Writing Glossary

Adapted materials  Authentic texts and other materials that have been modified for lower-level students. The format, vocabulary, grammatical forms, or sentence structure of authentic materials can be adapted. (See Simplified materials and Authentic materials.)

Adjective  An adjective is a word that describes a noun or a pronoun by describing, identifying, or quantifying words. Examples: big, yellow, thin, amazing, beautiful, quick, important.

Adverb  An adverb is a word which usually describes a verb. An adverb indicates manner, time, place, cause, or degree and answers questions such as "how," "when," "where," "how much". Adverbs often end in –ly. Examples: slowly, intelligently, well, yesterday, tomorrow, here, everywhere.

Affective strategies  Strategies that link learning with feelings; a powerful influence on storage and retrieval of learning. These strategies focus on motivation, anxiety, and self-encouragement.

Affix  An affix is a word part attached to the beginning or end of a “root word.” It is a general term that includes both prefixes (pre, un, dis, etc.) and suffixes (ful, less, ly, etc). An affix may change the meaning (happy, unhappy) or function of a word. For example, ly changes an adjective to an adverb, as in “The happy child played happily.”

Antecedent  A word, phrase, or clause referred to by another expression which precedes it or follows it. (e.g., The mouse who ate the cheese is full.)

Antonym  An antonym is a word that is opposite in meaning to another word. An antonym for dark is light.

Article  An article is used to introduce a noun. Examples: the, a, an.

Assessment  Assessment in education is the process of collecting and analyzing data to make educational decisions. Assessment is a general term that refers to tests and other measures, like oral reading performances, collections of writings, and other work products, teacher observations, and self-evaluations.

Authentic materials  Actual reading or listening materials, not modified or simplified, from the real world (e.g., newspaper articles, pamphlets, radio broadcasts). (See Adapted materials and Simplified materials.)

Background knowledge  Existing knowledge that the learner already has. In the second language comprehension process, at least three types of backgrounds are potentially activated: (1) linguistic information, (2) knowledge of the world (one’s store of concepts and experiences), and (3) knowledge of discourse structures or how various types of authentic discourse (e.g., conversations, radio broadcasts, newspaper articles, political speeches) are generally organized.

Benchmarks  Benchmarks describe the set of skills learners need to develop and achieve in order to meet the more broadly stated content standards.

Bloom’s Taxonomy  Identifies six levels within the cognitive domain, from the simple recall or recognition of facts (knowledge) as the lowest level through increasingly more complex and abstract mental levels (understanding, application, analysis, synthesis) to the highest order (evaluation).

Body language  Nonverbal communication by means of facial expressions, eye behavior, gestures, posture, etc. Body language expresses emotions, feelings, and attitudes, sometimes even contradicting
the messages conveyed by spoken language. People in all cultures understand some nonverbal expressions; other expressions are particular to specific cultures. (See Nonverbal communication.)

**Brainstorming**  Brainstorming is a process for developing creative solutions to problems. It works by focusing on a problem, and then deliberately coming up with as many solutions as possible and by pushing the ideas as far as possible. One of the reasons it is so effective is that the brainstormers not only come up with new ideas in a session, but also spark off from associations with other people’s ideas by developing and refining them.

**CASAS**  Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System.

**Circumlocution**  A strategy used by a learner who does not know or can’t recall a word but wants to express a concept. Instead of using a concise term, a speaker will use a string of words to express the same meaning (e.g., “The wife of your father’s brother” is a circumlocution for “your aunt.”).

**Cognates**  Words having a common linguistic origin (e.g., café and coffee derive from the Turkish, kahve). (See False cognates.)

**Collocation**  A predictable combination of words that commonly go together. For example: Some words that collocate well with work are full-time work, work area, work smoothly, and challenging work. Also, collocates are important in ESL because they help to explain why some learner language is grammatically correct and the meaning is apparent, yet the utterance seems strange. For example, in North America, teeth collocates with brush, as in I am going to brush my teeth, whereas I am going to clean my teeth is a grammatically correct and comprehensible sentence but seems awkward and is something a native speaker would not ordinarily say.

**Comparative**  A form of an adjective, adverb, or noun that is used to express differences between two items or situations (e.g., Juan is taller than Miguel. He works more quickly than she does. That machine makes more noise than this one.

**Complex sentences**  A complex sentence contains one or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses (e.g., He goes to the dentist when he has a toothache.).

**Compound sentences**  A compound sentence is made up of two simple sentences that are joined by a coordinate conjunction, punctuation, or both (e.g., She likes to take the subway, but she doesn’t like to take the bus. She likes to take the subway; she doesn’t like to take the bus.).

**Conjunctions**  A conjunction connects individual words or groups of words. A coordinating conjunction connects words, phrases, or sentences that are equal or the same type (e.g., or, and, but). A subordinating conjunction connects a dependent clause to an independent clause in order to complete the meaning of the dependent clause (e.g., after, although, as, because, before, if, since, when, where, while, and soon).

**Connected speech**  Spoken language simplified so that sounds run into one another, are reduced or left out, contracted, or blended. Connected speech is commonly used in the informal speech of native speakers. One important effect of connected speech is that the boundaries between words become blurred. While this may not represent a particular problem for a native speaker, a nonnative speaker who has been taught to recognize individual words and short sentences in their idealized citation forms may have difficulty comprehending. (See Linked words and Reduced speech.)

**Conditionals (if clauses)**  Sentence structures used to state a cause and effect event or situation (e.g., If it rains, the game will be cancelled. If it rained, the game would be cancelled. If it had rained, the game would have been cancelled.).
**Content-based instruction**  Using subject matter such as life-skills topics (e.g., housing, work), themes, or academic course materials (e.g., math, science, social studies) as a basis for language teaching.

**Content standards**  Content standards are broad statements of the knowledge, skills, processes, and other understandings that guide curriculum in order for students to attain high levels of competency in challenging subject matter. Content standards define what a learner should know and be able to do within a specific content area. Content standards reflect the knowledge and skills of an academic discipline and reflect what stakeholders of educational systems recognize as essential to be taught and learned.

**Contextualized**  Instruction presented within a meaningful context to facilitate learning (e.g., The grammatical structure of commands taught within the context of a doctor’s visit: Open your mouth. Raise your arms.).

**Conventions of Edited American English**  EAE refers to the variety of English that is most used by educated speakers of the language. Edited American English (EAE) refers to those conventions of grammar, usage, and mechanics to which writers and speakers adhere in order to communicate effectively. For example, EAE still governs when to use who or whom, is or are, pronoun forms, verb form and verb tense, adjective or adverb forms, parallel constructions, and sentence structure.

**Curriculum**  Curriculum is best characterized as what should take place in the classroom. It describes the topics, themes, units, and questions contained within the content standards. Content standards are the framework for curriculum. Curriculum can vary from program to program, as well as from instructor to instructor.

**D’Nealian Manuscript**  A type of handwriting that introduces slanted letters.

**Demonstrative pronouns**  These pronouns stand in for a person, place, or thing and may function as subjects, objects, or objects of the preposition (e.g., this, that, these, those).

**Dependent clause**  A dependent clause must connect to or be a part of another clause (e.g., because I walked in the room).

**Direct instruction**  Direct instruction is the general teacher-centered instruction technique. The teacher provides the learners with much of the information they need, often through lectures, explanations, examples, and problem solving. Most direct instruction techniques only allow for minimal student-teacher interaction, and need to be supplemented by review, practice, and group discussions.

**Discourse**  Communication in speech or in writing which is two or more sentences long.

**Embedded questions**  Embedded questions begin with phrases such as, “Do you know...,” Can you tell me...,” and are followed by a noun clause that begins with who, what, where, when, why, how, or if. In the noun clause the verb order is not transposed as it is in a question, e.g., Can you tell me where it is? (See Embedded statements.)

**Embedded statements**  Embedded statements look as if they are questions inside sentences. An introductory clause is followed by a noun clause that begins with who, what, where, when, why, how, or if. In the noun clause the verb order is not transposed as it is in a question, e.g., I don't know who he is. I can't remember where I put it. I wonder when she left.
Explicit instruction  In explicit instruction, the instructor presents content clearly and directly, providing step-by-step directions, and modeling followed by guided practice with feedback, independent practice, and frequent reviews. Similar structured approaches may be called direct instruction, active teaching, or expository teaching.

Expository text  Expository text presents and explains facts and information about a topic. It is distinguished from narrative text, which tells a story or relates a series of events.

False cognates  Words that are similar or the same as words in another language but have a different meaning (e.g., The English word embarrassed, and the Spanish word embarazada, are similar in form but the meaning of embarazada (pregnant) is not similar to the meaning of embarrassed.) (See Cognates.)

Figurative language  Figurative language is the non-literal use of words, as in the use of images to make comparisons. It is language that communicates ideas beyond the ordinary or literal meaning of the words (e.g., simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification). Examples are found in phrases like "perky as a puppy," "eyes like two burning coals," and "a stony silence."

Fossilized speech  Speech produced by a learner who has plateaued or stopped learning but continues to use non-standard grammatical forms. Often neither error correction nor explicit grammatical explanation has any effect on errors (e.g., A learner omits verbs to be/to do, producing speech like "Where he go?" or "What you doing?").

Fragments  Fragments are incomplete sentences or pieces of a sentence that have become disconnected from the main clause.

Free-writing  Writing for about five-to-ten minutes without concern for organization, grammar, and spelling; free-writing may be jumpstarted with a prompt.

Genre  A literary category. The main literary genres are fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. Each type conforms to specific expected rules and, often, a unique format.

Gerund  A verb that functions as a noun and always ends in –ing. Gerunds can be subjects, subject complements, direct objects, indirect objects, and objects of prepositions (e.g., running, biking, climbing).

Graphic organizers  A visual used to organize information so it can be more easily represented, recalled, or understood (e.g., word webs, Venn diagrams, charts, tables). (See K-W-L chart, Mind map, Venn diagram.)

Guided writing  In guided writing, the teacher and learners (or pairs or small groups of learners) compose together. They go through the steps of the writing process together: brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, and producing a final product.

Homographs  A group of words that are spelled the same but have different meanings, e.g., fair (to describe the weather or how one is feeling) and fair (a gathering at a particular time and place for trade).

Homonym  One of two or more words that have the same sound and often the same spelling but differ in meaning; such as bank (embankment) and bank (place where money is kept).

Homophones  A group of words that are pronounced the same but have different meanings (e.g., meat and meet, carrot and carrot).

Hyperbole  An intentional exaggeration or overstatement that a writer uses for emphasis or comic effect (e.g., Michael exploded when he saw the damage to his car.).
**Idiom**  A phrase or expression that means something different from what the words actually say (e.g., “over his head” means “doesn’t understand”).

**Independent clause**  Can stand alone as a complete simple sentence (e.g., I walked in the room.).

**Indirect instruction**  The indirect instruction approach to teaching presents students with instructional stimuli in the form of materials, objects, and events, and requires students to go beyond the basic information they are given to make their own conclusions and generalizations. Indirect instruction allows teachers to engage their students in activities which require the students to learn independently. The role of the teacher is facilitator, supporter, and resource person. The teacher arranges the learning environment, provides opportunity for student involvement, and, when appropriate, provides feedback to students while they conduct the inquiry.

**Inference**  An inference, in the context of reading, is a conclusion drawn from evidence in a text that leads to knowledge or understanding that is not directly stated in print. In making inferences a reader understands what is not explicitly stated by filling in information from their background knowledge. This process is often called “reading between the lines.”

**Infinitives**  A verb consisting of the word to plus a verb in its simplest form and functioning as a noun, adjective or adverb (e.g., to teach, to bend, to go).

**Inflection**  A change in the form of a word (usually by adding a suffix) to indicate a change in its grammatical function such as number, person, or tense (e.g., –ed, –er).

**Intensive instruction**  The defining factors in intensive instruction are student engagement and time. In intensive instruction students are paying attention and actively engaged in learning tasks—listening, thinking, responding, creating, or otherwise working—and doing so frequently for significant amounts of time.

**Interjection**  An interjection is an unusual kind of word, because it often stands alone. Interjections are words which express emotion or surprise, and they are usually followed by exclamation marks. Examples: Ouch!, Hello!, Hurray!, Oh no!, Ha!

**Invented spelling**  Spelling based on letter-sound and word knowledge that approximates conventional spellings. Invented spelling is not “spell it any way you wish,” but is reasoned, linguistic approximations that are appropriate for the learner’s developmental knowledge of letters and sounds. The use of invented spelling speeds up writing and encourages broader use of words (e.g., A learner isn’t sure how to spell stairs and generalizes the vowel sound based on words she knows how to spell and spells the word sters.).

**Irregular plural nouns**  Nouns that have unusual plural forms.

**Irregular verb**  A verb that forms the simple past in a different way than regular verbs. Regular verbs add –d or –ed. Irregular verbs can have the same form in simple present and simple past (e.g., put) or a different form (e.g., went).

**K-W-L chart**  A graphic organizer that helps learners to draw on what they know, focus on what they want to learn, and identify what they learned. To create a K-W-L chart, learners draw three columns. In the first column, write what is already known about a topic. In the second column, write questions about the topic. In the third column, write important information and answers to the questions after reading or studying about the topic. K-W-L charts can be completed as a class with the teacher or independently. (See Graphic organizers, Mind map, Venn diagram.)
**Key words**  Key words are words that carry significant meaning in the utterance or text, as opposed to words that may have a grammatical function and whose meaning may not be crucial for comprehension.

**Learning strategies**  Specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques used by learners to improve their learning (e.g., using a graphic organizer, asking a speaker to repeat, using context clues).

**Learning style**  A learner’s preferred way of perceiving, organizing, and retaining information.

**Lexicon**  All the words a learner knows.

**Linked words**  Also known as elision. The last consonant of the first word is joined to the vowel starting the second word (e.g., Get out!/getout/; we’re ready!/we’reready/). (See Connected speech and Reduced speech.)

**Metacognition**  Thinking about one’s own thinking or learning process. Metacognition refers to higher-order thinking that involves active control over the cognitive processes engaged in learning. Activities such as planning how to approach a given learning task, monitoring comprehension, and evaluating progress toward the completion of a task are metacognitive in nature. Because metacognition plays a critical role in successful learning, it is important to study metacognitive activity and development to determine how learners can be taught to better apply their cognitive resources through metacognitive control.

**Mind map**  A mind map is a graphic organizer used for developing ideas and organizing information. Mind mapping helps to identify central ideas, the relative importance of other ideas, and how they are connected. A main or central word or image is placed in the center and then key words, symbols, images, and abbreviations are added as sub-ideas. Sub-ideas should be on lines that ultimately connect to the center. Each new line should be open, allowing space for more connections to sub-ideas farther from the center. Mind maps are used for a pre-writing activity, note taking, developing grocery lists, brainstorming sessions, etc. (See Graphic Organizers, K-W-L chart, Venn diagram.)

**Minimal pairs**  Pairs of words that have only one different sound (e.g., pit, bit; sit, set).

**Miscue**  A miscue is a reading error; a deviation from the text during oral reading. Analyzing miscues and identifying patterns of errors may help an instructor understand the nature or origin of a reading problem.

**Modal**  Auxiliary verbs that express ability, authority, formality, politeness, and degrees of certainty (e.g., can, could, should, will, would, must, may, might).

**Modeling**  Modeling is teaching or showing students how to accomplish a task or use a strategy by demonstrating it explicitly. Instructors are often encouraged to model even their thinking processes, as they show students what to do and how to do it.

**Modifiers** Modifiers add information to another element in a sentence.

**Multiple meanings**  A word that has more than one definition dependent on its use in context within a sentence or passage (e.g., Manny hit a home run. “With or Without You” by U2 was a hit in the ’80’s).

**Nominative pronouns**  Nominative pronouns can only be used as the subject of a verb or a sentence (e.g., I, you, he, she, it, we, they, who).
Noun  A noun is a naming word. It names a person, place, thing, idea, living creature, quality, or action. Examples: cowboy, theatre, box, thought, tree, kindness, arrival.

Objective pronouns  Objective pronouns can only be used as the object of a verb or preposition. Examples: me, you, him, her, it, us, them, whom.

Paragraph types  There are 7 types of paragraphs: narration, exposition, definition, classification, description, process analysis, and persuasion.

Paraphrase  To rephrase the wording of one’s own or another’s oral speech or written text (e.g., *When were you born?* can be paraphrased as *What is your date of birth?*).

Participle adjectives  A verb form ending in –*ing* or –*ed*. A participle functions like a verb because it can take an object; a participle functions like an adjective because it can modify a noun or pronoun (e.g., a glowing coal, or a beaten dog).

Parts of speech  There are eight parts of speech: noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, interjection, adverb, preposition, and conjunction.

Phrasal verbs  Verbs that are used in common with other parts of speech, usually prepositions, and take on meanings of their own when combined with these other parts of speech. Although phrasal verbs are written as a combination of two or more words, they act as if they were one word (e.g., to go out with = to date, to bring up = to raise).

Plagiarism  To take another’s ideas or words and use them as your own without crediting the source.

Possessive pronouns  To show ownership, can be used alone or describe a noun (e.g., mine, ours, yours).

Predicate adjectives  Predicate adjectives come after some form of the verb *be* or some other linking verb (e.g., *taste, feel, turn*: Nami is *beautiful*. The train was *crowded*. For a while I felt *bad*.).

Prefix  A prefix is a word part (affix) that is added to the beginning of a word. Common prefixes include pre, un, dis, anti, non, and re. A prefix changes the meaning of the word (e.g., *un--*in unhappy).

Preposition  A preposition links nouns, pronouns, and phrases to other words in a sentence. A preposition usually indicates the temporal, spatial, or logical relationship. Examples include: about, above, across, after, against, along, among, around, at, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, between, beyond, but, by, despite, down, during, except, for, from, in, inside, into, like, near, of, off, on, onto, out, outside, over, past, since, through, throughout, till, to, toward, under, underneath, until, up, upon, with, within, without.

Prior knowledge  (See Background knowledge.)

Proficiency level  Portrays what students at a particular level know and can do in relation to what is being measured (e.g., a learner can do “x, y and z” in the Massachusetts ABE ELA Framework, Reading strand, *Proficiency Level 5*). Proficiency levels are not to be confused with a program’s class design levels. Programs should use proficiency levels, though, to closely crosswalk with their program class design levels.

Progressive tenses  A verb tense that expresses an action or situation in progress at a specific time. Also called continuous tenses. Progressive tenses include present (e.g., I am reading), past (e.g., I was reading), future (e.g., I will be reading), present perfect (e.g., I have been reading), past perfect (e.g., I had been reading), and future perfect (e.g., I will have been reading).
**Pronoun**  A pronoun is used instead of a noun, to avoid repeating the noun. Examples: I, you, he, she, it, we, they.

**Pronoun referent**  Referring back to an item (called the antecedent) with a personal pronoun, possessive pronoun, demonstrative pronoun, definite article, etc. A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in number and gender (e.g., That's April. She works at my company.).

**Proofread**  To read and make corrections.

**Pun**  A pun is the humorous use of words that involves a word or phrase that has more than one possible meaning. Example: I wondered why the baseball was getting bigger, then it hit me. Police were called to a daycare where a three-year-old was resisting a rest.

**Questions**  There are two general types of questions: yes/no questions and informational (often open-ended) questions. Informational questions begin with who, whom, what, where, when, why, how, and which (e.g., Do you live in Boston? Where do you live?).

**Reduced speech**  The reduction of stressed syllables so that both consonants and vowels are less explicitly pronounced. Reductions can be within a word (e.g., int(e)rest), or in a phrase or sentence (e.g., cuz becomes because, want to becomes wanna, him is pronounced as /Im/ instead of /hIm/ in the sentence She wants him to come.). (See Connected speech and Linked words.)

**Reflective pronouns**  Reflective pronouns can only be used to direct action back to the subject (think mirror image) or as intensifiers (e.g., myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, themselves).

**Register**  Variety of language appropriate to the level of formality in a particular social setting, the relationship among the participants, and the purpose of the interaction (e.g., Hi, George. vs. Good afternoon, Mr. President. Open the window! vs. Would you mind opening the window?).

**Rejoinder**  A short response in conversation or a quick reply to a question in conversation. Rejoinders do not convey any information as such, but they keep the conversation going and show that the listener has understood and is receptive (e.g., That's too bad. Good idea. So do I. Really? You don't say!).

**Reported speech**  Used to report what someone has said (e.g., Lucy told me that she got a new job.).

**Roots, Root words**  A root word is the basic part of a complex word. The root or base carries the core of the meaning. Affixes are added to roots to alter the meaning or function of the word. The word “disappearance” is based on the root word “appear.” The prefix “dis” changes the meaning, and the suffix “ance” changes the word from a verb to a noun. Root is also used to refer to the historical origin of a word or syllable. For instance, aerospace includes the Greek root, “Aero”, meaning “air.”

**Rubric**  A rubric is a scoring guide used in performance assessment. It includes well-defined criteria describing the characteristics of student performance at each of several points on a numerical scale. For example, a four-point scale for evaluating student writing would describe the qualities and types of errors found in typical examples of writing at each of the four rubric points.

**Run-ons**  Compound sentences that are not punctuated correctly.

**Scaffolding**  Temporary support from a teacher that enables the learner to take on and understand new material and tasks they are not quite ready to do independently (e.g., engaging learners in pre-reading activities, using graphic organizers, providing definitions of key vocabulary, teacher modeling of an activity, providing multiple resources).
**Scaffolded instruction**  Scaffolded instruction is a broad term that may refer to various methods of supporting learners as they learn and gradually withdrawing supports as they become capable of independent performance of a task or skill. Supports may include clues, clarifying questions, reminders, encouragement, or breaking the problem down into steps.

**Self-monitoring strategies**  Plans used to increase independence in academic, behavioral, self-help, and social areas. When used in reading, the ability to self-monitor meaning of words enables students to select and use strategies to improve comprehension.

**Sequencing words**  Words that help learners comprehend or relate the order in which events occur (e.g., first, then, finally, next, then, at this point, later, afterwards).

**Signal words**  Signal words are those words and phrases that give clues to the organization of material, identify what's important, and show the relationships among ideas and information (e.g., first, second, finally, although, in contrast, however, therefore).

**Simple present tense**  Used to express a permanent truth and habitual events or situations (e.g., People perspire when they are hot. I drive my car every day.).

**Simple past tense**  Used to express actions begun and completed in the past (e.g., Maria worked overtime yesterday. Kamal read to his son every night last week.).

**Simple future tense**  Used to express actions that will happen at one particular time in the future; this will happen (e.g., Tran will go to class tomorrow. Jerome is going to start a new job next week.).

**Simple sentences**  A sentence consisting of one main clause (e.g., The bus is coming. Daniel called his mother.).

**Simplified materials**  Texts that are specially written for classroom use, but have the style and format of authentic materials. The texts use controlled or limited vocabulary and simple sentence structure for use by lower level students. (See **Adapted materials** and **Authentic materials**.)

**Situations**  Specific places where survival language is spoken (e.g., at school, at the post office, in the doctor’s office).

**Social language**  Oral language used in social or peer settings, usually in contrast to more formal academic language (e.g., “Hi, how are you?”).

**Spiraling**  Reusing or recycling vocabulary, grammar, or concepts throughout a text or series of lessons.

**Standard**  Standards describe what learners should know and be able to do within a specific content area.

**Strand**  A strand is a cluster of learning standards in the content area organized around a central idea, concept, or theme.

**Strategy instruction**  Strategy instruction teaches learning tools. The focus is on teaching learners “how to learn effectively,” by applying principles, rules, or multi-step processes to solve problems or accomplish learning tasks.

**Suffix**  A suffix is a word part (affix) that is added to the ending of a root word. A suffix may change the meaning or function of a word. It establishes the part of speech of that word (e.g., -tion added to assert, a verb, creates the word assertion, a noun.).
**Superlative**  A form of an adjective, adverb, or noun that is used to rank an item or situation first or last in a group of three or more (e.g., Juan is the tallest person in the class. She works the fastest of all. That machine makes the most noise.).

**Supporting sentences** These sentences need to be about the idea presented in the topic sentence; should support the main idea of the paragraph.

**Synonym** A synonym is a word with the same meaning as another word. "Glad" is a synonym for "happy."

**TABE** Test for Adult Basic Education.

**Tag questions** A question added at the end of a sentence usually to make sure the information is correct (e.g., The Patriots won the Super Bowl, didn’t they?).

**Think-aloud strategy** A metacognitive strategy that can be used when reading a text. The reader verbalizes how she creates meaning for herself from the text (e.g., make predictions, make connections with prior knowledge, create analogies, talk about trouble spots such as difficult vocabulary). By verbalizing, the reader reinforces the process of gaining meaning from text and can share her thought process with others.

**Tone** An expression of the attitude of a writer or speaker toward a subject. Unlike mood, which is intended to shape the emotional response of the reader or listener, tone reflects the feelings of the writer or speaker. Tone is created by the pitch, rhythm, volume, and/or choice of words. It can be serious, humorous, sarcastic, playful, ironic, bitter, or objective. (See Voice.)

**Topic sentence** Usually the first sentence of a paragraph that gives an idea of what the paragraph is about.

**Transition words or expressions** Words or phrases often used to link sentences, subjects, or other parts of a written text. Also used when speaking. Transitions include: adding an idea (also, in addition, further, furthermore, moreover); contrasting (however, nevertheless); providing an alternative (instead, alternatively); showing similarity (similarly, likewise); showing order of time or order of ideas (first, then, next, later, meanwhile, previously, finally); showing result (as a result, consequently, therefore, thus, so); affirming (of course, in fact, certainly, obviously); giving examples (for example, for instance); explaining (in other words, that is); adding an aside (by the way, incidentally); summarizing (in conclusion, above all).

**Use and usage** Use is how the language is used in communication. This can be contrasted with usage, the grammatical rules for the language (e.g., “Have you ever eaten fried snake?”—Use: To inquire about past experiences; Usage: A present perfect question with “ever” placed in front of the past participle). Although usage does have some part to play in adult education, use is more important. In meaningful communication, learners are more concerned with the use of language.

**Venn diagram** A graphic organizer that is used to compare two characters, ideas, etc. To create a Venn diagram, draw two overlapping circles. In the first circle, put things that are unique about the first thing to be compared. In the second circle, put things that are unique about the second thing to be compared. In the overlapping section, put things both have in common. (See Graphic Organizers, K-W-L chart, Mind map.)

**Verb** A verb is a word which describes an action (doing something) or a state (being something). Examples include: walk, talk, think, believe, live, like, and want.
**Voice** A writer’s unique use of language that allows a reader to perceive a human personality in his or her writing. The elements of style that determine a writer’s voice include sentence structure, diction, and tone.

**Word families** Grouped words linked by derivation or etymology (e.g., doubt, doubtful, doubtless, dubious). Word families or word sorts can also refer to words that belong to a particular group. This group can be a semantic group (e.g., bean, squash, carrot belong to the semantic group, vegetables); a syntactical group (e.g., walk, run, jump belong to the syntactic group, verbs); or functional group (e.g., hello, hi, good morning belong to the functional group, greetings).

**Word order** The correct order of subject, verb, adjectives, and other parts of speech in an utterance or sentence. Word order often follows set rules (e.g., a blue book instead of a book blue.). Word order in a sentence can affect meaning (e.g., In the sentence, “The Red Sox beat the Yankees,” the second and third words indicate the doer of the action, while the sixth indicates the recipient of the action.). Word order can also provide clues for the meaning of a word (e.g., In the sentence, “The jeft is on the floor.,” the reader or listener can surmise that the nonsense word, jeft, is a noun because it comes after the article, the, and before a verb.)

**Writing process** An approach to writing and teaching writing that includes developing ideas, writing a rough draft, revising, editing, and completing a final product.