



# Strategies for developing English vocabulary

## Speaking Australian English for social purposes

### 1. Listen to TV and radio

Develop your Australian accent and use of idioms by listening to local radio, TV and online broadcasts. Listen actively, repeat phrases, and copy the sounds and intonation. This will help improve pronunciation, fluency and develop vocabulary.

- **TV**  
Choose an Australian produced show that interests you and watch it regularly to develop vocabulary and cultural knowledge. Dramas like *Neighbours* and *Home and Away* are good options. Many programs can be watched on demand using the internet.
- **Radio**  
ABC Radio National has many programs that can be downloaded to your ipod or MP3 player and some also have transcripts on the website so that you can print the script and listen as you read. This will help you with pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary development etc.

### 2. Read newspapers and listen to news online

This will give you an understanding of the events and ideas that local people are talking about and enable you to join in conversations with some knowledge of the topics that are current.

### 3. Practise speaking at every opportunity

Start conversations in shops/at the bus stop etc. Let people know that you want to continue a conversation by asking questions and showing some interest in their lives.

### 4. Join a public library, conversation group, or club, or take part in activities in your local area

Most activities are free or low cost. Contact your local council or council library to find out more.

### 5. Do voluntary work

Volunteer for student guide/mentor positions advertised at UniSA. The application process is good practice for job applications and you will be helping other students learn the things that you know about settling into university. Some training is provided and you get extra opportunities to interact with staff and other students.



## Writing academic English

### 1. Make your own dictionary for terms that are new to you

- Include explanations of these words using your own words so that you will be able to understand them at a later date.
- Include words in sample sentences and phrases to show how they occur in context.
- Try Google searching a word to see lots of examples of how it is used in context.

### 2. Practise daily writing

- Practise by writing summaries and paraphrases of short passages that you read.
- Write a journal that includes your ideas and thoughts on the topics that you are studying.

### 3. Ask for feedback on your writing

- Ask your friends or another student, or make an appointment with a Learning Adviser, to comment on what you have written. Use their suggestions to make improvements in your writing.

### 4. Look at models of academic language and writing

- Review how expert writers – in your set readings, in your course textbooks etc – use aspects of English that can take a lot of practice to learn, like prepositions and definite/indefinite articles.