

# Acquiring Vocabulary in the ESOL Classroom

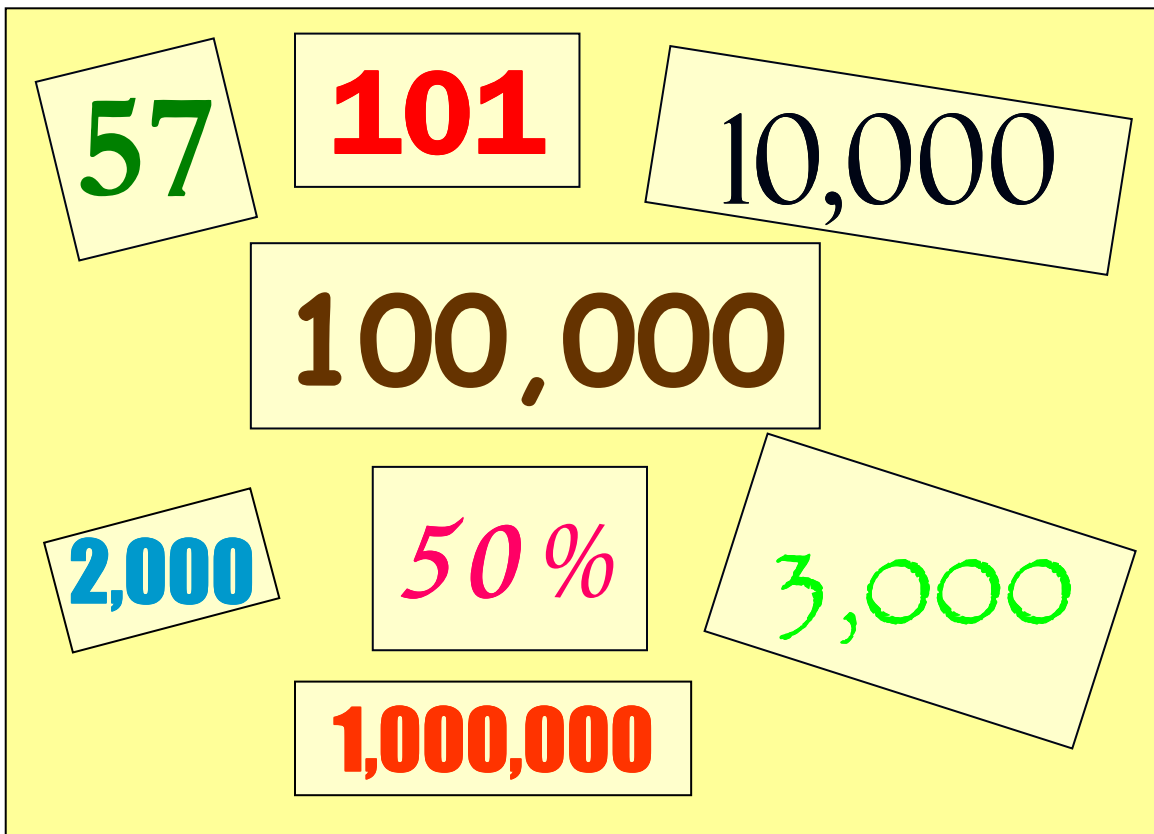
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# Word Facts And Figures



Match the numbers from the box above to the vocabulary fact below.

- 1) Language learners need to hear or be exposed to a word this many times before they can use the word freely. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) The number of words in the English language. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) The number of words the typical college graduate understands. (Passive vocabulary) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) The number of words the average native speaker uses. (Active vocabulary) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) The number of words an ESL student needs to be considered “fluent in social situations.” \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) The number of words English speakers use for 90% of their everyday conversations. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) The percentage of words that are NOT spelled phonetically in the English language. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) The number of meanings of “get” in Webster’s Dictionary. (not including “get real”) \_\_\_\_\_

# Five Stages of Vocabulary Acquisition

## STAGE 1: Get it! (Classroom Comprehension)

1. Use **visual** support as target vocabulary is introduced.
2. Use **comprehensible input** to provide context for the target vocabulary.
3. Employ students' **prior knowledge** to ensure comprehension.

## STAGE 2: Remember it! (Retention)

1. Ask **early production** questions about the target vocabulary and provide meaningful **drills** where students use the target vocabulary again and again.
2. Have students **match, categorize, sequence**, and do **cloze activities** with the target vocabulary.
3. Have students play **games** such as Definition Bingo\* or Class-Go-Around\*

## STAGE 3: Recognize it! (Recognition Out of the Context of Picture)

1. Use a **variety of visuals** for practice and review
2. Provide **reading** experiences that use the new vocabulary.
3. **Switch the language focus** but not the topic. (Move from speaking presentation and practice to a listening activity, a writing activity, and then back to a speaking activity.)

## STAGE 4: Use it! (Production in Speaking and Writing)

1. Have students **interview** each other using the new vocabulary.
2. Use **information gaps** that require use of the new vocabulary.
3. Provide **communicative writing** experiences with prompts that will have students use the target vocabulary.

## STAGE 5: Own it! (Use of Higher-Level Thinking Skills)

1. Provide **problem solving** activities that will require use of the target vocabulary.
2. Discuss **cross-cultural issues** related to the lesson topic that will require some use of the target vocabulary.
3. Teach language for **negotiation, disagreement, summarizing**, etc. (It's possible to do this with a simple vocabulary activity—what do you think xxx means?)

## Sample Activities

Turn to page 54-55 in the picture dictionary. Work with a partner. Categorize target vocabulary in one of the following ways. List words from these pages in the appropriate columns.

Uses Electricity	Doesn't Use Electricity

Appliance	Cookware	Other

**Exclusion Brainstorming Activity:**

Review the word list below. Cross out the words that do not belong.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Hamburger</b><br/> <b>Soda</b><br/> <b>Iced Tea</b><br/> <b>Hot Dog</b><br/> <b>Straw</b><br/> <b>Pizza</b></p> | <p><b>Chicken Sandwich</b><br/> <b>Nachos</b><br/> <b>Taco</b><br/> <b>Onion Rings</b><br/> <b>Mayonnaise</b><br/> <b>Cheeseburger</b></p> |
|---|--|

Choose a title for the words that remain: \_\_\_\_\_

Multilevel Listening Activity – Higher Level Worksheet



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit 2 People  
Life Events and Documents  
OPD pgs. 40–41

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ⓐ A. Look at pages 40–41. Listen to two people talk about family photos. Listen to the entire conversation. Answer the questions with your class.

1. Who is the woman?
2. Who is the man?
3. Is there a picture of the man on page 40 or page 41?

ⓐ B. Close your book. Listen to each part of the conversation. Write the verbs.

1. We went to Egypt in 2005.
2. He \_\_\_\_\_ in 1935, two years before me.
3. He \_\_\_\_\_ with his parents in 1950.
4. He \_\_\_\_\_ in 1953.
5. He \_\_\_\_\_ his degree in 1959.
6. No, we \_\_\_\_\_ this house in 1965.

ⓐ C. Complete the paragraph. Then listen again and check your answers.

Martin was born in Nicaragua. He \_\_\_\_\_ when he was 15 years old, and he \_\_\_\_\_ from high school three years later. Martin and Rosa met in 1955. They \_\_\_\_\_, but they didn't \_\_\_\_\_ until 1959. Six years later, they \_\_\_\_\_. Martin \_\_\_\_\_ in 2000, and he and Rosa \_\_\_\_\_ for a few years.

D. Write a paragraph about your life.

*I was born in 19\_\_\_. When I was young...*

