

## ELL Quick Tip

Do you have an ELL student and wonder how to help him/her in the classroom?  
Then the ELL Quick Tip is for you!

### Tip #7

## Word banks to build vocabulary

English language learners need to develop academic language in order to be successful in the content-area classroom. One way to help increase an English learner's academic vocabulary is to create a word bank. A word bank can be created by the teacher at the beginning of a unit of study or can be co-created with students during a unit. Word banks can be whole-class (e.g., word walls, words in a can) or individualized (e.g., file folders).

A word bank is only effective if students access it regularly. Encourage students to consult the word bank when they need to find a word and to add or modify words as appropriate.

Variations on word banks:

- Maintain a **word wall** for a content area (or unit of study) with target vocabulary (visual supports such as pictures or sketches help provide context for word meaning).
- Individual vocabulary **file folders** for students (take a manilla folder for each student and use the inside pages to record words).
- Write target words on wooden sticks and maintain **words in a can**. You can call on students at various times to demonstrate comprehension, give examples, sentences, or synonyms for your target words.

### EXAMPLE WORD WALL FOR MATH OPERATIONS

(Each operation would have a separate piece of paper on display in the classroom):

<b>+</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>÷</b>
add plus addition and how many in all? altogether <b>SUM</b>	subtract minus subtraction how many more? how many left? what is the difference? <b>DIFFERENCE</b>	multiply times multiplication groups how many in all? altogether <b>PRODUCT</b>	divide share equally division into <b>QUOTIENT</b>