

Cambridge Essential English Dictionary

SECOND EDITION

Dictionary Guide Worksheets

Photocopiable activities for learning dictionary skills

Designed for use with the *Cambridge Essential English Dictionary*,
Second Edition



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,
São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.dictionary.cambridge.org/essential

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These Dictionary Guide Worksheets are downloadable versions of the Guide to the Dictionary presented in the *Cambridge Essential English Dictionary*, Second Edition. The Guide is designed to help you develop skills in using a dictionary.

The worksheets are grouped as five separate units, which can be used for independent study or in the classroom.

Unit 1: Finding your way around the dictionary

- What is an entry?
- Alphabetical order
- Finding an entry
- Variants

Unit 2: Information about the word

- Irregular forms of verbs
- Irregular forms of nouns
- Irregular forms of adjectives
- Pronunciations
- English Profile levels

Unit 3: Parts of speech

- Noun
- Pronoun
- Determiner
- Adjective
- Preposition
- Verb, auxiliary verb
- Phrasal verb
- Adverb
- Conjunction

Unit 4: The entry for the word

- Definitions
- Phrases
- Example sentences
- Pictures

Unit 5: More about the word

- Formal and informal
- British and American English
- Related words
- Opposites
- Common error notes

Unit 1: Finding your way around the dictionary

What is an entry?

A dictionary entry tells you what a word means and how to use it. At the beginning of each entry in this dictionary is the main form of the word, in colour. This is the **headword**. A headword can be one word (**light**) or it can be more than one word (**light bulb**).

This guide will help you to use the entries in the dictionary. It will show you how to look for the entry you want and what information you will find in the entry.

Alphabetical order

The English alphabet has 26 letters. The order of the letters is:

Small letters: a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Capital letters: A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

The entries in the dictionary are in alphabetical order. We ignore spaces and punctuation marks when putting words in alphabetical order. For example, **fairy tale** is found between the words **fairy** and **faith**.

If you are trying to decide the alphabetical order of two words with the same first letter, look at the second letter. Go through each letter of the word from left to right until you find a letter that is different. The first letter that is different shows you what order the words should be in.

To help you remember the alphabetical order of English, the alphabet is shown down the side of each page of the dictionary.

1 Put these words in alphabetical order.

table book light pencil chair sock yacht hair

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| 1 _____ | 5 _____ |
| 2 _____ | 6 _____ |
| 3 _____ | 7 _____ |
| 4 _____ | 8 _____ |

2 Put these words in alphabetical order.

talk take thank teacher tall today Thursday tongue

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| 1 _____ | 5 _____ |
| 2 _____ | 6 _____ |
| 3 _____ | 7 _____ |
| 4 _____ | 8 _____ |

Finding an entry

When you open the dictionary, you will see a word at the top of each page. These help you to find the page that the word you are looking for is on. The word at the top of the left page is the first entry on that page, and the word at the top of the right page is the last entry on that page. If the word you are looking for comes in alphabetical order between these two words, it will be on the two pages you are looking at.

3 Draw a line from the headword to the words that it will appear between.

- | | |
|----------|------------------------|
| 1 good | port... ...praise |
| 2 police | we'd... ...which |
| 3 early | goal... ...grandchild |
| 4 whale | point... ...population |
| 5 poster | DVD... ...easy |

4 Which of these words will you find on the pages that start with **mouse** and end with **must**? Draw a line under the words that will be on these two pages.

mouth more much mood my mug move
Mr mother mustn't music Ms

Variants

Sometimes words can be spelled in more than one way, or another word can be used with exactly the same meaning. These different spellings or different words are shown in brackets at the beginning of the entries:

adviser /əd'vaɪzə/ **noun** (also **advisor**)
someone whose job is to give advice about a subject: a **financial adviser**

bye /baɪ/ **exclamation** (also **bye-bye**)
A1 goodbye: *Bye, see you tomorrow.*

everyone /'evriwʌn/ **pronoun** (also **everybody**)
A2 every person: *I've received a reply from everyone now.* ◦ *Everyone agreed with the decision.*

eyelash /'aɪləʃ/ **noun** (also **lash**)
one of the short hairs that grow from the edge of your eyelids: *false eye-lashes*

Unit 2: Information about the word

Irregular forms

Some forms of nouns, verbs, and adjectives have special forms or spellings. These are *irregular* forms. Irregular forms are shown at the beginning of the entry. **Broke** and **broken** are irregular forms of **break**, and **better** and **best** are irregular forms of **good**.

break¹ /breɪk/ verb (**broke**, **broken**)

1 **A2** to separate into two or more pieces, or to make something separate into two or more pieces: *They had to break a window to get in.*

good¹ /ɡʊd/ adj (**better**, **best**)

1 **A1** enjoyable or nice: *a good book*
◦ *Did you have a good time at the party?*

Irregular forms of verbs

Past tenses, past participles, and present participles ('-ing' forms) that are not regular are shown at the entry for the verb. There is also a list of irregular verbs at the back of the book that shows the infinitive form of the verb, its past tense, and the past participle.

Irregular forms have their own entries, which tell you to go to the main form of the word:

went /went/
past tense of go

1 Write the past tense and past participle of these verbs.

	past tense	past participle
1 break	_____	_____
2 make	_____	_____
3 get	_____	_____
4 swim	_____	_____
5 take	_____	_____

Irregular forms of nouns

To make nouns plural, you normally add **-s**, for example **book**, **books**. Some nouns do not have this regular plural form. If a plural form of a noun is not regular, it is shown in brackets after the headword:

shelf /ʃelf/ noun (plural **shelves** /ʃelvz/)

A2 a board used to put things on, often attached to a wall: *kitchen shelves*

2 Look up these nouns. Write down their plural form.

1 bookshelf	<u>bookshelves</u>
2 child	_____
3 foot	_____
4 man	_____
5 mouse	_____
6 potato	_____
7 sheep	_____
8 wife	_____

3 Look up these nouns. Put a line under the correct plural form.

- 1 city cities citys cityes
- 2 life lifes lifs lives
- 3 fireman firemans firemen firemens
- 4 tomato tomatoes tomatos tomates

Irregular forms of adjectives

Adjectives can have different forms. The comparative form is used to show that someone or something has more of a particular quality than someone or something else. To make the regular comparative form, you either add **-er** to the end of the adjective or use the word **more** before it.

The superlative form of adjectives is used to show that someone or something has more of a particular quality than anyone or anything else. To make the regular superlative form, you either add **-est** to the end of the adjective, or use the word **most** before it.

Comparative and superlative forms that are not regular are shown at the beginning of the entry:

far² /fɑːr/ adj (**farther** or **further**, **farthest** or **furthest**)
describing the part of something that is most distant from you: *His office is at the far end of the corridor.*

4 Look up these words. Write their comparative and superlative forms.

	comparative	superlative
1 bad	_____	_____
2 heavy	_____	_____
3 lazy	_____	_____
4 good	_____	_____
5 well	_____	_____

Pronunciations

Pronunciations are shown after the headword. For example, the pronunciation for the word **dog** is shown like this: /dɒg/. The pronunciations are written using the symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The list on the inside front cover of the dictionary tells you how to read the pronunciation symbols. The most difficult symbols are also shown at the bottom of each page, with an example of a word that contains that sound.

The symbols ' and , show you which part of the word to say strongly. The high symbol ' shows you the part of the word that you should say in the strongest voice. The low symbol , shows you the part of the word that you should say in a strong voice, but not as strong as '.

The dictionary entries do not show pronunciation for abbreviations used only in writing, such as **cm**, **lb**, **mm**.

1 fish	/ˈaɪlənd/
2 dictionary	/θru:/
3 island	/sam/
4 knee	/ni:/
5 through	/frʃ/
6 sign	/ˈdɪkʃənəri/

- 1 doctor
- 2 incorrect
- 3 award
- 4 question
- 5 record (noun)
- 6 record (verb)

In the dictionary entries you will see the numbers and letters A1, A2, B1. These are English Profile levels, and they show you the words or meanings of words that you need to know at different levels. A1 words are the most basic words and should be learned first, followed by A2 words, then B1 words. You can use these levels to decide what are the important words that you need to study. In the entry below you can see that **camera** is an A1 word.

1	bread	_____
2	home (noun)	_____
3	home (adverb)	_____
4	lucky	_____
5	fast (adjective)	_____
6	fast (adverb)	_____

Unit 3: Parts of speech

A part of speech is one of the grammatical groups into which words are divided, such as noun, verb, and adjective. It shows what job each word does in a sentence. In the dictionary each word has a part of speech label which is shown at the beginning of the entry, after the pronunciation. The names of the parts of speech used in this dictionary are: *noun, verb, auxiliary verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun, preposition, conjunction, quantifier, and exclamation*. *Phrasal verbs* also have a part of speech label.

When two words have the same spelling but different parts of speech, they have separate entries. For example, bite¹ and bite² have the same spelling but are separate because bite¹ is a verb and bite² is a noun.

1 Look up these words. How many parts of speech do they have?

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------------------|
| 1 | light | <u>3</u> |
| 2 | chat | <u> </u> |
| 3 | milk | <u> </u> |
| 4 | hot | <u> </u> |
| 5 | tax | <u> </u> |
| 6 | home | <u> </u> |

2 What part of speech are these words? Look them up in the dictionary to find out.

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | opinion | <u>noun</u> |
| 2 | curious | <u> </u> |
| 3 | tent | <u> </u> |
| 4 | frighten | <u> </u> |
| 5 | together | <u> </u> |
| 6 | within | <u> </u> |

Noun

A noun is a word that refers to a person, object, place, event, substance, idea, feeling, or quality. For example, the words **teacher**, **book**, and **beauty** are nouns.

3 Look up these words. Draw a line under the words that are nouns.

hat happy actor between luck chair read awful
compare house

Some nouns have only a plural form and cannot be used with **a** or **an**. These nouns are called *plural nouns* and are always used with plural verbs. Nouns such as **scissors** and **glasses** are plural nouns.

scissors /'sɪzəz/
plural noun
A2 a tool for cutting paper, hair, etc. that you hold in your hand and that has two blades: a *pair of scissors*

glasses /'glɑːsɪz/ plural noun
A1 a piece of equipment with two transparent parts that you wear in front of your eyes to help you see better: a *pair of glasses* • She was *wearing glasses*.

4 Look up these words to see if they are plural nouns, then draw a circle around the correct verb form in the sentences.

- 1 Where is/are my **shorts**?
- 2 The computer **graphics** is/are very good.
- 3 The **furniture** has/have arrived.
- 4 My **trousers** is/are dirty.
- 5 I think **maths** is/are very boring.

Some nouns do not have a plural form and cannot be used with **a** or **an**. These nouns have [**no plural**] after the part of speech label:

knowledge /'nɒlɪdʒ/ **noun** [no plural]
81 information and understanding
that you have in your mind: *His
knowledge of history is amazing.*

5 Look up the words that have a line under them. Are the sentences correct?

	correct	incorrect
1 I need an <u>advice</u> .	_____	_____ ✓
2 Can you send me some <u>informations</u> ?	_____	_____
3 They bought some new <u>equipment</u> .	_____	_____
4 I've got some <u>sand</u> in my shoe.	_____	_____
5 Someone has stolen my <u>luggages</u> .	_____	_____
6 I've got a good <u>news</u> for you.	_____	_____

Pronoun

A pronoun is a word that is used instead of a noun that has already been talked about. For example, **she**, **it**, and **mine** are pronouns.

Determiner

A determiner is a word that is used before a noun or adjective to show which person or thing you are referring to. For example, **my** in *my old car* and **that** in *that man* are determiners.

Adjective

An adjective is a word that describes a noun or pronoun. For example, **small**, **interesting**, and **blue** are all adjectives. In this dictionary adjectives are shown by the abbreviation **adj.**

6 Look up these words. Draw a line under the words that are adjectives.

afraid nibble bag react broken
adventure narrow honest immediately deep

Preposition

A preposition is a word that is used before a noun or pronoun to show place, direction, or time. For example, **on** in *Your keys are on the table* is a preposition.

Verb, auxiliary verb

A verb is a word that is used to say what someone does or what happens. For example, the words **be**, **arrive**, **make**, and **feel** are verbs. An auxiliary verb is a verb that is used together with another verb to make a new tense or other grammatical form. For example, **have** in *They have arrived* and **be** in *to be called* are auxiliary verbs.

Phrasal verb

A phrasal verb is a verb that has two or three words. Together these words have a meaning that is different from each of the separate words. For example, **count on** and **count up** are phrasal verbs.

count on someone phrasal verb
to be certain that you can depend on someone: *I can always count on my parents to help me.*

count someone/something up phrasal verb
to add together all the people or things in a group

In this dictionary, phrasal verbs are in alphabetical order at the end of the entry for the verb. There is also a list of the most important phrasal verbs on page 468 of the dictionary.

7 How many phrasal verbs can you find in the dictionary formed from these verbs?

1 get 2 stand 3 look 4 read

8 Choose a meaning from the box and write it next to the correct phrasal verb.

to start a journey
to argue with someone
to say or write something that is not true
to wait for a short time
to return to a place

- | | |
|---------------------|-------|
| 1 fall out | _____ |
| 2 make something up | _____ |
| 3 set off | _____ |
| 4 get back | _____ |
| 5 hang on | _____ |

Adverb

An adverb is a word that gives more information about a verb, adjective, phrase, or other adverb. In the sentence *He ate quickly*, **quickly** is an adverb. In this dictionary adverbs are shown by the abbreviation **adv.**

Conjunction


A conjunction is a word that is used to connect phrases or parts of a sentence. For example, the words **and** and **because** are conjunctions.

Unit 4: The entry for the word

Definitions

The definition tells you what a word or phrase means. Many words and phrases have more than one meaning. Each different meaning has a number.

All the definitions in this dictionary use simple words. Words that are more difficult than usual are explained in brackets:

<p>camel /'kæməl/ noun 81 a large animal that lives in hot, dry places and has one or two humps (= raised parts on its back)</p>	<p>camel</p> 
--	--

1 Look up the words in dark letters and answer these questions.

- How many meanings does the verb **light** have?
- What is the number of the meaning of **light** that is connected with being able to see?
- How many meanings does the adjective **bright** have?
- What is the number of the meaning of **bright** that is connected with being clever?
- Look at the entry for **present** (noun). How many meanings does the phrase **the present** have?

2 What type of things are the dark words? Look the words up and complete the sentences with a word from the box.

sport tree shoe animal food

- A **kangaroo** is a type of _____
- A **lettuce** is a type of _____
- Boxing** is a type of _____
- A **sandal** is a type of _____
- An **oak** is a type of _____

Phrases

A phrase is a group of words that are often used together and have a particular meaning. Phrases are shown in coloured letters.

In the entry for **minute** there are five meanings. Three of them are for phrases:

<p>minute¹ /'mɪnɪt/ noun 1 A1 a period of time equal to 60 seconds: <i>It'll take you thirty minutes to get to the airport.</i> • <i>She was ten minutes late for her interview.</i> 2 A2 a very short period of time: <i>I'll be with you in a minute.</i> 3 wait/just a minute 81 used when</p>	<p>asking someone to wait for a short time: <i>Just a minute – I've left my coat in the restaurant.</i> 4 at the last minute at the latest time possible: <i>The concert was cancelled at the last minute.</i> 5 (at) any minute very soon: <i>Her train will be arriving any minute.</i></p>
--	---

If there are brackets around part of a phrase, for example **(at) any minute**, it means that you can leave that part out. So you can say *Her train will arrive at any minute* or *Her train will arrive any minute*.

If there is a slash / in a phrase, for example **wait/just a minute**, it means that the phrase can be used with either the part before the slash or the part after the slash. So you can say *wait a minute* or *just a minute*.

Some phrases have **etc.** at the end of them. This means that you can use the phrase with one of the words in the list, or a similar word:

3 save files, work, etc. **A2** to store work or information on a computer

Some phrases have ... after the words. This means that the phrase is the start of a sentence and you can add words to the phrase to make a complete sentence:

3 would you like...? **A1** used to offer someone something: *Would you like a drink?* • *Would you like to eat now?*

If you are looking for a phrase in the dictionary, you will usually find it at the entry for the first important word in the phrase. For example, **take it easy** is found at the entry for **easy** (adverb).

3 Look up these phrases. Where did you find them? Write the headword of the entry where you found the phrase.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 standard of living | _____ standard _____ |
| 2 lose your temper (with someone) | _____ |
| 3 fold your arms | _____ |
| 4 take the blame | _____ |
| 5 look like | _____ |
| 6 let someone know | _____ |
| 7 for good | _____ |
| 8 feel bad | _____ |

Example sentences

Example sentences help you to understand a word and show you how to use the word.

Words that are often used together are shown in dark letters in examples:

*He has had a lot of **bad luck** in his life.*

Words that are more difficult than usual are explained in brackets:

*Did you **take** many **pictures** (= photograph many things) while you were in Sydney?*

4 Look at the example sentences at the entries for the words in dark letters.
Use the example sentences to answer the questions.

- 1 What type of container do you drink **tea** from?
- 2 What verb is normally used with the noun **shelter**?
- 3 What prepositions are used with the verb **reach**?
- 4 What type of thing can you put in a **stack**?
- 5 What verb is used with **money** that means 'to use money to buy things'?
- 6 What do you use with a **needle** to sew?
- 7 Write the correct word after **need**: *I **need** ___ leave at five o'clock.*

Pictures

The dictionary contains pictures to help you understand the meanings of words. There are colour pictures in the middle of the dictionary and black and white pictures at some entries. If there is a colour picture for the entry you are looking at, a note at the bottom of the entry will tell you to look at the colour picture:

sunglasses /'sʌŋ,glɑ:sɪz/ plural noun
A2 dark glasses that you wear to protect your eyes from the sun
→ See **Clothes** on page C5

Unit 5: More about the word

Formal and informal

The labels **informal** and **formal** tell you about how a word is used. **Informal** means that a word is used with people you know and is not usually used in serious writing.

okay² (also **OK**) /əʊ'keɪ/ adj, adv informal
1 A1 safe or healthy: *Is your grandmother okay now?*

Formal means that the word is used in serious writing or for communicating with people you do not know well, for example in a shop or in a work situation.

madam /'mædəm/ noun formal
1 B1 used to be polite when you speak or write to a woman who you do not know: *This way, madam.*

Words without a formal or informal label are used in general English.

1 Are these words formal, informal, or general? Use the dictionary to find out.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 gig | <u>informal</u> |
| 2 freezing | <u> </u> |
| 3 clean | <u> </u> |
| 4 acquire | <u> </u> |
| 5 trendy | <u> </u> |
| 6 attend | <u> </u> |
| 7 terror | <u> </u> |
| 8 snooze | <u> </u> |
| 9 frequently | <u> </u> |
| 10 kin | <u> </u> |

British and American English

Although English in the UK and English in the US are very similar, there are some differences in vocabulary and spelling.

This dictionary shows you when there are differences. The labels **UK** and **US** tell you if a word or a meaning of a word is used only in British English or only in American English. If the word you have looked up is used only in British English, and a different word is used in American English, this is shown:

tinned /tɪnd/ adj UK (US **canned**)
Tinned food is sold in metal containers.

This entry shows you that **tinned** is used in British English and **canned** is used in American English.

2 Use the dictionary to find the American English spelling of these words.

British English	American English
1 colour	_____ color _____
2 analyse	_____
3 centre	_____
4 aluminium	_____
5 centimetre	_____
6 defence	_____
7 humour	_____
8 pyjamas	_____
9 scales	_____
10 towards	_____

3 Draw a line from the usual British English word to the usual American English word.

British English	American English
1 jug	stove
2 pavement	elevator
3 trousers	fall
4 cooker	pitcher
5 holiday	vacation
6 lift	sidewalk
7 autumn	pants

Related words

Some words which are related to the headword, and which you can easily understand if you know the headword, are shown at the end of entries. Example sentences show you how to use the word:

beautiful /'bjʊ:tɪfʊl/ adj

- 1** **A1** very attractive: *a beautiful woman* • *beautiful scenery*
2 **A1** very pleasant: *beautiful music*
• *It's a beautiful day (= the sun is shining).*
• **beautifully** adv **B1** *She sings beautifully.*

Opposites

An opposite is a word that is as different as possible from another word. Opposites are given at the end of some entries to give you help in learning vocabulary and to show you the differences between words.

In this entry you can see that the opposite of **tall** is **short**:

tall /tɔ:l/ adj

- 1** **A1** being higher than most other people or things: *He's tall and thin.*
• *It's one of the tallest buildings in the city.*
→ Opposite **short** adj

4 Look up these words. Write down their opposites.

- | | |
|------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 heavy | <u>light</u> |
| 2 increase | <u> </u> |
| 3 friendly | <u> </u> |
| 4 guilty | <u> </u> |
| 5 high | <u> </u> |
| 6 major | <u> </u> |
| 7 noisy | <u> </u> |
| 8 rich | <u> </u> |
| 9 smooth | <u> </u> |
| 10 weak | <u> </u> |

Common error notes

Throughout the dictionary you will see common learner error notes. These are based on the *Cambridge Learner Corpus*, which is a large collection of students' written work, and give extra information about words that often cause problems for learners. These notes will help you to avoid common mistakes.

5 Look up the words in darker letters and read the common error note at the entry. Now write the correct versions of these sentences.

- 1 He gave me an **advice**.
- 2 I did a **mistake** in my exam.
- 3 He **said** me a story.
- 4 The house is **quite** when the children go away.
- 5 What time did you come to **home**?

Answer key

Unit 1: Finding your way around the dictionary

- 1 1 book 2 chair 3 hair 4 light 5 pencil 6 sock 7 table 8 yacht
2 1 take 2 talk 3 tall 4 teacher 5 thank 6 Thursday 7 today
8 tongue
3 1 good: goal ... grandchild 2 police: point ... population 3 early:
DVD ... easy 4 whale: we'd ... which 5 poster: port ... praise
4 mouth, more, much, mood, my, mug, move, Mr, mother, mustn't,
music, Ms

Unit 2: Information about the word

- 1 1 break: broke/broken 2 make: made/made 3 get: got/got 4 swim:
swam/swum 5 take: took/taken
2 1 bookshelves 2 children 3 feet 4 men 5 mice 6 potatoes
7 sheep 8 wives
3 1 cities 2 lives 3 firemen 4 tomatoes
4 1 bad: worse/worst 2 heavy: heavier/heaviest 3 lazy: lazier/laziest
4 good: better/best 5 well: better/best
5 1 fish /fɪʃ/, 2 dictionary /'dɪkʃənəri/, 3 island /'aɪlənd/, 4 knee
/ni:/, 5 through /θru:/, 6 sign /saɪn/
6 1 doctor 2 incorrect 3 award 4 question 5 record 6 record
7 1 A1 2 A1 3 A2 4 A2 5 A1 6 A2

Unit 3: Parts of speech

- 1 1 3 2 2 3 2 4 1 5 1 6 3
2 1 noun 2 adjective 3 noun 4 verb 5 adverb 6 preposition
3 hat, happy, actor, between, luck, chair, read, awful, compare, house
4 1 Where are my shorts? 2 The computer graphics are very good.
3 The furniture has arrived. 4 My trousers are dirty. 5 I think
maths is very boring.
5 1 incorrect 2 incorrect 3 correct 4 correct 5 incorrect
6 incorrect
6 afraid, nibble, bag, react, broken, adventure, narrow, honest,
immediately, deep
7 1 18 2 3 3 7 4 2
8 1 fall out – to argue with someone 2 make something up – to say or
write something that is not true 3 set off – to start a journey 4 get
back – to return to a place 5 hang on – to wait for a short time

Unit 4: The entry for the word

- 1 1 2 2 2 3 4 4 3 5 2
2 1 animal 2 food 3 sport 4 shoe 5 tree
3 1 standard 2 temper 3 fold 4 blame 5 look 6 know 7 good
8 bad
4 1 a cup 2 take 3 for, out 4 books 5 spend 6 thread 7 need to

Unit 5: More about the word

- 1** 1 informal 2 informal 3 general 4 formal 5 informal 6 formal
7 general 8 informal 9 formal 10 formal
- 2** 1 colour/color 2 analyse/analyze 3 centre/center 4 aluminium/
aluminum 5 centimetre/centimeter 6 defence/defense 7 humour/
humor 8 pyjamas/pajamas 9 scales/scale 10 towards/toward
- 3** 1 jug/pitcher 2 pavement/sidewalk 3 trousers/pants 4 cooker/stove
5 holiday/vacation 6 lift/elevator 7 autumn/fall
- 4** 1 light 2 decrease 3 unfriendly 4 innocent 5 low 6 minor 7
quiet 8 poor 9 rough 10 strong
- 5** 1 He gave me some **advice**. 2 I **made** a **mistake** in my exam.
3 He **told** me a story. 4 The house is **quiet** when the children go
away. 5 What time did you come **home**?