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FOCUS ON
VOCABULARY 1
Bridging Vocabulary



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To the Teacher

Overview

We know that learners need to have a very large vocabulary in order to be able to function in an English environment. Recent research has shown that learners must know as many as 6,000–7,000 word families to be able to understand spoken discourse in a wide variety of contexts. Furthermore, learners also need to know around 8,000–9,000 word families in order to read a range of authentic texts (e.g. novels and newspapers) (Nation, 2006). Of course, learners can cope to some extent with smaller vocabularies than these, but then unknown words will be a recurring problem.

These figures may seem daunting, but even so, they do not fully reflect the learning that students must do. Each word family includes several individual word forms, including the root form (*reflect*), its inflections (*reflected*, *reflecting*, *reflects*), and regular derivations (*reflection*, *reflective*). Nation (2006) shows that the most frequent 1,000 word families average about six members (types per family), decreasing to about three members per family at the 9,000 frequency level. According to his calculations, a vocabulary of 6,000 word families (enabling listening) entails knowing 28,015 individual word forms, while the 8,000 families (enabling wide reading) entails 34,660 words (Schmitt, 2008). However, it cannot be assumed that knowing one word family member implies knowing (or being able to guess) related members. Schmitt and Zimmerman's (2002) advanced learners of English typically knew only some, but not all, of the noun / verb / adjective / adverb members of word families they studied.

The upshot is that learners must learn a very large number of words to be successful English users. Unfortunately, learners typically fall well short of the size requirements reported here. Laufer (2000) surveyed a number of international teaching contexts and found that some university students knew around 4,000 word families (after 1,800–2,400 hours of instruction). However, the majority of learners she surveyed only knew between 1,000 and 2,000 word families. These learners did know some or all of the most frequent word families in English (often considered the most frequent 2,000) but had woefully inadequate vocabulary sizes compared to the requirements outlined here.

What are teachers to do about this typical deficiency in vocabulary size? Clearly, the long-term goal of 6,000–7,000 or 8,000–9,000 words requires extended study, but in the short term, it makes sense to work towards a more achievable interim objective. For learners who have most of the high-frequency, first 2,000 families in place, the obvious target is the next frequency band, that is, 3,000–4,000.

Focus on Vocabulary 1: Bridging Vocabulary focuses on just this vocabulary. This vocabulary can be considered "bridging vocabulary" as it exists between high-frequency vocabulary (which mainly expresses basic everyday concepts) and the less frequent, extensive vocabulary, which allows the expression of precise, nuanced, and stylistically appropriate communication. After your students have mastered this bridging vocabulary, they should be able to talk about a wider range of topics and use English with more precision. This should put them on the threshold of using English for more academic or formal purposes if they wish. As such, we see this book as a very good foundation for the more academic vocabulary and style found in *Focus on Vocabulary 2: Mastering the Academic Word List*.

In this book, we explicitly teach 504 word families from the 3,000–4,000 frequency band, although the majority of them are from the easier 3,000 band. It would have been possible to include more words in this book, but there is

always a compromise between teaching many words in a cursory fashion and teaching fewer words in greater depth. The words in the 3,000–4,000 band are still relatively high frequency vocabulary, and so need to be learned well. Also, it must be remembered that we are teaching *word families*, and so the number of individual words taught will number in the thousands. In order to help students gain a reasonable mastery of these words, we have drawn on the latest vocabulary research to design the most beneficial exercises. The key rationale behind the pedagogy in this book can be summarized in the following points.

- Words must be encountered numerous times to be learned. Nation (1990) reviewed the literature and concluded that it takes from five to sixteen or more repetitions for a word to be learned. In every chapter of *Focus on Vocabulary 1*, each target word appears at least four times, and most appear many more times elsewhere in the book. The Strategy Practice chapters and Unit Tests provide additional recycling opportunities.
- Learning a word entails more than knowing its meaning, spelling, and pronunciation (Schmitt, 2000). In fact, there are a number of other types of word knowledge, including a word's collocations, grammatical characteristics, register, frequency, and associations. In order to use a word with confidence, a learner must have some mastery of all of these types of word knowledge. Some can be taught explicitly (for example, meaning and spelling), while others can only be truly acquired through numerous exposures to a word (for example, frequency and register information). Our extensive recycling can help learners gain intuitions about types of word knowledge that are best learned in context. We have provided exposures to the target vocabulary in both reading passages and in a number of exercise sentences, which model as many different contexts as possible. At the same time, our exercises focus on elements that can be explicitly taught. Every chapter focuses on meaning, the derivative forms of a word (word families), and collocation.
- Students learn best when their attention is focused on the material to be learned (Schmidt, 1990). To make the target words more noticeable, we have placed them in **bold** type in the chapters in which they are the target words. However, to avoid excess clutter, recycled target vocabulary is not boldfaced in subsequent chapters.
- Learners typically do not know all of the members of a word family, even if they know some of these word forms (Schmitt and Zimmerman, 2002). However, a learner must know the correct form of a word (noun, verb, adjective, adverb) for a particular context. Thus, every chapter has a section (Word Families) that deals with the derivative forms of the target words.
- Equally important for the natural use of words is collocation. These word partnerships are actually difficult to teach, but we feel that collocation is so important to the appropriate use of vocabulary that we have included a collocation section in each chapter (Collocation). The exercises explicitly teach a number of collocations for the target words. However, as it is impossible to teach all of the collocations for a word, the tasks are best seen as exercises that help make learners more aware of collocations in general and may help students build their collocation intuitions for individual words more rapidly.
- In order to ensure that the information in this book reflects the actual usage of the target words, we have researched a number of corpora, including the 263 million-word New Longman Corpus. This has allowed us to empirically determine how the target words behave in real contexts. This was particularly useful in identifying the collocations of the words, because intuitions are often unreliable in this area. In addition, the examples and sentence exercises in this

To the Student

Why Study “Bridging” Vocabulary?

We assume you know the most common words in English. Many of these frequent words are taught in schools and occur regularly in reading materials, so you have probably seen them often. However, they mainly refer to common, everyday topics, and you will probably have trouble finding the right word if you want to talk about other things. The words you will study in *Focus on Vocabulary 1* are beyond this basic vocabulary, at the next level. When you learn the vocabulary at this higher level, you will be able to discuss a much wider range of topics and use English words much more precisely. You can think of the vocabulary at this level as forming a “bridge” between the basic vocabulary you already know and the large vocabulary you would eventually like to learn. Bridging vocabulary is also an important step towards using vocabulary in academic situations, in case you want to continue your education in English.

Knowing a Word

In order to use words effectively in your oral and written work, you must know more than simple word meanings. You must expand your knowledge of a word so that you know which meaning fits a particular context. You must learn which word form to use (for example, a noun or a verb) in a specific sentence. In addition, you must learn how to combine words with other words to form commonly used collocations. Many elements of word knowledge are required in order to choose the best word for a particular situation. Some of these elements of word knowledge include the following.

- **Word Meaning:** Many words in English have more than one meaning. You must be careful to use the right meaning for the right context.
- **Word Families:** Most words are part of a “family” of words with a shared meaning. You need to know how the different family members (for example, noun form, adjective form) are spelled and pronounced.
- **Collocation:** Some words appear together frequently. They are “word partners,” or collocations. Knowing these word partners can help you sound more natural.
- **Synonyms:** Synonyms have a similar meaning, but there are often some contexts where one synonym is more appropriate than another one.
- **Frequency:** The frequency of a word can make a difference in how it is used. Generally, higher frequency words are more basic and are used in everyday situations, while lower frequency words are usually restricted to specific situations and tend to be more formal.

Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Focus on Vocabulary 1 will help you learn “bridging vocabulary” words. How to learn them well, you will need to continue meeting and learning these word families outside of this book. This means you will need to use vocabulary strategies to maximize your learning. Below, we describe a number of these vocabulary learning strategies. Complete the activities to see how the strategies can help you learn the words better.

USING A DICTIONARY

One of the most important reasons to use a dictionary is to discover a word’s meaning. However, many words have more than one meaning, and you must be careful to choose the one that matches the context.

Below are three meanings of the word **bolt** from the *Longman Dictionary of American English*. Match the meaning to the following three contexts.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| _____ 1. weather | a. a screw with a flat head and no point, for fastening things together |
| _____ 2. being in a hurry | b. lightning that appears as a white line in the sky:
a bolt of lightning |
| _____ 3. mechanical things | c. to run away suddenly |

GUESSING FROM CONTEXT

Guessing the meaning of a new word from context is a very good way to supplement the learning of vocabulary from a book like this. You can get clues from the surrounding words and the construction of the sentences.

Try this example, which has the target word **mood**.

Have you ever been in such a bad **mood** that nothing made you feel happy? Even hearing your favorite song or seeing your best friend would not cheer you up. Negative feelings like this are normal occasionally, but if they last for a long time, friends may begin to consider you moody and might even start avoiding you altogether.

1. What is the meaning of **mood**?
2. What are the clues that helped you discover this meaning?
3. Did you notice the word **moody** and guess that it is part of the same word family? How could this help you understand the meaning of **mood**?

Can We Be Happier?

Getting Started

Discuss the questions with your classmates.

- ◆ What are the most common things that make people happy?
- ◆ Do you think it is important to study people's happiness?
- ◆ When are you happiest?

Assessing Your Vocabulary Knowledge: TARGET WORDS

Look at the words in the box. These are the target words for this chapter. Use the scale to score yourself on each word. After you finish the chapter, score yourself again to check your improvement.

- 1 I don't know this word.
- 2 I have seen or heard this word before, but I am not sure of the meaning.
- 3 I understand this word when I see it or hear it in a sentence, but I don't know how to use it in my own speaking and writing.
- 4 I know this word and can use it in my own speaking and writing.

TARGET WORDS

___assert	___discipline	___longing	___philosophy
___astonishing	___esteem	___manner	___restaurant
___boost	___graft	___monk	___review
___cheerful	___inherit	___mystery	___steak
___deed	___instinctively	___obscure	___therapy
___devote	___intervention	___pace	___thrill

KNOWLEDGE CHECK 1

Complete the sentences with words that you have scored as 1.

1. I am not familiar with the word / term _____.
2. I have no idea what _____ means.

Fill in the first blank with a word that you have scored as 2. Then complete the sentence.

3. I think _____ could mean _____.

Reading

The passage introduces the concept of happiness and some research on this idea. As you read, pay special attention to the target vocabulary words in **bold**.

Why Are You Happy?



1 Are you happy? It is a simple question, one that you can **instinctively** answer with an easy “yes” or “no.” However, for some **obscure** reason the question “What *is* happiness?” is more difficult to answer. So too is the question that follows: How do we achieve it?

2 Well, defining happiness is not quite as simple as it might seem. Go into any mall these days and you’ll find many people shopping at a frantic **pace**, believing that happiness is the **thrill** of buying a new pair of shoes or the latest high-tech device. Indeed, the idea of happiness has been a topic of much thought and discussion within the fields of **philosophy**, religion, and science for the past 2,500 years. A follower of Confucius, the famous Chinese **philosopher**, would say that happiness is the joy obtained from learning about humanity through social relationships and good **deeds**. Those good **deeds**, however, do not include going to the grocery store because your mother has told you to, or treating yourself to a **steak** at a **restaurant** after a hard day’s work. In fact, a Buddhist would say that happiness is the reverse of consumerism, because happiness consists of self-**discipline** and a life without

longing. Another perspective comes from scientists who have demonstrated that 50 percent of happiness is a result of the genes we **inherit** from our parents rather than the jeans we purchase at the mall.

3 So who is right, the shopper, the **philosopher**, the **monk**, or the scientist? Perhaps the answer lies in the field of psychology or, more specifically, positive psychology. In 1998, Martin Seligman, a psychologist at the University of Pennsylvania, gave a speech at the American Psychological Association in which he said that rather than **devoting** attention to unhappiness, psychology needed to change direction and focus instead on people for whom everything was going well. He said psychologists had a reasonably good understanding of depression, but they knew almost nothing about the **mysteries** of a happy life. He argued that if psychologists could isolate what those were, then people might be able to learn how to make themselves more satisfied with and **cheerful** about their lives. This was the beginning of positive psychology.

4 Since then, research on happiness has come up with some **astounding** facts. If we go back to the mall, shopping can indeed be a source of happiness, but it is significantly less so once your basic needs have been met. The best kind of “retail **therapy**” is to shop for someone else. This is consistent with the Chinese teachings of 2,500 years ago that **assert** that happiness lies in acting within social networks, rather than for our individual benefit only. Again, current research agrees. In 2002, a University of Illinois study found that students with the highest levels of happiness and the fewest signs of depression were those with strong friendship and family networks. Religion facilitates happiness in a similar **manner**. Once again, a **review** of a large number of research studies on the links between religion and happiness has concluded that

there is a positive correlation between religious commitment and higher levels of perceived well-being and self-esteem.

- 5 **Grafting** modern research onto Confucian **philosophy**, we can go back to our original question and say that happiness is a very personal combination of genetics, actions, and beliefs. In the future, it may become a

standard practice for therapists to suggest **interventions** that **boost** happiness level: including thanking people, writing letters old friends, and hanging out with family. Who knew that learning to feel good could feel so good?

(593 words)

READING COMPREHENSION

Respond to the questions in writing. Base your responses on the reading and your own personal experiences.

1. What does Confucianism say is the source of happiness?
2. How much of our happiness may be the result of our genetic makeup?
3. How did Martin Seligman change the way the field of psychology thinks about human happiness?
4. The passage talks about **grafting** modern research onto Confucian **philosophy**. What does this mean?
5. When was the last time you used shopping to make yourself happy? Did it work?
6. Why do you think strong friendships play such an important role in our happiness?

Focusing on Vocabulary

WORD MEANING

This book presents a variety of strategies for learning and remembering the meanings of target words. Sometimes you will be able to find clues to a word's meaning, or definition, in the sentence in which the word appears. In other cases, the sentence will not contain clear clues to word meaning. You may need to reread the section in which the word appears and think about the ideas presented in the text. If you are still unsure of the correct definition, you may need to look the word up in a dictionary.

A. Match the target words with their definitions. If you are unsure about a word's meaning, try to figure it out from the context by rereading the passage. Then check your dictionary. The first one has been done for you.

Set 1

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. instinctively | a. something a person does, especially something that is very good or bad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. philosophy | b. a place where you can buy and eat a meal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. deed | c. the way in which something is done or happens |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. restaurant | d. an event, situation, etc., that people do not understand or cannot explain because they do not know enough about it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. mystery | e. to add something very different to something, so that it becomes part of it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. manner | f. the study of the nature and meaning of existence, truth, good, and evil |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. graft | g. occurring because of a natural tendency to behave in a particular way or a natural ability to know something that is not learned |

Set 2

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. pace | a. the speed at which something happens or is done |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. steak | b. treatment that helps someone feel better or grow stronger |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. inherit | c. to use all or most of your time and effort in order to do something or help someone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. monk | d. to be born with the same character or physical appearance as your parents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. devote | e. a feeling of respect for someone, or a good opinion of someone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. therapy | f. a large, thick piece of good-quality red meat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. esteem | g. a member of an all-male religious group that lives apart from other people |

B. Read each target word and the list below it. One word or phrase in each list is a synonym for the target word. Cross it out. The first one has been done for you.

1. obscure

unclear vague ~~precise~~ difficult to understand

2. thrill

boredom excitement pleasure adventure

3. discipline

control regulation restraint indulgence

4. longing

desire dislike wish want

5. cheerful

serious happy positive joyful

6. astonishing

amazing predictable surprising shocking

7. assert

state declare claim deny

8. review

evaluation assessment description proposal

9. intervention

interference inactivity treatment interruption

10. boost

increase enhance improve limit

WORD FAMILIES

Most words belong to a “family” of words with a shared meaning. For example, the words *serious*, *seriousness*, and *seriously* are related to each other—they are word forms in the same family. In the reading “Why Are You Happy?” forms of the word *happy* appear nineteen times. The differences in the spelling indicate parts of speech (verb, noun, adjective, adverb).

Verb	Noun	Adjective	Adverb
happy	happiness	happy	happily

Notice the endings for *happiness* and *happily*. These spelling patterns are common at the end of certain noun and adverb forms. However, notice also that there isn’t a verb form of the word *happy*. If you aren’t sure of the form of a word or if there is a form of the word you don’t recognize, you can look the word up in a dictionary.

- A. The table contains word families for some of the target words in the reading. Complete the table. An **X** indicates that there is no form or that the form is not common. Sometimes more than one form may be possible. If you are unsure a form, check your dictionary. The first one has been done for you.

Verb	Noun	Adjective	Adverb
assert	assertion		
		1. 2. astonishing	
	1. 2.	1. cheerful 2.	
devote			
X		1. 2.	instinctively
	longing		
X	mystery		
		obscure	
	philosophy		
	thrill	1. 2.	

- B. Choose the correct form of the word in **bold** in sentence **a** to complete sentence **b**. Use the word families table you just completed as a guide. The first one has been done for you.
- a. The United States **asserted** its independence from Great Britain in 1776, but it did not become a reality until the end of the War of Independence in 1783.

b. The government's assertion that the recession was over did little to reassure the small businesses that were still struggling.
 - a. Happiness experts have discovered some **astonishing** facts.

b. I was _____ to discover that some people are born with a greater capacity for happiness than others.
 - a. Her **cheerful** personality was appreciated by all her coworkers.

b. The fans were instantly _____ up by the late goal, which gave their team the win.
 - a. Most parents are very **devoted** to their children.

b. Her _____ to her studies paid off with high grades.

5. a. Flying south in the autumn is an **instinctive** behavior of birds.
b. Parents often _____ know when their children are lying, telling the truth.
6. a. The new clothes, cars, and other things we **long** for don't necessarily make us happier.
b. She looked _____ at the shoes in the store.
7. a. The **mystery** of *Flight 19*, a group of five Navy airplanes that disappeared over the Bermuda Triangle, has never been solved.
b. A number of musicians have died under _____ circumstances, including Brian Jones from the Rolling Stones and Jim Morrison from the Doors.
8. a. The instructions for video games are often so **obscure** that it is much easier to learn to play through trial and error than by reading the instruction manual.
b. The _____ of many legal documents means that average people often cannot understand them without the help of a lawyer.
9. a. **Philosophy** is one of the major subjects studied at university.
b. He was _____ about the loss of his job and used it as a means of moving into a different career.
10. a. She got a real **thrill** when her daughter won the swimming race.
b. Parachuting over the desert was truly _____.

COLLOCATION

When you look at words in context, you can see patterns in the way they are used. These patterns are not based on rules of grammar, but on traditions of use by native speakers. Certain words tend to occur together, and this is called *collocation*.

Example:

We say *ice cold*.

But we do not say *snow cold*.

Sometimes the link between word partners and their meaning is clear and unsurprising—for example, the collocations *bright light* and *heavy load*. Other times, the link may be unexpected—for example, the collocations *bright child* and *heavy heart*. Here are some typical collocation patterns.

Example:

noun + verb	<i>birds sing</i>
verb + noun	<i>deliver babies</i>
adjective + noun	<i>specific information</i>
verb + adverb	<i>breathe heavily</i>
noun + noun	<i>bear market</i>

Because collocations are not based on rules of grammar, the patterns for each word are one of a kind. Therefore, you must build up your knowledge of collocations one at a time. This section introduces a sample of the patterns you need to know in your reading and writing. Apply your growing understanding of collocations to new words and words you already know.

Read the common collocations in the column on the left. Give two examples of associated with each collocation. The first one has been done for you.

	Example 1	Example 2
1. good deed	<u>shopping for neighbor</u>	<u>washing Dad's car</u>
2. inherit property	_____	_____
3. rare steak	_____	_____
4. leisurely pace	_____	_____
5. physical therapy	_____	_____
6. Buddhist monk	_____	_____
7. rapid intervention	_____	_____

Expanding the Topic

An important part of developing your vocabulary involves forming and supporting opinions about the topic you are studying. Read the statements and indicate whether you agree (A) or disagree (D). Then discuss your opinions and reasoning with a partner.

- ___ 1. Studying **philosophy** can lead to a happier and more peaceful existence.
- ___ 2. Eating at **restaurants** with your family is a good way to build family ties.
- ___ 3. **Grafting** some fixed relaxation time onto a busy schedule may lead not only to a less hectic lifestyle, but also to a healthier mind and body.
- ___ 4. Strict self-**discipline** is the best road to happiness.
- ___ 5. Writing a diary is the best way to **review** how happy you are.
- ___ 6. Self-**esteem** is dependent on the possessions you have.
- ___ 7. Achieving a calm, relaxed **manner** will **boost** your sense of happiness.
- ___ 8. We should **devote** most of our lives to being happy.



Write a 500-word essay on one of the statements above explaining why you agree or disagree with it.

Revisiting the Target Words

Now that you have completed this chapter, use the scale to describe your know of the target words.

- 1 I still don't know anything about this word.
- 2 I am still not sure of the meaning of this word even after studying it.
- 3 I understand this word when I see it or hear it in a sentence, but I don't know how to use it in my own speaking and writing.
- 4 I know this word and can use it in my own speaking and writing.

TARGET WORDS

___assert	___discipline	___longing	___philosophy
___astonishing	___esteem	___manner	___restaurant
___boost	___graft	___monk	___review
___cheerful	___inherit	___mystery	___steak
___deed	___instinctively	___obscure	___therapy
___devote	___intervention	___pace	___thrill

KNOWLEDGE CHECK 2

Select examples from the words you now give a score of 3 or 4, but didn't at the start of the chapter, to complete the sentences.

1. I didn't know that _____ meant _____ before reading this chapter.
2. I wasn't sure that I knew the meaning of _____, but I am now.
3. I now am confident that I know what _____ means, but I would like more practice with how to use it in my speaking and writing.
4. I could next use _____ when I am _____.



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FOCUS ON **VOCABULARY 1** Bridging Vocabulary

Focus on Vocabulary 1: Bridging Vocabulary is a research-based vocabulary textbook that gives intermediate to high-intermediate students hands-on preparation for understanding mid-frequency vocabulary, such as that found in novels, newspapers, films, and social and workplace settings. Through excerpts from popular material and well-crafted exercises, English learners focus on mid-frequency vocabulary—504 word families in all. To help students reach a fuller understanding of the new vocabulary, each chapter provides a series of exercises on word meaning, word families, and collocation.

Features

- Seven units focus on a variety of subject areas, such as the mind, design, celebrity, and the environment.
- The start of each main chapter features an Assessing Your Vocabulary Knowledge section, which helps students determine their level of familiarity with that chapter's twenty-four target words. Students reassess their familiarity with the words at the end of the chapter.
- Each main chapter carefully recycles target words a minimum of four times in the reading passage and throughout the sections that follow: Reading Comprehension, Word Meaning, Word Families, Collocation, and Expanding the Topic.
- At the end of each unit, a Strategy Practice chapter offers tips for dictionary use, essay writing, and other vocabulary-related tasks.

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978-0-13-137619-9
978-0-13-137617-5



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ISBN-13: 978-0-13-137619-9
ISBN-10: 0-13-137619-5



9 780131 376199