

Overview: The Common Core recognizes Three Tiers of Vocabulary

- **Tier 1:**
Words acquired through every day speech, usually learned in the early grades
- **Tier 2:**
Academic words that appear across all types of text. These are often precise words that are used by the author in place of common words. (i.e. gallop instead of run). They change meaning with use.
- **Tier 3:**
Domain specific words" that are specifically tied to content. (i.e. Constitution, lava) These are typically the types of vocabulary words that are included in glossaries, highlighted in textbooks and address by teachers. They are considered difficult words important to understanding content.

The Common Core suggests that it's important to target specific instruction on Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary words to help students develop deep understanding that cannot be acquired through independent reading. Since Tier 3 words are typically targeted in content specific instruction, it's particularly important and challenging to identify and target Tier 2 words, since they appear across all disciplines. The task at hand, then, appears to be identifying the Tier 2 words and finding effective instructional strategies to support acquisition of those words.

*From Cool Tools for 21st Century Learners : Ideas for efficient and effective tech integration
created by Susan Oxnevad, Sept. 6, 2012*