

Dictionaries

1.1 Read the notes and choose words from the box to complete them.

realise bilingual teaching phonemic translation
 look mean pronunciation explain lists definitions
 example sentences context grammatical informal
 understand locations family frequent spelling



Study tip

Book versions of more advanced dictionaries can be very heavy to carry around so a CD-ROM version or mobile app (application software for your phone) may be a better purchase, e.g. *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*.

Choosing a dictionary

Beginners

- often prefer to use a ¹ _____ dictionary.

Advanced students

- should use a dictionary that does not rely on ² _____.

Reasons for using an English–English dictionary:

- Using a dictionary is the first step in learning new words.
- You can ³ _____ up the meaning of a word or phrase.
- You can check the ⁴ _____ of a word and if it has double letters.
- You can learn the correct ⁵ _____ of words in English, ideally on a recording or from the ⁶ _____ script.

Features of a good dictionary:

- Language is graded and aimed specifically at ESL/ELT learners.
- The ⁷ _____ explain the meaning of the word in a simple way.
- There are also ⁸ _____ that clearly contextualise the word.
- It helps you learn new words by telling you the word ⁹ _____ and if it is an adjective, noun or verb.
- It tells you ¹⁰ _____ information (e.g. plural form).
- It warns you if a word is taboo, i.e. too impolite or too ¹¹ _____ to use in a formal situation.
- It tells how ¹² _____ the word is and if it is mainly used for speaking or writing.
- It contains useful ¹³ _____ of academic words, prefixes, word families and idioms.

1.2 Look at the definition of the word *practice* taken from the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* and answer the following questions.

- Which meaning of the word doesn't have a plural form? What tells you this?
- What can you consult to find a list of words with a similar meaning?
- Which form of the word collocates with *dental, medical and legal*?
- Is the phrase *make a practice of* common?
- Which three adjectives collocate with *practice* (regular activity)?
- Look up the same word in a different dictionary to compare the information.

1.3 Use a dictionary to look up the words in italics and find the following.

- the noun form of *assume*
- the opposite of *import*
- the correct spelling of the past tense of *occur*
- another noun form of the word *method*
- a phrasal verb with *factor* which means 'to include something' when you are doing a calculation
- an idiom with *labour* which means 'to work hard because you enjoy it not because you will receive money for it'

1.4 Use a dictionary to help you choose the words in the box to complete the sentences below. You need to change the form of the words.

correlate ultimate maintain derive legislate authority pursue proportion

- The government are planning to introduce new _____ that will set a minimum wage for all.
- Researchers found a positive _____ between computer access at home and student academic performance.
- Many people spend a great deal of money in the _____ of happiness without ever finding it.
- The school gave me an _____ because I had been absent for 40 days that year.
- The survey found that a _____ number of politicians send their children to private schools.
- Older houses generally require more _____ than more modern houses.
- The students immediately fell quiet when they heard the _____ voice of their principal.
- Botox is a protein which is _____ from a live bacteria.

practice UK US *pr* /'præktɪs/ noun ACTION

SMART **Collocations** **Idioms/Expressions**

- [U] action rather than thought or idea
It seemed like a good idea before we started, but in practice it was a disaster. Officially, Robert's in charge, but in practice Hannah runs the office. I can't see how your plan is going to work. In practice, how do you intend to put these proposals into practice, Mohamed?
SMART **Resources**

practice UK US *pr* /'præktɪs/ noun REGULAR ACTIVITY

SMART **Collocations**

- [C or U] something that is usually or regularly done, often as a habit, tradition or custom
What can European companies learn from Japanese business practices? It's common practice in the States to tip the hairdresser. This is a cruel practice which should be banned immediately. What is standard practice (in what is usually done) in a situation like this? Newspaper editors have agreed a new code of practice on the invasion of privacy.
SMART **Resources**
- make a practice of sth UK US **EXPRESS**
to do something regularly
I'll do your washing for you this time, but I'm not going to make a practice of it.
SMART **Resources**

practice UK US *pr* /'præktɪs/ noun TRAINING

SMART **Collocations**

- [C or U] when you do something regularly or repeatedly to improve your skill at doing it
I need to get some more practice before I take my driving test. Are you coming to cricket practice this evening? She's never at home because she spends all her free time at hockey practices. You'll gradually get better at it - it's just a question of practice. I'm a bit out of practice (= I haven't had any recent experience) but I'd love to play. Do you mind if I have a few practice shots before we start the game?
SMART **Resources**

practice UK US *pr* /'præktɪs/ noun WORK

- [C] a job or business which involves a lot of skill or training
a dental/medical/veterinary/legal practice
Our practice is responsible for about five thousand patients. She's decided to leave the Health Service and join a private practice.

Wordlists

- 2.1 In the following reading passage, three groups of words have been identified by underlining, bold or italics, and the rest are normal type. Read the passage and then match the types of words (1–4) in the key below with a–d.

A recent experiment by Shigeru Watanabe showed that the utterly un-artistic pigeon could be taught to **identify** 'good' and 'bad' children's artwork. How was the pigeon able to perform this feat and why should we care that it did?

Step back for a moment and look around your **environment**. Perhaps you're sitting at a desk, by a table, or near a window. Outside, you might see trees, grass, other people, birds, and flowers. **Despite** the fact that you're probably receiving only a small amount of **visual** information about many of these stimuli, it seems to be an effortless and unthinking **process** to classify these objects into their respective **categories**. **Categorising** these patterns of **visual** stimulation allows you to make sense of an often **complex** and chaotic world.

It might very well be the case that much of our substantial neural machinery is built to address this **complex** problem of object recognition; **nevertheless**, **identifying** so many different kinds of objects must surely be a difficult **computational task**. After all, we rarely see the same **version** of any of these objects again. Still, the **task** may be simplified by **constraints** on the appearance of these objects. Most birds have beaks and wings; most trees have tall brown trunks and green leafy branches, etc. As well, the trees, flowers, and grass will stay relatively still, **whereas** the birds and people will move in ways that are true to their biological nature.

Remarkably, when pigeons are suitably trained, they too can learn a **variety of visual categories**. We train the animals to report these **visual categories** by placing them into an *operant conditioning chamber* or *Skinner box*, a common **psychological** testing **apparatus**.

Key

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 high frequency words | a <u>underlined</u> |
| 2 low frequency words | b bold |
| 3 academic words | c <i>italic</i> |
| 4 technical words | d normal type |



Study tip

You can use specific wordlists to help you choose which words to learn. The words from 1.3 come from the Academic Word List by Averil Coxhead (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand). This list features words commonly used in academic texts, and you may find them in the IELTS Reading and Listening tests. Versions of the list are available online.



Vocabulary note

In 1953, Michael West published a *General Service List (GSL)* of the most frequently used words in English. The list contains over 2,000 headwords.

According to West, anyone who knew the first 2,000 words on his list should be able to understand 80% of a written text. Furthermore, the first 1,000 words represent approximately 77% of a written text and the second 1,000 words make up around 5%.

Some people feel that West's list is no longer relevant, given its age (it contains words that are no longer in common usage, e.g. *shilling*, and lacks more recent words such as *plastic*, *digital*, *computer*, etc.). However, recent attempts to replicate the list show an agreement of 80%, and the differences are generally concerned with frequency rather than individual words.

In his book *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*, I.S.P Nation writes: 'In general, high frequency words are so important that anything that teachers and learners can do to make sure they are learned is worth doing'.

- 2.2 Look at the passage again and answer these questions.

- Which kind of words are most common?
- Is it important to understand the meaning of the technical words?

2.3 Look at the extracts (1–5). Decide what the words in italics mean based on their context.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 making <i>pseudoscientific</i> claims which are unsupported by scientific evidence | a You can compare the word to others in a list. |
| 2 these products give skin a healthy <i>glow</i> | b The word can be defined by an adjective. |
| 3 are more help than <i>hindrance</i> | c The word may be part of a cause and effect sentence. |
| 4 pharmacists, doctors and <i>dermatologists</i> | d You can see if the word is compared with another word. |
| 5 the use of white lead to cover the face resulted in <i>hallucinations</i> and <i>convulsions</i> | e The word can be defined by a relative clause. |

2.4 Working out a low-frequency word from its context can be done in a number of ways. Match the methods (a–e) with the extracts (1–5).**3.1** There are many ways to learn vocabulary. Tick the methods that you already use.

- 1 Choose words that look familiar first – you may remember them better.
- 2 Choose the words you learn from a list of frequent words.
- 3 Repeat words aloud so you remember the oral as well as visual aspect of the word.
- 4 Use a mind map to link words together into a topic.
- 5 Use a web browser to make a note of how a word is used.
- 6 Ask other students or teachers about the word.
- 7 Practise using the word with native English speakers.
- 8 Look for the words in exam practice materials.
- 9 Use a variety of techniques so you don't get bored.
- 10 Use a system of index cards with a synonym, antonym and translation on the back.
- 11 Use new words as often as possible.
- 12 Use diagrams and pictures to illustrate new vocabulary.
- 13 Use physical actions to help remember the words.
- 14 Play games with words.
- 15 Listen to recordings of words or make them yourself.
- 16 Cover the words you learn and guess them from their synonyms and antonyms.
- 17 Remember whether the word is formal, informal, positive or negative.
- 18 Learn vocabulary in lists of 18 or 36 words and revise them before you learn the next set.
- 19 Read English language newspapers and journals every day.
- 20 Read factual passages on unfamiliar topics.

3.2 Are there any other things you can add to the list of methods in 3.1?