of useful learning. Using the strategy well involves knowing how to make word cards (putting the new word or phrase on one side and its first language translation on the other), knowing how to use word cards (using spaced learning rather than massed learning; having to recall the meaning or the form; using memory tricks where necessary), and knowing how to choose words and phrases to put on the cards.

A good example of a strategy to deal with problems in the use of the language is the strategy of guessing words from context. If learners are good at using this strategy, then they have a greater chance of being able to read fluently and to learn new vocabulary from their reading.

Strategy training is a part of the language-focused learning strand and needs to be a regular feature in an English course. The goal of strategy training is to help learners become independent from the teacher and the course book so that they can manage their own learning effectively. In this book we will look at the most useful strategies and how teachers can help their learners gain control of these strategies. Training in a particular strategy is not typically done in one lesson but involves regular, small amounts of training and practice with a strategy over several weeks and months until the learners become very skilful at using it.

In order to train learners in strategy use, teachers need to know the most important strategies, the steps involved in learning and applying them, and the general principles of strategy training.

The most important language-learning strategies

Type of strategy	Strategy
Vocabulary learning strategies	Using word cards Using word parts Using dictionaries
Grammar learning strategies	Checking for errors
Listening strategies	Controlling the speaker
Speaking strategies	Controlling the conversation
Reading strategies	Guessing from context
Writing strategies	Applying the steps of the writing process Strategies for error checking Using a model Using topic types

C. Testing and Monitoring the Learners

Testing and monitoring is the third most important job of the English teacher because, unless the teacher knows where the learners are in their knowledge of the language, it is difficult to plan the next steps. In addition, if learners are experiencing difficulty using the language, it is important to be able to test them to see where their problems lie. Sometimes learners have difficulty in reading because they do not know enough vocabulary. Sometimes they have difficulty in reading because their skill in converting letters to sounds is poorly developed. Sometimes they have difficulty in reading because they read far too slowly and need some fluency practice to improve their reading rate.

In order to test and monitor learners, teachers need to know what tests are available, what procedures to use to analyse problems, and how to make simple but effective tests.

The fourth job is to teach. Teaching has valuable effects, but generally teachers teach too much. We will explore this idea further in this book.

So far in this chapter we have looked in general terms at what a teacher needs to do in a language-teaching course. In the rest of this book, we will look in more practical detail at putting the ideas in this chapter into practice. To do this, we will focus on twenty teaching techniques. These are very useful and effective techniques which can be used again and again, and they are sufficient to provide a good balance of activities across the four strands.

The twenty most useful language teaching techniques

Skill area	Technique	Strand
Listening	Listening to stories Read and listen Dictation	Meaning-focused input Meaning-focused input Language-focused learning
Speaking	Problem-solving Pair conversation Prepared talks Same or different (pronunciation) Identifying (pronunciation) 4/3/2	Meaning-focused output Meaning-focused output Meaning-focused output Language-focused learning Language-focused learning Fluency development
Reading	Extensive reading Paired reading Intensive reading Speed reading	Meaning-focused input Meaning-focused input Language-focused learning Fluency development
Writing	Writing with feedback Information transfer Substitution tables 10 minute writing	Meaning-focused output Meaning-focused output Language-focused learning Fluency development
General purpose	Linked skills Issue logs Word cards	Meaning-focused strands Meaning-focused strands Language-focused learning

D. Teaching Young Learners

This book largely focuses on learners who are teenagers or older. However the four strands and largely the same activities are also very relevant for young learners. Young learners also need a balance of opportunities for learning.

(1) Listening

For listening, the activities of listening to stories, read and listen, and dictation are very well suited to young learners. Intensive reading, however, is better treated as a listening-based activity rather than a reading-based activity for young learners. In this form, it is known as the shared book approach or the blown-up book, where the teacher has a very large copy of a well-illustrated

and interesting book which the teacher reads aloud to the learners and interacts with them about the story. The interaction focuses on what might happen next, the meanings of the words and sentences in the story, learners' own experience of some of the things mentioned in the story, and what learners think of the story.

(2) Speaking

For speaking, the activities of problem-solving discussion, pair conversation, prepared talks, and 4/3/2 are all easily adapted to young learners. The content of problem-solving discussion needs, of course, to be suited to the learners' interests and age level.

(3) Reading

For reading, paired reading is particularly suited to young learners, where the other member of the pair may be a parent, the teacher, or a classmate. Extensive reading is also extremely important for young learners. Speed reading activities are better replaced by re-reading activities for younger learners, where learners come back to books they have already read and read them again. Young learners will spend more time on the language-focused learning aspects of reading as they develop their reading skill. It is important to remember that research has shown that for many learners the best age to learn to read is around six years old because at this age learners can more easily develop phonemic awareness and awareness of the alphabetic principle (see Chapter 6) which are important conceptual leaps when beginning to read an alphabetic language. If learners younger than six are not yet ready to read, it is best not to push them on this.

(4) Writing

For writing, writing with feedback and an adaptation of 10-minute writing are well suited to young learners. Information transfer activities are best treated as picture-related exercises where learners can read and write about a picture that they have drawn or that they are very attracted to. Substitution tables are probably better replaced by simple memorisation activities.

The general purpose activities of linked skills and issue logs (which could also be called projects) are very well suited to young learners. Much of good primary school teaching in English-speaking countries involves the use of project-related linked skills activities. Word card learning can be suited to young learners with the use of pictures and games based on the word cards.

It is probably quite useful for a teacher to believe that any activity can be used at any age or proficiency level as long as suitable adjustments are made.

Amount of time in a course for the four strands, the four skills, and teaching activities

Strand	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Total time
Meaning-focused input	Linked skills Listening to stories Problem-solving speaking Pair conversation		Extensive reading Writing with feedback Linked skills Information transfer Paired reading Issue logs		1/2
Meaning-focused output	Prepared talks Read and listen Issue logs				
Language-focused learning	Dictation 1/16	Pronunciation Substitution tables Same or different Identifying 1/16	Intensive reading Word cards 1/16	Feedback Substitution tables 1/16	1/4
Fluency development	Linked skills 4/3/2 1/8		Linked skills Speed reading course Easy extensive reading 1/16	Linked skills 10 minute writing 1/16	1/4
Total time	1/4	1/4	1/4	1/4	1

1. Add an extensive reading program. Just under one quarter of the course time should be spent on the extensive reading of books which are at the right level for the learners. For elementary and intermediate learners with a vocabulary size of less than 3,000 words, these books should be graded readers of various levels written within a controlled vocabulary. This extensive reading program should include reading for meaning-focused input and reading for fluency development. Learners should read with enjoyment and read at least one book every two weeks and preferably one per week. Adding an extensive reading program to a language course is the most important improvement that a teacher can make, and if this was the only improvement made, the teacher could still feel very satisfied about that.
2. Add a fluency development strand across the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This simply means spending about one quarter of the course time on the activities of easy extensive reading, a speed reading course, 4/3/2, 10 minute writing, listening to stories, and linked skills activities. Fluency development activities require very little preparation from the teacher and are very important in helping learners make the best use of what they already know. There is no point in knowing features of the language if they are not readily available for normal use.
3. Add meaning-focused problem-solving activities for listening and speaking. These activities provide the learners with opportunities to make spoken use of the language that they have learnt. This use is strongly meaning-focused. That is, the learners' attention is on getting their message across and understanding what others in their group are saying. Once the teacher sets up the activity, the learners are left to get on with doing it.
4. Add extensive listening activities, particularly listening to stories and reading while listening. These activities should be at the right level for the learners with only a small amount of unknown vocabulary.
5. Encourage and train the learners to do deliberate vocabulary learning from bilingual word cards. Note that in this list of five improvements, this is the first language-focused learning improvement. Most language courses already contain too much language-focused learning, but unfortunately most of this focus is not on sensible ways to learn vocabulary.

E. The most important improvements a teacher can make to a language course

The following improvements are ranked in order of importance beginning with the most important.

How Do You Teach Vocabulary?

Main Idea

The main idea in this chapter is that learners should be focusing on the right level of vocabulary (high frequency, mid-frequency, low frequency, academic or technical), and should have opportunities to meet this vocabulary through input at the right level, through output, through deliberate study, and through fluency development activities. Training involves strategies, and we will look at some of the most useful vocabulary strategies.

A. What Vocabulary Should Learners Be Focusing On?

If we take a text or a collection of texts and turn it into a word list which consists of every word in the text plus their frequency of occurrence, we find that there is a small number of words which occur very frequently, and a large number of words which do not occur very often, with many of them occurring only once or twice. Table 7.1 shows what percentage of the words in a text are covered by a series of 1,000 word lists from the first 1,000 up to the 10th 1,000 and beyond.

Coverage of text by a series of lists each containing 1,000 word families

Vocabulary level	Coverage of text	
1 st 1,000	75.22%	} High-frequency words
2 nd 1,000	8.92%	
3 rd 1,000	5.32%	
4 th 1,000	1.71%	
5 th 1,000	0.97%	} Mid-frequency words
6 th 1,000	0.64%	
7 th 1,000	0.44%	
8 th 1,000	0.33%	
9 th 1,000	0.24%	} Low-frequency words
10 th 1,000	0.18%	
11 th to 25 th 1,000	1.25%	
The rest	5.42%	

These very frequent words are called the high frequency words of English. Because these words are so frequent and occur in almost all kinds of uses of the language, they should be learned first. Native speakers of English learn words at a rate of around 1,000 word families a year, but learners of English as a foreign language generally learn at a slower rate because they have much less contact with English.

It is important to know whether your learners have learnt all the first 2,000 words or not. You can find this out by using tests of the first 1,000 and second 1,000 words from the Vocabulary Resource Booklet on Paul Nation's website. There are some bilingual versions of these tests in the Vocabulary Resource Booklet, and if these happen to match the first language of your learners, it is better to use these rather than the monolingual version.

(1) What should learners focus on after they know the first 2,000 words of English?

If the learners are going on to do academic study in English, then they need to learn the 570 word families in the Academic Word List. This list contains words that are very frequent across a wide range of academic texts and which are not in the first 2,000 words of English. A list of these words can be found in the Vocabulary Resource Booklet, and there is also a website focusing on

these words. These words cover around 10% of the words in academic text, but they cover only around 2% of the words in novels. So, if your learners do not have academic purposes but simply wish to learn English to speak, to watch movies and television programs, and to read novels and magazines, then the next step is to go on to learn the mid-frequency words of English. The words from the Academic Word List cover around 4% of the words in newspapers and thus are useful for such reading. Most of the words in the Academic Word List are in the mid-frequency words.

The levels of vocabulary

Type of vocabulary	Number of word families	Text coverage	Description
High-frequency words	2,000	88% including proper nouns etc.	Words that occur very often in all kinds of texts
Mid-frequency vocabulary	7,000	10%	Words that occur in a wide range of texts
Low-frequency vocabulary	11,000	2%	Words that do not occur often in most uses of the language
Academic vocabulary	570	10% of academic texts	Words that occur very often in a wide range of academic texts
Technical vocabulary	2,000	20-30% of technical texts	Words that occur most often in specialist areas

The principle which lies behind choosing which words to focus on can be called the cost/benefit principle. This principle says that learners should get the best return for the learning that they do. In terms of vocabulary, this means that they should learn words that they will meet often and be able to use often. So, they should learn the high-frequency words before they learn academic vocabulary or mid-frequency vocabulary. They should learn mid-frequency vocabulary before they learn low-frequency words. When they are capable of beginning to work in English in the specialist areas that they are interested in, they should begin learning the technical vocabularies of those areas.

B. How Should Learners Learn Vocabulary?

The high-frequency words of the language are so frequent and useful that they should be learnt across the four strands of the course. Anything that the teacher can do to help the learning of these words should be done. Learners should meet these words through meaning-focused input in extensive reading and listening using graded readers. They should have the opportunity to use these words in meaning-focused output through speaking and writing. They should study these high-frequency words deliberately through the use of word cards and in intensive reading. They should become fluent in the use of these high-frequency words in each of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. When necessary, teachers should teach high-frequency words. There is little point in learning other vocabulary if the high-frequency words are not known.

Because academic vocabulary is like high-frequency vocabulary for learners who have academic purposes, the words in the Academic Word List should also be learnt across the four strands of a course.

Mid-frequency vocabulary is not frequent enough to deserve teaching time in class. Learners should deliberately study these words through the use of the strategies of learning from word cards, dictionary use, and word part analysis. Teachers should only deal very briefly with these words when they come up in class, but should set goals for the learners for learning these words and should monitor that the words are being learnt.

C. What Vocabulary Strategies Should Learners Use?

There are several vocabulary learning strategies: guessing from context, using word cards, using word parts, and dictionary use.

(1) The guessing from context strategy

The guessing from context strategy is a very important one for learning through meaning-focused input. To practice this strategy, learners need to read texts which are at the right level for them. This is the most important requirement for successful guessing from context. Teachers can give some deliberate attention to this strategy during intensive reading by focusing on the clues available in a particular text.

Guessing from context involves using context clues and background knowledge to work out the meaning of an unknown word. For example, if the word *fantastic* is not known in the following context "A year of good fishing and all I have to do in return is find a bird? Fantastic!", learners can try to guess its meaning before looking it up in the dictionary or continuing reading.

(2) The word card strategy

The most important deliberate vocabulary learning strategy is learning from bilingual word cards. Word cards consist of small cards, around 2 cm x 4 cm, which have a word or phrase from the foreign language on one side, and the translation of this word or phrase into the first language on the other side. Each learner builds up their own sets of word cards.

At the beginning, word cards should be made and used in class. This is to make sure that the learners know how to make word cards, how to choose words to go on their cards, and how to use the cards for learning.

✓ A word card



It is important when making the cards that the English word or phrase or sentence goes on one side of the cards and its translation on the other. This is so that learners cannot see the translation when they look at the word or phrase. This means that they then have an opportunity to retrieve the meaning of the word in the form of its translation. This retrieval is a very important learning condition. If we see the word and its meaning together, then there is no reason to make a retrieval and so there is little opportunity for making a strong connection between the word and its meaning.

The learners individually look through their cards trying to recall the translation on the other side. If they cannot recall the translation, they turn the card over to see it. After they look at a card and recall the meaning, they place this card at the back of the pack. If they cannot recall the meaning, they then place this card somewhere in the middle of the pack so that they will see it again soon. In one session, the learner should only look through the cards once or twice. After doing that, they then put them away in their pocket with a rubber band around them, and look at them again within a few hours when they have some free time.

When learning from word cards, it is good to say the words aloud when looking at them. It is also good not to turn over the card too soon if a word cannot be retrieved. The learner should spend a few seconds trying to retrieve the word before turning the card over. It is good to keep changing the order of the cards in the pack, so that one word does not remind the learner of the next word which follows it.

There are some memory tricks which can be used for words which do not easily stay in memory. These include breaking the word into parts if that word has word parts, thinking of a word which sounds like this word in the first language, and using a technique called the keyword technique which helps connect the form and the meaning.

(3) The word parts and dictionary use strategies

a. The word parts strategy involves knowing the most useful prefixes and suffixes.

The learners should learn these word parts and their meanings. There are not many of them, and they can be learned quite quickly when learners already know some words which contain them. When they meet words which contain these parts, they should try to relate the meaning of the

parts to the meaning of the words. These word parts are not used to guess the meanings of words but to help remember them. So, for example, if a learner meets the unknown word *prominent*, looks up its meaning, and realises that it contains the prefix *pro-* which means “forward”, the learner can try to relate the meaning of *forward* to the meaning of *prominent*.

A list of useful prefixes

Prefix	Meaning	Word	Other forms
<i>ab-</i> <i>ad-</i>	from, away to(ward)	abstract advertise	<i>a-, abs-</i> <i>a-, ab-, ac-, af-, ag-, al-, an-, ap-, aq-, ar-, as-, at-</i> <i>co-, col-, con-, cor-</i>
<i>com-</i> <i>de-</i> <i>dis-</i> <i>dis-</i> <i>ex-</i> <i>ex-</i> <i>in-</i> <i>in-</i> <i>inter-</i> <i>mis-</i> <i>non-</i> <i>ob-</i> <i>ob-</i> <i>over-</i> <i>per-</i> <i>pre-</i> <i>pro-</i> <i>pro-</i> <i>re-</i> <i>sub-</i> <i>trans-</i> <i>un-</i>	with down, away not apart, away out, beyond former not in(to) between, among wrong(ly) not against to(ward) above through before forward in favour of back, again under across, beyond not	complicated describe dislike distance express ex-president inconsistent instruct intermittent misinform nonviolent oppose obtain overpower perfect predict progress pro-Islam reorganize subscribe transfer unable	<i>di-, dif-</i> <i>e-, ef-</i> <i>ig-, il-, im-, ir-</i> <i>il-, im-, ir-</i> <i>o-, oc-, of-, op-</i> <i>o-, oc-, of-, op-</i> <i>suc-, suf-, sug-, sum-, sur-, sus-</i> <i>tra-, tran-</i>

b. **The dictionary use strategy** involves using the entries in a dictionary to help remember the meanings and use of words. So, when learners look up a word in the dictionary, they should do some of the following things to help the word stick in their memory. They should find the appropriate sense of the word given in the dictionary entry. They should look at the different senses given for the word and see if they share a common

meaning. So, if they look up the word *pour*, they should see if all the meanings given for *pour* have a common meaning. They should look at the example sentences in the dictionary which contain the word and try to form a mental picture of the meaning of these sentences. They should look at other entries which are very close to the entry that they have looked up to see if there are other words which have a similar form and a similar meaning to the word that they are looking for. So, if they look up the word *foundation*, they are likely to find these words near it: *found* and *founder*. These words actually have the same word stem and share part of the meaning of *foundation*.

D. What Vocabulary Teaching Should a Teacher Do?

Vocabulary learning occurs as a gradual process as learners build up knowledge of a particular word through many meetings with it. Even if learners learn a word from word cards, this is only one step toward knowing that word. Later meetings with the word will enrich learners’ understanding of the meaning, will show them the other words that it occurs with, will show them how it is used, and will strengthen each of these kinds of knowledge through repetition. Teaching a particular word can only be one step in the gradual learning of that word, so we should not spend too much time on it.

The main opportunities for vocabulary teaching should be during intensive reading and when learners ask for words during speaking and writing activities.

One of the teacher’s main goals should be to help learners become independent vocabulary learners. They can become independent vocabulary learners by knowing how to decide what vocabulary is most useful to learn, by knowing how to learn it through the use of word cards and other strategies, by knowing how to meet the words again by doing lots of extensive reading and listening, and by finding opportunities to produce the words they have learnt through speaking and writing. Rather than teach vocabulary, teachers should be spending that time on training learners in vocabulary learning.

› For more information, see ‘What should EFL teachers know?’

Vocabulary Analysis programs

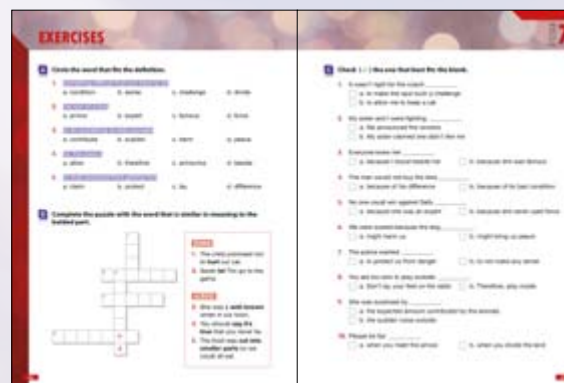
Tom Cobb's website (www.lex tutor.ca) has a wealth of resources to help vocabulary learning.

To test your vocabulary size, go to <http://my.vocabularysize.com/>. Paul Nation's home page (<https://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/about/staff/paul-nation>) contains copies of his articles about vocabulary teaching and learning (Look under the heading Publications). It also has the free Vocabulary Resource Booklet which contains word lists and tests. The Vocabulary Size Test can also be found there.

Preview of 4000 Essential English Words 2nd Edition



- Clear, easy-to-understand definitions and examples for all target words
- Appealing images that illustrate each target word



- Various activities to reinforce target vocabulary



- Reading passages which utilize target words

About 4000 Essential English Words

4000 Level books	Major word level in the books	CEFR level
Book 1	1000	A2
Book 2	1000-2000	A2
Book 3	2000-3000	B1
Book 4	AWL	B2
Book 5	3000-4000	B2
Book 6	4000	C1

4000 Essential English Words is a six-book series that is designed to focus on practical high-frequency words to enhance the vocabulary of learners from high beginner to advanced levels. The series presents a variety of words that cover a large percentage of the words that can be found in many spoken or written texts.