

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What Is a Dictionary?	1
Finding Words	2
Understanding an Entry	3
Spelling Words Correctly	4
Pronouncing Words Correctly	5
Multiple Entries (<i>Homographs</i>)	6
Understanding Parts of Speech	7
Syllables and Accent Marks	8
Dictionary Definitions	9
Capitalized Entries (<i>Names and Places</i>)	10
Abbreviations and Acronyms	11
Compound Entries	12
Prefixes and Suffixes	13
Idioms	14
Pictures Help Define Words	15
Inflections (<i>Noun and Verb Forms</i>)	16
Inflections (<i>Adjective and Adverb Forms</i>)	17
Etymologies	18
Foreign Words	19
Words from the Names of People	20
Restrictions	21
Synonyms	22
Words That Sound Alike	23
Using What You Have Learned— <i>Part 1</i>	24
Using What You Have Learned— <i>Part 2</i>	25
Fun with Words	26
Word Puzzles	27
Certificate of Accomplishment	28

This book was designed to help children discover that a dictionary is a valuable language tool. Students will learn that a dictionary contains many different kinds of information that will help them in their reading, writing, and speaking.

All activities require the use of a dictionary. Dictionaries will vary in content and some of the words and/or phrases listed in the exercises may not be found in the

edition of the dictionary provided by your school. Students will profit from having a variety of dictionaries available for their use.

With minimal assistance from the teacher, students will readily learn how to use their own dictionaries and be encouraged to seek other editions. Exercises may be easily adapted for further use by substituting other words and/or phrases from other available dictionaries.

What Is a Dictionary?

Of all the reference books, the *dictionary* may be the most important. It is really several reference books in one.

A *dictionary* shows how to spell and pronounce words correctly. It will tell you the meanings of words and many facts about how words began. A dictionary also tells you the ways in which words are used.

Dictionaries differ in their methods of giving information. Some dictionaries give the original word meaning first and the more recent meanings of a word last. Many dictionaries present the most common meaning first. Some dictionaries have a separate section for biographical and geographical information, while others supply names and places in the body of the book. You must become familiar with your dictionary, or any dictionary you will use frequently, if you want to find information quickly.

A. Examine your school dictionary or the dictionary you often use and complete the exercises below.

1. The title of my dictionary is _____
2. It was published by _____ in the year _____.
3. a. It has _____ pages. b. It has over _____ words.
4. How many pages of information about using your dictionary are included? _____
5. Does your dictionary contain tables of weights and measures? _____
6. a. Is there a list of signs and symbols? _____ b. Are there any maps? _____
7. Look up Honolulu in your dictionary. Did you find it in a special section of geographical entries or in the body of the book? _____
8. Look up John Adams in your dictionary. Did you find it in a special section of biographical entries or in the body of the book? _____
9. How are the words in a dictionary arranged? _____
10. Which letter begins the least number of words in your dictionary? _____

B. Abbreviations are also listed in the dictionary. An *abbreviation* is a shortened form of a word or phrase.

1. What does the abbreviation U.S.A. mean? _____
2. For what word is qt. an abbreviation? _____

C. Most dictionaries also define phrases. A *phrase* is a pair or group of words that has a single meaning.

1. What is a crash helmet? _____
2. What is a maid of honor? _____

3. Find a phrase in your dictionary. Write its meaning below.

Understanding an Entry

Every word listed in a dictionary in bold type is called an *entry word* or *main entry*. All the information about that word, including the word itself, is called an *entry*.

Some entries have as many as nine parts. Look at this sample entry.

a. **gem** (jĕm), *n.* 1. a precious stone, cut and polished for use as a jewel. 2. anything prized for its beauty or value. [Miss Evans is a *gem* of a programmer.]—*v.* **gemmed**, **gemming** to adorn or set with gems. *See picture.* [from the Latin word *gemma* meaning bud, jewel] **g.** **h.** **i.**



cuts of gems

- The *entry word* is shown in bold type.
- The *pronunciation* is given after each entry word. Special marks called *diacritical marks* are often used. These marks are explained in detail in the pronunciation key and briefly at the bottom of each page.
- The *part of speech* is given.
- The *definition* (meaning) of the word is given.
- If there is more than one meaning, the definitions are numbered.
- Related forms of the word, such as plurals or principal parts of verbs, are often given. These related forms, called *inflections*, are also in bold print.
- Pictures are sometimes shown to help define a word.
- A sentence that uses the word is often given.
- The origin of the word may also be shown.

A. Study the sample entry and answer the following questions.

- How many definitions are listed? _____
- What part of speech is the entry word? _____
- From what language did this word come? _____
- Use the word gem in a sentence according to definition 1. _____

- What does the Latin word *gemma* mean? _____

B. Study the entries for the following words. Then write a sentence using each word correctly.

- opal _____
- value _____
- polish _____
- sleuth _____

Spelling Words Correctly

A. Look up each of these words in your dictionary. Circle the words that are spelled correctly.

scissors envie jeep excited
 beautiful separate radios

B. Most words have only one correct spelling. A few words have more than one. The dictionary will give the preferred spelling first, but all spellings given are correct.

Look up these words and write the other spelling for each. Circle the preferred spelling.

1. axe _____
2. catsup _____
3. kerosine _____
4. catalog _____
5. adviser _____
6. fulfill _____
7. judgment _____
8. usable _____

C. Use your dictionary to help you complete the following exercises.

1. These words begin with an *f* sound. Add **f** or **ph** to spell each word correctly.

_____ ancy _____ armacy _____ otograph _____ eel _____ rase

2. These words begin with a *k* sound. Add **c**, **k**, or **ch** to spell each word correctly.

_____ angaroo _____ orner _____ emistry _____ itchen _____ urve

3. These words begin with an *n* sound. Add **n**, **kn**, **gn**, or **pn** to spell each word correctly.

_____ ose _____ ead _____ at _____ ee _____ oodle

4. These words begin with an *s* sound. Add **s**, **c**, **ps**, or **sc** to spell each word correctly.

_____ ychology _____ ircle _____ ience _____ entry
_____ enter _____ alad _____ ircus _____ urprise

5. These words begin with a *sh* sound. Add **sh**, **ch**, or **su** to spell each word correctly.

_____ re _____ ute _____ ame _____ ut _____ ef

6. These words begin with an *r* sound. Add **r**, **wr**, or **rh** to spell each word correctly.

_____ ainbow _____ inkle _____ ubarb _____ ooster _____ ong

7. These words begin with a *j* sound. Add **j** or **g** to spell each word correctly.

_____ elly _____ entle _____ eography _____ acket _____ iant

8. These words begin with a *g* sound. Add **g**, **gu**, or **gh** to spell each word correctly.

_____ ame _____ ide _____ ost _____ itar _____ alaxy _____ astly

9. These words begin with a *z* sound. Add **x** or **z** to spell each word correctly.

_____ ylophone _____ ipper _____ ombie _____ one _____ ebra