

Why Expand your Academic Vocabulary?

When writing a research paper or essay in a post-secondary institution you are expected to write academically. This means you must present your ideas clearly and efficiently with the proper academic vocabulary.

It is important to have a well varied vocabulary in order to avoid repetitive text as well as to add interest to your paper.

Professors will expect well written papers with the proper words used in the proper places. It is improper to use slang or derogatory words in an academic paper; thus, having a large academic vocabulary can help improve your professional skills.

Where can you learn new words?

You can learn new vocabulary words a variety of different ways. The easiest would be to watch the news and pay attention to the way the reporters speak and the language they use to keep you interested.

Reading newspapers, magazines and journals can also help increase your vocabulary. These frequently have high level terms and ideas that are used throughout the text.



If you need more help, make an appointment with us at...

Student Academic Learning Services

Phone: 905.721.2000 ext. 2491

Email: sals@durhamcollege.ca

or

visit our front desk in room 204,
Student Services Building (SSB)

Student Academic Learning Services

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Academic writing requires a good understanding of how to express ideas precisely, without repetition. A higher level of vocabulary and variety helps the reader understand the quality or intent of the writer.

One of the common complaints professors have about student writing is that students use, “the author says...” or, “the article says...” instead of using precise vocabulary to express the author’s intent.

Look at the examples below and the words in the box to express what you really mean. Communicate with confidence!

Incorrect:



- The author says that/ thinks that... (the author is not present to speak and we do not know the authors thinking processes)
- The article says that /shows that ... (the article cannot say or show something. It is not a person)

Correct:



- The author/evidence indicates that...
- The author/article identifies three reasons for...
- The article/author assesses the effect of...
- The article/author questions the view that...

Accounts for	Exhibits
Argues	Explains
Asserts	Frames
Analyzes	Identifies
Assumes	Illustrates
Assesses	Implies
Claims	Indicates
Clarifies	Investigates
Compares	Judges
Concludes	Justifies
Contrasts	Maintain
Criticizes	Narrates
Conveys	Persuades
Defends	Proposes
Defines	Questions
Demonstrates	Recognizes
Describes	Reflects
Depicts	Refers to
Determines	Reports
Distinguishes	Relies on
Evaluates	Reviews
Emphasizes	Suggests
Examines	Stresses
Exemplifies	Supports