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VOCABULARY
for the College Bound

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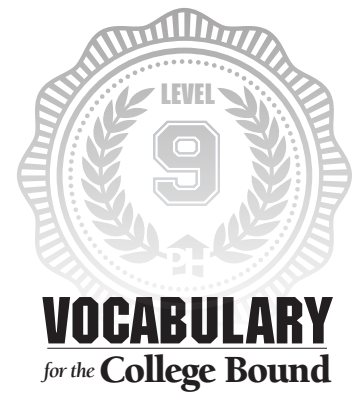


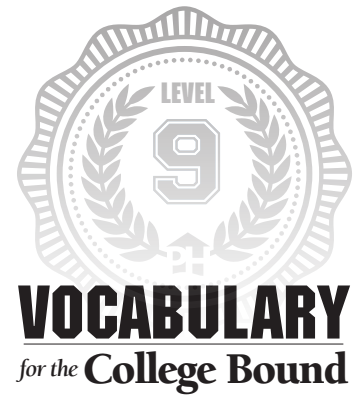
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Strategies for Completing Activities

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
ĕ 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. **adjunct** (adj' unkt) *noun* a subordinate; an assistant
adj. added or connected in a dependent or subordinate manner
Before his dismissal, Dr. Jones had been an *adjunct* professor at the university.
syn: addition, appendage, attachment
2. **admonish** (ăd mŏn' ĩsh) *verb* to warn, to caution
The lifeguard *admonished* the small children about the high waves and undertow before allowing them to go near the water.
syn: advise, notify
3. **advocate** (ăd' və kăt) *verb* to recommend; to speak in favor of
I would *advocate* a telephone survey to find out if there is backing for the proposed changes.
syn: prescribe, support *ant:* oppose, contest
4. **affiliate** (ə fil' ē ĩt) *noun* an associate, partner
He denied that he was an *affiliate* of any organized-crime figure.
syn: member, subordinate, employee
5. **affliction** (ə flĭk' shən) *noun* anything causing great suffering
His nightly insomnia is an *affliction* that has caused many problems at work.
syn: trouble, pain, distress *ant:* relief, aid
6. **aghast** (ə găst') *adj.* feeling great dismay or horror
We were *aghast* at the sarcastic tone the teenage girl directed at her parents.
syn: terrified, shocked, amazed
7. **alacrity** (ə lăk' rĭ tē) *noun* liveliness; willingness; eagerness
He performed his chores with *alacrity*.
syn: promptness, briskness, readiness *ant:* slowness, reluctance
8. **alienate** (ăl' yə năt) *verb* to make others unfriendly toward you
Don't *alienate* your neighbors unless you really like to be alone.
syn: estrange, turn against *ant:* disagreeable, irritable,
bad-tempered
9. **allude** (ə lŏd'') *verb* to hint at; to refer to indirectly
The attorney *alluded* to a cover-up but was not very specific.
syn: suggest, refer, imply
10. **aloof** (ə lŏf'') *adj.* reserved, distant
The singer looked rather *aloof* as he stood on the step signing autographs in a bored manner.
syn: remote, cool, indifferent *ant:* warm, friendly

Exercise I Words in Context

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

affliction **adjunct** **alluded** **advocate** **aghast**

- A. When his _____ assistant got a promotion, the professor advertised in the local newspaper for a new one. When the first applicant arrived for his interview, Dr. Smith was _____ at his inappropriate appearance. He looked like he was suffering from the _____ of homelessness.
- B. Although the speaker _____ to taking drastic action, he was careful not to _____ violence as the solution.

affiliated **alienated** **aloof** **admonished** **alacrity**

- C. While some of the guests remained _____, others joined in the activity with _____.
- D. Although his wife had _____ Mr. Jones about his behavior, he _____ just about everyone in the neighborhood, and now, no one speaks to him. He claims that he prefers not being _____ with anyone or anything in the neighborhood.

Exercise II Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes

Study the entries and answer the questions that follow.

The prefix *sub-* means “under, below.”

The suffix *-ize* means “to make.”

The root *urb* means “city.”

- Without using a dictionary, try to define the following words:
suburb
standardize
urbanize
subhuman
substandard
humanize
- The action of many people leaving cities and moving into the _____ causes the cities to decay. This results in what is called _____ blight.
- List as many words as you can think of that use the prefix *sub-*, the suffix *-ize*, or the root *urb*.

Exercise III Usage Inferences

Choose the answer that best suits the situation.

- Who is least likely to move with *alacrity*?
A. someone walking for exercise
B. a person going to a job interview
C. a teenager doing chores
D. someone trying to meet a deadline
- If you are *aloof*, in which job would you most likely not do well?
A. policeman
B. plumber
C. teacher
D. salesman
- Who would most likely *advocate* the releasing of wolves into remote national parks?
A. a conservationist
B. a veterinarian
C. a rancher
D. a supermarket executive

Exercise IV Reading Comprehension

Read the selection and answer the questions.

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things.

—Francis Bacon

1. The author's main point in this selection is that
 - A. it is quite acceptable to read extracts of books.
 - B. all books should be read in the same fashion.
 - C. not all books should be read in the same way.
 - D. books are no substitute for experience.
2. The tone of this selection is one of
 - A. repressed anger.
 - B. hopeless sadness.
 - C. biting satire.
 - D. thoughtful reflection.
3. Of "distilled books" the author thinks
 - A. they are trash that no one should read.
 - B. they have a great deal of importance to say.
 - C. they may be read by others and reported on.
 - D. they are to be chewed and digested.
4. The author implies or states that
 - A. all books are worth our full attention.
 - B. some books should be read only very quickly or in part.
 - C. mean books are not worth reading because of the violence in them.
 - D. every book an author feels is important enough to be written is important enough to be read.