

Vocabulary Power Plus

Vocabulary, Reading, and Writing Exercises
for Higher Achievement

Book G

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INTRODUCTION

V*ocabulary Power Plus* Books F through H combine classroom-tested vocabulary drills with reading exercises designed to prepare students for both secondary school and the revised Scholastic Assessment Test; however, *Vocabulary Power Plus* is a resource for all students—not just those who are college bound or preparing for the SAT. This series is intended to increase vocabulary, improve grammar, enhance writing, and boost critical reading skills for students at all levels of learning.

Vocabulary Power Plus reinforces each vocabulary word by presenting it in several different contexts. Words in Context activities allow students to identify the correct context for each lesson's words. Sentence Completion and Improving Paragraphs exercises foster writing and editing skills and prompt students to create contexts for words instead of simply memorizing definitions. Each exercise, including Prefixes and Suffixes and Reading Comprehension, is linked to the vocabulary list. Students receive additional reinforcement through review activities after every third lesson. Review lessons further the development of inference skills and highlight word relationships and shades of meaning.

We hope that you find the *Vocabulary Power Plus* series to be an effective tool for teaching new words and an exceptional tool for preparing students for secondary school and standardized tests.

Strategies for Completing Activities

Words in Context

To complete the answer for Words in Context questions, first read the entire sentence, and then focus on the words closest to the blank and determine the correct answer's part of speech.

If a noun precedes the blank, then the answer is likely to be a verb. For example:

The repairman _____ an old sock when he looked beneath the dryer.

In this example, *repairman* is the subject of the clause containing the blank, and *sock* is the object. The sentence would become senseless if an adjective or a noun were used in the blank.

If an adjective precedes the blank space, then the answer is most likely a noun. For example:

The tired _____ has been fixing dryers all day long.

The adjective *tired* must modify something. Using an adjective for the answer creates a nonsensical sentence. The answer cannot be a verb because the sentence provides no subject for the verb *has been fixing*. Placing a noun in the blank creates a subject for the sentence and provides a word for *tired* to modify.

Articles such as *a*, *an*, and *the* can also precede nouns, but you must look at what follows the blank to determine what type of word the answer will be. For example:

The repairman fixed a _____ today.

In this example, the blank must be a noun, which serves as the object of the verb *fixed*.

The repairman fixed a _____ dryer today.

In this example, the blank must be an adjective, because something must modify the noun *dryer*.

An answer's part of speech varies also when a verb precedes the blank. If a verb precedes the blank, first determine the purpose of the verb. Will the answer be the *object* of the verb, or a *part* of the verb? For example:

The repairman fixed _____ dryers today.

In this example, the answer must be an adjective that modifies *dryers*.

The repairman plans to _____ the dryer tomorrow.

In this example, the answer will be a verb that completes the infinitive phrase, *to...*

The repairman will not _____ the dryer today.

In this example, the answer will be a verb that completes the verb phrase, *will not...*

Identifying the answer's part of speech will allow you to narrow the word list down to a few possible answers, but you must take into account the rest of the sentence to select the answer that best matches the context of the sentence. As you read, think about the context of the answer. Does the sentence have a positive connotation, or is it negative? Is it formal, or is it casual? Does it use language specific to a particular subject or field of study that would limit the answer to a specific word?

Sentence Completion

The main thing to remember about sentence completion is that your answer must show that you understand the meaning of the word. Your answer must *show* the word in use—not simply redefine the word. For example:

When it landed on the floor after being dropped, the *flimsy* container...

The word is *flimsy*, which means *delicate* or *fragile*. To create your answer, first ask yourself what would reveal to you whether something is *flimsy*. In this sentence, the clue is already begun for you because the flimsy container has been dropped onto the floor. Determine what a *flimsy* container would do if it fell onto the floor, and write it:

When it landed on the floor after being dropped, the *flimsy* container...shattered into many small pieces, spilling its contents everywhere.

Prefixes and Suffixes

Use the Words in Context strategy of determining a part of speech to decide the type of word you will need to complete each sentence. You must form the word you need by combining a vocabulary word with a prefix or suffix, which means that your answer will use the same root as the vocabulary word provided, if not the entire word.

To identify the answer, first consider the definition of the given word and how it relates to the topic of the sentence provided. Then, look over the prefixes and suffixes and select the one that creates the proper part of speech and usage for the context of the answer.

Critical Reading

Reading questions generally fall into three categories:

1. *Identifying the main idea or the author's purpose.* Generally, the question will ask, "What is this selection about?"

In some passages, the author's purpose will be easy to identify because the one or two ideas leap from the text; however, other passages might not be so easily analyzed, especially if they include convoluted sentences. Inverted sentences (subject at the end of the sentence) and elliptical sentences (words missing) will also increase the difficulty of the passages, but all these obstacles can be overcome if readers take one sentence at a time and recast it in their own words. Consider the following sentence:

When determining an individual's total worth to the team, one must first, and perhaps most importantly, consider the player's attendance record, as this suggests important information about the individual's degree of commitment and is a significant indicator of the player's priorities, which should place the team near the top; a dependable teammate will demonstrate dedicated allegiance to the team through persistent practice and support of other players.

If we edit out some of the words, the main point of this sentence is obvious.

When determining an individual's worth to the team, consider the player's attendance record, as this the individual's degree of commitment and priorities ; a dependable teammate will demonstrate allegiance to the team through practice and support of other players.

Some sentences need only a few deletions for clarification, but others require major recasting and additions; they must be read carefully and put into the reader's own words.

Some in their discourse desire rather commendation of wit, in being able to hold all arguments, than of judgment, in discerning what is true; as if it were a praise to know what might be said, and not what should be thought.

After studying it, a reader might recast the sentence as follows:

In conversation, some people desire praise for their abilities to maintain the conversation rather than their abilities to identify what is true or false, as though it were better to sound good than to know what is truth or fiction.

2. *Identifying the stated or implied meaning.* What is the author stating or suggesting?

The literal meaning of a text does not always correspond with the intended meaning. To understand a passage fully, readers must determine which meaning—if there is more than one—is the intended meaning of the passage. Consider the following sentence:

...an expression of courtesy and interest gleamed out upon his features; proving that there was light within him and that it was only the outward medium of the intellectual lamp that obstructed the rays in their passage.

Interpreted literally, this Nathaniel Hawthorne metaphor suggests that a light-generating lamp exists inside of the human body. Since this is impossible, the

reader must look to the metaphoric meaning of the passage to understand it properly. In the metaphor, Hawthorne refers to the human mind—consciousness—as a lamp that emits light, and other people cannot always see the lamp because the outside “medium”—the human body—sometimes blocks it.

3. *Identifying the tone or mood of the selection.* What feeling does the text evoke?

To answer these types of questions, readers must look closely at words and their connotations; for example, the words *stubborn* and *firm* share almost the same definition, but a writer who describes a character as *stubborn* rather than *firm* is probably suggesting something negative about the character.

Improving Paragraphs

When you read a passage, remember that Improving Paragraphs exercises focus on the clarity and organization of the whole passage as opposed to single, confined, grammatical errors. Improving Paragraphs questions fall into four categories:

1. *Analytical.* This type of question involves the main idea, or organization, of the passage, and it might require you to understand the purpose or the meaning of the whole passage before you answer. Be aware of topic sentences, sentences that contradict the author's intention, and information that seems to be in the wrong place.
2. *Sentence Revision.* Revision questions focus on single, troubled sentences that either lack clarity or contain some other type of flaw. These sentences may or may not affect the whole paragraph.
3. *Sentence Combination.* Combination questions ask you to fulfill the purpose of existing sentences using fewer words, thus simplifying and clarifying the text. These can sometimes be identified during your initial reading of the text, because flawed combinations distort meanings and create awkward paragraphs.
4. *Sentence Addition.* Addition questions present sentences which, when added to the passage or deleted from the passage, enhance the general clarity of the text. Watch for “loose ends” or poor transitions between paragraphs as potential areas for addition questions.

Pronunciation Guide

- a — track
- ā — mate
- ä — father
- â — care
- e — pet
- ē — be
- i — bit
- ī — bite
- o — job
- ō — wrote
- ô — port, fought
- ōō — proof
- ö — book
- u — pun
- ū — you
- û — purr
- ə — about, system, circus
- îr — steer
- oi — toy

Word List

Lesson 1

articulate
crux
debris
decry
eminent
harass
milieu
opportune
refuse
skeptical
successor
sullen
trivial
tinge
unkempt

Lesson 2

belittle
blasé
concoct
decade
diverse
enunciate
hurtle
improvise
jostle
libel
mammoth
paradox
provincial
realm
undermine

Lesson 3

amity
cater
guise
inconsequential
jubilant
placate
preclude
repress
saturate
slake
sortie
succumb
tranquil
venomous
wrest

Lesson 4

acute
durable
eavesdrop
ethical
fjord
gaudy
nurture
nominal
pommel
quibble
rampart
respite
rite
seismic
terrestrial

Lesson 5

bizarre
bungle
deduce
dynamic
irrelevant
loiter
obstinate
scrutinize
stunt
superficial
ultimate
vapid
viable
wan
wane

Lesson 6

adjacent
candor
compassion
democratic
disperse
doleful
duress
irk
ratify
sobriety
stagnate
subordinate
talon
taut
wallow

Lesson 7

badger
benevolent
elapse
fitful
genre
haven
immaterial
innate
kindle
listless
meager
octogenarian
permeate
republic
tether

Lesson 8

alight
convalesce
dainty
feint
implore
impugn
integral
jurisdiction
malnutrition
meddle
painstaking
pantheon
sear
vertical
wince

Lesson 9

antagonist
detriment
drone
drudgery
horizontal
hypocrite
insubordinate
mentor
oration
retract
sanctuary
scamper
solace
somber
zenith

Lesson 10

brash
buff
intemperate
interrogate
moot
opaque
pragmatic
prestigious
prodigy
savory
sedate
singular
spontaneous
usurp
whimsical

Lesson 11

authoritarian
avenge
bewilder
bristle
clemency
elaborate
gazebo
malady
mar
obscure
obsolete
pretext
teem
translucent
transparent

Lesson 12

appall
constraint
dissuade
falter
frail
hypothetical
irate
peninsula
placid
prejudice
prelude
profane
puny
ruthless
skirmish

Lesson 13

bystander
cede
comprehensive
devout
flounder
foster
incite
pittance
precipitate
restrictive
scurry
shrewd
spew
tact
vigorous

Lesson 14

accost
ascend
candidate
conventional
culprit
daft
disparage
miscellaneous
placard
proximity
quarry
regatta
sordid
stereotype
whet

Lesson 15

arbitrary
conspicuous
detest
dexterity
dreg
flourish
fray
incoherent
nullify
paltry
persistent
prediction
sinister
succinct
tundra

Lesson 16

concise
dubious
dupe
feudal
illegible
indigent
inhibition
merit
potent
protagonist
ruse
straightforward
subsequent
vogue
writhe

Lesson 17

askew
cope
deceptive
engrossed
facilitate
gusto
premise
rejuvenate
remote
reprehensible
reverberate
speculate
supplement
vain
yen

Lesson 18

asset
construe
equilibrium
imperturbable
interloper
melancholy
petty
potential
prudent
suave
tertiary
unabated
unique
vie
wither

Lesson 19

adverse
alliance
altruism
blunder
bolster
brazen
indifferent
insurgent
lucid
mutual
quaint
retort
technology
terminal
vigil

Lesson 20

assail
astute
condolence
enigma
fruitless
inexplicable
malignant
monotonous
profound
rail
shun
subterranean
valor
variable
virtue

Lesson 21

aspire
composure
deploy
exonerate
exploit
flamboyant
fret
hostile
lackluster
maternal
morose
procrastinate
replenish
saga
static

Lesson One

- articulate** (är tik' yə lit) *adj.* well-spoken; clear
(är tik' yə lāt) *v.* to speak clearly and distinctly
(*adj.*) The *articulate* woman made a living narrating for radio and television advertisements.
(*v.*) Please *articulate* the instructions so there is no confusion over what to do.
(*adj.*) *syn: eloquent; coherent* *ant: tongue-tied; unclear*
(*v.*) *syn: enunciate; pronounce* *ant: mumble; murmur*
- crux** (kruks) *n.* the main or most important point or feature
Sam's refusal to admit his responsibility was the very *crux* of the dilemma.
syn: core; root; center
- debris** (də brē') *n.* scattered remnants; rubble
The typhoon destroyed buildings and filled the streets with *debris*.
syn: ruins; waste
- decry** (dē krī') *v.* to condemn or disapprove openly
Citizens *decried* the new law until a court ruled it unconstitutional.
syn: denounce; condemn *ant: applaud; praise*
- eminent** (em' ə nənt) *adj.* famous; prominent
The *eminent* architect received numerous awards for her latest skyscraper design.
syn: renowned; celebrated *ant: unknown; common*
- harass** (hə ras') *v.* to torment continually; to irritate
Damian's mother *harassed* him until he finally cleaned up his room.
syn: hound; hassle *ant: soothe; please*
- milieu** (mil yoo') *n.* an atmosphere or setting
Frank enjoys the Victorian *milieu* of Sherlock Holmes novels.
syn: environment; domain
- opportune** (op ər tōn') *adj.* happening at a convenient time; favorable
Monday was the *opportune* day for the party because most of the guests had the day off.
syn: appropriate; suitable *ant: inappropriate; undesirable*

9. **refuse** (rē fūz') *v.* to decline to accept or allow
(ref' ūs) *n.* discarded items; trash
(v) You will not be allowed to rent any more videos if you *refuse* to pay the late fees.
(n) All *refuse* must be taken to the city dump.
(v) *syn: reject; deny* *ant: accept; acknowledge*
(n) *syn: garbage; rubbish*
10. **skeptical** (skep' ti kəl) *adj.* doubting; disbelieving
Dan was *skeptical* about buying a watch from the vendor on the street.
syn: doubtful; questioning *ant: confident; certain*
11. **successor** (sək ses' ər) *n.* one who inherits, will inherit, or is next-in-line for a position or title
The *successor* to the late-night talk-show host was never as funny as the original host.
syn: heir; descendent *ant: predecessor*
12. **sullen** (sul' ən) *adj.* miserable; gloomy; somber
Her *sullen* poetry reflects her real-life depression and uncertainties.
syn: dark; dismal *ant: cheerful; bright*
13. **tinge** (tinj) *v.* 1. to tint 2. to affect slightly
n. a small amount of an added color or characteristic
(v.1) The black soot in the air *tinged* her white blouse gray.
(v.2) She worried that the unruly child would *tinge* the other students with a sense of defiance.
(n) Adding a *tinge* of blue to the white walls would improve this room.
(v.1) *syn: shade; color*
(v.2) *syn: influence*
(n) *syn: tint; shade*
14. **trivial** (triv' ē əl) *adj.* of little importance
After seeing what his friend endured, Ben felt that his own problems were *trivial*.
syn: minor; insignificant *ant: crucial; important*
15. **unkempt** (un kempt') *adj.* maintained poorly; untidy
The grass in the *unkempt* lawn stood two feet tall.
syn: sloppy; messy *ant: neat; trim*

EXERCISE I – Words in Context

Using the vocabulary list for this lesson, supply the correct word to complete each sentence.

- Residents _____ the construction of a landfill less than a mile from their new homes.
- The morning before the rainstorm was not the _____ time to wash a car.
- The rusty metal will _____ the white gloves a shade of brown.
- The _____ of the sentence was the word "not."
- Miguel, who grew up in the country, dislikes the urban _____ of the city.
- The damage to Brent's car seemed _____ when he thought about how lucky he was to have survived the accident.
- Linda plans on retiring, but not before she chooses a[n] _____ to take her place.
- Sylvia's _____ painting featured dead trees against a gray, winter sky.
- The adult birds _____ the snake until it left the vicinity of the nest.
- If you _____ your words, people will understand you.
- Empty pizza boxes and old newspapers littered Tom's _____ apartment.
- Please throw your _____ in the trash bin outside.
- The _____ juror felt certain that the defendant was lying.
- After the earthquake, rescue workers used dogs to find victims trapped beneath the _____.
- After winning a Nobel Prize, the _____ scientist became an advisor to the president.

EXERCISE II – Sentence Completion

Complete the sentence in a way that shows you understand the meaning of the italicized vocabulary word.

1. Madeline determined that the *crux* of the matter is...
2. She thinks that 6:00 am is the *opportune* time to go jogging because...
3. The weeds growing in the lawn were a *trivial* problem until they...
4. The angry citizens *harassed* the corrupt mayor because...
5. The *articulate* student volunteered...
6. Someone who enjoys the oceanic *milieu* might decide to...
7. The loyal fan of the television series *decried* the network's decision to...
8. The white clothes will take on a red *tinge* if...
9. The bin overflowed with *refuse* because...
10. Robbie could not find anything in his *unkempt* locker because...
11. People cleaned up the *debris* after...
12. As she approached retirement age, she trained a *successor* who would...
13. We knew by her *sullen* expression that she...
14. Grandpa was always *skeptical* about...
15. The *eminent* scholar became famous when he...

EXERCISE III – Prefixes and Suffixes

Study the entries and use them to complete the questions that follow.

The prefix *in-* means “in” or “not.”

The suffix *-ful* means “full of” or “having.”

The suffix *-ion* means “act of,” “state of,” or “result.”

The suffix *-ity* means “state of” or “quality of.”

Use the provided prefixes and suffixes to change each word so that it completes the sentence correctly. Then, keeping in mind that prefixes and suffixes sometimes change the part of speech, identify the part of speech of the new word by circling *N* for a noun, *V* for a verb, or *ADJ* for an adjective.

1. (successor) You need to practice every day if you want to have a [n] _____ career as a musician. N V ADJ
2. (opportune) When Caleb finally had a [n] _____ to see his favorite band live, a snowstorm caused the concert to be postponed. N V ADJ
3. (successor) Students in the British History class had to memorize the _____ of English monarchs. N V ADJ
4. (opportune) The star player incurred a [n] _____ injury just hours before the championship game. N V ADJ

EXERCISE IV – Critical Reading

The following reading passage contains vocabulary words from this lesson. Carefully read the passage and then choose the best answers for each of the questions that follow.

- 1 Upon hearing the name “Sherlock,” many people instantly picture the world’s most **eminent** fictional detective, complete with tweed, deerstalker cap, cape, magnifying glass, and pipe. A single glance at a footprint at the scene of the crime is all Sherlock Holmes needs to tell you the culprit’s weight, occupation, and what injuries he or she might have sustained as a child. For more than a century, Mr. Holmes has amazed readers with his deductive ability; that is, his ability to infer facts from clues that other investigators dismiss as being **trivial** to the case. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s creation would not have been complete, of course, without Sherlock’s dependable sidekick, Doctor Watson, whose skills compensated for those forfeited by the great Holmes to make room for his matchless intellect. Together, Holmes and Watson have become icons of the mystery—the model for countless detective tales that feature a genius and a trusty sidekick working together to solve crimes; however, it is with no little surprise that many learn that Sherlock Holmes is but a mere **successor** to the original detective genius. Those who are **skeptical** of this need only read the adventures of C. Auguste Dupin—the first detective—in Edgar Allen Poe’s “The Mystery of the Rue Morgue.”
- 2 The first of three Dupin mysteries appeared in 1841, forty-six years before Sherlock Holmes debuted in the magazine serial *A Study in Scarlet*. Narrated by an unnamed sidekick, Poe’s mysteries feature the extraordinary deductive abilities of the eccentric Auguste Dupin, an amateur detective in Paris. The brilliant Dupin uses his command of logic to reconstruct unsolvable crimes, twice at the request of police who overlook the clues at the **crux** of a mystery.
- 3 The Dupin mysteries establish several key elements that frequently appear in detective fiction. Dupin is the original deductive genius, a loner who relies upon his powers of logic and observation to decipher evidence. He trusts only his sidekick of lesser genius, and Dupin’s sidekick, like Dr. Watson, is also the narrator of the story. Since Dupin corrects mistakes of police investigations, Poe’s stories suggest a general lack of ability among police detectives. As a private detective, Sherlock Holmes also assists police who seemingly cannot perform their duties. Poe also introduces the concept of the wrongful accusation. In “The Mystery of the Rue Morgue,” Dupin must solve a case to prove the innocence of a wrongfully accused friend—a popular plot for modern mystery and drama. Finally, Poe invented the “locked-room” mystery, which

involves setting a crime in a closed environment from which the criminal could not possibly escape, thus baffling investigators. Modern readers hear this technique humorously mocked each time someone exclaims, “The butler did it! In the den! With the bread knife!”

- 4 From the popularity of Sherlock Holmes extends a long line of fictional detective geniuses: Agatha Christie’s Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple; Rex Stout’s Nero Wolfe; Perry Mason; Charlie Chan; Simon Templar; Mike Hammer; and Sam Spade, to name a few. The detective mystery has spread from literature to television, and it is now nearly impossible to turn on a television without seeing at least two mysteries in progress that involve either private investigators or police detectives; however, whether you read mysteries or watch them, remember to thank Edgar Allen Poe, and his invention of Auguste Dupin, for making the mystery one of the most popular forms of entertainment.
1. As used in paragraph 1, *eminent* most nearly means the opposite of
 A. weak.
 B. celebrated.
 C. popular.
 D. unknown.
 E. quiet.
2. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is
 A. the sidekick of the legendary Auguste Dupin.
 B. the author who created Sherlock Holmes.
 C. Auguste Dupin’s unnamed narrator.
 D. the author who created Auguste Dupin.
 E. Dr. Watson’s sidekick.
3. As used in paragraph 2, *crux* most nearly means
 A. end.
 B. crime scene.
 C. heart.
 D. topic.
 E. evidence.
4. According to paragraph 3, which is *not* an element of the detective story?
 A. deduction
 B. ghosts and supernatural events
 C. wrongful accusations
 D. inept police
 E. sidekick narrator