

# ENGLISH VOCABULARY ORGANISER

100 topics for self-study

CHRIS GOUGH



## Language Teaching Publications

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# Vocabulary is important

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## What is the purpose of this book?

This book is designed to help you increase the number of words you know and help you to use them. It gives you thousands of words connected with 100 different topics. One of the main things you will learn is that a new word is useless unless you know how to use it.

## What is vocabulary?

Vocabulary is not just words. When we talk about our vocabulary, we mean the words we know and our ability to use them. Here are four different ways to think about words:

### Meaning

When we meet a new word, the first thing we want to know is what it means. In this book, for example, you will find the word for a type of fish – salmon. Only one kind of fish is called salmon, so that is easy.

### Pronunciation

When you learn a new word, make sure you can say it. Make sure you know which syllable is stressed. If you are unsure, ask a teacher or use a dictionary with a CD-ROM which gives the pronunciation.

### Collocation

Collocation is the way words combine with other words. There is little point in knowing the word *risk*, unless you also know the verb which goes with it – *take a risk*. We say that *take* collocates with *risk*. In the same way *deep* and *shallow* are adjectives which collocate with *water*. In this book you will find lots of collocation exercises.

### Expressions

Expressions are groups of two, three, four or more words which always go together. For example, if you are in a shop and an assistant approaches you, you can say, "I'm just looking." If you are interested in finding out more about something, you can ask them, "What do you do for a living?"

## Should I translate words?

There is nothing wrong with translation. It is often the quickest way to check the meaning of

a word. You will find exercises in this book which encourage you to write in translations of basic vocabulary. Remember that you often need to translate whole expressions, not just individual words. Check words in your bilingual dictionary, but then check in a good English-English dictionary which will give you good, natural examples of the word in context.

## Why is vocabulary important?

Vocabulary is important because it is words which carry the content of what we want to say. Grammar joins groups of words together, but most of the meaning is in the words. The more words you know, the more you will be able to communicate. You can say a lot with words. There is not much you can say with grammar alone!

## How many words are there in English?

Compared with other languages, English grammar is quite simple: there are no cases and nouns don't have gender. However, English contains more words than any other world language – hundreds of thousands. Very often English has two words when other languages only have one. For example, we can talk about two things being the same or identical. Questions can be hard or difficult.

## How do we learn vocabulary?

The main way we increase our personal vocabularies is by reading a lot of natural English regularly. As a student, you can also learn by studying and doing vocabulary exercises like those in this book. This book brings words of similar meaning together into 100 units. We have organised vocabulary for you. If you study page 7, it will help you get the most out of this book.

## Is grammar also important?

Vocabulary and grammar are both important. With a bigger vocabulary you will be able to talk about more things. With better grammar, you will be able to talk about them more fluently and more accurately.

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