AMERICAN HERITAGE® DICTIONARIES
Getting to Know Dictionaries from A to Z

A helpful tool for teachers, parents, students, and librarians
1. Identify things in different groups that can be found in the book, such as foods, animals, and things to do. Make a list of these words. Which ones are your favorites?

2. Find Freddie. Freddie is the black-and-white dog that appears throughout the book.
   - Find all the entries that Freddie is in.
   - Make a list of these words.
   - Then start over and see if you can find Freddie by looking up these words.

3. Choose three or more illustrations from the dictionary. Make a story using the corresponding words in sentences. Here are some groups of words you might start with:
   - dig/garden/vegetable
   - book/night/sleep/dream
   - cold/coat/winter/snow

4. Look up a word you like and ask questions about it. At apple, you could ask:
   - Where do apples come from?
   - What is the shape of an apple?
   - What colors can apples have?
   - Are these words also in the dictionary? Where?

5. Look at one of the thematic illustrations in the back of the book.
   - Use the words in it to describe what is going on.
   - Make a list of the words you used.
   - See if these words are in the dictionary.
1. Sometimes two short words can be joined to form a longer word. Match each word in column A with a word in column B to form a **compound word** that is in your dictionary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>after</td>
<td>room</td>
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<tr>
<td>high</td>
<td>board</td>
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<tr>
<td>score</td>
<td>ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bath</td>
<td>noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>base</td>
<td>chair</td>
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</table>

2. Find the words that **rhyme**.
   - Find a word on page 121 that rhymes with **sun**.
   - Find a word on page 24 that rhymes with **tree**.
   - Can you find two words that rhyme with **two** and begin with the letter **d**?
     (Hint: The words are on pages 83 and 87.)

3. **Synonyms** are words that mean the same thing. Say the missing word or fill in the blank.

   A word on page 254 that means the same as **gift** is ________________________.

   A word on page 139 that means the same as **glad** is ________________________.

   A word on page 69 that means the same as **sofa** is_______________________.

4. The words in the dictionary are in **ABC order**. Can you list these words in ABC order?

   scissors, knife, fork, spoon, dish, cup, pitcher

   Now see if you can find these words in your dictionary. Use the **guidewords** on the top of the pages to help you.

5. Match the word in column A with its **opposite** in column B. Look up these words in your dictionary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>shout</td>
<td>crooked</td>
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<td>exit</td>
<td>find</td>
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<td>save</td>
<td>awake</td>
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<td>lose</td>
<td>whisper</td>
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</table>
The American Heritage® Children’s Dictionary

The American Heritage Children’s Dictionary is an award-winning dictionary for children in grades 3–6 (ages 8–11).

1. **Homophones** are words that sound alike even though they may be spelled differently. In your dictionary, you can find words that sound alike listed at the end of entries. Use your dictionary to fill in the blanks below.
   
   a. These words sound alike: _____, stair.

   As I was climbing up the _____, my mother was _____ down at me from the ledge.

   b. These words sound alike: _____, pier.

   We _____ into the fog that had covered the harbor, but we could not see the end of the _____.

   c. These words sound alike: ________, blue.

   The wind _____ the boat over the _____ water.

2. Your dictionary spells out the different forms of a word at the end of each entry.
   
   a. Fill in the blank with the plural form of the noun *leaf*.

   We raked the __________ into a big pile.

   b. Fill in the blanks with forms of the adjective *itchy*.

   The rash I got from chickenpox was _______ than the one from poison ivy.

   This bug bite is the _____ bite I’ve ever had!

   c. Fill in the blanks with forms of the verb *stir*.

   While we waited in the canoe, I lazily _____ the water with my finger.

   Remember to keep _____ the soup while it is cooking.

3. Match the definitions on the left with the example sentences on the right.

   A series of regular or usual activities; a standard procedure.  
   
   A new road **connects** the two towns.

   To bring two or more items together; link.  
   
   The air was **still** before the storm.

   Without motion.  
   
   Walking the dog is part of my daily **routine**.

   In a very cautious or careful way.  
   
   I **gingerly** patted the large dog.
1. The etymologies tell you where a word came from and how old it is. They appear in brackets at the end of many entries in the dictionary.

   a. Look at the etymology for the word plate. When was this word first written down in English? Now look at the etymology for fork. When was it written down? Which word has been in the language longer?

   b. Weird and strange are synonyms, but they have very different histories. Look at the etymology at weird. What was this word’s meaning when it was first written down in English? Now look at the etymology at strange. What is the meaning of the Latin word it comes from?

2. Synonyms are words that have similar meanings. The dictionary shows words with similar meanings in notes throughout the book.

   a. Look at the note at the word smart. What other synonyms are listed there? Can you use these words in a sentence?

   b. Look at the note at the word neat. What other synonyms are listed there? Can you use these words in a sentence?

3. Homophones are words that sound alike. The dictionary shows words that sound alike at the end of entries throughout the book.

   a. Look at the entry for way. What homophones are listed there?

   b. Look at the entry for new. What homophones are listed there?

4. Notes in the margins of the dictionary tell you more about words.

   a. Look at the Regional Note for tonic. Can you name three other words used for carbonated soft drinks? In what parts of the United States are these words used?

   b. Look at the Usage Note for infer. Should you use infer or imply in the following sentence?

      His frown could _______ that he doesn’t approve of your idea.

   c. Look at the Word History Note for sauce. What other English words come from the same word in Latin as sauce? What is the Latin word and what did it mean?
Answers for
The American Heritage® Picture Dictionary

1. Some foods are apple, banana, carrot, cookie, corn, juice, milk, orange, peach, sandwich, soup.

Some animals are alligator, bear, bird, bunny, cat, chicken, cow, deer, dog, duck, goose, horse, kitten, mouse, owl, pig, rabbit, raccoon, sheep, squirrel, turtle, zebra.

Some things to do are color, draw, jump, kick, paint, play, ride, run, sail, shop, sing, skate, swim, swing, write.

2. Freddie appears in 36 entries: angry, ate, bad, bath, big, bite, catch, clean, different, dry, eat, everybody, fight, hide, hungry, large, no, not, our, pull, prize, push, roll, short, sleep, stay, tail (just his tail), team, their, too (first sense), too (second sense), upstairs, wet, what, why.

4. Where do apples come from? tree
What is the shape of an apple? round
What colors can apples have? green, red, yellow
Are these words also in the dictionary? Yes.

Answers for
The American Heritage® Children’s Dictionary

1. a. stare, stairs, staring
   b. peer, peered, pier
   c. blew, blew, blue

2. a. leaves
   b. itchier, itchiest
   c. stirred, stirring

3. A series . . . / Walking the dog . . .
To link . . . / A new road . . .
Without motion / The air was . . .
In a very . . . / I gingerly . . .

Answers for
The American Heritage® Student Dictionary

1. a. Plate was first written down in about 1250. Fork was first written down in about 1000. Fork has been in the language longer.
   b. Weird was first written down in about 1400 when it meant “controlling fate.” Strange comes from a Latin word meaning “foreign.”

2. a. intelligent, bright, brilliant, quick-witted
   b. tidy, trim, shipshape

3. a. weigh, whey
   b. gnu, knew

4. a. Tonic is called soda in the northeast United States and around St. Louis, Missouri, and pop from the Midwest westward. It is also called a cold drink in the Southern United States.
   b. imply
   c. English sauce and salsa come from the Latin word salsa, which itself comes from a Latin word that meant “salty.”