

Dictionary skills: Part 4

Level 3

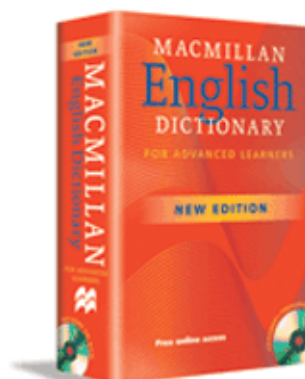
Author: Tim Bowen

Age: Teenagers / adults

Time needed: 45–60 minutes (approx)

Subject: Dictionary skills / vocabulary development

Summary: These worksheets are designed for use with the *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (MED 2)* to give learners practice in using the dictionary to check meaning and for vocabulary development.



Exercise 1: Expressions with prepositions

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. Ensure that your learners know which word to look up in each case (for example, in the phrase *keep pace with*).

Exercise 2: Verb + noun collocations

Note that there are two ways in which the MED2 helps with collocations. Main frequent collocates are shown **in bold** within the entry (for example, *doubt: **raise doubts***). Additional collocations are given in pink collocation boxes – with the heading *Words frequently used with _____*. For example, *space: Words frequently used with **space**. Verbs: *create, fill, find, leave, make, take up*.*

Exercise 3: Adjectives and definitions

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. Draw your learners' attention to the Metaphor boxes to be found in the MED2. Categories include *angry* and *happy* (for a full list see Language Awareness, page 11).

Exercise 4: Word stress

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. Make sure they know how word stress is represented in the dictionary – with

a short vertical line above and before the stressed syllable, e.g. *'examine*.

Exercise 5: Idioms

Before you ask your learners to do this exercise, highlight which word is underlined in each idiom and ask them what type of word it is. Note that in all the examples the colour adjectives are underlined as this is where the definitions will be found. To give learners further practice in the tricky skill of identifying which word in an idiom to look up, ask them to have a quick look at Exercise 7 (homework) and tell you which three words they will have to look up – again they will find the answers under the colour adjectives.

Exercise 6: Phrasal verbs

Ask learners to work in pairs or small groups to discuss the possible answers. Then ask them to check in the dictionary. Highlight the importance of the order of presentation of the meanings of phrasal verbs with several meanings (for example, *put on*, where no fewer than 15 different meanings are listed), where the first meaning given is generally the most widely used and the last meaning the least used.

Dictionary skills: Part 4

Level 3

1 Expressions with prepositions

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

- The government is not allowing salaries to keep pace _____ inflation.
- The beach was packed _____ holiday-makers.
- People are fleeing the area _____ panic.
- It was a lack of judgment _____ his part.
- The rebels have agreed to participate _____ the peace talks.
- He mentioned her _____ passing but I didn't think anything of it at the time.
- One day you will all pay the price _____ your selfish behaviour.
- Some growers are paying the penalty _____ not watering crops sufficiently in hot weather.

2 Verb + noun collocations

Fill the gaps in the sentences using these nouns. Then check your answers in the dictionary by looking up the verbs and finding the nouns they collocate with or by looking up the nouns.

feet	experience	form	fine
growth	focus	failure	forum

- Their first attempt to climb Everest ended in _____.
- They are trying to shift the _____ more towards domestic policy.
- It's bound to take a bit of time to find your _____.
- The aid might take the _____ of personal service or of cash.
- For years the club has provided a _____ for political discussion.
- She hopes to gain _____ by working abroad for a year.
- The new measures are designed to stimulate economic _____.
- He had to pay a hefty _____.

Dictionary skills: Part 4

Level 3

3 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. sketchy
 - a) *picturesque*
 - b) *not detailed or complete*
2. skinny
 - a) *thin and extremely attractive*
 - b) *very thin in a way that is not attractive*
3. sleazy
 - a) *dishonest or immoral*
 - b) *extremely easy to convince*
4. sloppy
 - a) *lazy and untidy*
 - b) *done in a very careless way*
5. sluggish
 - a) *not performing or reacting as well as usual*
 - b) *untidy or dirty*
6. soggy
 - a) *wet and soft, especially in an unpleasant way*
 - b) *very emotional or romantic in a way that is embarrassing*
7. spine-chilling
 - a) *making you feel particularly cold*
 - b) *very frightening*
8. squalid
 - a) *dirty and unpleasant*
 - b) *soft and easily squashed*

4 Word stress

Use the dictionary to find how many syllables these words have and which syllable is stressed.

British	No. of syllables	Stressed syllable
<i>e.g. examine</i>	3	<i>second</i>
1. forgetful		
2. preliminary		
3. occasional		
4. secretive		
5. tutorial		
6. embarrassment		
7. orchestra		
8. adjustable		

Dictionary skills: Part 4

Level 3

5 Idioms

Match these idioms with their meanings. Then check your answers by looking up the underlined words in the dictionary.

1. once in a blue moon
2. a red rag to a bull
3. give something the green light
4. a grey area
5. black humour
6. wave the white flag
7. the pink pound
8. purple prose

- a. a piece of writing that is written in a very emotional or complicated style
- b. a situation in which the rules are not clear
- c. admit defeat
- d. give official approval for something to be done
- e. very rarely
- f. money that gay people spend
- g. jokes that relate to sad or unpleasant things such as death or illness
- h. something that will make someone very angry

6 Phrasal verbs: *make up*

A First match the examples with the definitions.

1. They made my face up to look like a clown.
 2. I'm paying £500 and Dave is making up the rest.
 3. Why don't you two forget your differences and make up?
 4. He made up some excuse about the dog eating his homework.
 5. Could you make up a list of all the things we need?
 6. Sorry I'm late; I'll make the time up this evening.
- a. [T] to prepare or arrange something
 - b. [I] to become friendly with someone again after an argument
 - c. [T] to work at different times because you have not worked enough at the normal times
 - d. [T] to put make-up on someone's face
 - e. [T] to invent an explanation for something, especially in order to avoid being punished or embarrassed
 - f. [T] to make an amount or number complete

B Now decide which of the above definitions of *make up* is the most common and which is the least common. Rank them in order from 1 to 6 and write the letters of the examples in the gaps. Then check in the dictionary to see the order of priority given there.

1. ____ 2. ____ 3. ____ 4. ____ 5. ____ 6. ____

7 Homework task

Use the dictionary to find the meanings of these idioms associated with colours.

1. To turn the air blue
2. To roll out the red carpet for someone
3. The green welly brigade

Dictionary skills: Part 4

Level 3

KEY

1 Expressions with prepositions

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

2 Verb + noun collocations

1. failure
2. focus
3. feet
4. form
5. forum
6. experience
7. growth
8. fine

3 Adjectives and definitions

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

4 Word stress

1. three; second
2. four; second
3. four; second
4. three; first
5. three; second
6. four; second
7. three; first
8. four; second

5 Idioms

1. e
2. h
3. d
4. b
5. g
6. c
7. f
8. a

6 Phrasal verbs: *make up*

- | A | B |
|------|------|
| 1. d | 1. e |
| 2. f | 2. d |
| 3. b | 3. a |
| 4. e | 4. f |
| 5. a | 5. c |
| 6. c | 6. b |

7 Homework task

1. *to use a lot of rude or swear words, especially because you are angry*
2. *to give special treatment to an important visitor*
3. *middle-class British people who live in the countryside or like to spend time in the countryside*