

## Basic vocabulary

The vocabulary items that could be taught are endless. Often you will be guided by topics that are being taught to the class and teach beginners key vocabulary items that relate to that; for example, if the topic is electricity you might focus on the basic vocabulary of the topic e.g.wire/crocodile clip/battery/bulb/positive/negative/etc.

However, when pupils are newly arrived in school, it is often helpful to focus on a few practical areas of vocabulary that they will need immediately in their life in school. The following list is not comprehensive but does indicate the sort of vocabulary that might be taught in the first few weeks. (Thanks to Gordon Ward for this list. )

Vocabulary areas	Examples of words to be taught
1. social language	please thank you sorry hello goodbye etc.
2. classroom objects	pencil rubber book board chair table carpet tray folder door felt-tip paint scissors glue rubber ruler milk etc.
3. areas of the school	classroom hall playground toilet dining hall office stairs staff-room library corridor car-park upstairs downstairs etc.
4. school routines	assembly playtime dinner time whistle home time etc.
5. clothes	shoes dress coat trousers trainers shorts swimming costume towel shirt blouse vest pants T-shirt socks jumper etc.
6. parts of the body	head face eyes ears hair nose mouth teeth tongue body arms hands legs feet etc.
7. health	tummy ache toothache earache cut bleed hurt broken etc.
8. colours	black white red blue green yellow (beware colour blindness)
9. people	girl boy man woman children teacher etc. names of the teacher, headteacher, other children, other adults in the class, etc.
10. family	mother father sister brother
11. reading	book page word picture story etc.
12. Maths - counting	1 - 10, 10 - 20, 20 - 100, etc.
13. Maths - money	pound penny

14.	Maths - computation	add take away multiply divide etc. more less
15.	Maths - shapes	square circle triangle rectangle etc.
16.	Maths - measuring	
17.	meals/food	breakfast, dinner, tea, supper food usually served for school dinners, other food as necessary
18.	meals/utensils	plate knife fork spoon bowl rubbish bin cup saucer mug etc.
19.	instructional verbs (classroom)	sit down stand up stand still write stop draw colour paint listen line up go and get show me your stick etc.
20.	instructional verbs (PE)	jump hop climb roll throw catch etc.
21.	street (nouns)	road pavement zebra crossing traffic lights etc. shop house car lorry van etc.
22.	street (verbs)	look cross stop be careful go etc.
23.	time	now yesterday tomorrow last week next week dinner time play time home time 9 o'clock half past seven etc.
24.	House - outside/rooms	roof door wall garden etc. sitting room bedroom kitchen etc. upstairs downstairs
25.	House - furniture	bed bath cooker etc.
26.	day/months	Monday, Tuesday, March, April, etc.
27.	weather	cold hot rain sunny etc.

We can also extend the vocabulary listed above e.g.

body	fingers toes shoulders knee ankle wrist bottom stomach lips back
colours	grey pink brown silver gold orange
clothes	gloves scarf plimsolls sweater sweatshirt hat cap
family	grandfather cousin aunt uncle etc.