



# Mathematical Vocabulary

## What's Different for Vocabulary in Mathematics?

- Depth is key in learning the meaning of words
- Vocabulary “Front Loading” not very effective.
- Everyday vs. Academic vocabulary in Math – Mathematics requires specific words
- A False cognate in mathematics, in “quotidian” vs. Academic language

## Everyday vs. Academic Vocabulary in Mathematics

Everyday	Academic
Guess	Estimate
Cross	Intercept
Problem	Equation
Steps	Algorithm

- What does a word mean in mathematics?
- How can we help students learn the mathematical meaning?



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## Strategies We Know Don't Work

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- Look the word up in the dictionary (online or otherwise).
- Just use the context!
- Skip it and you'll learn it later on.

## More Strategies to Use Monday Morning

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- **Omit** the target word (a new term for your students) from a sentence and then consider what the word might fit in the mathematical sentence.
- Mathematics **sentence walls**, in addition to a word wall. Students are the best sources, but the curricular materials may also be useful. “Our playground’s grass area is rectangular and about 50 square meters in size.”
- Finding **root/history** of the word (e.g., triangle, tricycle, tripod, trilogy).
- Provide as many mathematical **Objects** as possible (for example, providing 3 D models of shapes). Have students experiment with folding models.
- Be consistent in your use of **terms**. Do the terms and syntax in your curricular, instructional, assessment, and standards match?