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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is designed around a simple principle: information is more easily assimilated when you have context.

Words Organized by Theme

Rather than studying random or alphabetized lists of words (which are quite arbitrary when it comes to how words are related), in this edition the words are organized into lists based on common concepts or themes. Themes are noted on the top right of the page. This should, on its own, make the words easier to retain. For example, if you forget what *languid* means but remember that it belongs to the list of words related to *sloth*, you'll know that it probably has something to do with laziness or lacking energy.

This way of organizing words affords a few study options. For example, you can study related groups of words like *speech*, *expression*, and *writing* or opposite pairs of words like *success* and *failure* to build ever larger frameworks of context.

A natural consequence of organizing words by common meaning is that you will encounter many words with similar or identical meanings. So, while working through exercises, do not be disturbed by the fact that while you used one word to answer a question, a synonymous word is listed as the answer. **If your answer is synonymous with the correct answer, both answers are correct!**

Notable Roots

Another feature of this book is the list of *notable roots* that follows each day's words. This includes roots, prefixes, and suffixes found in your vocabulary words that can also be found in other words. This gives you yet another context for study: groups of words that share common roots.

Weekly Study Program

The book is organized into 46 weeks of study, each containing four lists of six words to be studied during the week and a series of review exercises for the fifth day (or weekend if you prefer). Review exercises not only cover that week's words, but also periodically review words learned on previous weeks. This brings up an important point—success with vocabulary study comes through repetition. Each day's words should be reviewed a few times throughout the day, and past words need to be studied and used in order for them to stick.

FULL PRONUNCIATION KEY

a	apple, bat	i	inch, pin	s	spell, best
ā	age, lace	ir	ear, cheer	sh	shrug, crash
ä	alms, father	ī	ivy, hide	t	time, act
är	arm, jar	j	just, enjoy	th	think, teeth
		k	kin, talk	TH	this, breathe
b	bag, sob	l	lose, hurl	u	bull, foot
ch	chill, such	m	mice, cram	ur	sure, pure
d	done, said	n	not, into	ū	ooze, cute
		ŋ	song, ring	û	up, month
ə	around, waken, pencil, demon	o	ox, rot	v	vast, have
e	elk, met	ō	open, blow	w	wish, squeak
ē	ease, see	ó	all, bought	y	youth, few
er	air, wear	ôi	oil, boy	z	zoo, buzz
ér	urn, worth	ôr	ore, cord	zh	genre, pleasure
f	feel, stiff	ou	owl, mouse	-	denotes separate syllables
g	gone, big	p	pest, cap		
h	him, behind	r	red, tree		
hw	which, whale				

READING WISELY

An *astute* reader can *surmise* the logic and general meaning of a text without necessarily being influenced by it. She has the mental *acuity* to separate fact from opinion. She does not shun the latter but instead weighs *proffered* insights according to the *probity* of the writer as well as the degree to which subjective views conform with her experience, values, and *prudence*.

Sample Sentences: Use your new words in the following sentences. Occasionally, it may be necessary to change the ending of a word (e.g., *indiscriminate* to *indiscriminately*).

1. The mayor's business dealings left his _____ open to question.
2. To receive a driver's license you must demonstrate your visual _____.
3. _____ is the hallmark of a sound investment strategy.
4. Above all, a hiring manager must be a(n) _____ judge of character.
5. The professor _____ the following advice: choose a well-researched topic.
6. From his demeanor, Beth _____ that her brother wished to be left alone.

Definitions: Now that you have seen and used the new words in sentences and have the definitions "on the tip of your tongue," try to pair the words with their meanings.

- | | | |
|--------------|-------|--|
| 7. astute | _____ | a. to determine by observation and deduction |
| 8. surmise | _____ | b. to present in a helpful manner |
| 9. acuity | _____ | c. upright moral character |
| 10. proffer | _____ | d. caution; good sense |
| 11. probity | _____ | e. clever; keenly observant |
| 12. prudence | _____ | f. sharpness; perceptiveness |

NEW WORDS

astute

ə - stūt

surmise

sur - mīz

acuity

ə - kyū - i - tē

proffer

pro - fēr

probity

prō - bi - tē

prudence

prū - dins

Notable Roots:

mis = send out;

ac = sharpness; prob = worth, goodness

INFORMATION OVERLOAD

Though information technology has put a glut of it at our fingertips, knowledge is not always power. A healthy democracy does depend on a citizenry *cognizant* of facts and *apprised* of current events. To be truly *circumspect* about it, however, we *concoct* so many studies, “news” articles, and angry screeds for *perusal* that readers can become numb, while the *pedantic* merely use facts and talking points to impress.

Sample Sentences: Now that you’ve seen the words used in context and have an idea of their meanings, try to use them in the following sentences. Remember that a word ending may have to be changed.

1. The teacher easily saw through the excuse her student had _____.
2. An array of intelligence services keeps the president _____ of foreign and domestic threats to national security.
3. _____ of what the pitcher was about to throw, the center fielder confidently swung the bat.
4. Einstein was modest and never _____ toward those who lacked his brilliance.
5. While the young are prone to rashness, the old are more _____.
6. The young couple had their attorney _____ the contract before they would sign it.

Definitions: Test yourself by matching the new words with the definitions.

- | | | |
|----------------|-------|--|
| 7. cognizant | _____ | a. to review with care |
| 8. apprise | _____ | b. thoughtful; cautious |
| 9. circumspect | _____ | c. showing off one’s knowledge |
| 10. concoct | _____ | d. to be aware of specific information |
| 11. peruse | _____ | e. to create or prepare |
| 12. pedantic | _____ | f. to provide information |

NEW WORDS

cognizant

kog - ni - zent

apprise

ə - prīz

circumspect

ser - kûm - spekt

concoct

kun - kokt

peruse

pə - rūz

pedantic

pə - dan - tik

Notable Roots:

cog = thought,
knowledge; circum =
circle; spec = sight;
ped = teaching, child

LEND FEW THY TONGUE

Sylvia was a *canny* survivor. For months one decree after another came down from the new management team without any input from the workforce. Accustomed to a more open corporate culture, griping colleagues found themselves victims of “restructuring.” Sylvia had found that a *politic* approach gave her a better chance at keeping her post. Thus, she maintained an *introspective* silence. When the atmosphere finally became too toxic, she crafted a corporate memo offering a *cogent* analysis of company failings with many *incisive* critiques. After *ruminating* over whether to send it, however, she chose instead to polish her resume and begin the search for an employer that deserved her skills and loyalty.

Sample Sentences: Try your hand at using your new words by writing them in their correct form (change the endings if necessary) in these sentences:

1. Luddendorf’s _____, feverish mind was steadied by Hindenberg’s pragmatism and calmness; together they formed a highly effective leadership team.
2. Dole and Clinton were _____ in their eulogies of the polarizing Nixon, choosing to focus on his many foreign policy achievements while glossing over the Watergate scandal.
3. The quiet of nature allows us a chance to _____, finding insights into and solutions for the vexations of everyday life.
4. A _____ argument will always win more people over than a convoluted one.
5. Malik is naturally more _____, often apologizing for breaches of etiquette that are barely noticed, if at all.
6. Lincoln’s kindly, story-telling persona belied what a _____ politician he was.

Definitions: If you are having trouble picking the right definitions, it may be best *not* to do them in the order given, but to do the ones you are surest of first.

- | | | |
|------------------|-------|--|
| 7. canny | _____ | a. inward looking; self-aware |
| 8. politic | _____ | b. expressed clearly and forcefully |
| 9. introspective | _____ | c. careful to avoid giving offense; shrewd |
| 10. cogent | _____ | d. to consider carefully |
| 11. incisive | _____ | e. perceptive; astute*; cautious |
| 12. ruminate | _____ | f. clear and penetrating; harsh |

*astute—studied previously, see page 1. *Each review word studied previously will be followed by an asterisk—you will find the first use of the word by consulting the index at the back of the book.*

NEW WORDS

canny

kan - nē

politic

pol - i - tik

introspective

in - trō - spek - tiv

cogent

kō - jent

incisive

in - sī - siv

ruminate

rū - min - āt

Notable Roots:

polis = city; intro =
inward; spec = sight;
cis = cut; rumen =
chew on

NERVOUS NELLY

Contract signing always made Chris feel *pensive*. He had done his job well, bringing buyers and sellers together. This was the moment when he would earn his commission, but past experience had taught him to take a *pragmatic* view: so many things could still go wrong. *Perspicacious* first-time homebuyers asked many questions, some reasonable and *trenchant*, others quibbling and paranoid. To assuage their fears as much as possible, he felt it best to be transparent. "The contract *stipulates* \$20,000 in earnest money," he pointed out, then added, *pedagogically*, "That's a down payment the sellers keep in case you back out before closing."

Sample Sentences: Getting the hang of it? Now go on to use the six new words in the following sentences—remember, past tenses may be required.

1. Few modern satirists are as _____ as H. L. Mencken, whose wit was devastating.
2. Elle's _____ expression stood out in the sea of smiling faces in the class photo.
3. As a natural _____, Malini was a font of both useful information and trivia.
4. The visionary Root designed buildings of sublime beauty for the clients secured by the charming and _____ Burnham.
5. The _____ general manager, "Stick" Michael, assembled the Yankee dynasty of the late 1990s by recognizing the latent potential of unsung prospects and free agents.
6. The terms _____ in the labor agreement are so clear that management and the workforce rarely have serious disagreements.

Definitions: Pick the letter of the definition that matches your new word and write it in the answer space.

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 7. pensive _____ | a. to set as a condition for an agreement |
| 8. pragmatic _____ | b. teacher; one who offers unsolicited information |
| 9. perspicacious _____ | c. observant; sarcastically witty |
| 10. trenchant _____ | d. thoughtful; nervous |
| 11. stipulate _____ | e. perceptive; discerning |
| 12. pedagogue _____ | f. having a practical point of view |

NEW WORDS

pensive

pen - siv

pragmatic

prag - ma - tik

perspicacious

pér - spik - ā - shəs

trenchant

tren - chent

stipulate

stip - ū - lāt

pedagogue

ped - ə - gog

Notable Roots:

pens = thinking;
spec = sight; trench =
depth; ped = teaching,
children

GROUP REVIEW

You have accomplished something worthwhile this week. In learning 24 useful words, you have taken a step toward a greater mastery of the English language. In studying a single group of related words, you are more likely to retain this mastery. As a result of today's lesson, you will become aware of those words that require greater study on your part for complete success in these first lessons.

Matching

Directions: Take the following quiz by matching the best possible definition with the words you have studied. Write the letter that stands for that definition in the appropriate answer space.

REVIEW WORDS

- _____ 1. acuity
- _____ 2. apprise
- _____ 3. astute
- _____ 4. canny
- _____ 5. circumspect
- _____ 6. cogent
- _____ 7. cognizant
- _____ 8. concoct
- _____ 9. incisive
- _____ 10. introspective
- _____ 11. pedagogue
- _____ 12. pedantic
- _____ 13. pensive
- _____ 14. perspicacious
- _____ 15. peruse
- _____ 16. politic
- _____ 17. pragmatic
- _____ 18. probity
- _____ 19. proffer
- _____ 20. prudence
- _____ 21. ruminate
- _____ 22. stipulate
- _____ 23. surmise
- _____ 24. trenchant

DEFINITIONS

- a. to be aware of specific information
- b. having a practical point of view
- c. to consider carefully
- d. thoughtful; nervous
- e. perceptive; astute*; cautious
- f. upright moral character
- g. perceptive; discerning
- h. expressed clearly and forcefully
- i. to determine by observation and deduction
- j. teacher; one who offers unsolicited information
- k. clear and penetrating; harsh
- l. thoughtful; cautious
- m. observant; sarcastically witty
- n. showing off one's knowledge
- o. to set as a condition for an agreement
- p. caution; good sense
- q. careful to avoid giving offense; shrewd
- r. clever; keenly observant
- s. to review with care
- t. sharpness; perceptiveness
- u. to provide information
- v. to present in a helpful manner
- w. to create or prepare
- x. inward looking; self-aware

Exploring Roots

As the most common roots are to be found in many different words, knowledge of them is an important tool for breaking down new and unfamiliar vocabulary. Whether you recognize a word's etymology or its similarity to a foreign language word, improving your knowledge of these building blocks will improve your mastery of vocabulary.

Directions: Match the root definition with the sentence containing an italicized word using the same root.

- | | | |
|-------|--------------------|--|
| _____ | 1. teaching, child | a. <i>Ruminants</i> are the principle source of milk production. |
| _____ | 2. sight | b. The modern <i>metropolis</i> offers much for tourists to admire. |
| _____ | 3. depth | c. Judges often sentence first-time offenders to <i>probation</i> . |
| _____ | 4. circle | d. Some personality disorders can be treated with <i>cognitive</i> behavioral therapy. |
| _____ | 5. thought | e. <i>Entrenched</i> attitudes are the hardest to eradicate. |
| _____ | 6. chew on | f. Magellan died before he could complete the <i>circumnavigation</i> of the world. |
| _____ | 7. city | g. The daredevil amazed the <i>spectators</i> . |
| _____ | 8. worth | h. Vaccination is a contentious subject among parents and <i>pediatricians</i> . |