

The Choral Method: Vocab The Right Way

The Choral Method Vocab
The Right Way
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Preface

While the idea of moving towards a future of communicating through a nuanced, intricate, and diverse vocabulary might be prevalent in the minds of some educators, this noble endeavor is much too romanticized for our constantly changing society. At the most basic level, it is important to introduce into their working vocabulary the words that students will be hearing and seeing in the world around them.

There are numerous problems with the recent trend of using multiple activities to interact with each word thoroughly in order to learn new vocabulary words. Students tend to BS the exercises and just cram before a test, which results in only short-term success and does not produce enduring understanding. Such programs tend to consist of too many abstract 'routes' to the meaning of a word such as long definitions and lists of antonyms. These tend to put too much pressure on a student driven to succeed to memorize the word and all of the associated jumble as a separate entity. That is, when a student memorizes a package of phrases connected to a word, these packages become compartmentalized and isolated from reality. Furthermore, this overcomplication leads to more stress and less time to let the actual word 'sink in' which (unless the student is spending time to study the etymology of each word) is necessary to learn the spelling of the word.

There is an argument to be made for learning vocabulary in groups, out loud, by rote. Instead of disconnected bundles of information for each vocab word that quickly fade away, the choral method strives to provide an efficient line from each new word to existing knowledge. By only using synonyms and auditory association, students are able to quickly connect with the meaning of each word. In addition, by mastering vocabulary as a group, there is a clear motivation to keep up with the crowd. This subconscious motivation results in more rapid class progress and a deeper embedding of vocabulary.

There is no fluff, there is no stress, there is no extraneous complication.

After using this method, students will immediately recall the new words when they encounter the old ones, as well as associate a known meaning to the new words when they encounter them.

The only way to 'know' a word as opposed to memorizing it (like the way you 'know' your name) is ongoing exposure. This method begins this process of fundamental knowing by creating direct lines of association. Encounters with the word or its 'definitive' synonym will trigger a recollection of its counterpart. Over time, this will strengthen the connection and eventually solidify the understanding as true knowledge.

How to Use this Book

Here I provide less of an instructional book, but more of a list of “expensive” and popular words that high school students would benefit from knowing.

Each unit should take a week to complete. At the start of the week, write the words large

Unit 1

1. **ameliorate** - to make better
2. **apex** - the highest point
3. **cacophony** - a loud and unpleasant noise
4. **clandestine** - secretive or done in secret
5. **garrulous** - talkative
6. **gregarious** - sociable
7. **languid** - lazy
8. **nadir** - the lowest point
9. **penury** - poverty
10. **surreptitious** - secretive or done in secret
11. **tacit** - silent
12. **truculent** - forceful
13. **ubiquitous** - widespread, appearing everywhere
14. **verisimilitude** - the quality of being lifelike
15. **zenith** - the highest point

Unit 2

1. **chattel** - property
2. **ennui** - extreme boredom
3. **ephemeral** - temporary
4. **laconic** - beginner
5. **lucid** - clear
6. **malevolent** - mean spirited
7. **nascent** - newly created
8. **neophyte** - beginner
9. **novice** - beginner
10. **obdurate** - stubborn
11. **raze** - to destroy completely
12. **salutary** - beneficial
13. **sanguine** - reddish; healthy; optimistic
14. **sardonic** - sarcastic
15. **turgid** - swollen

Unit 3

1. **affable** - likable
2. **desecrate** - to treat with disrespect
3. **enigmatic** - mysterious
4. **epitome** - the essence of
5. **erudite** - learned
6. **exhort** - to urge on
7. **factotum** - servant
8. **folderol** - useless
9. **hackneyed** - unoriginal
10. **petulant** - impatient
11. **provincial** - unsophisticated
12. **remonstrate** - to oppose strongly
13. **resilient** - recovers quickly
14. **tenuous** - flimsy
15. **vapid** - stupid

Unit 4

1. **Absolve** - to forgive
2. **Acerbic** - sharp tongued
3. **Austere** - strict
4. **Cajole** - to persuade
5. **Cupidity** - greed
6. **Deleterious** - causing harm
7. **Efficacious** - effective
8. **Fortuitous** - fortunate
9. **Haughty** - stuck up
10. **Mitigate** - to make better
11. **Munificent** - generous
12. **Ostentatious** - stuck up
13. **Paragon** - a perfect example
14. **Prosaic** - commonplace

15. **Supercilious** - stuck up

16. **Sycophant** - butt-kisser

Unit 5

1. **ambiguous** - a thing that is unclear
2. **ambivalent** - having mixed feelings
3. **didactic** - intended to teach a lesson
4. **impertinent** - rude
5. **intransigent** - stubborn
6. **intrepid** - courageous
7. **laud** - to praise
8. **pulchritude** - beauty
9. **reconnoiter** - to scout out
10. **stalwart** - determined
11. **succinct** - brief
12. **tempest** - a storm
13. **tyro** - beginner
14. **venerable** - worthy of respect
15. **vivacious** - lively

Unit 6

1. **aesthetic** - pertaining to beauty or the arts
2. **cantankerous** - argumentative
3. **clairvoyant** - able to see the future
4. **conundrum** - a problem
5. **credulous** - gullible
6. **cryptic** - mysterious
7. **lampoon** - to make fun of
8. **maladroit** - clumsy
9. **opulent** - wealthy
10. **palpable** - tangible
11. **purloin** - to steal
12. **sagacious** - wise
13. **Tawdry** - trashy
14. **vindicate** - to find innocent
15. **zephyr** - light breeze

Unit 7

1. **Augur** - to foreshadow
2. **Dawdle** - procrastinate
3. **Dire** - extremely Serious
4. **Duplicitous** - two-faced
5. **Encomium** - High praise
6. **Euphemism** - Sugarcoating
7. **Facile** - Easy
8. **Frugal** - Cheap
9. **Homogenous** - a group of things that are alike
10. **Impetuous** - hasty
11. **Inveterate** - Confirmed by habit
12. **Jaundiced** - skeptical
13. **Mercurial** - Hot Tempered; Fickle
14. **Serene** - peaceful
15. **Tertiary** - of lesser importance

Unit 8

1. **Abomination** - A disgusting act
2. **Ascertain** - To Prove
3. **Beguile** - To charm or deceive
4. **Calumny** - A false allegation
5. **Contentious** - controversial
6. **Elegiac** - Sad
7. **Emulate** - to imitate
8. **Hedonist** - pleasure seeker
9. **Ignominious** - dishonorable
10. **Inept** - Clumsy
11. **Licentious** - Sinful
12. **Manifest** - proof or evidence
13. **Martial** - Relating to war
14. **Prodigious** - immense
15. **Slander** - to falsely accuse

Unit 9

1. **Adulation** - Worship
2. **Banal** - Ordinary
3. **Bereft** - Lacking
4. **Blatant** - Obvious
5. **Endemic** - Native to a certain area or thing
6. **Lurid** - Shocking or gruesome
7. **Meander** - To wander
8. **Meritorious** - Praise worthy
9. **Pastoral** - Relating to the countryside
10. **Perturb** - To agitate
11. **Singular** - Unique
12. **Transient** - Not permanent
13. **Tyrant** - Unlawful ruler
14. **Utilitarian** - Practical or useful
15. **Vicarious** - Living through something else

Unit 10

1. **Acrid** - Bitter taste or smell
2. **Bellicose** - Hostile
3. **Demagogue** - A politician who tells people what they want to hear
4. **Derogatory** - Insulting
5. **Epistle** - Letter
6. **Florid** - Flashy
7. **Irascible** - Cranky
8. **Nettle** - To annoy
9. **Parochial** - Close minded
10. **Proletarian** - A common man
11. **Rectify** - To make correct
12. **Remuneration** - Payment
13. **Talisman** - Lucky Charm
14. **Terse** - Succinct

15. **Wary** - Cautious