

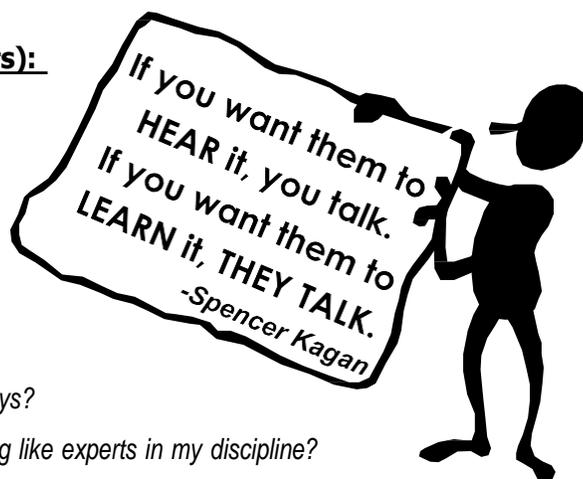
# ACCOUNTABLE TALK FRAMES TO SUPPORT LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS

→ A RESOURCE FOR DEVELOPING ACADEMIC LANGUAGE  
FOR ALL STUDENTS IN ALL CONTENT AREAS



## **Guiding Questions from Building Academic Language (Zwiers):**

- ✓ *What is academic language, how can I **build** it as I teach **content**?*
- ✓ *How can I **adapt** my curriculum and assessment to build on the **cultural** and **linguistic strengths** of my students?*
- ✓ *How can I get students to think together to **co-construct** meaning; rather than just study to memorize?*
- ✓ *How can I **build language skills** for complex reading and writing?*
- ✓ *How can I **assess** thinking skills and language proficiency in useful ways?*
- ✓ *How can I most efficiently **apprentice students** into thinking and talking like experts in my discipline?*



## **→ Excerpts from "English Language Development: Implementation at Grades Six Through Twelve" (Dutro and Kinsella)**

Secondary education is a complex endeavor. Fast-paced schedules, specialized courses, rigorous content, high-staked assessment, and variety of instructional methods place a high demand on students. For students, who must navigate these complexities while acquiring [academic] English, the demands intensify significantly (Dutro and Levy 2008).

### Academic Language Development in Core Content

Although there are many definitions of academic English, there are agreed-upon commonalities. According to various sources cited by Saunders and Goldenberg, "Academic language refers to the specialized vocabulary, grammar, discourse/ textual, and functional skills associated with academic instruction and mastery of academic materials and tasks". Academic language is significantly different from the informal speech students use outside the classroom. The language of schooling includes everyday words (e.g. *reason, understand*), general academic vocabulary that cuts across subject areas (e.g. *respond, category*), and specialized terms (e.g. *polygon, onomatopoeia*) (Feldman and Kinsella 2008). Written and spoken classroom discourse is also characterized by academic text structures and grammatical complexity (Bailey 2007; Scarcella 2003; Schlepegrell 2004; Wong Fillmore and Snow 2000).

Academic English requires sufficient background knowledge to apply general knowledge of words differently across subject areas. For example, *division* and *product* have strikingly different meanings in mathematics than they do in social studies or everyday use. Similarly, a student might encounter the term *factor* in a mathematics class (process) and later that same day in a discussion of economics (issue). Academic English also entails specialized knowledge of concepts in particular subject areas.

### Building Functional Language

Mastery of language and syntactic features allows students' full participation in academics by enabling them to put ideas together in a wide range of ways. Mastery includes learning the breadth of language patterns to communicate relationships between ideas: to explain, describe, compare, and contrast, summarize, generalize, express, cause-and-effect relationships, sequences, and so on. **The intentional teaching of language structures- the "mortar"- enables Students to internalize the patterns needed to express concepts, ideas, and thinking.**

Teaching English from the perspective of language functions helps to identify the language demands of a specific academic task (describing, sequencing events, comparing attributes) and content concepts (methods of communication, narrative events). The benefits of learning to use the language functions such as *comparing*, for example, extend beyond a given task because once Students know how to compare, they can apply that skill to a range of contexts across content areas. Students practice and extend their language skills for comparing by applying it in different ways. **Increasing competence in any language function obligates the speaker or writer to use increasingly complex sentence structures.**

Using this approach, learning interesting content- and how to talk and write about that interesting content- is not delayed until more advanced levels of proficiency are reached. Academic language is developed from the beginning stages of second language learning. Competence in a range of functions equips students to participate in content instruction and supports academic language proficiency. **Language becomes a vehicle, rather than a barrier, to learning.**

## Academic Language

Academic Language can be defined as 1) the language used in the classroom and workplace, 2) the language of text, 3) the language of assessments, 4) the language of academic success and 5) the language of power.

<i>Informal Language</i>	<i>Academic Language</i>
repetition of words	variety of words, more sophisticated vocabulary
sentences start with “and” or “but”	sentences start with transition words, such as “however”, “moreover”, and “in addition”
use of slang such as “dude”, “whatever”, and “like”	replaces slang with accurate descriptors
appropriate for use in casual, social settings	appropriate for use in all academic and work place settings
can vary greatly by ethnicity, region, gender, age	common language register for all

**Academic Language** consists of *academic vocabulary* and is used in *academic discourse*.



### **Academic Vocabulary**

The vocabulary critical to understanding the concepts of the content taught in schools. Academic vocabulary includes content related vocabulary and high frequency academic words such as Bloom’s verbs.

“BRICKS”

### **Academic Discourse**

Academic discourse provides students with the language tools (vocabulary and syntax) necessary to competently discuss the topic using complete sentences. Structured dialogue in the form of “sentence stems” provides a scaffold for students to appropriate academic language in meaningful contexts.

“MORTAR”

# Inquiry/Seeking Information

ACADEMIC  
LANGUAGE  
FUNCTION

01

**Student uses language to:** Observe and explore the environment, acquire information, inquire

**Examples:** Uses who, what, when, where, and how to gather information

**Strategies:** Quick-write, Think Pair Share, Novel Ideas, 5 W's and How, Question Creation, Chart (Q-Chart)

**Cue Words:** in other words, that is to say, according to, specifically, who, what, when, where, why, how

**Language Frames & Graphic Organizers:**

## Language of Inquiry/Seeking Information

I wonder why . . .

How does . . . work?

I'd like to ask you about . . .

Am I correct in assuming that . . . ?

Could you expand a little bit on what you said about . . . ?

Could you be more specific about . . . ?

Something else I'd like to know is . . .

If I have understood you correctly, your point is that . . .

I didn't understand what you said about . . .

I'm sorry, could you repeat what you said about . . . ?

Sorry, but I'm not quite clear on . . .



### Expressing an Opinion\*

I think/believe that . . .

In my opinion, . . .

Based on my experience, I think . . .

### Soliciting a Response\*

What do you think?

We haven't heard from you yet.

Do you agree?

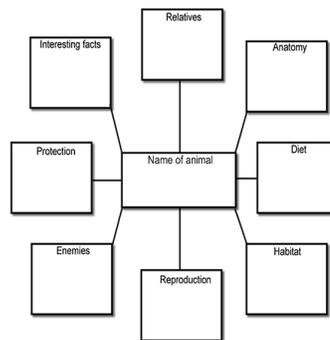
What answer did you get?

### Paraphrasing\*

So you are saying that . . .

In other words, you think . . .

What I hear you saying is . . .



K	W	L
What do you think you <b>KNOW</b> about slavery?	What do you <b>WANT</b> to know about slavery?	What did you <b>LEARN</b> about slavery?

Extended Anticipatory Guide (2)

Text: Statement	Your Opinion		Justification of Your Opinion What is the strongest reason you agree or disagree? Explain in as much detail as possible and provide an example or analogy.	Finding in Text		Evidence That Refutes Your Opinion If the text does not support your opinion, explain why not, in your words.
	Agree	Disagree		Support	No Support	
1.						
2.						
3.						

# Summarizing and Informing

**Student uses language to:** Identify, report or describe information

**Examples:** Recount information presented by teacher or text; retell a story or personal experience

**Strategies:** Novel Ideas Only, Writing Frames

**Cue Words:** in short, in summary, to sum up, finally, all in all, in conclusion

**Language Frames & Graphic Organizers:**



## Language of Summarizing

On the whole...

Basically he/she is saying that....

In this text, the author argues that....

To support the main claim, the author provides evidence that suggests that....

## Language of Informing

The advantages of \_\_\_\_\_ outweigh the disadvantages of \_\_\_\_\_ In so far as...

The statistics are misleading because they do/not show...

These [facts/reasons/data] strongly suggest that... Yet some argue strongly that....

## Reporting a Partner's [or anyone's] Idea\*

\_\_\_\_\_ indicated that...

\_\_\_\_\_ pointed out to me that....

\_\_\_\_\_ emphasized that...

\_\_\_\_\_ concluded that....

Main Idea/Supporting  
Ideas/Conclusion

Topic Sentence

---

Support Detail #1

---

Support Detail #2

---

Support Detail #3

---

Conclusion Sentence

---

## Synecdotes

Definition				
Similar	Feels Like	Opposite	Similar	Synthesis
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....



# Comparing and Contrasting

ACADEMIC  
LANGUAGE  
FUNCTION  
**03**

**Student uses language to:** Describe similarities and differences in objects or ideas

**Examples:** Make/explain a graphic organizer to show similarities and contrasts; Write in bullet or paragraph format to specify similarities / differences; Categorizing to organize terms or ideas; Verbal clarification of similarities or differences through questioning or pairing activities.

**Strategies:** Categories on a wall, Content Curiosities (Survey), Jigsaw Project

**Cue Words:** likewise, however, nevertheless, despite, on the other hand, on the contrary, contrary to..., conversely, rather, still

**Language Frames & Graphic Organizers:**



## Language of Comparing & Contrasting

One similarity/difference between [subject 1] and [subject 2] is ...

[Subject 1] and [subject 2] are similar because they both...

[Subject 1] and [subject 2] are rather different because while

[subject 1] has \_\_\_\_\_, [subject 2] has \_\_\_\_\_.

Whereas [subject 1] is ... , [subject 2] is ...

[Subject 1] is .... Similarly / In contrast, [subject 2] is ....

## Language of Agreeing\*

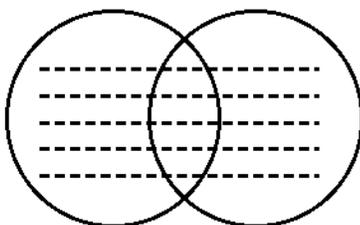
My idea/answer/explanation is similar to/related to...

I agree with (a person) that...

My idea builds upon (a person's) idea...

I don't agree with you because...

Venn Diagram

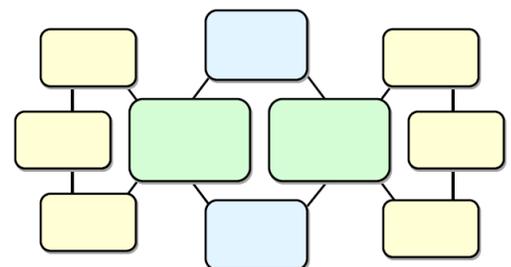


Compare/Contrast Matrix

	Name 1	Name 2
Attribute 1		
Attribute 1		
Attribute 1		

Double Bubble Chart

Directions: Use this mind map to compare (find similarities) and contrast (find differences).



# Sequencing/Ordering

ACADEMIC  
LANGUAGE  
FUNCTION

04

**Student uses language to:** sequence objects, ideas, or events.

**Examples:** Describe / make a timeline, Continuum, Cycle, Narrative sequence

**Strategies:** Mix and match, Categories on a wall, Collaborative Poster

**Cue Words:** at which point, at this time, simultaneously, subsequently



**Language Frames & Graphic Organizers:**

## Language of Sequencing

First, ... and second, ...

Meanwhile, the \_\_\_ appeared to be ...

While [subject 1] was ..., [subject 2] was simultaneously/concurrently...

Finally \_\_\_ proceeded to...

Consequently the \_\_\_ began to ...

Previously, \_\_\_ had decided to ...

Following this event, ...

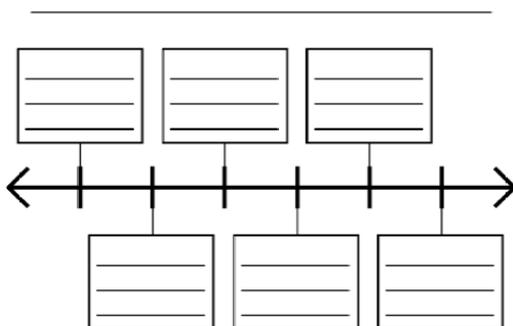
Initially ... Some time later....

After ... the next step is/was to...

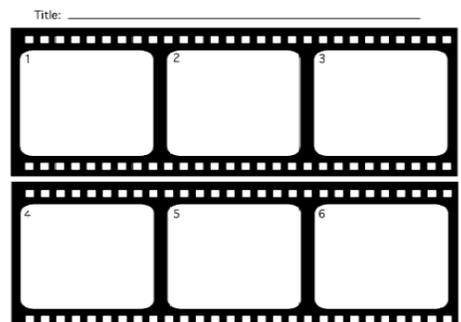
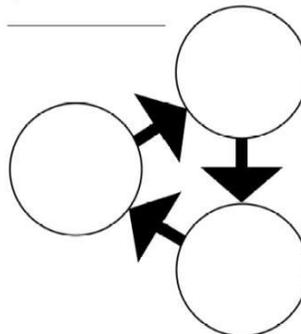
What occurred/happened prior to... was that...

In the first stage/phase, ...

The transition between stages \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ can be described as....



Cycle of



# Classifying

ACADEMIC  
LANGUAGE  
FUNCTION

05

**Student uses language to:** Group objects or ideas according to their characteristics. It is critical to identify the rules that govern class or category membership.

**Examples:** describe organizing principle(s), explain why A is an example and B is not,

**Strategies:** Collaborative poster, categories on a wall, word sorts, sort and label

**Cue Words:** sort, categorize, select, belongs to, fits into, features, traits, qualities

**Language Frames & Graphic Organizers:**



## Language of Classifying

\_\_\_\_\_ consists of [quantity] categories.

The [quantity] categories of \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

We can classify \_\_\_\_\_ according to...

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are types of ... because....

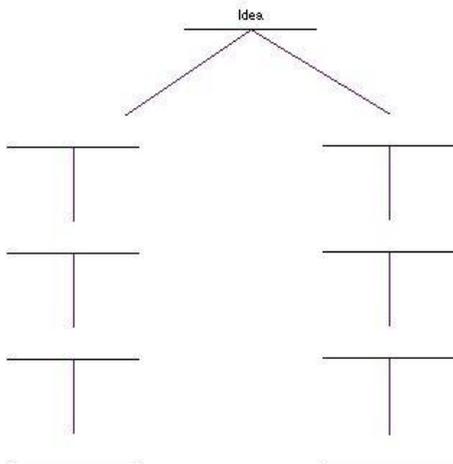
The most salient characteristic(s) of this group is/are...

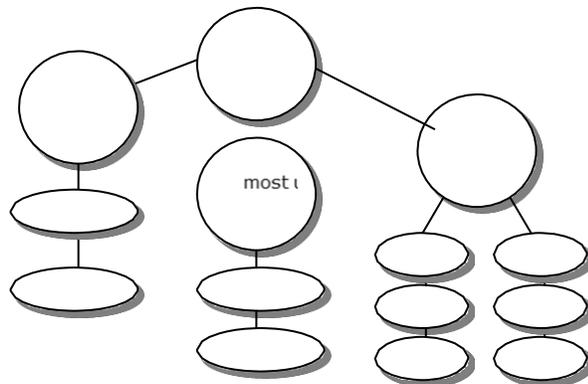
An appropriate name for this group is ... owing to the fact that they all...

\_\_\_\_\_ correlates to \_\_\_\_\_ insofar as....

These \_\_\_\_\_ are arranged according to....

Tree Map: Inductive & Deductive Classification



# Analyzing

ACADEMIC  
LANGUAGE  
FUNCTION

06

**Student uses language to:** Separate whole into parts, identify relationships and patterns

**Examples:** Describe parts, features, or main idea of information

**Strategies:** Analysis Pizza, Collaborative poster, word sorts, sort and label, dissecting, various lab activities

**Cue Words:** examine, scrutinize, break down, dissect, investigate, determine, elements

**Language Frames & Graphic Organizers:**



## Language of Analysis

We can interpret \_\_\_\_\_ as ....

Given the evidence, we can deduce that...

\_\_\_\_\_ can be differentiated from \_\_\_\_\_ based on...

After a thorough analysis of the evidence, we conclude that....

This \_\_\_\_\_ is significant because...

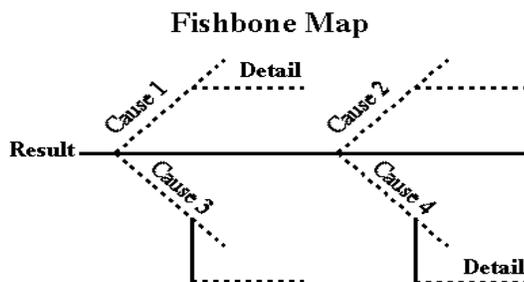
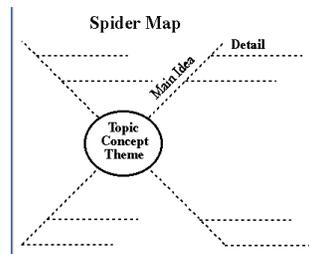
After careful examination of... it appears that...

\_\_\_\_\_ is related to \_\_\_\_\_ insofar as....

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are connected by..... This is important because...

We can draw parallels between \_\_\_\_\_ and the world/other texts/self because....

	Cat	Dog	Goldfish	Parrot
Noisy?	+	+	-	+
Has to be walked?	-	+	-	-
Sheds hair?	+	+	-	-



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

### Concept Definition Map

What is it?

Category \_\_\_\_\_

What is it like?

Property \_\_\_\_\_

Property \_\_\_\_\_

Property \_\_\_\_\_

Property \_\_\_\_\_

Main Concept \_\_\_\_\_

What are some examples?

Illustration \_\_\_\_\_

Illustration \_\_\_\_\_

Illustration \_\_\_\_\_

New Definition \_\_\_\_\_

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Graphic Organizers ■ Page 3

# Inferring, Predicting & Hypothesizing

ACADEMIC  
LANGUAGE  
FUNCTION

07

**Student uses language to:** make inferences, predict implications, hypothesize.



**Examples:** Describe reasoning process (inductive or deductive); Generate hypotheses to suggest causes or outcomes; Describe observations using multiple senses

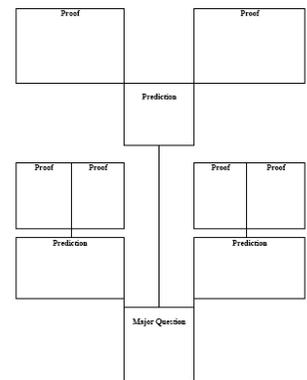
**Strategies:** Guess and check, Scientific method, Seeking patterns, Using visuals and structure of a text to predict topic, Pre-reading strategies

**Cue Words:** guess, conclude that..., estimate, speculate, draw a conclusion, believe, due to, since, in light of

## Language Frames & Graphic Organizers:

### Language of Prediction and Hypothesis

I predict / imagine that...  
 Given ..., I hypothesize that ...  
 If I use ...then I predict...will happen.  
 Based on past results, I predict...  
 I deduced ... after analyzing further. I discerned that \_\_\_\_\_ because....  
 I foresee \_\_\_\_\_ because....  
 I prognosticate..... because I know.....



### Language of Inference

Based on ... I infer that ...  
 I infer that... based on...  
 My conjecture on \_\_\_\_\_ is....  
 I anticipate that...

### Hypothesis Matrix

Question	Conditional Statement	If, Then Statement

### Making Inferences

Story Clues	+	What I Know	=	Inference

### PREDICTION CHART

GUESSES	REASONS	EVIDENCE

# Justifying and Persuading

**Student uses language to:** Give reasons for an action, decision, point of view; convince others

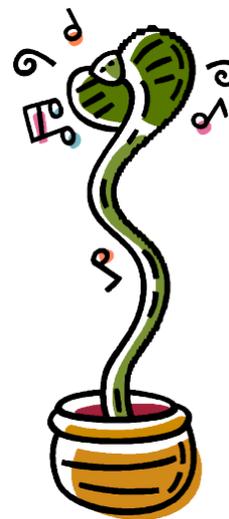
ACADEMIC  
LANGUAGE  
FUNCTION  
**08**

**Examples:** Tell why A is important and give evidence in support of a position.

**Strategies:** Socratic Seminar, Think-Pair Share, Anticipatory Chart with Round Robin, Rally-Robin Debate, Four Corners with justification, Error Analysis

**Cue Words:** defend, show, rationalize, think, feel, because of, for this reason, due to, right, argue, convince, influence, sway, urge, claim, beliefs, support, evidence, appeal, should, must, ought to, have to, furthermore, moreover, clearly

**Language Frames & Graphic Organizers:**



**Language of Justification**

I believe this because...

My primary reason for thinking so is...

Perhaps the most convincing reason for this is...

**Language of Persuasion**

Based on the evidence presented so far, I believe that...

Although some people claim that..., opponents argue that....

It is vital to consider...

The advantages of \_\_\_\_\_ outweigh the disadvantages of \_\_\_\_\_ insofar as...

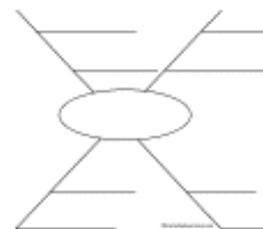
The statistics are misleading because they do/not show...

These [facts/reasons/data] strongly suggest that... Yet some argue strongly that....

T-Chart: Opinion – Reason



Spider Web/Map listing topic/idea and reasons on "branch"



# Solving Problems/Problem Solving

ACADEMIC  
LANGUAGE  
FUNCTION

09

**Student uses language to:** Define and represent a problem; determine a solution,

**Examples:** Describe the problem solving process or procedures; re-state the problem in their own words

**Strategies:** Collaborative Poster, Sage-Scribe, Mix and Match, Manipulatives, Creating a Mnemonic, Mathematically Speaking (\_\_\_ally Speaking), Fold-ables, Pass the Envelope, Gallery Walk, Reciprocal Teaching, Create- Exchange- Access, Quiz-Quiz Trade

**Cue Words:** solve, figure out, think about, find, conflict, difficult question, situation



## Language Frames & Graphic Organizers:

## Problem/Solution Outline

**Language of Describing Problems**

A way of thinking about solving this problem is...

In order to solve this problem we must first/ initially....

This problem is similar to....

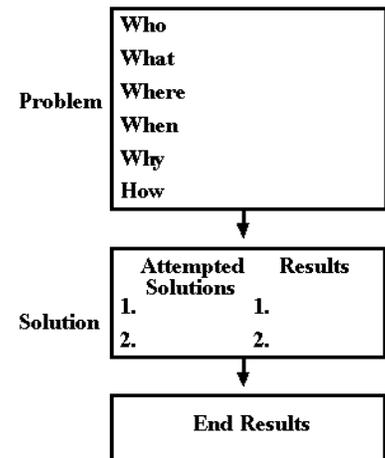
We need to identify...

One way to visualize this problem is...

Let's break this into parts. First, ...

Another way of looking at this problem is...

The most important thing to remember in this problem is...



**Language of Explaining Solutions**

A diagram or symbol that might represent this solution is...

We know our solution is correct because....

The solution to this problem is...

I know I have solved the problem because...

The solution to this problem will require....

A critical element of the solution to this problem is...

**Problem Solving Organizer**

Title: _____		
Vocabulary: New/Nuevo(Blue)	Math/Matemáticas(Red)	What to do/ ¿Qué debes hacer? (Green)
Paragraph #1: Rewrite the problem in your own words / Escribe el problema de nuevo en tus propias palabras		
Work: Show how you solved the problem. / Muestra como resolviste el problema.		
Paragraph #2: Write a detailed list of how you solved the problem / Escribe una lista detallada de como resolviste el problema.		
Paragraph #3: Solution: Answer the problem using complete sentences. / Solución: Contesta el problema en oraciones completas.		
Paragraph #4: Reflection: What do you think of this problem? What did you learn from this problem that you did not know before? / Reflexión: ¿Qué opinas de este problema? ¿Que aprendiste de este problema que no sabias anteriormente?		

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# Synthesizing

ACADEMIC  
LANGUAGE  
FUNCTION

10

**Student uses language to:** Combine or integrate ideas to form a whole group

**Examples:** Summarize information; incorporate new information

**Strategies:** Allow students to create their own problem, Collaborative Poster, Compare- Contrast Matrix, Creating a Mnemonic, THINK- Pair Share, Writing Summaries, Reports, Mathematically Speaking, Fold-ables, Analysis Pizza, Jigsaw, Pass the Envelope, Create- Exchange- Access, Window Pane

**Cue Words:** combine, merge, form, put together, synthesis, combination

**Language Frames & Graphic Organizers:**



## Acknowledging Ideas\*

My idea is similar to/related to \_\_\_\_\_'s idea.

I agree/disagree with \_\_\_\_\_ that . . .

My idea builds upon \_\_\_\_\_'s idea.

As \_\_\_\_\_ already mentioned...

## Language of Synthesizing

The main point(s) is/ are...

The point that \_\_\_\_\_ makes is related to \_\_\_\_\_ in that.....

The significance of \_\_\_\_\_ is.....

From my perspective, \_\_\_\_\_ means.....

The concept of \_\_\_\_\_ can be expressed as.....

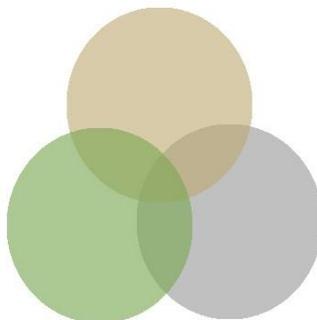
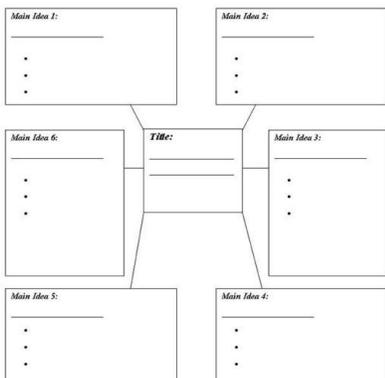
Our conclusion is a synthesis of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

I feel that \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_'s viewpoints are related in that....

My visual represents a synthesis of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ because....

While creating \_\_\_\_\_, I built upon .....

Main Idea Graphic Organizer (adapted from Dillabovitz, 1998)



# Evaluation

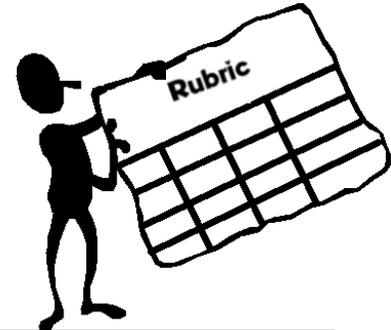
**Student uses language to:** assess and verify with of an object, idea or decision.

**Examples:** Identify criteria, Explain priorities, Indicate reasons for judgment, Confirm truth

**Strategies:** Thumbs up/down, Colored cards (green – agree; red – disagree),  
Fist of 5 (level of agreement), Quickwrite

**Cue Words:** Judge, critique, assess, assessment, value, worth, based on, judgment,  
criteria, favorable, unfavorable, reason, evaluate, evaluation, features

**Language Frames & Graphic Organizers:**



## Language of Evaluating

Based on ... I determined that...

\_\_\_\_\_’s judgment of ... was ... because ...

The critique of \_\_\_\_\_was favorable/unfavorable because ...

We/They judge \_\_\_\_\_to be \_\_\_\_\_because ....

We/I evaluated \_\_\_\_\_on the following criteria ...

I assess that....

After inspecting.... I have determined...

After carefully scrutinizing \_\_\_\_\_I believe that....

My interpretation of \_\_\_\_\_is...

When ranking its importance, I feel that... because...

## Ranking

1	.....
2	.....
3	.....

## PMI

P+	
M-	
I?	

Graphic Organizer  
Evaluation

Subject:		
Criterion:	Successful / Unsuccessful Reason:	Evidence:
Criterion:	Successful / Unsuccessful Reason:	Evidence:
Criterion:	Successful / Unsuccessful Reason:	Evidence:
Criterion:	Successful / Unsuccessful Reason:	Evidence:

# Cause and Effect

ACADEMIC  
LANGUAGE  
FUNCTION

12

**Student uses language to:** Describe why and how relationships and patterns exist between events, ideas, processes, problems; Identify consequences that led to the outcome

**Examples:** Make a graphic organizer to define the events leading up to the outcome or the possible outcomes based on a particular cause

**Strategies:** 1) Categories on a Wall/Sort and Label-Categories are provided and students develop list or students develop own categories based on given list; 2) Mix-n-Match cards-Students work in groups to match causes with effects; 3) Foldables; 4) Gallery Walk/Pass the Envelope-A cause or effect is given and students either rotate around the room or pass the problem from group to group to identify possible causes or effects; 5) Trading Cards-One cause or one effect is given on a card to each student. They develop an opposite idea for what they have and walk around the room to share. After sharing they trade cards to share with another.

**Cue Words:** therefore, consequently, thus, as a result of, since, because, in order to, if...then



**Language Frames & Graphic Organizers:**

## Language of Explaining Causes

Even though many people thought the cause was ..., I believe it was...

The most likely reason for... was...

I hypothesize that... made them...

That wasn't caused by ...because

Several factors contributed to the outcome. Namely, ...

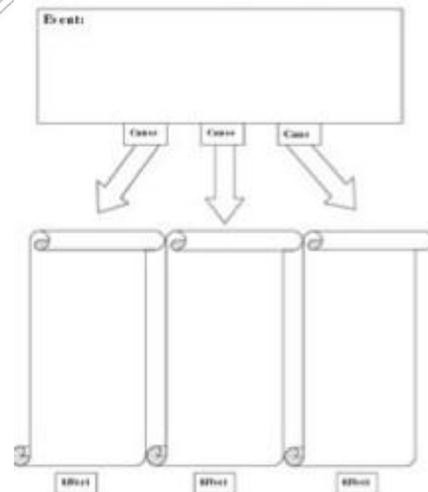
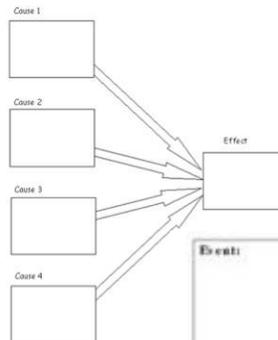
## Language of Describing an Effect

\_\_\_\_\_ was a result of...

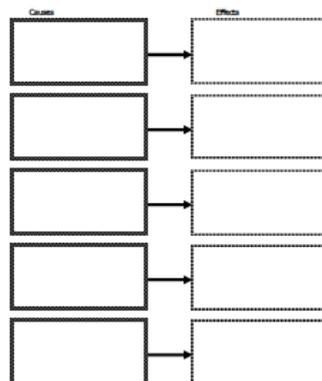
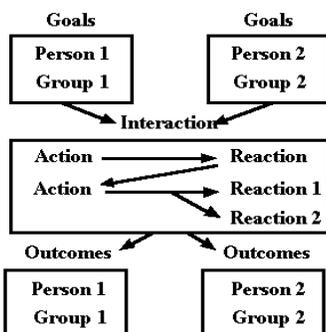
The...led to..., which led to...

The change resulted in...

It combines with...to produce...



## Human Interaction Outline



## Student Discussion Guide

### Ground Rules for Class Discussion

1. Be prepared to share your idea when instructed to do so, first with your partner and next with the class.
2. No blurting (ever) or hand raising (until I ask for volunteers).
3. Use the assigned sentence starter to share your idea.
4. Use your public discussion voice to share your idea: two times slower and three times louder than conversation.
5. Listen attentively while classmates are sharing and jot down new ideas.
6. If your idea is similar to someone else's, acknowledge your classmate's contribution before sharing your idea

### Language Class Discussion Sentence Starters

#### Expressing an Opinion

I think/believe that . . .

In my opinion . . .

Based on my experience, I think . . .

#### Predicting

I predict/imagine that . . .

Based on . . ., I infer that . . .

I hypothesize that . . .

#### Asking for Clarification

What do you mean?

Will you explain that again?

I have a question about that.

#### Paraphrasing

So you are saying that . . .

In other words, you think . . .

What I hear you saying is . . .

## Student Discussion Guide

### Language Class Discussion Sentence Starters

#### Soliciting a Response

What do you think?

We haven't heard from you yet.

Do you agree?

What answer did you get?

#### Acknowledging Ideas

My idea is similar to/related to

I agree with (a person) that . . .

My idea builds upon \_\_\_\_'s idea.

#### Reporting a Partner's Idea

\_\_\_\_ indicated that . . .

\_\_\_\_ pointed out to me

\_\_\_\_ emphasized that . . .

\_\_\_\_ concluded that . . .

#### Reporting a Group's Idea

We decided/agreed that . . .

We concluded that . . .

Our group sees it differently.

We had a different approach.

#### Disagreeing

I don't agree with you because . . .

I got a different answer than you.

I see it another way.

#### Offering a Suggestion

Maybe we could . . .

What if we . . .

Here's something we might try.

#### Affirming

That's an interesting idea.

I hadn't thought of that.

I see what you mean.

#### Holding the Floor

As I was saying, . . .

If I could finish my thought . . .

What I was trying to say was . . .

*(adapted from Kate Kinsella 8/07)*