

TOEFL Vocabulary Voyage

A free taster: 40 essential academic words across four Seas, with word families. From the Academic Word List, built for the 2026 TOEFL iBT. Sail the full Voyage at [prepdrills.com](https://www.prepdrills.com).

The TOEFL does not have a vocabulary section, and ETS publishes no official word list. What it tests is high frequency academic vocabulary in context, the kind of words that appear across every subject. These 40 words come from the Academic Word List and are grouped by how they function in academic English. Learn the whole word family, not just the single word, because the 2026 Complete the Words task tests exactly that: prefixes, suffixes, and the different forms a word can take.

How to use this list: cover the meaning column, read the word, and say the definition and an example out loud. Mark the words you miss, and review only those the next day. Ten words a day is a realistic pace.

Sea of Inquiry

analyze verb	to examine something in detail to understand or explain it <i>"Researchers analyze the data to identify patterns."</i> Family: analysis (n), analytical (adj), analyst (n)
assess verb	to judge the quality, value, or importance of something <i>"The study assesses the effect of sleep on memory."</i> Family: assessment (n)
indicate verb	to show, point to, or suggest something <i>"The results indicate a clear upward trend."</i> Family: indication (n), indicator (n)
demonstrate verb	to show clearly through evidence or example <i>"The experiment demonstrates how plants respond to light."</i> Family: demonstration (n)
establish verb	to set up firmly or to prove something <i>"The scientists established a link between the two events."</i> Family: established (adj), establishment (n)
evaluate verb	to judge the value or quality of something carefully <i>"Teachers evaluate each essay against a rubric."</i> Family: evaluation (n)
obtain verb	to get or acquire something, often formally <i>"Students must obtain permission before entering the lab."</i> Family: obtainable (adj)
acquire verb	to gain or come to possess something <i>"Children acquire language remarkably quickly."</i> Family: acquisition (n)
conduct verb	to carry out an activity such as research <i>"The team conducted a survey of 500 students."</i> Family: conduct (n)
contribute verb	to give a part toward a result <i>"A poor diet contributes to many health problems."</i> Family: contribution (n), contributor (n)

derive verb	to obtain or develop something from a source <i>"The English word derives from Latin."</i> Family: derivation (n), derivative (adj, n)
interpret verb	to explain or decide the meaning of something <i>"Scientists interpret the graph as evidence of warming."</i> Family: interpretation (n)
define verb	to state the exact meaning of something <i>"The author defines the key terms early in the paper."</i> Family: definition (n), definite (adj)

Sea of Consequence

factor noun	one thing that influences a result <i>"Cost is a major factor in the decision."</i> Family: factor in (v)
impact noun	a strong effect on someone or something <i>"The new policy had a major impact on employment."</i> Family: impact (v), impactful (adj)
affect verb	to produce a change in something <i>"Temperature affects the rate of the reaction."</i> Family: affected (adj); note: affect (v) vs effect (n)
consequence noun	a result or effect of an action <i>"Rising prices are a consequence of the shortage."</i> Family: consequent (adj), consequently (adv)
generate verb	to produce or create something <i>"The turbines generate electricity from wind."</i> Family: generation (n)
method noun	a planned way of doing something <i>"The researchers used a new method to collect data."</i> Family: methodical (adj), methodology (n)
process noun	a series of steps that lead to a result <i>"Photosynthesis is the process by which plants make food."</i> Family: process (v)
approach noun	a particular way of dealing with a problem <i>"The school adopted a new approach to teaching math."</i> Family: approach (v)
principle noun	a basic rule or truth that explains how something works <i>"The design follows the principles of physics."</i> Family: note: principle (n) vs principal (adj, n)
function noun	the natural purpose or role of something <i>"The main function of the heart is to pump blood."</i> Family: functional (adj), function (v)

Sea of Judgment

significant adjective	large or important enough to have an effect or to matter <i>"There was a significant increase in test scores."</i> Family: significance (n), significantly (adv)
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appropriate adjective	suitable or correct for a particular situation <i>"Choose an appropriate example to support your point."</i> Family: appropriately (adv)
relevant adjective	closely connected to the matter being discussed <i>"Include only relevant details in your summary."</i> Family: relevance (n)
sufficient adjective	enough for a particular purpose <i>"The evidence is not sufficient to prove the claim."</i> Family: sufficiency (n), suffice (v)
adequate adjective	enough in amount or good enough in quality <i>"The funding was adequate but not generous."</i> Family: adequately (adv), adequacy (n)
distinct adjective	clearly separate or different from others <i>"The two species are distinct in size and color."</i> Family: distinction (n), distinctly (adv)
evident adjective	clear and easy to see or understand <i>"The improvement was evident after only one week."</i> Family: evidence (n), evidently (adv)
previous adjective	coming or existing before in time <i>"This result contradicts previous studies."</i> Family: previously (adv)
apparent adjective	clear or obvious; seeming to be true <i>"It soon became apparent that the plan would fail."</i> Family: apparently (adv)

Sea of Foundations

concept noun	an abstract idea or general notion <i>"The concept of gravity was hard to accept at first."</i> Family: conceptual (adj), conceive (v)
structure noun	the way the parts of something are arranged <i>"A good essay has a clear structure."</i> Family: structural (adj), structure (v)
aspect noun	one part or feature of something <i>"The report covers every aspect of the problem."</i> Family: aspect (n, no common family)
context noun	the situation or words surrounding something <i>"Use context to guess the meaning of new words."</i> Family: contextual (adj), contextualize (v)
element noun	a basic or essential part of a whole <i>"Trust is a key element of any successful team."</i> Family: elemental (adj)
hypothesis noun	a proposed explanation that can be tested <i>"The experiment supported the researchers hypothesis."</i> Family: hypothesize (v), hypothetical (adj)

variable noun	something that can change or vary in an experiment <i>"The scientists controlled every variable but one."</i> Family: variable (adj), vary (v), variation (n)
component noun	one of the parts that make up a whole <i>"Memory is one component of overall intelligence."</i> Family: component (adj)

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