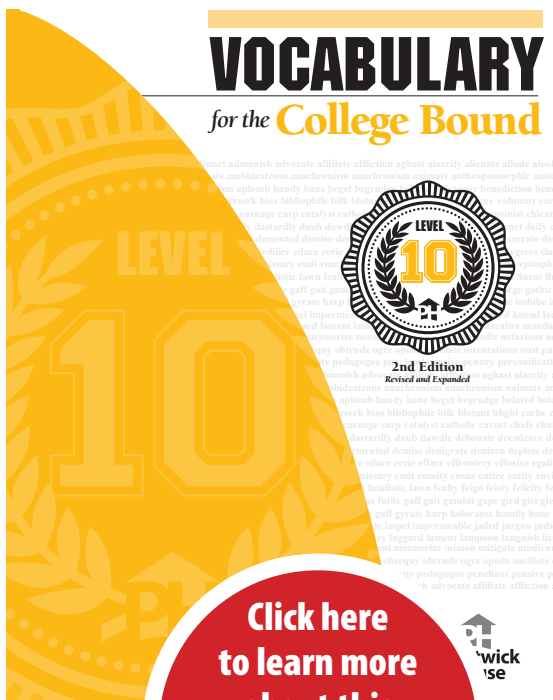




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for the College Bound

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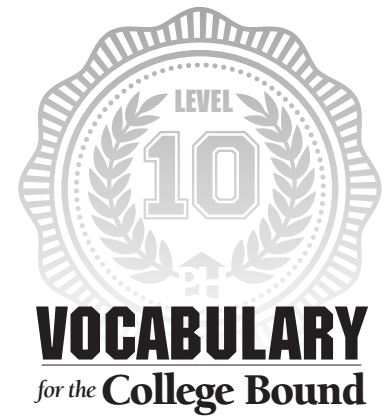
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Strategies for Completing Activities

Words in Context

One way you can make sure that you understand what an unfamiliar word means is to see it used in a sentence and make a guess, an inference, as to its meaning. For example, you probably do not know what the word *theriomorphic* means. Using roots, prefixes, and suffixes will help, as you will see explained below. Read it in the following sentence, though, and you will have another method to arrive at its meaning:

The drawing on the clay tablet that archaeologists recently discovered depicted a man with antlers and hooves—a *theriomorphic* being—within a ring of fire.

Clues in the sentence enable you to see the context of *theriomorphic*: a primitive drawing showing something not completely human. Therefore, you can infer that *theriomorphic* means “a person who looks like an animal.”

Here’s another example:

Dawn was a *somnambulist*; on some nights, her family found her in the hall, other times she was discovered in the basement, and once, they found her sitting asleep in the front seat of the car.

After reading the sentence, you should be able to infer that the word *somnambulist* must mean “someone who walks in his or her sleep.”

Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes

To the person interested in words, a knowledge of roots, prefixes, and suffixes turns each new, unfamiliar word into a puzzle. And while it is a sure and lifelong way to build your vocabulary, there are two points to keep in mind.

1. Some words have evolved through usage so that today’s definitions are different from the ones you might have inferred from an examination of their roots and/or prefixes. For example, the word *abstruse* contains the prefix *ab-* (away) and the root *trudere* (to thrust) and literally means “to thrust away.” But today, the word is used to describe something that is “hard to understand.”

2. Occasionally, you may be incorrect about a root. For example, knowing that the root *vin* means “to conquer,” you would be correct in concluding that the word *invincible* means “not able to be conquered”; but if you tried to apply that root meaning to the word *vindictive* or *vindicate*, you would miss the actual meaning. So, in analyzing an unfamiliar word, check for other possible roots than the one you first assumed if your inferred meaning doesn’t fit the context.

These warnings notwithstanding, a knowledge of roots, prefixes, and suffixes is one of the best ways to build a strong, vital vocabulary.

Usage Inferences

The next method of determining if you understand what a word means is for you to see the word as it might be applied to various situations. Therefore, in a Usage Inference, you need to be able to take the definition you learned into the real world. Remembering the definition and using the word correctly are two different concepts. We supply a series of multiple-choice situations in which you need to figure out the best use of the word.

Let’s assume that you learned in a lesson that *specious* means “false or faulty reasoning that seems true” or “an argument that does not stand up to logical reasoning.”

Example:

When or where would making a *specious* argument most likely be challenged?

- A. on Friday night asking for the keys to the family car
- B. in a jury room debating the guilt of someone on trial
- C. with your family deciding on the price of a trip to Hawaii
- D. at school trying to convince your friend to go sky diving

While all the answers could be examples of making a specious argument, the one that might cause a problem is B, simply because any faulty argument would most likely be argued against by another juror. Obviously, faulty logic and arguments can be used in A, B, C, and D. After all, saying the wrong thing may prevent getting the keys, spending too much could ruin a trip, and sky diving is dangerous. These three situations, though, are less likely to have flawed logic called into question.

Another key to the correct answer is stated in the question, so make sure that you read that part carefully, as it frequently will narrow down your choices.

Reading Comprehension

Reading questions generally fall into several types.

1. *Identifying the main idea or the author’s purpose. In short, the question asks, “What is this selection about?”*

In some paragraphs, this is easy to spot because there are one or two ideas that leap from the paragraph. In some selections, however, this may be much more difficult, especially if there are convoluted sentences with clauses embedded within clauses. It also may be difficult in those selections in which there are inverted sentences (a sentence with the subject at the end) or elliptical sentences (a sentence in which a word or words are left out). All of these obstacles can be overcome if you take one sentence at a time and put it in your own words.

Consider the following sentence:

These writers either jot down their thoughts bit by bit, in short, ambiguous, and paradoxical sentences, which apparently mean much more than they say—of this kind of writing Schelling's treatises on natural philosophy are a splendid instance; or else they hold forth with a deluge of words and the most intolerable diffusiveness, as though no end of fuss were necessary to make the reader understand the deep meaning of their sentences, whereas it is some quite simple if not actually trivial idea, examples of which may be found in plenty in the popular works of Fichte, and the philosophical manuals of a hundred other miserable dunces.

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

These writers either jot down their thoughts bit by bit, in short, ~~ambiguous, and paradoxical~~ sentences, which apparently mean much more than they say—of this kind of writing Schelling's treatises on natural philosophy are a splendid instance; or else they hold forth with a deluge of words ~~and the most intolerable diffusiveness~~, as though [it] ~~end of fuss~~ were necessary to make the reader understand the deep meaning of their sentences, whereas it is ~~some~~ [a] ~~quite~~ simple if not actually trivial idea, ~~examples of which may be found in plenty in the popular works of Fichte, and the philosophical manuals of a hundred other miserable dunces.~~

While the previous sentence needs only deletions to make it clear, this next one requires major revisions and 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 revise the sentence as follows:

In their conversations, some people would rather win praise for their wit or style of saying something rather than win praise for their ability to judge between what is true or false—as if it were better to sound good regardless of the quality of thought.

2. *Identifying the stated or inferred meaning. Simply, what is the author stating or suggesting?*
3. *Identifying the tone or mood of the selection or the author's feeling.*

To answer this type of question, look closely at individual words and their connotations. For example, if an author describes one person as stubborn and another as firm, it tells you something of the author's feelings. In the same manner, if the author uses many words with harsh, negative connotations, he is conveying one mood; but if he uses words with milder negative connotations, he may be striving for quite another mood.

Pronunciation Guide

ă pat	ō boat, oh
ā aid, fey, pay	ōō took
â air, care, wear, ant	ōō boot, fruit
ā father	ô ball, haul
b bib	p pop
ch church	r roar
d deed	s miss, sauce, see
ē pet, pleasure	sh dish, ship
ē be, bee, easy, leisure	t tight
f fast, fife, off, phase, rough	th path, thin
g gag	<u>th</u> this, bathe
h hat	ũ cut, rough
hw which	û circle, firm, heard, term, turn, urge, word
ĩ pit	v cave, valve, vine
ī by, guy, pie	w with
î dear, deer, fierce, mere	y yes
j jury, joke	yōō abuse, use
k kiss, clean, quit	z rose, size, xylophone, zebra
oi soil, toy	zh garage, pleasure, vision
ou cow, out	ə about, silent, pencil, lemon, circus
ō closet, bother	ər butter

Lesson One

1. **abate** (ə bāt') *verb* to lessen in violence or intensity
When the winds *abated*, the helicopter was able to land.
syn: subside, decrease *ant:* intensify, increase
2. **abet** (ə bēt') *verb* to assist or encourage, especially in wrongdoing
For hiding the thief in his basement, he was charged with aiding and *abetting* a criminal.
syn: promote, incite *ant:* impede, dissuade, deter
3. **abhor** (ăb hôr') *verb* to detest, loathe, hate strongly
Leigh Ann loved her job, but she *abhorred* the long commute to work every day.
syn: despise, abominate *ant:* love, esteem
4. **acquit** (ə kwīt') *verb* to find not guilty of a fault or crime
The jury *acquitted* the man, and he was free to go.
syn: vindicate, absolve, exonerate *ant:* convict, incriminate, condemn
5. **acrimony** (ă' krə mō nē) *noun* harsh temper or bitter feeling
Because of his *acrimony*, the old man found himself lonely and friendless.
syn: resentment, rancor, unkindness *ant:* amiability, tenderness, kindness
6. **adamant** (ăd' ə mănt) *adj.* unyielding; firm in opinion
Despite the protests of the entire city council, the mayor remained *adamant*.
syn: stubborn *ant:* amenable, flexible
7. **adulation** (ăj ōō lă' shən) *noun* excessive praise or admiration
She despised the *adulation* heaped on rock stars by young fans.
syn: flattery, adoration *ant:* derision, mockery
8. **affable** (ăf' ə bel) *adj.* friendly; courteous; agreeable in manner; easy to talk to
The *affable* old man never lacked visitors.
syn: amiable, good-natured *ant:* disagreeable, irritable, bad-tempered
9. **agnostic** (ăg nōs' tīk) *noun* one who believes that the existence of God is unknown and unknowable
Although he would not say there was no God, he did not attend church because he was an *agnostic*.
10. **agrarian** (ə grâr' ē ən) *adj.* having to do with farms, farmers, or the use of land
Because New Jersey is mostly *agrarian*, it is called "The Garden State."
syn: agricultural, rural, pastoral *ant:* urban

Exercise I Words in Context

Fill in the blanks with the correct vocabulary words needed to complete the sentences.

acquitted**abhorred****abetting****abate**

- A. Having been betrayed by a friend in his youth, the hermit _____ mankind and kept mostly to himself. One dark night, after a storm that had raged for hours began to _____, he was surprised by a knock on his door. It was a man who had just escaped from a nearby prison. The lonely old man fed and clothed the stranger and gave him a place to sleep. The next morning, however, he was awakened by the police who arrested him for _____ an escaped convict. Had the old man not acted typically unpleasant at his trial, he probably would have been _____.

affable**agnostic****adulation****acrimony****agrarian****adamant**

- B. The mayor and the city council had debated for weeks on the rezoning issue. The councilmen were in favor of urbanizing, but the mayor insisted on maintaining the _____ nature of the county. Despite the well-planned arguments of the councilmen, the mayor remained _____ and refused to change his position.
- C. The school board meeting began pleasantly enough with people exchanging _____ greetings. However, once the issue of school prayer was raised, friendliness changed to _____. Mr. Johnson, an _____, who once had received a great deal of _____ in the community for his work with troubled children, was the object of many attacks.

Exercise II Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes

Study the entries and answer the questions that follow.

The prefix *mal-* means “bad, evil.”

The root *bene* means “good.”

The root *dict* means “to speak.”

- Without using a dictionary, try to define the following words:
malevolent
benevolent
malediction
benediction
malefactor
benefactor
- After a biopsy, tumors are generally labeled _____ or _____.
- List as many other related words as you can that begin with either *mal-* or *bene*.

Exercise III Usage Inferences

Choose the answer that best suits the situation.

- Who would most likely *abhor* the thought of a math test tomorrow?
A. the teacher who was sick and used an old test that allowed some students to cheat
B. the student who felt that he knew math better than he understood English
C. the group of students who studied together all week at each other’s houses
D. the student who spent no time studying because a new video game just came out
- Which situation will most likely include *acrimony*?
A. people playing cards for many hours with one person usually losing
B. a dog and cat hissing and barking when they meet for the first time
C. a divorce in which neither person will relinquish the house to the other
D. an argument between teams in a soccer game after the referee missed a call
- What is most *adamant*?
A. a rock
B. a stream
C. anger
D. travel

Exercise IV Reading Comprehension

Read the selection and answer the questions.

Let us suppose, therefore, that the government is entirely at one with the people and never thinks of exerting any power of coercion unless in agreement with what it conceives to be their voice. But I deny the right of the people to exercise such coercion, either by themselves or by their government. The power itself is illegitimate; the best government has no more title to it than the worst. It is noxious, or more noxious, when exerted in accordance with public opinion, than when in opposition to it. If all mankind, minus one, were of one opinion and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind.

—John Stuart Mill

- The writer of this selection is primarily concerned about
 - a government of the people.
 - the abuse of power.
 - justice for all.
 - censorship.
 - men and nations.
- The word *noxious* in the fifth sentence means
 - helpful.
 - harmful.
 - silly.
 - important.
 - peaceful.
- The author states or implies that if the majority of people agree on one point,
 - then the minority who disagree should keep silent.
 - that in no way gives the majority the right to silence the minority.
 - that is how democracy works.
 - that is bad for the entire country.
 - that a few people should not be allowed to disrupt things for everyone else.
- The author contends or implies that
 - when the government is entirely at one with the people, only then can it exert coercion.
 - only the best of governments (i.e., the most democratic) has the right to control the speech of its citizens.
 - no government has the right, under any circumstances, to control the speech of its citizens.
 - if only one or a few voices disagree, they may be silenced.
 - if the government and public opinion agree, only then can disagreements be silenced.