

# Dictionary skills: Part 5

## Level 1

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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 *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: Parts of speech

If you do this as a class exercise, ask learners to work with a partner and try to complete the grid before checking in the dictionary. If they are unfamiliar with dictionary use, you may need to show them where the word class information can be found – immediately after the phonemic transcription of the word (e.g. *noun, adj, adv*). In the case of verbs, check they understand [I] and [T] shown after the word class information – I for intransitive and T for transitive. Make sure they realize that homographs such as *object* have different dictionary entries for each word class.

### Exercise 2: Irregular past tenses

Make sure learners know where this information can be found (immediately after the phonemic transcription).

### Exercise 3: Compounds

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 plan* and so on.

### Exercise 4: Main meanings

Draw your learners' attention to the use of pink boxes in MED2 for words with five meanings or more. These give very brief definitions for each meaning in the order of priority in which they are presented in the dictionary. For example, meaning one of the nine meanings of *full* is *containing all that fits*, while the much less common meaning eight is *clothing: loose on body*.

### Exercise 5: Word building

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

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### 1 Parts of speech

What parts of speech are these words? Check in the dictionary and write *verb*, *noun*, *adjective* or *adverb* in the gaps after each word. Note that all of them have more than one function.

1. pack \_\_\_\_\_
2. page \_\_\_\_\_
3. paper \_\_\_\_\_
4. party \_\_\_\_\_
5. pay \_\_\_\_\_
6. picture \_\_\_\_\_
7. pity \_\_\_\_\_
8. practical \_\_\_\_\_

### 2 Irregular past tenses and past participles

Complete the table by writing in the irregular past tenses and past participles of these verbs. Then check your answers in the dictionary.

	irregular past form	past participle
1. swing		
2. tear		
3. throw		
4. tread		
5. wake		
6. wear		
7. weep		
8. wind		

### 3 Compounds

Find the nouns that go with these other nouns to match the definitions.

Example: bus \_\_\_\_\_ a building where buses start and finish their journeys (bus station)

1. **job** \_\_\_\_\_ the knowledge that your job is permanent as long as you want it to be
2. **junk** \_\_\_\_\_ advertising and other information sent to you by post or email
3. **key** \_\_\_\_\_ a metal ring used for keeping keys together
4. **law** \_\_\_\_\_ the job of making sure people obey the law
5. **league** \_\_\_\_\_ a list of teams put in order according to how many points they have
6. **loan** \_\_\_\_\_ someone who lends money to people and charges them a very high rate of interest
7. **log** \_\_\_\_\_ an official document giving details of a vehicle and its owner
8. **machine** \_\_\_\_\_ a series of instructions written in a form that a computer can read and understand

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### 4 Main meanings

These words all have more than one meaning in English. Fill the gaps using the words in the list. Then look in the dictionary\* and check your answers.

\* You will find short definitions of the main meanings of words with five or more meanings in the pink-shaded box beneath the word, e.g. full (nine meanings).

groups	boring	water	fact
liquid	swim	level	difficulty

- detail      a small (unimportant) \_\_\_\_\_
- dip          a quick \_\_\_\_\_
- dive        jump into \_\_\_\_\_
- division    separation into \_\_\_\_\_
- drag        pull with \_\_\_\_\_
- drop        small amount of \_\_\_\_\_
- dull        \_\_\_\_\_
- even        flat and \_\_\_\_\_

### 5 Word building: Nouns

Complete the table by writing in the noun form of each of these verbs. Then use the dictionary to check your answers.

verb	noun
<i>e.g. correct</i>	<i>correction</i>
1. intend	
2. persuade	
3. promote	
4. greet	
5. postpone	
6. encourage	
7. reinforce	
8. renew	

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### KEY

#### 1 Parts of speech

1. noun; verb
2. noun; verb
3. noun; adjective; verb
4. noun; verb
5. noun; verb
6. noun; verb
7. noun; verb
8. adjective; noun

#### 2 Irregular past tenses

1. swung, swung
2. tore, torn
3. threw, thrown
4. trod, trodden
5. woke, woken
6. wore, worn
7. wept, wept
8. wound, wound

#### 3 Compounds

1. security
2. mail
3. ring
4. enforcement
5. table
6. shark
7. book
8. code

#### 4 Main meanings

1. fact
2. swim
3. water
4. groups
5. difficulty
6. liquid
7. boring
8. level

#### 5 Word building: Nouns

1. intention
2. persuasion
3. promotion
4. greeting
5. postponement
6. encouragement
7. reinforcement
8. renewal