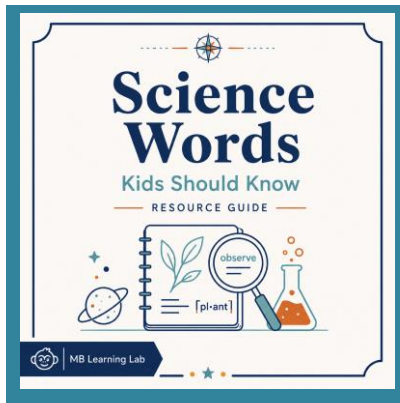




Science Terms Kids Should Know

Monkey Buddies Learning Lab Resource Guide

chrissidennis.com — June 2026

Use this sectioned guide to support science talk at home, in tutoring, or in the classroom. Print only the sections you need.

Parent/Caregiver / Teacher Reminder

Science vocabulary is not about memorizing big words. It helps children describe what they notice, explain what they think, and talk about evidence.

Children do not need perfect definitions before they use science words. Start with simple meanings, real examples, and lots of “What do you notice?” conversations.

Guide Sections	
Section	Examples
Science Thinking Words	observe, predict, evidence, data, conclusion
Investigation & Experiment Words	experiment, variable, fair test, procedure, trial
Matter & Materials Words	matter, solid, liquid, gas, property, mixture
Force, Motion & Energy Words	force, motion, gravity, friction, energy, sound, light
Life Science Words	organism, habitat, adaptation, life cycle, ecosystem
Earth & Space Words	weather, erosion, water cycle, orbit, planet, star
Engineering & STEM Words	design, prototype, test, improve, criteria, constraint
Data & Measurement Words	measure, graph, pattern, scale, thermometer, balance

Science Terms Kids Should Know

Good Science Questions to Ask

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Parent/Caregiver / Teacher Reminder

Science talk grows when children have chances to notice, wonder, predict, test, and explain. These questions work at home, in tutoring, and in classrooms.

Question	Why It Helps
What do you notice?	Helps children slow down and describe details.
What do you wonder?	Turns curiosity into a science question.
What do you predict will happen?	Encourages thoughtful guessing before testing or observing.
What is your evidence?	Connects answers to observations, data, or results.
Did the results match your prediction?	Helps children compare what they thought with what happened.
What could we try next?	Builds revision, problem solving, and investigation habits.

Science Terms Kids Should Know

Science Thinking Words

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Section Reminder

These words help children talk about noticing, wondering, predicting, explaining, and using evidence.

Word	Kid-Friendly Meaning
observe	to use your senses or tools to notice details
question	something you wonder or want to find out
predict	to make a thoughtful guess about what may happen
infer	to use clues and what you know to make a reasonable idea
evidence	information that helps support an answer or claim
claim	a statement or answer you can support with evidence
data	information collected during an investigation
results	what happened or what was found after testing or observing
conclusion	what you decide after looking at the evidence
compare	to tell how things are alike and different

Science Terms Kids Should Know

Investigation & Experiment Words

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Section Reminder

These words help children talk about tests, variables, fair comparisons, steps, and results.

Word	Kid-Friendly Meaning
investigate	to look closely, ask questions, and try to find out more
experiment	a test used to learn what happens under certain conditions
hypothesis	a testable idea or prediction
variable	something that can change in an experiment
control	the part kept the same or used for comparison
fair test	a test where only one important thing changes at a time
procedure	the steps followed during an investigation
trial	one try or round of a test
repeat	to do the test again to check the results
record	to write, draw, or save what you notice or measure

Science Terms Kids Should Know

Matter & Materials Words

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Section Reminder

These words help children describe materials, states of matter, properties, and simple changes.

Word	Kid-Friendly Meaning
matter	anything that takes up space and has mass
solid	matter that keeps its own shape
liquid	matter that flows and takes the shape of its container
gas	matter that spreads out and fills space
property	a characteristic such as color, size, texture, or hardness
texture	how something feels, such as rough, smooth, soft, or bumpy
absorb	to soak up or take in liquid
dissolve	to mix into a liquid so it seems to disappear
mixture	two or more materials together that are not chemically changed
solution	a mixture where one material dissolves in another
physical change	a change in size, shape, or state without making a new material
chemical change	a change that makes a new material

Science Terms Kids Should Know

Force, Motion & Energy Words

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Section Reminder

These words help children describe movement, pushes, pulls, energy, light, sound, heat, and magnets.

Word	Kid-Friendly Meaning
force	a push or pull
motion	movement from one place or position to another
speed	how fast something moves
gravity	the force that pulls objects toward Earth
friction	a force that slows movement when surfaces rub together
magnetism	a force that can pull or push some metals or magnets
energy	the ability to make something move, change, heat, or work
sound	energy we can hear when something vibrates
light	energy that helps us see
heat	thermal energy that can make things warmer

Science Terms Kids Should Know

Life Science Words

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Section Reminder

These words help children describe living things, habitats, needs, life cycles, and relationships in nature.

Word	Kid-Friendly Meaning
living thing	something that grows, uses energy, and has basic needs
organism	a living thing
habitat	the place where a plant or animal lives
basic needs	things living things need, such as food, water, air, and space
adaptation	a body part or behavior that helps a living thing survive
life cycle	the stages a living thing goes through as it grows and changes
ecosystem	living and nonliving things interacting in one place
food chain	a model that shows how energy moves from one living thing to another
predator	an animal that hunts another animal for food
prey	an animal that is hunted by another animal

Science Terms Kids Should Know

Earth & Space Words

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Section Reminder

These words help children talk about land, weather, water, Earth processes, and objects in space.

Word	Kid-Friendly Meaning
landform	a natural feature on Earth, such as a mountain, valley, or plain
weather	what the air is like at a certain time and place
climate	the usual weather patterns in an area over a long time
erosion	when wind, water, or ice slowly moves soil or rock
soil	the top layer of Earth where many plants grow
water cycle	the movement of water through evaporation, condensation, and precipitation
precipitation	water that falls from clouds, such as rain, snow, sleet, or hail
orbit	the path one object takes around another object in space
planet	a large object that orbits a star
moon	a natural object that orbits a planet
star	a huge ball of hot gas that gives off light and heat

Science Terms Kids Should Know

Engineering & STEM Words

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Section Reminder

These words help children talk about designing, building, testing, improving, and solving problems.

Word	Kid-Friendly Meaning
engineer	a person who designs, builds, or improves solutions to problems
design	to plan how something will be made or solved
build	to make or put something together
prototype	a first model used for testing an idea
test	to try something to see how well it works
improve	to make something better after testing or feedback
criteria	what a solution needs to do to be successful
constraint	a limit, such as time, materials, space, or cost
structure	something built or arranged to hold, support, or connect parts
solution	a way to solve a problem

Science Terms Kids Should Know

Data & Measurement Words

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Section Reminder

These words help children measure, organize information, notice patterns, and talk about tools.

Word	Kid-Friendly Meaning
measure	to find the size, amount, or distance of something
length	how long something is
mass	how much matter is in an object
volume	how much space something takes up or how much a container holds
temperature	how hot or cold something is
thermometer	a tool used to measure temperature
balance	a tool used to compare or measure mass
ruler	a tool used to measure length
graph	a picture that organizes data
chart	a way to organize information so it is easier to read
pattern	something that repeats or happens in a regular way
scale	marks or numbers on a tool or graph that show how much

Science Terms Kids Should Know

End-of-Guide Science Talk Readiness Check

chrissidennis.com — June 2026

Parent/Caregiver / Teacher Reminder

A child is growing in science language when they can use words to describe what they notice, ask questions, talk about evidence, and explain what happened.

Area	What We Want to See
Science thinking	Can observe, ask questions, predict, and use evidence.
Investigations	Can explain what was tested, what changed, and what happened.
Matter and materials	Can describe solids, liquids, gases, properties, and simple changes.
Force and energy	Can talk about pushes, pulls, motion, gravity, friction, light, sound, and heat.
Life science	Can describe habitats, basic needs, life cycles, and food chains.
Earth and space	Can use words like weather, erosion, water cycle, orbit, planet, moon, and star.
Engineering	Can design, build, test, improve, and talk about criteria or constraints.
Data and measurement	Can measure, record data, read simple graphs, and notice patterns.

Final Reminder

Children do not need perfect definitions to use science language well. The goal is for them to connect words to real observations, investigations, and explanations.