ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

The language of school and the workplace uses specialized speech patterns that are different from informal communication used outside of the classroom. Speaking and writing in school requires us to express our ideas in more complex and concise ways.

These sentence stems are available to help students build language patterns around certain academic tasks and specific vocabulary, often referred to as "mortar" terms. Use this language guide for student conversations as well as academic writing and thinking.

- Think about the literacy demands of your classroom activity & choose which language function will enhance communication.
- Distribute cards to student groups.
- Encourage student groups to use these sentence stems regularly and provide active monitoring and positive feedback when used.
- Make these cards available to all students, not just English Language Learners or students who struggle with language.

PROBLEM SOLVING

Language used to describe or define a problem and a possible solution.
Key words: solve, figure out, think about, find, conflict, difficult question, situation

-Describing a Problem/Explaining a Solution-

The first step to solving this problem is _____.   As a group we must think about _____.

This problem is similar to _____.   We can break this into different parts, like …

We need to identify _____.   A possible solution may be _____.

We know our solution is correct if _____.   It is important to consider _____.

This solution makes sense because….

INQUIRY, OPINIONS, QUESTIONING & PARAPHRASE

Language used to observe the environment, acquire information, or inquire about a problem
Key words: who, what, when, where, why, how, according to, specifically, in other words

-Inquiry-

**Observe & explore our environment, acquire information,
or inquire about possibilities**

I wonder why…?   How does . . . work?   Why does it work that way?

I didn't understand what you said about . . .?   Can you explain more about…?

I'm sorry, but can you repeat what you said about…?

-Expressing an Opinion-

I think/believe that…   In my opinion…   Based on my experience, I think…

From what we read, I believe…   The article/video/report suggests that…

-Soliciting a Response-

What do you think?   Do you agree?   What answer did you find?   Why do you think that?

-Paraphrasing-

In other words, you think…   What I hear you are saying is…   Overall, the text says…

INFERING, PREDICTING, & HYPOTHESIZING

Language used to make inferences, predict outcomes, and to hypothesize.
Key words: guess, conclude, estimate, speculate, draw a conclusion, believe, due to, since

-Making Predictions & Hypothesis-

I predict / imagine that…

Given _____ I hypothesize that…

Based on past results, I predict that…

I foresee _____, because…

Since _____ happened, I think _____ will happen.

My predictions were right/wrong because _____.

-Making Inferences-

This information makes me think _____.

Based on what the text says and what I know, I think _____.

Because of _____ I believe _____.

This evidence suggests _____.

That is probably why _____.

COMMUNICATING & SUMMARIZING INFORMATION

Language used to identify the major points, and to report or describe the gist of a text.
Key words: important, evidence, emphasize, describe, show, suggest, conclude

-Summarizing-

The most important ideas from the text are…

The author argues that…   To support the main claim, the author emphasizes…

Evidence used to support the author's claim include…

-Informing-

The author says _____, which means _____.

The text describes the advantages of _____ over _____.

The text may be misleading because it does not show _____.

-Reporting on other people's Ideas-

_____ mainly believes/thinks that…   _____ suggested that…

_____ emphasized that…   _____ concluded that…

_____ wonders/questions if _____