

Dictionary skills: Part 2

Level 2

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Age: Teenagers / adults
Time needed: 45–60 minutes (approx)
Subject: Dictionary skills / vocabulary development
Summary: These worksheets are designed for use with the <i>Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners</i> to give learners practice in using the dictionary to check meaning and for vocabulary development.



Exercise 1: Expressions with prepositions

1. This could be done as a pair or small group exercise. Listen to their suggested answers but do not correct any mistakes. Allow them to check their answers in the dictionary. They may need some brief guidance as to where to look for the answers. These are shown in **bold type** as part of the entry for the key word in each case (e.g. *breach*, *change*, *close*, *comparison* and so on). Note that the key word may precede the preposition (e.g. *breach*) or follow it (e.g. *conclusion*).

Exercise 2: Word building

2. When learners have finished this exercise, you could highlight some of the main patterns used in noun formation exemplified here, e.g. *-y*, *-ness*, *-th*, and ask them for more examples of each.

Exercise 3: Compounds

3. The answers to these will not be found under the entries for the nouns themselves but in the associated compound words found immediately after each entry. For example, the entry for *business* gives definitions for different uses of the word as well as idioms containing the word *business*. Compounds beginning with *business* can be found after the entry for *business*, e.g. *business card*, *business class*, *business park* and so on.

Exercise 4: Adjectives and definitions

4. Ask learners to work in pairs or small groups to discuss the possible answers. Listen to their suggested answers but do not correct any mistakes. Then ask them to check in the dictionary.

Exercise 5: British and American English

5. Check briefly that your learners know the abbreviations used in the dictionary to denote whether a lexical item is typically British English (*Br E*) or American English (*Am E*).

Exercise 6: Phrasal verbs

6. Ask learners to work in pairs or small groups to discuss the possible answers. Listen to their suggested answers but do not correct any mistakes. Then ask them to check in the dictionary. Check that they know that phrasal verbs are listed immediately after the main entry for the verb in question.

Dictionary skills: Part 2

Level 2

1 Expressions with prepositions

Fill the gaps in these examples from the dictionary using prepositions. Then check your answers in the dictionary.

1. The company was found to be in breach _____ environmental regulations.
2. It's nice to hear some good news _____ a change.
3. We are close _____ signing an agreement after today's meeting.
4. In comparison _____ the male, the female is stronger and more energetic.
5. _____ conclusion, I would like to thank everyone who helped to make this event possible.
6. Congratulations _____ your 50th wedding anniversary.
7. His breakfast consists _____ dry bread and a cup of tea.
8. When we took control _____ the company, it was losing money.

2 Word building: Noun forms

What are the noun forms of these adjectives? Check your answers in the dictionary.

adjective	noun
e.g. <i>simple</i>	<i>simplicity</i>
1. wide	
2. deep	
3. easy	
4. heavy	
5. jealous	
6. kind	
7. anxious	
8. stupid	

Dictionary skills: Part 2

Level 2

3 Compounds

Which nouns go with these other nouns to match the definitions? Check your answers in the dictionary.

Example: booking _____ – a place where you can buy travel tickets (booking **office**)

1. **art** _____ – a building where people go to see paintings and other art
2. **bank** _____ – the amount of money that you have in your bank account
3. **car** _____ – money that you pay to the government so that you can drive your car on the roads
4. **desk** _____ – the American English term for a hotel receptionist
5. **economy** _____ – a period when you try to spend less money than usual
6. **fire** _____ – a metal staircase on the outside wall of a building that people use to get out of the building when there is a fire
7. **garden** _____ – a large store that sells plants, flowers and the tools and equipment you need for looking after a garden
8. **head** _____ – the main office of an organization or company, or the people who work there

4 Adjectives and definitions

In each of these examples, one definition is correct and one is incorrect. Which do you think are the correct definitions? Check your answers in the dictionary.

1. **brisk**
 - a) moving or acting quickly
 - b) using very few words so seeming to be rude
2. **damp**
 - a) slightly wet, often in an unpleasant way or when it should be dry
 - b) full of steam
3. **eager**
 - a) able to see or notice things that are very difficult to see
 - b) very keen to do something or enthusiastic about something
4. **fed up**
 - a) full of food after eating too much
 - b) annoyed or bored with something you feel you have accepted for too long
5. **hesitant**
 - a) doing something slowly or pausing before you do it because you are nervous
 - b) able to solve problems by finding solutions based on your own experience
6. **lousy**
 - a) bad or unpleasant
 - b) rude and aggressive
7. **obedient**
 - a) refusing to change your opinions or plans
 - b) doing what a person, law or rule says that you must do
8. **pathetic**
 - a) feeling sorry for someone
 - b) useless or not effective in an annoying way

Dictionary skills: Part 2

Level 2

5 British and American English

Use the dictionary to find the British or American equivalents of the words in the table and fill the gaps.

British	American
1. mobile home	
2.	store
3.	penitentiary
4.	attorney
5. chips	
6.	thumb tack
7. American football	
8.	soccer

6 Phrasal Verbs

Read the definitions and complete the phrasal verbs by writing one of the particles given below in the gaps. Then check your answers in the dictionary.

through up back forward on down

1. put _____ – *suggest something or offer an idea, opinion, reason etc.*
2. put _____ – *cover your body with a piece of clothing or jewellery*
3. put _____ – *criticize someone, especially when other people are present*
4. put _____ – *change the time of an event so it happens later than planned*
5. put _____ – *connect someone to the person they want to speak to on the phone*
6. put _____ – *let someone stay in your house*

Dictionary skills: Part 2

Level 2

KEY

1 Expressions with prepositions

1. of
2. for
3. to
4. with
5. in
6. on
7. of
8. of

2 Word building: Noun forms

1. width
2. depth
3. ease
4. heaviness
5. jealousy
6. kindness
7. anxiety
8. stupidity

3 Compounds

1. gallery
2. balance
3. tax
4. clerk
5. drive
6. escape
7. centre
8. office

4 Adjectives and definitions

1. a
2. a
3. b
4. b
5. a
6. a
7. b
8. b

5 British and American English

1. trailer
2. shop
3. prison
4. lawyer
5. French fries
6. drawing pin
7. football
8. football

6 Phrasal verbs

1. forward
2. on
3. down
4. back
5. through
6. up