

The aim of this leaflet

The aim of this leaflet is to introduce you to materials that you may find useful if you like learning vocabulary from your normal reading or listening material (books, magazines, newspapers, films, news reports etc.), and to suggest learning techniques that you may like to try.

Finding materials

This won't normally be a problem — just read or listen to whatever interests you. The advantage of this type of vocabulary learning is that you can find materials anywhere, not necessarily from the Language Commons.

Useful materials in the Language Commons

- **Magazines**

Time, Newsweek

- **Newspapers**

South China Morning Post

- **Films**

There are many movies in the Language Commons. Films with English *captions* can be useful, as you can read the words as they are spoken. Some films contain a lot of useful vocabulary; others do not. See the

Advice Sheet **Listening to Movies (L4)** for further advice.

- **News reports**

For advice on audio and video news sources and learning materials available in the Language Commons, see the Advice Sheet **Listening to the News (L2)**.

Learning tips

Here are some tips for learning vocabulary from your normal reading or listening. You may already have your own method that works well for you. If so, that's great — stick with it. If not, you may like to:

- Read or listen to a lot of materials on one topic (or a small number of topics). This helps you quickly become familiar with vocabulary on that topic. For example, for listening you can:
- Interview a number of fluent/advanced/native speakers for one or two minutes each on the same topic and record each conversation. You can then play back all the short recordings, noting the vocabulary used.
- Follow a major news story on the radio or TV over a period of time. Only listen to certain types of news story.

- Read Chapter 7 of *How to Learn a Language* (*Study skills* shelf in the Language Commons Multimedia Area).
- If you are not sure which words you should spend your time on, check out the Advice Sheet **Deciding Which Words are Worth Learning (V2)**.
- For tips about organizing your learning so that it's systematic and you don't become overloaded, check out the Advice Sheet **Organizing Your Vocabulary Learning (V3)**.
- For tips about remembering words that you have learned, check out the Advice Sheet **Remembering Vocabulary (V4)**.

N.B. The important thing is to find out what works/does not work for you and why. Do your methods help you to learn effectively? If not, what could you do that would help you learn more effectively?

If you do use an effective technique, please contact a Speaking or Writing Adviser or e-mail **lccommons** (lccommons@ust.hk) to let us know about it — we would like to hear from you!

Evaluating your progress

Here is a method for checking on your progress that you may like to try:

- If you are concentrating on words of a certain frequency range (e.g. the most common 3,000 words), try reading a simplified reader of the same frequency level after a certain period of time — is it easy to read the book now?

For more information, see the advice sheet **Evaluating your Vocabulary Learning (V5)**.

And now...


If you would like any help or advice, or just a chat about your progress, please get in touch - **we are here to support your independent learning!** To contact us:

- Make an appointment to see an adviser. For details of advisers and their availability, please go to <https://ilang.cle.ust.hk/language-adviser-timetable/>.
- E-mail your questions to **iLANG** (lcilang@ust.hk).
- Ask at the reception counter of the Language Commons — if the receptionist cannot help you directly, s/he will pass your query on to one of the advisers.

What else can you do?

- Browse the many physical (<https://ilang.cle.ust.hk/language-commons/#resources>) and online materials (<https://ilang.cle.ust.hk/resources-vocabulary/>) for Vocabulary.
- Join a Vocabulary activity or short course (<http://ilang.cle.ust.hk/vocabulary/>).

Glossary

Captions	Sub-titles that are printed on-screen in the <i>same</i> language as the language of the film — i.e. an English Language film will have English Language captions. Films in the Language Commons that have captions are marked with the symbol  . Use one of the special machines on top of the VCRs (caption decoders) if you want to see the captions when you watch these films.
Collocations	When two words often go together (i.e. one follows the other in speech or writing), they are said to collocate with each other. For example, an adjective that often collocates with <i>rain</i> is <i>heavy</i> . <i>Heavy rain</i> , therefore, is a collocation.
Frequency level/range	This indicates how common the word is. A word in the 1,000-2,000 frequency range will be one of the second thousand most common words of English — i.e. very common. A word at the 10,000 frequency level will not be common. Knowledge of the 3,000 most common words of English is considered to be essential for understanding texts at university level.
Simplified readers	Books which have been made easier to read for non-native speakers (usually the vocabulary, grammar and sentence length are altered). There are many to choose from in the Language Commons, Rm 3018, each with a certain frequency level (e.g. 1,500 words; 4,000 words etc.).
Synonym	A word similar in meaning to another word.

Last Updated: May 2017