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Let's be realistic about vocabulary study. Learning words cannot guarantee you admission to college or propel you toward automatic success. But knowing the meanings of important words can be useful. If a word you don't understand keeps cropping up in your reading, you must stop to look it up or sacrifice understanding of the text. If you find yourself having to make do with a general word such as *nice* or *pleasant* because you don't know a more specific word, you may feel frustrated and your speaking and writing will lack precision.

Vocabulary study, therefore, can be of value to you if the words you learn are commonly used in the kind of reading you'll be doing or will help you say what you mean in more interesting ways. Learning the meanings of obscure words may make you feel sophisticated but will do little to enhance your ability to read and communicate.

VOCABULARY 5 is a book that avoids the pitfalls of teaching obscure words. It presents words that have use in the real world. It requires that you learn only two words per lesson and furnishes you with what you need to know about using the words.

After reading the explanatory matter, you confront two kinds of practice with the new words. In the first kind of practice (Exercise A, Focus on Meaning), you test your ability to *recognize* the meanings of the words as you must do when you encounter them in reading a magazine or a newspaper article. In the second kind of practice (Exercise B, Words in Context), you test your ability to *recall* the words and use them in the proper way. This practice prepares you to use the new words in your own speaking and writing.

Words from previous lessons keep showing up in the practice exercises, and so you never have a chance to forget them. By devoting ten minutes a day to this kind of vocabulary study, you will take command of approximately two hundred useful new words as well as hundreds of synonyms and antonyms of the vocabulary words.

But that's not all. As a bonus, this book includes lessons that introduce you to more than forty Latin and Greek word parts on which several hundred English words are based. Learning these word parts will give you the keys to the meanings of countless other unfamiliar words.

lesson 1

surmise ■ bungle

surmise (v) (sər-ˈmīz)
ORIGIN: Latin *supennittere* (to throw upon)
MEANING: To think or to infer without having strong evidence
CONTEXT: “Since it was raining hard, I *surmised* that my sister’s family from out of town would be late for Thanksgiving dinner.”
SYNONYMS: suppose, suspect, imagine, guess, presume

bungle (v) (ˈbʌn-gəl)
ORIGIN: Unknown; perhaps from the Swedish *bangala* (to work ineffectively)
MEANING: To do something clumsily and awkwardly
CONTEXT: “In spite of careful instructions, Earl *bungled* the job.”
SYNONYMS: mishandle, botch
ANTONYMS: succeed, triumph
OTHER FORMS: bungler (n.), bunglingly (adv.)

A. Focus on Meaning

Circle the letter of the best meaning for each vocabulary word.

1. surmise: a) mishandle b) sermonize c) suspect d) dislike
2. bungle: a) dig b) botch c) suspect d) break
3. surmise: a) suppose b) put down c) read quickly d) laugh
4. surmise: a) promise b) guess c) noise d) plea
5. bunglingly: a) carefully b) loudly c) blunderingly d) slowly

B. Words in Context

Supply the proper form of the most appropriate vocabulary word.

bungle surmise

1. Martha O’Hara, fearful that the inexperienced intern might _____ the job of bandaging her hand, insisted on waiting for Dr. James.
2. Mrs. Green would not permit her four-year-old son to help repaint the kitchen for fear he would _____ even the simplest tasks.
3. The shopkeeper _____ that the vandal who had smashed the display window might be the lanky boy who usually loafed around the playground.
4. Sharon _____ that Michael might invite her to the movies when he waited for her after play rehearsal.
5. The inexperienced sailor _____ loosened the wrong line, allowing the boat to drift away from its mooring.
6. John _____ we would have a storm when the black clouds appeared in the western sky.
7. Since the carpenter was new on the job, he was concerned about _____ his assignment.

Lesson 2

fastidious ■ cower

fastidious (adj) (fa-'stid-ē-əs)

ORIGIN: Latin *fastidium* (disgust)

MEANING: Showing or demanding excessive delicacy or care; hard to please, critical

CONTEXT: "He is such a *fastidious* housekeeper that every weekend he spends hours mopping, dusting, and cleaning."

SYNONYMS: particular, meticulous, finicky

ANTONYMS: tasteless, uncritical, sloppy

OTHER FORMS: fastidiousness (n.), fastidiously (adv.)

cower (v) ('kaü-[ə]r)

ORIGIN: Icelandic *kura* (to mope)

MEANING: To crouch in fear or shame, act afraid

CONTEXT: "The man *cowered* before the police who had stumbled upon him in the alley."

SYNONYMS: cringe

ANTONYMS: attack, assault, retaliate

A. Focus on Meaning

Circle the letter of the best meaning for each vocabulary word.

1. cower: a) imitate b) elevate c) cringe d) conceal
2. fastidious: a) careless b) particular c) skinny d) quiet
3. cowering: a) defying b) guessing c) cringing d) talking
4. bungle: a) play b) mishandle c) lead away d) guess
5. fastidiousness: a) clumsiness b) meticulousness c) tastelessness d) intelligence

B. Words in Context

Supply the proper form of the most appropriate vocabulary word.

bungle cower fastidious surmise

1. Ann _____ before her angry father.
2. When the sales representative continually referred to her manual of company policy, the customer _____ that she was new to the firm.
3. The _____ secretary neatly hung her coat on the hanger, quickly wiped off the slight layer of dust which had settled overnight on her desk top, and restraightened the pile of papers on her desk before knocking on the boss's door.
4. The defeated nation _____ before the enemy, too weak to halt their advance.
5. After the worker _____ the job of repairing the precious family clock, the irate owner complained bitterly to the repair service.
6. Members of the armed forces are expected to be _____ when it comes to taking care of their uniforms and equipment.
7. Even though Peter's dog was very large, he _____ when the neighborhood cat crossed his path.