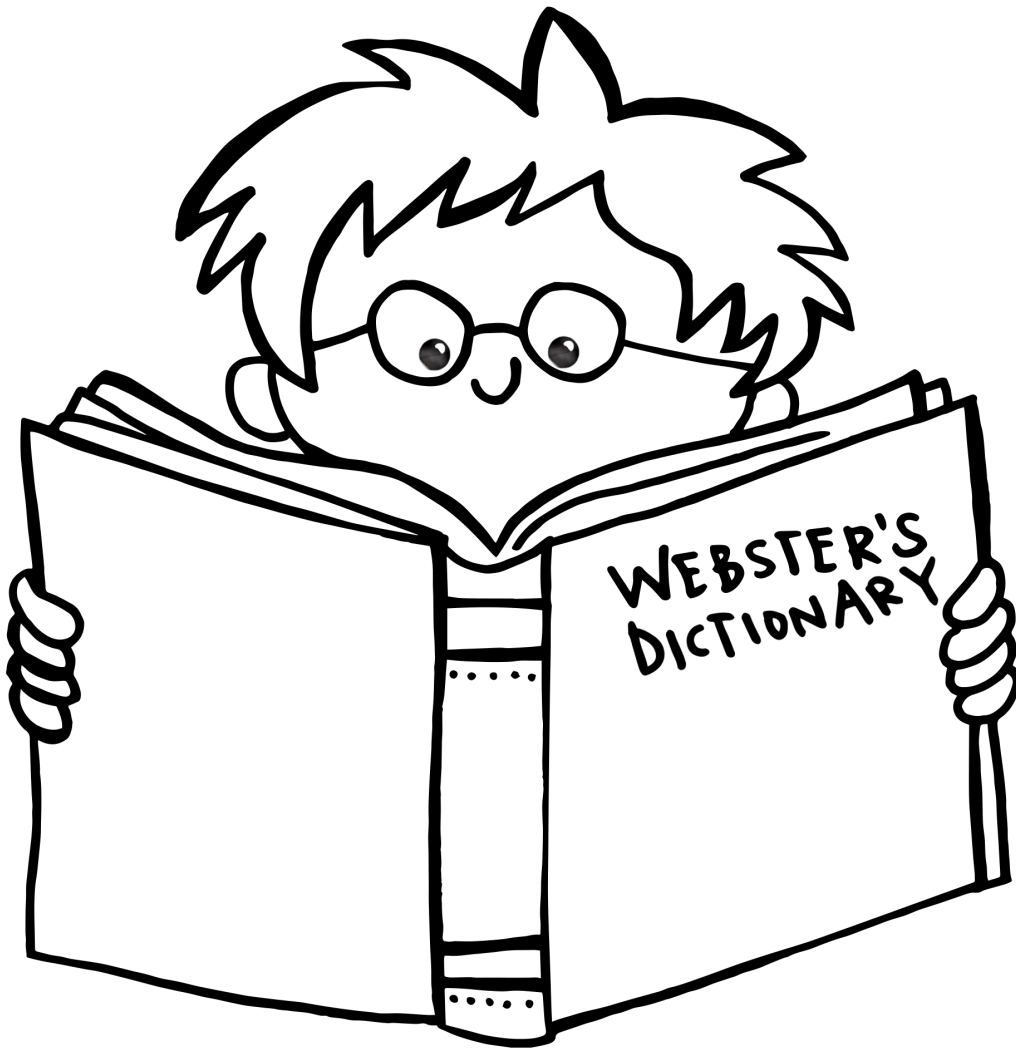


What Is a Dictionary?

Most people know that a dictionary is a book that helps you find out what words mean and can sometimes help you spell words. But, as you will see, dictionaries can do so much more.



What Do You Need to Know Before You Use a Printed Dictionary?

The first thing you need to do is to find out what type of dictionary you have and how it is set up. For example, many dictionaries put all the entries in the dictionary in alphabetical order. Others have separate sections for abbreviations, common geographical terms, and foreign words that are commonly used. These sections are usually in the back of the dictionary if the dictionary is arranged in this way. Dictionaries usually have an introduction to let you know where to find everything. Using your dictionary, answer the following questions:

Is your dictionary written for a particular age or grade level, such as elementary, high school, college, etc.?

Does your dictionary have an introduction explaining how to use it and where to find any special sections it includes?

Does your dictionary have special sections for things like abbreviations, foreign words that are commonly used, etc.? If so, where are they located in the dictionary?

How Do You Find Words In a Printed Dictionary?

On the top of the pages of a dictionary are words called **guide words** that help you “narrow” the area you need to look in to find the word you want. The guide words are the first and last words on the page. For example, if you were to look up the word “cranberry” in a dictionary, you would first go to the section with words that start with “C.” Then you would turn several pages at a time until you find words that are alphabetically close to the word “cranberry.”

For example, if the first page in the “C” section has “C” on the top left side of the page (the letter “c” is the first word on the page) and the word “cabbage” on the top right side of the opposite page (“cabbage” is the last word on the opposite page), you know you won’t find the word “cranberry” on those pages because c-r-a-n-b-e-r-r-y comes after c-a-b-b-a-g-e. If the next page has the word “cabbie” on the top left side of the page and the word “cableway” on the top right side of the opposite page, you know you will not find the word “cranberry” on those pages either. You will go on like this until you find a page that has guide words that the word “cranberry” would come between. Those are the pages you will look at more closely to zero in on the word “cranberry.” Using your dictionary, answer the following questions:

Look up the word “decision” in your dictionary. What are the guide words you found the word “decision” between?

Look up the word “fanfare” in your dictionary. What are the guide words you found the word “fanfare” between?

Look up the word “glance” in your dictionary. What are the guide words you found the word “glance” between?

Look up the word “hydrant” in your dictionary. What are the guide words you found the word “hydrant” between?

Amazing

What are the guide words you found the word "amazing" between?

What word was listed immediately before the word "amazing"?

What word was listed immediately after the word "amazing"?

What part of speech is the word "amazing"?

Copy the pronunciation of the word "amazing."

What does the word "amazing" mean? Copy the definition.

Copy a sentence that uses the word "amazing."

Are there any synonyms or antonyms listed for the word "amazing"? If so, copy one of each.

Copy the word "amazing" broken into syllables.

Are there any phrases using the word "amazing" that are mentioned in the dictionary? If so, copy one of the phrases and what it means.

Are there any prefixes or suffixes listed for the word "amazing"? If so, copy the word with the prefixes or suffixes that you find in the dictionary.

Frivolous

What are the guide words you found the word "frivolous" between?

What word was listed immediately before the word "frivolous"?

What word was listed immediately after the word "frivolous"?

What part of speech is the word "frivolous"?

Copy the pronunciation of the word "frivolous."

What does the word "frivolous" mean? Copy the definition.

Copy a sentence that uses the word "frivolous."

Are there any synonyms or antonyms listed for the word "frivolous"? If so, copy one of each.

Copy the word "frivolous" broken into syllables.

Are there any phrases using the word "frivolous" that are mentioned in the dictionary? If so, copy one of the phrases and what it means.

Are there any prefixes or suffixes listed for the word "frivolous"? If so, copy the word with the prefixes or suffixes that you find in the dictionary.

Acclimate

What are the guide words you found the word "acclimate" between?

What word was listed immediately before the word "acclimate"?

What word was listed immediately after the word "acclimate"?

What part of speech is the word "acclimate"?

Copy the pronunciation of the word "acclimate."

What does the word "acclimate" mean? Copy the definition.

Copy a sentence that uses the word "acclimate."

Are there any synonyms or antonyms listed for the word "acclimate"? If so, copy one of each.

Copy the word "acclimate" broken into syllables.

Are there any phrases using the word "acclimate" that are mentioned in the dictionary? If so, copy one of the phrases and what it means.

Are there any prefixes or suffixes listed for the word "acclimate"? If so, copy the word with the prefixes or suffixes that you find in the dictionary.

Impressive

What are the guide words you found the word "impressive" between?

What word was listed immediately before the word "impressive"?

What word was listed immediately after the word "impressive"?

What part of speech is the word "impressive"?

Copy the pronunciation of the word "impressive."

What does the word "impressive" mean? Copy the definition.

Copy a sentence that uses the word "impressive."

Are there any synonyms or antonyms listed for the word "impressive"? If so, copy one of each.

Copy the word "impressive" broken into syllables.

Are there any phrases using the word "impressive" that are mentioned in the dictionary? If so, copy one of the phrases and what it means.

Are there any prefixes or suffixes listed for the word "impressive"? If so, copy the word with the prefixes or suffixes that you find in the dictionary.

Reason

What are the guide words you found the word "reason" between?

What word was listed immediately before the word "reason"?

What word was listed immediately after the word "reason"?

What part of speech is the word "reason"?

Copy the pronunciation of the word "reason."

What does the word "reason" mean? Copy the definition.

Copy a sentence that uses the word "reason."

Are there any synonyms or antonyms listed for the word "reason"? If so, copy one of each.

Copy the word "reason" broken into syllables.

Are there any phrases using the word "reason" that are mentioned in the dictionary? If so, copy one of the phrases and what it means.

Are there any prefixes or suffixes listed for the word "reason"? If so, copy the word with the prefixes or suffixes that you find in the dictionary.

Comforting

What are the guide words you found the word "comforting" between?

What word was listed immediately before the word "comforting"?

What word was listed immediately after the word "comforting"?

What part of speech is the word "comforting"?

Copy the pronunciation of the word "comforting."

What does the word "comforting" mean? Copy the definition.

Copy a sentence that uses the word "comforting."

Are there any synonyms or antonyms listed for the word "comforting"? If so, copy one of each.

Copy the word "comforting" broken into syllables.

Are there any phrases using the word "comforting" that are mentioned in the dictionary? If so, copy one of the phrases and what it means.

Are there any prefixes or suffixes listed for the word "comforting"? If so, copy the word with the prefixes or suffixes that you find in the dictionary.

Accomplice

What are the guide words you found the word "accomplice" between?

What word was listed immediately before the word "accomplice"?

What word was listed immediately after the word "accomplice"?

What part of speech is the word "accomplice"?

Copy the pronunciation of the word "accomplice."

What does the word "accomplice" mean? Copy the definition.

Copy a sentence that uses the word "accomplice."

Are there any synonyms or antonyms listed for the word "accomplice"? If so, copy one of each.

Copy the word "accomplice" broken into syllables.

Are there any phrases using the word "accomplice" that are mentioned in the dictionary? If so, copy one of the phrases and what it means.

Are there any prefixes or suffixes listed for the word "accomplice"? If so, copy the word with the prefixes or suffixes that you find in the dictionary.

How About Using an Online Dictionary?

There are many online dictionaries. These dictionaries often offer much of the same information as a printed dictionary. You can find the pronunciation, word divided into syllables, definition, part of speech, synonyms, antonyms, suffixes or prefixes, and sample sentences using the word. Many times, online dictionaries also include some background on the word, such as when it was first used and the language it came from.

Using the online dictionary of your choice, answer the following questions:

Look up the word “amazing” in an online dictionary. When was the first known use of the word “amazing”? What is the history, or etymology, of the word?

Look up the word “frivolous” in an online dictionary. When was the first known use of the word “frivolous”? What is the history, or etymology, of the word?

Look up the word “acclimate” in an online dictionary. When was the first known use of the word “acclimate”? What is the history, or etymology, of the word?

Look up the word “impressive” in an online dictionary. When was the first known use of the word “impressive”? What is the history, or etymology, of the word?

Look up the word “reason” in an online dictionary. When was the first known use of the word “reason”? What is the history, or etymology, of the word?

Look up the word “comforting” in an online dictionary. When was the first known use of the word “comforting”? What is the history, or etymology, of the word?

Look up the word “accomplice” in an online dictionary. When was the first known use of the word “accomplice”? What is the history, or etymology, of the word?

What Is a Thesaurus, and Why Are They Used?

A thesaurus is a book that mainly gives synonyms and antonyms of words. It lists the words in alphabetical order, just like a dictionary. Using a thesaurus can help improve your writing because it helps you find other suggested words to use in place of overused words. It may also give you an idea for a word that does a better job of saying what you want to say or a word to make your writing sound more formal or more casual. One of the major advantages of using a thesaurus instead of a dictionary is that the thesaurus does not have as much information about the word, such as syllables, pronunciation, etc., so it is much more to the point of helping you find the exact word you want to use. Sometimes, a thesaurus includes short definitions for words that have more than one meaning so you can find the synonym or antonym that is just right for what you want to say.

There is not much difference between an online thesaurus and a printed thesaurus except that an online thesaurus sometimes includes some background on the word. It might tell you when the word was first used and the language it came from.

Using the printed or online thesaurus of your choice, answer the following questions:

Look up the word “amazing” in a thesaurus. Write five synonyms and five antonyms for the word if you can find them.

Look up the word “frivolous” in a thesaurus. Write five synonyms and five antonyms for the word if you can find them.

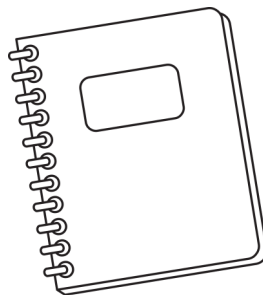
Look up the word “acclimate” in a thesaurus. Write five synonyms and five antonyms for the word if you can find them.

Look up the word "impressive" in a thesaurus. Write five synonyms and five antonyms for the word if you can find them.

Look up the word "reason" in a thesaurus. Write five synonyms and five antonyms for the word if you can find them.

Look up the word "comforting" in a thesaurus. Write five synonyms and five antonyms for the word if you can find them.

Look up the word "accomplice" in a thesaurus. Write five synonyms and five antonyms for the word if you can find them.



Note to Parents and Teachers: I have done my best to choose words for this unit that do not have adult meanings that students could come across when looking at definitions, synonyms, and antonyms. However, it would be best to use an elementary dictionary and thesaurus. Since not all dictionaries and thesauruses are the same, there is no way I can be certain a word doesn't have multiple meanings that include some not appropriate for children.

Copyright © 2021 by WriteBonnieRose, LLC



Select graphics used courtesy of [Keeping Life Creative](#) and [Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah Designs](#).

All Rights Reserved. This book may not be reproduced or transmitted by any means, including graphic, electronic, or mechanical, without the express written consent of the author except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews and those uses expressly described in the following Terms of Use. You are welcome to link back to the author's website, <http://writebonnierose.com>, but may not link directly to the PDF file. You may not alter this work, sell or distribute it in any way, host this file on your own website, or upload it to a shared website.

Terms of Use: For use by a family, this unit can be printed and copied as many times as needed. Classroom teachers may reproduce one copy for each student in his or her class. Members of co-ops or workshops may reproduce one copy for up to fifteen children. This material cannot be resold or used in any way for commercial purposes. Please contact the publisher with any questions.