

## INCREASING VOCABULARY TO WRITE A PAPER

Use class materials, lectures, and classmates as sources for new vocabulary. After all, the words you read and hear in class are the ones you need to use in your papers.

*Read your syllabus.*

1. Look up any unfamiliar words and write their definitions in your own words.
2. Type repeated or key terms into Google. Look for examples of these words used in sentences. (Look for sites ending with: .edu/.gov/some .org.)
3. Look up the words in a dictionary or thesaurus. List synonyms.
4. Try using them in your next paper and check them with a tutor.

*Practice the "Rule of Three" in every class.*

1. See or hear the word in a class reading or lecture.
2. Write it in a certain place (a vocabulary notebook or at end of class notes).
3. Review the word later. Look it up in the dictionary to learn other definitions, synonyms, and examples of how to use it. (See resources below.)

*Listen to your classmates.*

1. Notice how they say things in class discussions.
2. Compare paper topics and notice the vocabulary they use.

*Find parts of speech.*

1. When you learn a new word, identify its part of speech (noun, verb, etc.).
2. Look for its other forms; this will help you repeat key terms and ideas in different ways when you write. (*vary* ideas, *various* ideas, *varied* ideas, etc.)

*Actively use vocabulary resources.*

Professors want to see precise, direct language. Use resources to help you with word choice issues.

1. [www.thesaurus.com](http://www.thesaurus.com)
2. [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)
3. [www.oxforddictionaries.com](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com)
4. [www.ozdic.com](http://www.ozdic.com) (helpful for common expressions)
5. [www.yourdictionary.com](http://www.yourdictionary.com) (helpful for idiomatic language)

*A note about vocabulary word lists:*

Lists are good starting points and memorization aids. Lists are not enough to truly learn how to use a word. You need to see/hear examples of how to use the word, write examples of your own, and recognize common synonyms.

*A note about translating:*

Sometimes you can find sources about topics in your language and translate key words into English. Translating can help if you are truly lost, but it can also lead to confusion because sometimes there is no direct translation. When you learn a word within the context of the English language, your understanding of it is often closer to its intended meaning in English. Also, you learn how to use it within English grammar—which is what you need when writing.