

To the Student

Sometimes you say, "I know that word."

What does this mean? When you know a word, you know a lot about the word, and you can do a lot with it.

- You can read the dictionary definition of the word and understand it.
- If the word has an abbreviation or shortened form, you know it.
- If the word is part of an initialization, you know the initialization.
Initializations are short forms of two or more words, using the first letters of the words.
- You can add a prefix to the word to change the meaning.
- You can add a suffix to the word to change the part of speech.
- You understand the spelling changes that occur when you add a suffix to the word.
- You can think of one or more close synonyms for the word.
- You can think of an antonym, or opposite, for the word.
- You can use the word in a collocation. Collocations are fixed phrases of two or more words that are used together in a particular order.
- You understand fine points of meaning and grammar so that you do not confuse the word with similar words.
- You know how the word works in the context of other words.
- You know what part of speech the word is, even if you are not sure of the exact meaning.
- You can select the appropriate definition of the word from a list in your dictionary, even if the word has several definitions.

As you can see, there are many ways you can know a word. You can know a word to different degrees as well. You can simply guess the general meaning of the word. You can look up a word quickly in a dictionary. You can change a word with prefixes and suffixes. Or, you can quickly bring to mind a synonym or an antonym.

Word Strategies will help you know words better. The two-book set allows you to get to know hundreds of words in all of the ways outlined above. The first book presents words from your everyday life, including words about learning a language, shopping, job hunting, and TV. The second book presents more specialized words on subjects like the federal government, crime, computers, and health care. By completing both books, you can improve your vocabulary for school, work, and your everyday life.

Public Education

In this lesson,
you will work
with words
about schools.
Read this short
description of
public education
in the U.S.



In the U.S., public education is free, and attending school is **compulsory** for all children. In most states, children start attending school between age five and age seven. They may leave school at age 16 or 17 in many states. But most students stay in school until they **graduate** from high school.

Each state makes its own rules about school, so the rules vary from state to state. For many children, school starts when they are five years old. That is when they attend **kindergarten**. Kindergarten primarily helps **prepare** children for learning. After that, most children spend five years in **elementary school**. In elementary school, children of the same age stay together in the same grade. They stay in one classroom with one teacher all day. Elementary school students start to study academic **subjects** like reading, math, and science.

At about grade 6, students move into middle school (or junior high school). The grades vary from one school system to another. It may be grades 6 through 8, or 7 through 9, or even 6 through 9. Middle school students generally all study the same subjects.

After middle school, students go to high school. High school students can make some choices about what they study. If they plan to **enroll** in college, they may take mostly **academic** classes. If they plan to get a job after graduation, they may take **vocational** classes.

At age 16 (or 17 in some states), students may choose to drop out of high school. Dropouts do not receive high school diplomas. If they discover later that they need high school **diplomas**, they don't have to re-enroll in school. Instead, they may take the GED tests. **GED** stands for General Educational Development. People who take the GED must show knowledge of basic high school subjects: reading, writing, math, science, and social studies.

Exercise 1

Definitions

Write each word or phrase next to its definition.

academic
college
compulsory

diploma
elementary school
enroll

graduate
kindergarten
prepare

public
subject
vocational

1. a grade for young children that introduces them to school
2. this describes something that you must do or that is required
3. an official piece of paper stating that a student has earned a degree or finished a course of study
4. having to do with school or what you learn in school
5. relating to a job or trade
6. to successfully finish required studies at a school or college
7. to officially join (usually used with school or classes)
8. a school that you go to after high school
9. a school for the first six to eight years of a child's education
10. an area of knowledge that you study in school
11. provided for all of the people in a community
12. to get ready or make ready

Exercise 2

Initializations

Match each initialization with what it stands for.

Initializations are short forms of two or more words. We use many initializations when we talk about school. You can explain these initializations with sentences using *stands for*.

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| _____ 1. GED | a. Associate in Arts (degree) |
| _____ 2. PE | b. digital versatile disk or digital video disk |
| _____ 3. BS | c. English as a second language |
| _____ 4. DVD | d. date of birth |
| _____ 5. ESL | e. physical education |
| _____ 6. CD | f. Bachelor of Science (degree) |
| _____ 7. DOB | g. General Educational Development |
| _____ 8. AA | h. compact disk |

Exercise 3: Word Builder

Prefix

Choose a word from the box, add *re-* to it, and write it on the line. If the word begins with a vowel, put a hyphen (-) between *re-* and the word.

The prefix *re-* can mean *again*. If you add *re-* to the beginning of a verb, it often means *to do (that action) again*.

built	enroll	play	set	write
charge	fill	read	take	

1. If you drop out of school, you can _____.
2. You should _____ the chapter if you don't understand it.
3. You can _____ the test if you don't do well.
4. I need to _____ the battery in my video camera.
5. After the school burned, they _____ it.
6. You can _____ the tape if you don't understand.
7. No one liked my essay, so I think I'll _____ it.
8. You should _____ the counter to zero when you finish.
9. You can _____ your water bottle when it is empty.

Exercise 4: Word Builders

Suffixes

Study each rule. Then write the noun form of the verb in parentheses on the line.

Rule 1: If a word ends in -te, drop the -e and add -ion.

Example: operate + ion = operation

1. (graduate) The _____ was on June 20.
2. (cooperate) I appreciate your _____.
3. (concentrate) Memorizing dates requires _____.
4. (abbreviate) You can write an _____ here.

Rule 2: Add -ion to words that end with -t.

Example: inspect + ion = inspection

5. (subtract) Do we use addition or _____?
6. (suggest) Do you like my _____?
7. (interrupt) Please excuse the _____.
8. (invent) This is a new _____.
9. (correct) She made a _____ on my paper.

Rule 3: If a word ends with -uce, drop the -e and add -tion.

Example: introduce + tion = introduction

10. (reduce) They made a _____ in the tuition.
11. (produce) That man is in charge of the _____.
12. (introduce) We listened to the _____.

Rule 4: If a word ends with -de, drop the -de and add -sion.

For example, collide + sion = collision

13. (invade) I read about the _____ in history.
14. (explode) We created an _____ in science.
15. (divide) Fourth graders learn _____.
16. (decide) Let's make a _____.

Exercise 5

Antonyms

Choose an antonym from the box for each underlined word and write it on the line.

formal
noisy

optional
present

public
together

1. The playground is _____ but the halls are quiet.
2. Children who aren't in _____ schools may go to private ones.
3. Sometimes we study _____, but other times we are apart.
4. Until you are 16, school is not _____; it is compulsory.
5. Last week, the child was _____ two days and absent three.
6. Education includes both _____ and informal learning.

Exercise 6

Collocations

Choose a word from the box and write it on the line. Words can be used more than once.

by
from

of
off

out
to

up

English uses many collocations with prepositions to talk about school.

1. Students are free to discuss many topics that come _____ in high school.
2. Children are often dropped _____ by parents if they don't ride the bus.
3. The teacher checks _____ each name on her list when she takes attendance.
4. Many schools operate _____ September through June.
5. Rich and poor students often study side _____ side in public schools.
6. Public schools can vary _____ one state _____ another.
7. Too many students drop _____ high school nowadays.
8. The teacher handed _____ books on the first day of class.

Exercise 7

Confusing Words

Write a form of *spend* or *take* on each line. Use present or past tense.

Spend and **take** are both used to talk about using time. They work differently in sentences. For example, we say, "I spend (time)." But we say, "It (something) takes me (time)."

1. How much time did it _____ you to do your homework?
2. She _____ 45 minutes on the phone last night.
3. It _____ me more than two years to get my AA degree.
4. How long do the GED tests _____?
5. Did you know that it _____ several years to learn a language?
6. How much time do you _____ doing homework?
7. It _____ me an hour to get to school by bus.
8. I _____ my time on the bus wisely, doing homework.

Write a form of *spend* or *waste* on each line. You may use present or past tense.

Spend and **waste** are both used to talk about time and money. While **spend** just means *to use time or money*, **waste** means *to use more time or money than you need(ed) to*.

9. That movie wasn't good. I _____ my money on the ticket.
10. She gets good grades because she _____ at least one hour studying every night.
11. Frank brings his lunch to school. That way he only has to _____ about two dollars a day on coffee.
12. Tara studied the wrong chapter last night. She _____ an hour doing that. Now she has to study the correct chapter.
13. Don't _____ your time at that movie. It isn't worth it.
14. How much time do you usually _____ studying? It takes me about an hour to study for a test.

Exercise 8

Context Clues

Circle the vocabulary item (the word or phrase that appears right before the dash). Then underline or highlight the definition or defining examples. Write *definition* or *examples* on the line.

In each of the following, words are defined in the context of the sentence. A definition or defining examples appear after a dash.

1. If you need information about the school, call the principal—the head of the school.
2. If you can't afford a university, you should consider a community college—a two-year public institution.
3. High school students study several subjects—math, science, history, English—every day.
4. High school students can take electives—music, art, drama—in addition to their academic subjects.
5. A child brings home a report card—a summary of grades and progress—four times a year.
6. Young students learn basic arithmetic—addition and subtraction.
7. You'll need a high school diploma if you want to move on to an institution of higher education—a college or university.
8. A student who is having trouble may need a tutor—a teacher who can work one-on-one with him or her.
9. If you don't graduate—receive a diploma—you may have a hard time getting a job.
10. Informal learning takes place in preschool—schooling before kindergarten, also called nursery school.
11. Some secondary schools are vocational schools—schools where students learn job skills.
12. A high school orchestra is usually made up of stringed instruments—violins, violas, cellos—and some percussion instruments.
13. Nowadays, most playground equipment—slides, swings, and climbers—needs to be accessible to children in wheelchairs.
14. Most elementary school children say that recess—the time they are allowed to go outside and play—is their favorite part of school.

Exercise 9

Parts of Speech

Identify the underlined words. Write *N* on the line if the word is a noun, and write *V* if it is a verb.

Many common vocabulary words can work either as nouns or as verbs. Look for a noun after an article or a possessive. Look for a verb after a subject.

1. The teacher promises to give less homework.
2. The work gets harder in secondary school.
3. His report card tells about his progress.
4. Elementary schools start the day with "The Pledge of Allegiance."
5. Most children progress through the grades without repeating.
6. I kept my promise about doing my homework on time.
7. When a student completes her studies, she receives a diploma.
8. Most schools have announcements at the start of every day.
9. Some students work on community service projects.
10. A typical high school student studies three hours every night.

Exercise 10

Dictionary

Identify the part of speech of each underlined word or phrase. Write *N* or *V* on the line. Then look up the word in your dictionary. Choose and write the best definition.

1. My favorite subject is social studies.
definition: _____
2. Kindergarteners have a snack every morning.
definition: _____
3. I'm looking forward to my high school reunion.
definition: _____
4. You should apply for a scholarship.
definition: _____
5. The dates of spring break vary from year to year.
definition: _____

Review 1

Crossword Puzzle

Fill in the puzzle with words from the box.

absent
attend
college

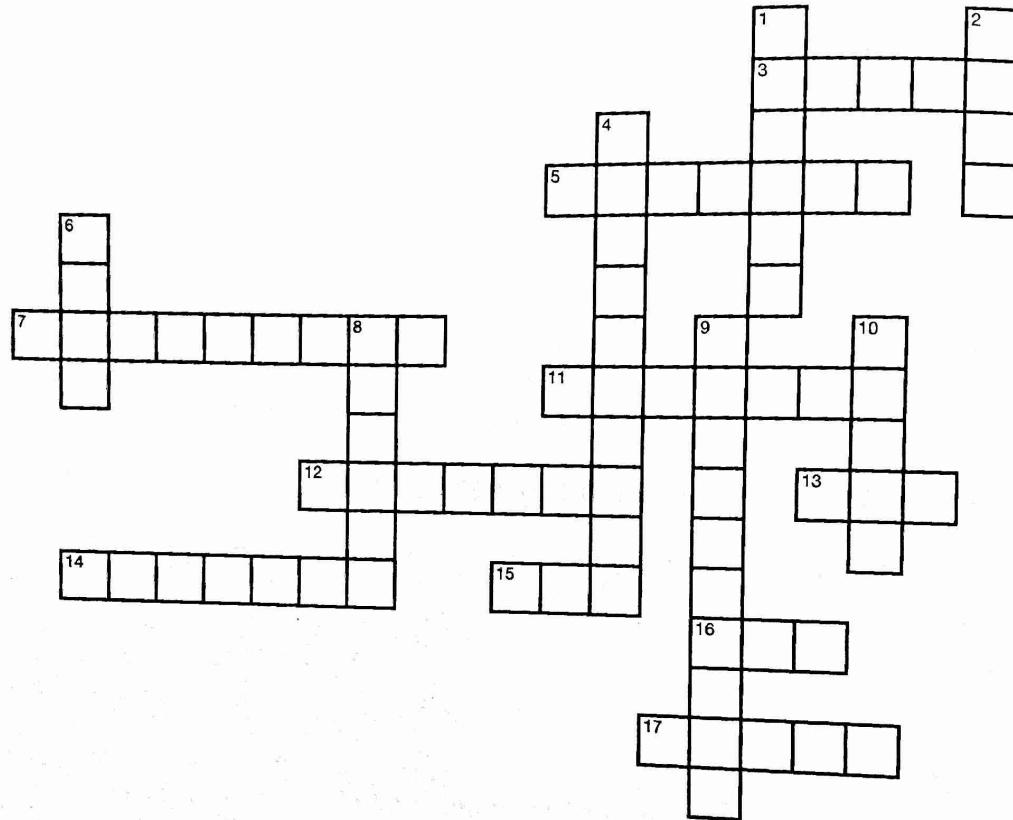
diploma
drop
ESL

GED
off
playground

principal
reunion
snack

subject
takes
tutor

vary
vocational



ACROSS

3. If you need extra help, hire a private ____.
5. Many high school graduates plan to attend ____.
7. The ____ is the head of the school.
11. You receive your ____ when you graduate.
12. I attend a high school ____ every five years.
13. ____ stands for General Educational Development.
14. Algebra is a high school ____.
15. ____ stands for English as a second language.
16. She took attendance and checked ____ my name.
17. The children eat a ____ in the morning.

DOWN

1. Five-year-olds usually ____ kindergarten.
2. Students who don't finish school ____ out.
4. ____ classes teach job skills.
6. Laws about schools ____ from state to state.
8. If you are not in school you are marked ____.
9. They like to play on the ____ during recess.
10. It usually ____ four years to get a degree.

Review 2

Vocabulary in Context

Choose a word from the box and write it on the line.

college**elementary****kindergarten****secondary****university**

Most children enter _____ when they are five years old. After that, they spend
1
five years in _____ school. Then they move into _____
2
school. If they want to continue their education after they finish high school, they can attend a
3
4 or _____.
5

re-enroll**replay****reread****retake****rewrite**

It seems that Maria has to do everything twice these days. Yesterday, she didn't understand a chapter in her book, so she had to _____ it. Then she was listening to a tape
6
of the lecture and she couldn't hear it. She had to _____ the tape several
7
times. Finally she had to _____ a composition that she wasn't happy with.
8
Next week, she is going to _____ a test that she failed. If things don't start
9
going better for Maria, she is going to have to _____ in the same class
10
next year.

diploma**electives****graduation****schedules****subjects**

Some high school students can set their own _____. They have to be careful
11
to take all of the _____ that are required for _____. Some
12
students would like to fill their days with _____
13
like art, drama, or driver's ed.
14
If they want a _____, they have to take more academic classes.
15