

To the Teacher

Teachers and students alike realize that strong vocabulary skills are necessary for academic success. Specifically, students need to know the vocabulary they will most frequently encounter in their academic studies in order to successfully complete their reading and writing assignments. The *Vocabulary Mastery* series teaches students the words they need to know to succeed in their academic work. These words come from the Academic Word List (AWL) developed by Averill Coxhead ["A New Academic Word List," *TESOL Quarterly* 34, no. 2 (2000): 213–38]. The Academic Word List resulted from Coxhead's analysis of a broad corpus of academic texts—about 3.5 million words—from 414 academic texts in 28 topic areas. Out of this corpus, Coxhead selected the 570 word families that occur most frequently in academic texts. *Vocabulary Mastery* teaches these word families.

Learning vocabulary involves more than simply recognizing a word. In order to truly know a word, students must:

- **Have multiple exposures to the word.** Nation [*Teaching and Learning Vocabulary*, Newbury House, 1990] concluded that a word needs to be encountered anywhere from five to more than 16 times before it is learned. The readings and exercises in *Vocabulary Mastery* provide students with multiple exposures to the target vocabulary. Activities that require students to do outside reading also increase their exposure to the target vocabulary.
- **Know more than the meaning, spelling, and pronunciation of a word.** Students must also learn the grammar of the word, the words it frequently occurs or collocates with, the associations a word has, the frequency with which it occurs, and its register. *Vocabulary Mastery* uses an effective interactive approach that develops both explicit and implicit word knowledge. The exercises in this book provide students with word knowledge that is explicitly taught (spelling, meaning, pronunciation, and collocation). It also provides numerous encounters with words to help students develop their own implicit, contextual knowledge (association and register) of words.
- **Be familiar with other members of a word's family.** By learning some or all of a word family, students are able to use the correct form of a word within a particular context. Every unit in *Vocabulary Mastery* contains exercises that focus on word families and derivations.
- **Understand collocations.** Knowledge of collocations makes word use more natural. Exercises in *Vocabulary Mastery* teach some of the more common collocations of the target vocabulary. More important, though,

these exercises raise students' awareness of collocations, which may help students notice collocations when they occur and build their own knowledge of collocation.

- **Know that one word can have different meanings used in different contexts.** Exercises show the different meanings of a target word in the appropriate contexts. Students are encouraged to use a dictionary to help them learn these different meanings.
- **Learn to focus on the words they want to learn.** The readings and exercises in *Vocabulary Mastery 3* contain more than 300 words from the AWL, more than in *Vocabulary Mastery 1* and 2. To aid students in learning, the target vocabulary in the readings is marked in **bold**. Other AWL vocabulary items (any form of the item) in the readings are underlined. Words and idioms that occur infrequently but are needed to understand the text are glossed in the margins. Appendix 1 is an excellent resource for revealing just how many academic words students are learning in this volume and in this series; it also shows that many words in this book are reinforced and repeated.

The readings and vocabulary appear in an order so that skills and concepts are built upon as students progress through the book.

In addition to academic vocabulary, this text helps students develop the critical-thinking skills necessary for academic achievement. Activities in each unit require students to think about and analyze what they have read. In addition, writing assignments require students to think critically about what they have read as they learn and practice skills they will need in their academic classes. These skills include answering questions and supporting answers with concrete examples, interpreting a chart and answering questions about it, ordering information chronologically and writing paragraphs that give that information, analyzing and writing about a problem they select, summarizing, giving an opinion, and identifying causes and effects.

Vocabulary Mastery 3 has six units, each on a particular high-interest theme. Each of the six units is divided into

- **Vocabulary Preview 1 and 2.** These exercises help students and teachers discover how much target vocabulary is already familiar.
- **Reading Preview.** These questions are designed to activate students' prior knowledge of the topic.
- **Introduction to the Readings.** An introductory reading about the topic provides background information about the readings that follow.
- **Two or three readings of various lengths on a theme or topic that contain 15 target words from the Academic Word List.** In most units, at least one reading is biographical or autobiographical, and the other

readings are from other non-fiction sources. In the final two units, all the readings are non-fiction and come from more complex and more difficult original sources. Students will notice that as this book progresses, the number of words in readings from the Academic Word List increases. This reveals just how frequent these words are to academic content, especially non-fiction. The variety of readings exposes students to the target words in different writing styles and voices. In addition to the target vocabulary, all of the readings expose students to a number of other words and their word forms from the AWL and recycle AWL words already learned.

- **Comprehension Check.** This series of True/False questions determines how well students understood the Introduction and Readings.
- **A list of 15 target vocabulary words from the Academic Word List.**
- **At least ten vocabulary-based activities that include**
 - Understanding Words
 - Word Parts: suffixes, prefixes, and roots
 - Word Relationships: synonyms, antonyms, collocations, and analogies
 - Word Families Chart: a target word and its most commonly used derivatives
 - Word Forms and Derivatives
 - Commonly Confused Words
 - Understanding Words in Context
 - Using Words Correctly
 - Making Inferences
 - Constructing Sentences
 - Word Meanings: multiple or similar meanings of a word
 - Context Clues/Meanings in Context
 - Using Words in Communication
 - Reading activities that encourage research and outside reading about the topic
 - Writing activities that ask students to react, summarize, and give an opinion
 - Critical-Thinking Tasks
 - Questions and tasks to be used for writing assignments or class discussion

The exercises and activities in *Vocabulary Mastery 3* give students the opportunity to study academic vocabulary in two important ways: Students encounter each word as a discrete language unit and also within natural contexts as part of a whole language system.

We hope that you and your students find this textbook is a useful and enjoyable way to learn vocabulary from the Academic Word List. Good luck in your endeavors!