

FIGURE 5.6 Checklist for Increasing Academic-Language Awareness

1. Find a text you will be using with your students.
2. Note the purpose for teaching this text. You can cite content and/or language standards or provide a general purpose.
3. Analyze the various elements of the text’s academic language, and complete the checklist.

Awareness-Building Questions	Text Info	Example(s) Found in Text	Teach This Feature?
Vocabulary (Word Level)			
Are there everyday Tier 1 words (e.g., cat) that may be unfamiliar to students?	Yes/No		Yes/No
Are there general academic Tier 2 words (e.g., analyze or describe) that may be unfamiliar?	Yes/No		Yes/No
Does the vocabulary in the text lend itself to any minilessons on word-learning strategies (e.g., words with multiple meanings, determining meaning of words in context, or affixes)?	Yes/No		Yes/No
Are there Tier 3 words specific to the content you’re teaching that may be unfamiliar?	Yes/No		Yes/No
Grammar or Syntax (Sentence Level)			
Are there aspects of grammar (e.g., clauses, verb tense, or interrogatives) that may be challenging for ELs?	Yes/No		Yes/No
Is there any syntax (arrangement of words and phrases) that might be confusing?	Yes/No		Yes/No
Are there any conventions that may be new or confusing (e.g., punctuation, spelling, etc.)?	Yes/No		Yes/No
Organization (Discourse Level)			
What is the type of text (e.g., lab report or blog post)?			Yes/No
How is the text organized or structured (e.g., description or cause and effect)?			Yes/No
How do the ideas hang together cohesively?			Yes/No
Are there any markers of sequence or relationships between ideas (e.g., in addition or likewise)?	Yes/No		Yes/No
What is the purpose of text (e.g., to persuade or to inform)?			Yes/No
Sociocultural Level			
Does the text assume any experience, background knowledge, and/or awareness for students to understand it?	Yes/No		Yes/No
Could students’ first language and/or home culture impact their understanding of the text?	Yes/No		Yes/No