



R1f. Can use a dictionary to check the meaning of words they have read

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## Teachers' Notes

- This therapy begins with a vocabulary activity that introduces key dictionary skills.
- This is followed by a focus on using alphabetical order to find words and then looks at dictionary definitions.
- Throughout the therapy, pupils have the opportunity to discuss and practise the taught skills.

# Vocabulary Warm-Up 1

alphabetical order



When words are ordered in the same order as the alphabet.

For example, a word starting with a would come before a word starting with b.

When two words start with the same letter, you order them by the second letter, and so on.

Can you explain what *alphabetical order* means? Have a go and then click to reveal and check.

There will be examples for you to try later on...

## Vocabulary Warm-Up 2

definition

Can you explain what *definition* means? Have a go and then click to reveal and check.

A definition explains what something means. In a dictionary, it states the meaning of a word. For example, a definition for cat could be:

*A furry mammal with four legs, whiskers and a tail. Often kept as pets. Cats are carnivores. They like to prowl and hunt. Cats purr when they are happy.*

You will find a definition of 'carnivore' later on...

## Vocabulary Warm-Up 3

dictionary

Can you explain what *dictionary* means? Have a go and then click to reveal and check.

A book that lists words in alphabetical order and explains what each word means.

A dictionary also usually says what class the word is in, for example *noun*, *adjective*, *adverb* or *verb*, and shows how the words appear in different tenses (like *play*, *played*, *playing*, *plays*, *to play*).

## Discussion

How have you used a dictionary?  
Have you seen someone else use one?

To look up how to spell  
a word.

To check the meaning  
of the word.

To find out what class of word it is –  
noun, verb, adverb, adjective,  
conjunction etc.

## Using a dictionary

We are going to learn about using a dictionary...

... to check the meaning of the word.

confounded

cactus

canoe

carnivore

Using a dictionary to check the meaning of words.

**STEP 1:**

Using **alphabetical order** to find the word.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

You may need to look for the capital letter.

Remember, some letters can look different in different fonts, like: l I, g g and k *k* .

**STEP 1:**

Using **alphabetical order** to find the word.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

**Alphabetical order** is when words are ordered in the same order as the alphabet.

For example, a word starting with a would come before a word starting with b.

## STEP 1:

Using **alphabetical order** to find the word.

### Discussion

How would you order these words?

*meerkat, zebra, alligator*

Which would come 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>?

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

## STEP 1:

Using **alphabetical order** to find the word.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

When two words start with the same letter, you order them by the second letter, and so on.

This means that, when you look up a word, you find the section with the first letter and then work through the words by order of the next letter.

There is a step-by-step guide on the next slide...

## STEP 1:

Using **alphabetical order** to find the word.

**Your turn:** How would you find the word *cleft* in a dictionary?  
Think it through and then click for the guide.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ef Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

1. Find the section with words beginning with c.

2. Pass through the words that have *a* as the second letter, like *canoe* and *carnivore*. The 2<sup>nd</sup> letter of *cleft* is l, so start looking towards the middle of the section.

3. If you get to words starting with *co*, *cr* or *cu* then you've gone too far...

## STEP 1:

Using **alphabetical order** to find the word.

Use this strategy for the 3<sup>rd</sup> letter in a word, and so on.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

### Your turn:

Would you find the word *monster* before or after these other words?

- moose
- monsoon
- mountain
- monstrosity

## STEP 2:

Reading the **definition** of the word.

A **definition** explains what something means. In a dictionary, it states the meaning of a word.

Here is an example of a definition of the word 'lion'.

### Lion

*Noun. Plural: lions.*

A large member of the big cat family, living in the African savannah. Male lions have a mane around their face. Female lions are called lionesses and they hunt for the family, which is called a pride. Baby lions are called cubs. Lions are carnivores.

Look at the next slide for a guide to dictionary definitions...

## STEP 2:

Reading the **definition** of the word.  
Click to examine the different parts.

Definitions usually give you important grammar information.

### Lion

*Noun. Plural: lions.*

A large member of the big cat family, living in the African savannah. Male lions have a mane around their face. Female lions are called lionesses and they hunt for the family, which is called a pride. Baby lions are called cubs. Lions are carnivores.

You may find new topic words that you need to look up using your dictionary skills!

## STEP 2:

Reading the **definition** of the word.

A **definition** should be clear and concise (not too long).

### Discussion

Is the definition of *carnivore* clear and concise? Does it include all the features you would expect to see?

### Carnivore

*Noun. Plural: carnivores.*

An animal that eats other animals.

## **Your turn:**

On your own or with a partner, use a dictionary to check the meanings of these words:

- monarch
- peak
- centurion
- compassion

## **Discussion**

How confident are you now with using a dictionary to check the meaning of words?

So, using a dictionary is an important skill for checking the meaning of words. You may have heard a word in conversation, or come across it in your reading, and want to know what it means. Looking the word up in a dictionary will tell you its grammatical features and its meaning, and may lead you on to learning other new topic words too.

To help you find words quickly you should practise using alphabetical order to search for words. It would also help you to get used to reading dictionary definitions.

Remember these key skills:

- Use the word's first letter and alphabetical order to find the right section of the dictionary.
- Then use alphabetical order for the 2<sup>nd</sup> letter and so on, until you find the word.
- Your alphabetical order knowledge will help you scan through to find the word more quickly.

See what interesting new words you can learn, and remember to use them in your writing!