Study unit 3

Using a dictionary

A What dictionaries do I need?

A **bilingual** dictionary [using two languages] is easy for you to understand, and quick and easy to use. A dictionary in English will give you reading practice in English and many more examples of how words are used. If possible, use both. These are good dictionaries in English for your level, and most of them are available online:

Cambridge Learner's Dictionary
Longman Active Study Dictionary
Oxford Wordpower Dictionary
Macmillan Essential Dictionary

B Information in dictionaries

If you **look up a word** [find a word in a dictionary] using the *Cambridge Learner's Dictionary,* the information is shown like this:

pronunciation using **phonemic symbols** (see page 247)

a **definition** explains the meaning

bold *italics* show common word partners (see Unit 74)

fun[1] /fʌn/ *noun* [u]

1 enjoyment or pleasure, or something that gives you enjoyment or pleasure

*She's **great fun** to be with.*
***Have fun!** (= enjoy yourself)*
*It's **no fun** having to work late every night.*

2 for fun/for the fun of it
for pleasure and not for any other reason

3 make fun of sb/sth
to make a joke about someone or something in an unkind way.

The other children at school used to make fun of his hair.

part of speech (= noun)

[U] tells you that *fun* is uncountable (see Unit 86)

fixed **phrases** using the word are shown in **bold** (see Units 75–6)

examples are in *italics*

3.1 **Correct the spelling mistakes. Use a dictionary to check your answers.**

1 allways *always*
2 realy .....
3 unfortunatly .....
4 expecially .....
5 cloths .....
6 confortable .....
7 accomodation .....
8 beautifull .....
9 unbeleivable .....
10 neccesary .....

3.2 **In the word *island* /ˈaɪlənd/, the letter 's' is silent (not pronounced). Use your dictionary to find the silent letters in these words.**

1 knee 2 comb 3 castle 4 salmon 5 receipt







C Defining words

'Defining words' are words that dictionaries use when they **define** [explain] the words in the dictionary. Some of these are quite common.

emphasise [give something more attention and importance], e.g. My teacher has always emphasised the importance of writing down new words in a notebook.
relating to or **connected to/with** [having a relationship with someone or something], e.g. *musical* is connected with / related to *music*
amount [how much there is of something], e.g. £5 million is a large amount of money.
official [done by the government or someone in authority], e.g. A passport is an official document.
behave [do or say things in a particular way], e.g. People can behave strangely when they're nervous.

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Exercises

3.3 **Complete the dictionary definitions using words from the box.**

~~connected with~~	emphasise	relating to	behave	official	amount

1 **industrial** / ɪn'dʌstriəl/ 1 adjective *connected with* industry
2 **sum** /sʌm/ noun [C] an ..... of money
3 **pretend** /prɪ'tend/ verb [I,T] to ..... as if something is true when it is not
4 **certificate** /sə'tɪfɪkət/ noun [C] an ..... document that gives details to show something is true
5 **not at all** /nɒt ət ɔːl/ used instead of 'no' or 'not' to ..... what you are saying: I'm not at all happy about it
6 **legal** /'liːgəl/ adjective ..... the law

D Using a dictionary

- When you use a dictionary to check the meaning of a word, put a **tick** (✓) next to it. Each time you return to a page with a tick, **see** [find out] if you remember the word.
- When you meet a new word or phrase in a text, first try to **guess the meaning** [try to think of the meaning when you don't know it]. Then, use a dictionary to see if your **guess** was correct.
- Don't just read the dictionary definition. Example phrases and sentences show you how a word or phrase is used, and they help you to understand the meaning more clearly.
- If you look up a word in a bilingual dictionary and get two or three different translations, check these words in an English dictionary to see which translation is the best one for the situation.
- Remember that many words have more than one meaning. The first meaning in the dictionary is not always the one you want. You may need to read through the different meanings.

3.4 **Answer the questions, and use an English dictionary to check the answers.**

1 What does *puppy* mean? *It's a very young dog.*
2 Is the correct spelling *organize* or *organise?* .....
3 What part of speech is *extremely?* .....
4 What kind of noun is *advice?* .....
5 What preposition follows the verb *rely?* .....
6 Look up *friend*, and then the words in **bold** that are often used with it. Can you complete these phrases? *She's an* ..... *friend; he's my* ..... *friend; you* ..... *friends with people.*

3.5 **Match the sentences on the right with the different meanings of *post* on the left.**

post[1] /pəʊst/ *noun*

1 System [no plural] *UK (US mail)*
the system for sending letters, parcels, etc
*Your letter is **in the post**.*
*I'm sending the documents **by post**.*

2 Letters [u] *UK (US mail)*
letters, parcels, etc that you send or receive
*Has the **post arrived/come yet?***

3 Job [c] *formal*
a job
A part-time post.
A teaching post.

4 Pole [c]
a long, vertical piece of wood or metal fixed into the ground at one end.
*I found the dog tied to a **post**.*

1 He's applied for a post overseas.
2 Did you send the cheque by post?
3 I tied the flag to a post.
4 We haven't had any post yet.

LIVEWORKSHEETS