

Brief explanation of Vocabulary Notebook set-up

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All levels learning any language

Reading/Writing/Listening/Speaking
Personal Vocabulary Notebooks

Most of these materials have been taken from *Learning Vocabulary & Mastering AWL Sublist 1* which is available for purchase from the AACE store. www.aace-English.com

Objective:

Language Learners (LLs) design a vocabulary notebook which they regularly add new words to and regularly review. The general consensus among language acquisition researchers is that LLs need to meet a new word up to 10 times before it becomes part of the LL's mental lexicon (Nation, 2001). This process, then, is an early step of the vocabulary learning process.

Brain-compatibility:

- The Personal Vocabulary Organizing (PVO) system relies on the concepts of learning by association and encoding specificity (Tulving & Thomson, 1973). The topic/category pages serve as the cues to support retrieval of the specific word and the other words in the thematic context.
- The LLs design pages for each topic category and add new words as they encounter them. The act of entering the words allows for deeper processing; therefore, facilitating recall and retention in their long-term memory.
- The concept of a thematic collection was first introduced by an educator named Comenius in 1631 (McArthur, 1988)

McArthur, T. (1988) *Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English*. Harlow, UK: Longman. ISBN: 0-582-55527-2. This may be out of print, but it's a great example of how to group words.

Nation, I.S.P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press

Tulving, E. & Thomson, D. M. (1973). Encoding Specificity and retrieval processes in episodic memory. *Psychological Review*, 30 (5), 352 -373.

Desired Outcome & Evaluation

- The LLs will collect different words and design their notebook pages differently. Nonetheless, the teacher can check for effort and completion.
- Ultimately, learning and retrieving the new vocabulary is the LL's responsibility.

The importance of Vocabulary Notebooks

Schmitt and Schmitt (1995) have provided succinct theoretical underpinnings for the development of vocabulary notebooks. Much vocabulary research has been conducted since that time, and much of it has confirmed their principles.

11 Principles for designing vocabulary notebooks (Schmitt & Schmitt, 1995)	How the PVO actualizes these principles
1. The best way to remember new words is to incorporate them into language that is already known.	The AWL words are grouped in categories. The categories are common terms such as communication and finance, etc. which are “known.”
2. Organized material is easier to learn	The PVO is organized by categories. ELLs also organize their PVO pages according to their perceived needs (For example, some don’t need pronunciation cues whereas others do)
3. Words which are very similar should not be taught at the same time.	The ELLs are grouping the words and reviewing them with words in the same category. Thus, they are <u>not learning them</u> at exactly the same time. However, you will notice that some of the AWL words in the same sublist are very close in meaning (sublist 2 has aspects & features). This is the nature of the AWL and can’t be changed.
4. Word pairs can be used to learn a great number of words in a short time. [native word/L2 target word pairs] “L1 to L2 order is best for words which need to be used productively” (citing research by Nation, 1982)	The PVO design allows ELLs to include first language words on the pages as an option (preferably on the right side of the page).
5. Knowing a word entails more than just knowing its meaning. For example, “its relationship to other semantic concepts” is also important.	ELLs choose which other knowledge about the word to include on their PVO pages (Word Form, pronunciation, etc). The categories also enhance the concept of relationships with other words.
6. The deeper the mental processing used when learning a word, the more likely that a student will remember it. Example: “group the word with other conceptually associated words”	The PVO categories require the ELLs to do this. These materials provide many “deeper mental processing” tasks.
7. The act of recalling a word makes it more likely that a learner will be able to recall it again later.	The PVO is portable and the ELLs are encouraged to review their pages often and refer to it when writing, etc.

8. Learners must pay close attention in order to learn most effectively.	The deliberate act of making a PVO is more work than most ELLs have done in the past. Sublist 4 to 10 words are also highlighted to help the ELLs notice them.
9. Words need to be recycled to be learnt	Recycling the AWL words is deliberately done in the paraphrase, the definition recognition and the cloze reading tasks.
10. An efficient recycling method: the 'expanding rehearsal'	We can only suggest that the ELLs review. However, doing the tasks in this resource naturally facilitates the review process.
11. Learners are individuals and have different learning styles.	It is vital that you have the learners develop self-awareness about their strengths and weaknesses. The Multiple Intelligence internet research lab will facilitate this. The ELLs are encouraged to design their own thematic pages based on their own needs (They decide on the format and what word information to include).

Schmitt, N. & Schmitt, D. (April 1995). Vocabulary notebooks: theoretical underpinnings and practical suggestions. *ELT Journal*, 49(2), pp. 133 – 143.

For lower level ELLs

A simple version of the PVO Explanation – for lower level ELLs

- Because of copyright, I'm not able to provide a newspaper article for you to illustrate the vocabulary thematic pages.
- The following story has been passed through the internet, so I hope it's considered "public domain." It could be used with lower level ELL students.

Pet Names

A young man was invited to an **elderly** gentleman's home for dinner one evening. He was **impressed by** the way his friend **preceded** every **request** to his wife with **endearing** terms such as: Honey, My Love, Darling, Sweetheart, Pumpkin, etc.

The **couple** had been married for almost 70 years and clearly, they were still very much in love.

While the wife was in the kitchen, the young man leaned over and said to his **host**, "I think it's wonderful that, after all these years, you still call your wife those loving **pet names**."

The old man hung his head. "I have to tell you the truth," he said. "Her name **slipped my mind** about 10 years ago and I'm **scared to death** to ask her what it is!"

- The possible words that the English Language Learners (ELLs) may not know have been highlighted.
- These are the possible PVO pages the students could make.

PVO for "Pet Names"

Age Elderly	Feelings impressed by endearing very much in love - idiom scared to death - idiom	Thinking/ ideas slipped my mind - idiom
Communication Request	Relationship – People couple host pet names	Time (as in WHEN) to precede

- Pages 10 – 11 are all you'd need to use to help the lower level ELLs understand the system.
- If you would like the LLs to use the same format for their pages, one design is provided on page 12.

[Teacher Notes]

Suggested order of presentation for ONE learning session with Intermediate & Advanced learners -1 hour minimum

p. 6 & 7 Introduction to the PVO system

Establishes that words have different meanings and establishes the concept of a mental lexicon

p. 8 Student Examples: Personal Vocabulary Organizing System Pages

ELLs see how pages could look and determine effective and ineffective organization of pages. See page 51 for analysis. Please ADD an L1 if possible for B and C

p. 9 – debriefing notes re: page 8

p. 10 What is a PVO System?

Consolidates the previous info and encourages self-determination (the **Personal** aspect of the PVO)

p. 11 Format Guidelines for your PVO

Helps them set up their page and notebook.

OPTIONAL

p. 12 . Standardized format for a vocabulary notebook page

Optional – if you want everyone to have the same format

p. 13 . Student Comments about the PVO system

Optional - This gives credibility to the process because the comments are from their peers. It also reinforces the effort that is required.

p. 14 Two common problems in Vocabulary Notebooks

Optional – If ELLs don't get the concept of the Theme/ Category OR if they do not focus, they may have these problems.

Introduction to the Personal Vocabulary Organizing (PVO) system

Imagine: You have read this sentence on your schools' website.

*The university president has just announced that the national government has provided a large **grant** in order to build a new sport center.*

What does the word **grant** mean in this sentence? land ___ permission ___ money ___

Here are a few meanings of the word **grant** from a dictionary.

grant¹ / gra:nt / \$ grænt /
v[T] 1) to give someone something or allow them to have something that they have asked for.
*Britain could **grant** Spain's request.* | **grant sb sth** I would love to be able to grant her wish. ... | **grant sth to sb** A licence to sell alcohol was granted to the club. ...

2) to admit that something is true although it does not make much difference to your opinion.
SYN: concede *He's got talent, I grant you, but he doesn't work hard enough.*

grant² n [C] an amount of money given to someone, especially by the government, for a particular purpose. *The university gets a government grant.* [+of] ... [+from] ... [+for]

Adapted source: Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English

1. Which meaning fits the school's website sentence above? _____

2. Here is a short story. Which meanings match the use of the word "grant"?

___ a) Susan applied to her university for a travel **grant**, so she could go to Iran for two years to study.

She wanted her parents to visit her, but they thought they wouldn't like the hot weather. On the flight to Iran, she met a man named **Grant** Lee. ☺ They exchanged email addresses.

___ b) After 3 months, her parents **granted** her wish and visited her in Iran.

___ c) Her father was the most surprised. He said, "Iran is so beautiful and the people are so interesting, I **grant** you, but it sure is hot here today!"

3. Notice the 3 meanings of the word "grant".

The 1st verb meaning is related to "giving".

The 2nd verb meaning is related to "thinking/ ideas".

The noun meaning is related to "money" or finance

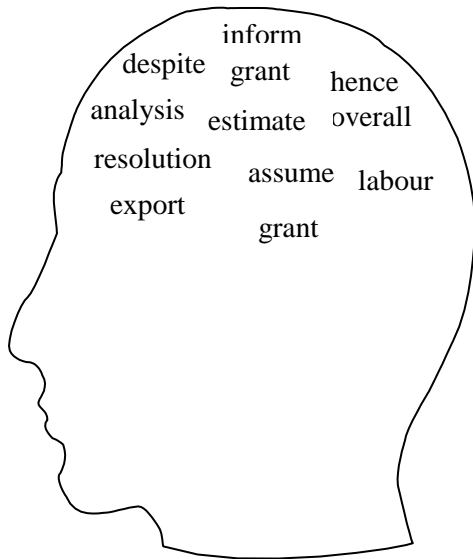
4. If you had to learn the word **grant**, how would you do it?

5. How would you store the three different meanings in your brain?

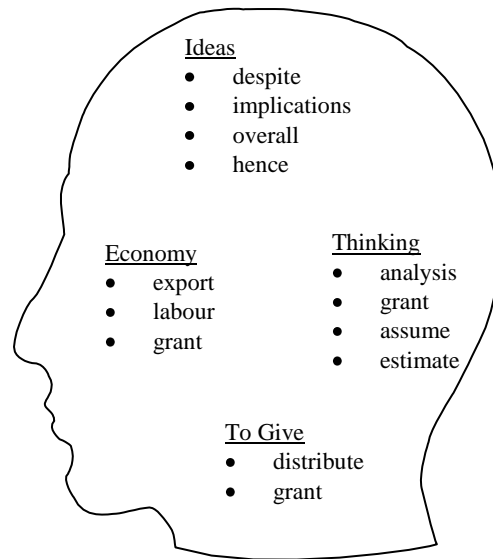
These heads show two possible ways you could store the words in your brain.

Which way of storing this new word is more effective - A or B? Why?

A. Way to store the word



B. Way to store the word



Student Examples Personal Vocabulary Organizing System pages

- These are only 3 examples of how words related to the idea of *Communication* can be organized on a vocabulary notebook page.
- What are the positive and negative aspects of each method of organization?

A. Communication

Comment

n. [C][U] 1. 簡體中文版 [(+on/about)] 2. 簡體中文版 [(+on/about)] He made no comments on our proposal. 他在我們的提案沒有作出評論。 3. 簡體中文版 [(+on/about)] His conduct at social gatherings created a lot of comment. 他的在社交集會的品行創造了很多評論。 vi. 1. 簡體中文版 [(+on/about)] 2. 簡體中文版 [(+on/about)] He did not comment on what I said. 他沒有對什麼評論我說。 3. 簡體中文版 [(+on/about)] vt. 1. 簡體中文版 [Y][+(that)] He commented that it was an excellent film. 他評論它是一部優秀影片。 He commented that her acting was superb. 他評論了她行動是雄偉的那。

B. Communication

Indicate	v	to show	ɪn dɪ keɪt	L1 could be
Comment	n	opinion		inserted here
Demonstrate	v	to show or prove	dem ən streɪt	
Consent	n	permission to do sthg		
Consent to	v			

C. Communication

WORD	SPEECH	SYNONYMS	MEANING	L1
indicate	v.	reveal, record	To point out or to show	
response	n.	answer	An answer or reply	
comment	n.	remark	A remark, observation or criticism	could be
consent to	v.	agree	To permit, approve, or agree	be
demonstrate	v.	confirm, verify	To make evident or establish	inserted here

[For Teacher]

Debriefing notes for *Student Examples of Personal Vocabulary Organizing system*

Student A

Positive - lots of info = grammar & pronunciation, However, it's a great example of a poor method!

Negative – no intellectual processing done

- This doesn't mean students can't use a computer, but this person was not selective.
- The students love this example because they know the person just "cut and pasted" from a bilingual online dictionary.
- This is a true example and exemplifies how the student approached the other learning tasks. At least the student was consistent!

Student B

- This student mainly had grammar problems with word form, so that was the key info the student needed. She did not have pronunciation issues.

Positive – word form and simple meanings

Negative –no pronunciation codes.

- If one of your ELLs has pronunciation problems, encourage him/her to include them. Often learners will add the pronunciation codes to some and not all the words. That's not a problem because it's THEIR notebook.

Student C

- This student was a strong student and probably could have just had the word, word form and synonyms.
- This student also didn't really need the L1, but the student added it to be more thorough and the student shared her PVO with a sibling who was at a lower level

Positive – a lot of support for the learner

Re: FORMAT

If you can, please get a learner to add in the L1 for Student A and/or C to make it more authentic (I've had serious formatting problems with this printing)

What is a PVO system?

It's your personal lexicon notebook!

Personal

- You develop self-study skills
- You choose the words to focus on. If you know the word and use it often, you don't need to include it in your vocabulary notebook.
- You design your own topic pages for review (example: Communication)
- You will decide how much effort you will invest
- If you already have a system that you use, please explain it to your teacher.

Vocabulary

- Words are taken from the AWL and other class work
- You can include idioms, phrases, word partners, word studies for special topics, etc.

Organizing

- New words are organized by topics/ categories so you connect the new words with categories you already know (learning by association)
- You can add a variety of information about the new words. For example,
definitions L1 translations with collocations example sentences
pronunciation codes word forms synonyms antonyms

System

- You use the vocabulary notebook to review your new words
- A vocabulary notebook is most effective when you add words and review them systematically (regularly). For example, you can add 10 words/day.
- You can use your notebook to find words when you are writing.
- It's your personal lexicon that can be used as long as you need to.

The goal is for all the words in your notebook to become part of your mental lexicon.

Format guidelines for your PVO

1. Remember: you choose the format/design for the pages.

- All the pages don't need to be exactly the same.
- You may not need all the information for every word you learn.

2. Use loose leaf in a duo-tang or binder so you can add pages easily.

- Each topic/category has its own page.
 - You will be adding pages as you learn new words.
 - Be sure you have a big enough margin on the left hand side.

3. Only write on one side of the page.

- Then, you can flip the pages over to test yourself.

4. If you use your first language (L1), put the L1 words on the right hand side of the page or in the right margin.

- It's easier to test yourself if you can hide the right side.
- Over time, you will be able to keep the right margin folded over because you won't need to refer to it.

5. Pay attention to the various meanings of the word and how they connect to the topic/category page. Match the meaning for the category page.

- Many words have more than one meaning.
- Some words can be put on several pages. Remember the word *grant*?

6. If you are adding words from other classes and you don't know which category page to put them on, make a "Don't Know" page.

- On the "Don't Know" page, write the original sentence/context in which you found the word. It makes it easier for the teacher to choose a category.

7. Put your PVO pages in Alphabetical Order (by thematic/category)

Thematic Category: _____

Target Word	WF	Pronunciation	Meaning & Sample Sentence	L 1

Student Comments* about the PVO system

These comments represent over 600 adult English language learners who have designed their own PVO system for their academic preparation courses at a college in BC, Canada.

Related to the Learning Process

- As I wrote the words that I don't know in my PVO, I can have more concentration, so it's easier to remember them later. (Korean Male)
- When I am doing my PVO, I get the meaning of the words in my mind. Then, when I'm reading and writing, I can easily have a picture of the words - maybe not exactly the meaning, but at least I know which PVO page I can find them. (Chinese Female)
- The PVO helped me to organize my learning. Before I just 'tried to remember' the new words, but that was impossible. (Japanese Female)
- I think it's good for us but it takes so long time. (Mexican Male)
- Before I put much Spanish on my PVO pages, now I don't so much cause I don't need it. It good to see. (Chilean Female)

Related to Use

- When I didn't know a word when I am writing, I check in my PVO. (Chinese Female)
- I check it for really hard words when I'm doing homework. (Iranian Female)
- I review my PVO two times a week. Sometimes I check it while I'm doing homework. (Chinese Male)
- The results depend on how much effort I make. (Japanese Male)
- I like to review my PVO when I take the bus. This is a good way to improve my English and pass my time. (French Canadian Female)
- This system is perfect to me. (Belarusian Female)

Related to Regrets

- I should make a sentence with each word. (Russian Male)
- The PVO is good for us, but actually it depends on the students and how many times review or not. In my case, to be honest, not often. (Korean Female)
- I didn't organize my PVO very good. Other students add part of speech or at least a sentence, they take many profit of it. (Iranian Male)

* The grammar of the students' comments was not corrected.

**Essentially, learning English is your responsibility!
Learning *is* hard work, and you *will* notice improvement soon!**

Two Common Problems in Vocabulary Notebooks

1. Definition does not connect with the category/ topic

a) Category page: Economics

Word: credit

Meaning the student chose for the PVO page: to praise someone

- Which category page could this meaning be on?

b) Category Page: Thinking/ Ideas

Word: survey

Meaning the student chose: to examine and measure an area of land

- Which category page could this meaning be on?
- What can you do to prevent putting the words in the wrong meaning category/ group?

2. Definition uses the key word

a) Category Page: Thinking/ Ideas

Word: controversial

Meaning from the dictionary: enjoying controversy

b) Category Page: Showing Relationship

Word: assistance

Meaning from the dictionary: the act of assisting

- What can you do to find definitions that give a meaning that you can understand?