

Vocabulary of Vocabulary

Denotation and Connotation

The denotation of a word is its specific dictionary meaning. Here are a few examples:

<i>Word</i>	<i>Denotation</i>
humane	kind and merciful
braggart	boastful person
search	look for

The connotation of a word is its tone – that is, the emotions or associations it normally arouses in people using, hearing, or reading it. Depending on what these feelings are, the connotation of a word may be favorable (positive) or unfavorable (negative, pejorative). A word that does not normally arouse strong feelings of any kind has a neutral connotation. Here are some examples:

<i>Word</i>	<i>Connotation</i>
humane	favorable
braggart	unfavorable
search	neutral

Literal and Figurative Usage

When a word is used in a *literal* sense, it is being employed in its strict (or primary) dictionary meaning in a situation (or context) that “makes sense” from a purely logical or realistic point of view. For example:

On our hike we picked berries, mushrooms, and other wild plants.

In this sentence, mushrooms is employed literally. The mushrooms are real fungi.

Sometimes words are used in a symbolic or nonliteral way in situations that do not “make sense” from a purely logical or realistic point of view. We call this nonliteral application of a word a *figurative* or *metaphorical* usage. For example:

Sometimes a minor border incident mushrooms into a major international crisis.

In this sentence, mushrooms is not being used in a literal sense. Rather, the word is intended to convey graphically that the problem is growing rapidly, like a mushroom.

Synonyms

A synonym is a word that has the same or almost the same meaning as another word. Here are some examples:

cheerful – glad	select – choose	attempt – try
mercy – kindness	salary – pay	careful – cautious

Antonyms

An antonym is a word that means the opposite of or almost the opposite of another word. Here are some examples:

generous – stingy	love – hate	give – take
swift – slow	cheerful – sad	conceal – reveal

POWER WORD VOCABULARY

Memorize two words and the meaning of their prefixes and roots each week and you will expand your vocabulary by 15,000 words! WHAT?!!! Yep – that’s what I said!

Let’s break it down each week together!!!

Adding 15,000 words to our vocabulary is worth it



inaudible	not, hear
dismiss	away from, send
transport	across, carry
unsubscribe	not, under, write
predict	before, say
remit	again, send
encounter	in, against
offer	against, carry
inspect	in, see
epilogue	upon, word
antigen	against, people
empathy	in, feeling
intermediate	between, middle
destruction	apart from, build
superimpose	over, in, put