



A BGC Approach to English Vocabulary

One of the overriding principles that has shaped the development of the BGC is an awareness of the unique needs of Deaf and hard of hearing children (D/HH). It is essential to develop a working lexicon of English vocabulary in order to study grammar using the BGC. Because of inaccessible environments and ineffective instruction, D/HH children's working English vocabulary is often limited.

Recognizing this challenge, the BGC has applied an innovative strategy to support teachers and students as they engage with English grammar study. In a remarkable effort, all English examples that appear in Level 1 are taken from a limited inventory of 216 vocabulary words.

Vocabulary Matters

The English vocabulary is further broken down so that lists of English words that appear early on (in Anchor Standard 1, and then those that appear in Anchor Standard 2, and so on) are prioritized. In this way we set up economical approaches to vocabulary development so that students can begin meaningful English grammar study sooner!

Importantly, those vocabulary words are taken from high-frequency word lists as organized in the **Bedrock Literacy program**. Limiting the range of English words used in the BGC ensures that children can focus on the grammar of English independently - without the added obstacle of inaccessible English sentences. Many traditional approaches assume a broad working knowledge of English words, making it difficult for students with restricted vocabulary to fully engage in grammar instruction.

Key Points

- The BGC introduces English grammar using a **controlled set of 216 high-frequency vocabulary words**.
- These words are carefully selected from the **Bedrock Literacy Program**, ensuring relevance and accessibility.
- Vocabulary words are introduced progressively, aligning with **Anchor Standards** to facilitate gradual and meaningful learning.

This structured vocabulary development sets them up for success early on in their literacy journey.

The Power of a Structured Approach

Instead of relying on randomized, haphazard vocabulary strategies—which are often ineffective for D/HH learners—the BGC provides a clear, intentional, and research-based plan:

Prioritized Vocabulary Exposure – Words are introduced strategically, aligning with Anchor Standard 1, then 2, and so on, allowing students to build their vocabulary incrementally.

Grammar Without Barriers – By working within a known set of words, students can focus on grammar concepts without struggling with inaccessible sentences.

Efficient Learning for Teachers & Students – Teachers don't have to worry about comprehension—this approach ensures that vocabulary and grammar instruction work hand-in-hand.

BGC: A Game-Changer for D/HH English Literacy

This approach is more than just good pedagogy—it's a transformative shift in how English is taught to D/HH students. Instead of merely adapting hearing-centric curricula, the BGC builds from the ground up with the needs of Deaf learners in mind.

By integrating structured vocabulary development with explicit grammar instruction, the BGC:

- Empowers students to **engage in grammar study sooner**, making **faster progress**.
- Provides a **scaffolded learning experience**, reducing frustration and increasing comprehension.
- Ensures that **teachers have a clear roadmap** for supporting their students in both vocabulary and grammar acquisition.

Your Experience Matters!

We'd love to hear from teachers and educators who have implemented this approach in their classrooms!

- **How has the structured vocabulary approach impacted your students' ability to engage with English grammar?**
- **What successes (or challenges) have you observed?**

Share your experiences with us here: <https://forms.gle/NFY93TYDdSTxLfgt7>

Your insights help us continue to refine and improve the BGC for D/HH learners everywhere.

