



THE 3-LEVEL WORD BANK

Different levels. Same topic. Every learner can access.



THE IDEA

Not every student has the same vocabulary toolkit.

A 3-level word bank gives learners the right words at the right level — without lowering the thinking.

Same concept.

Different language.

Equal access.



IN THE CLASSROOM

- Prepare three levels of key vocabulary for each topic or task.
- Match the level to the learner, not the task.
- Encourage students to build from Level 1 → 2 → 3.
- Display word banks visibly and refer to them often.
- Celebrate when students try words from a higher level.
- Update and expand the banks together.

THE 4 STEPS

1

CHOOSE THE CONCEPT

Pick the key idea.

- Choose the concept or topic.
- Decide the essential vocabulary.
- Keep the list focused.

Example topic: Climate Change

Key words: atmosphere, impact, solution, evidence

2

BUILD 3 LEVELS

Create three levels of words.

- **Level 1 – Core:** everyday, high-frequency words.
- **Level 2 – Academic:** school language and key terms.
- **Level 3 – Technical:** subject-specific vocabulary.

Example: atmosphere / layer

academic: trend / contribute

technical: greenhouse effect / carbon dioxide

3

MATCH & USE

Match to learners. Use in tasks.

- Provide the level each learner needs most.
- Use in speaking, reading and writing tasks.
- Model how to use the words in context.

Learners can move up levels with support and repeated practice.

4

REVIEW & GROW

Review, recycle, expand.

- Revisit the words regularly.
- Add examples, synonyms and visuals.
- Encourage students to suggest new words.

Repetition builds confidence.

Depth builds understanding.



WHY IT WORKS

It reduces cognitive load and frustration.
 It builds vocabulary step by step.
 It supports independence and academic growth.

EAL UPGRADE

- Add visuals, realia and gestures to each level.
- Pre-teach key words before reading or listening.
- Use in sentence frames and modelled examples.



TRY IT TOMORROW

- Choose a topic and build your 3-level word bank.
- Use it in one lesson or task.
- Ask students which level helped them most — and why.



TEACHER LANGUAGE

"Here are some key words to help you."

"Which level of words will help you most?"

"Try using a word from Level 2 (or 3)."

DUNCAN ROSE

EAL • LANGUAGE • LEARNING