

Technical subject vocabulary & metacognition

2A – Script technical subject vocabulary and metacognitive strategies

Guide to writing descriptions of subject technical vocabulary

Technical vocabulary usually represents complex and interconnecting ideas that pupils need to learn in order to understand the different subjects that they study. These words and phrases are often integral to a subject and are threaded through the secondary curriculum.

The nature of these words and their importance within each subject and discipline means they require a different approach to how they are taught in the classroom. This approach should aim to capture all the relevant features of the term so that pupils can understand all its common links and associations.

- Use the table overleaf to help you identify the key features of the concept in your description.
- Read the example to see how this can work.

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Category	General (<i>associated with...</i>)	Specific (<i>associated with...</i>)
Types of people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> performing actions (eg policewoman) requirements necessary (eg surgeon) set of characteristics (eg psychologist) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specific time (eg Elizabeth I) specific event (eg Adolf Hitler) specific accomplishment (eg Ghandi)
Natural objects and places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> setting (eg beach) characteristics (eg mountain range) method of development (eg tidal basin) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specific events (eg Mt. St. Helens) specific people (eg Waterloo) specific location (eg the Amazon)
Man-made objects and places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> setting and uses (eg port and trade) physical characteristics (eg wheel) method of development (eg railroad) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specific people (eg Versailles) specific time (eg Parthenon) specific locations (eg Stonehenge)
Man-made events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> types of people (eg football match) a process (eg party) equipment, materials (eg horse-riding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specific people (eg holocaust) specific time or place (eg Christmas, 9/11) specific cause or outcome (eg WW2)
Natural phenomena	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a process (eg volcanic eruption) consequences (eg tornado) setting (eg tidal wave) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specific place (eg Indonesian Earthquake) specific time (eg ice age)
Intellectual, artistic, cognitive products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> process (eg a painting) purpose or use (eg a letter) types of people (eg opera) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specific person (eg Mona Lisa) specific time (eg Rosetta Stone) specific cause (eg Human Rights Act)
Groups, institutions, or organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> process (eg militia) types of people (eg governing board) a setting (eg jury) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specific location (eg EU) specific time (eg 13:00) specific event (eg Women's Institute)

* adapted from R. Marzano (2004) *Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement*

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Example: a MONASTERY is a **general** man-made object or place

<p>Typical setting and usage</p>	<p>A building or group of buildings made up of the domestic living quarters and workplaces of monks or nuns used for religious contemplation, worship, study, and communal living.</p>
<p>Specific physical characteristics</p>	<p>Typically feature a tranquil setting with buildings such as a church or chapel, living quarters, communal areas, gardens and architecture like cloisters and courtyards.</p>
<p>How it is developed or built</p>	<p>Usually developed through a combination of religious funding, donations, skilled labour, and architectural planning, often following specific religious or architectural traditions.</p>