



牛津 学术英语词典

Oxford
Learner's Dictionary of
Academic English



创于1897

商务印书馆
The Commercial Press

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OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Oxford Learner's Dictionary of Academic English

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

牛津学术英语词典/(英)黛安娜·莉主编.—北京:
商务印书馆,2018
ISBN 978-7-100-16435-1

I.①牛… II.①黛… III.①学术交流—英语—
词典 IV.①G321.5-61

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2018)第 167767 号

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NIÚJĪN XUÉSHÙ YĪNGYŪ CÍDIǎN

牛津学术英语词典

出版:商务印书馆

(北京市王府井大街 36 号 邮政编码 100710)

牛津大学出版社(中国)有限公司

(香港九龙湾宏远街 1 号—号九龙 39 楼)

国内总发行:商务印书馆

国外以及香港、澳门、台湾地区总发行:

牛津大学出版社(中国)有限公司

印刷:北京新华印刷有限公司印刷

ISBN 978-7-100-16435-1

2018 年 8 月第 1 版

开本 88

2018 年 8 月北京第 1 次印刷

印张 32

定价:168.00 元



English text originally published as *Oxford Learner's Dictionary of Academic English* by Oxford University Press, Great Clarendon Street, Oxford
© Oxford University Press 2014

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ISBN 978-7-100-16435-1

出版：商务印书馆
北京王府井大街 36 号（邮政编码 100710）
牛津大学出版社（中国）有限公司
香港九龙湾宏远街 1 号—号九龍 39 楼

印刷：中国
中国大陆地区总发行：商务印书馆

OXFORD
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出版前言

《牛津学术英语词典》是牛津大学出版社新近推出的一本开创性的词典，专为母语非英语的学习者量身打造，满足他们阅读、写作各类学术文章的需要。

词典中收录的单词，是依托含 8500 万词的“牛津学术英语语料库”（Oxford Corpus of Academic English）、通过科学分析精选得出，普遍见于各门学科、各种类型的学术文章。无论读者专业为何，皆可从中受益。绝大多数单词释义用 2300 个常用词撰写而成，解释词语在学术语境中的特殊意义。

词条内有大量的搭配信息，对学术文章产出大有帮助；另有“辨析”等特色栏目，可从中学习如何充分理解和精准表达。48 页的《牛津学术写作指南》涵盖案例研究、论文等多个文体，为难度最大的学术写作提供全程指导。

词典中的例句取自真实语料，自有学术观点的不同。词典编纂者选择这些例句，旨在描述语言现象、呈现语言用法，并不表示对其观点的赞同。读者使用时亦须细加甄别。

词典工作繁杂琐碎，百密一疏在所难免。诚望读者指瑕纠错，以利共同进步。

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2018 年 4 月

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Oxford Corpus of Academic English

Pete Whitelock

Introduction

In recent years there has been an increasing focus within English Language Teaching on English for Academic Purposes (EAP). Greater numbers of international students are choosing to pursue their higher education in English-speaking countries. Additionally, universities and colleges around the world are offering courses in a whole range of academic subjects taught through the medium of English. As a result, more and more students are learning English specifically for the purposes of academic study. This dictionary has been designed to meet the particular needs of these students, with an exclusive, detailed focus on the language of academic writing.

Academic vocabulary can be divided into three broad categories. First, there is ordinary general English vocabulary. This includes all the function words such as *the*, *and*, *because*, *for*, *about*, as well as common verbs and adjectives and nouns for everyday things. At the other extreme, there is specialist subject vocabulary. This differs between different academic disciplines and can be highly technical; typically, students will need to learn these words as part of their subject studies, whether or not they are also learners of English. In between these two extremes, there is so-called 'subtechnical' or 'general academic' vocabulary. These are words that tend to be used across most or all academic disciplines; most are also used in general English. However, the way they are used in academic writing is often rather different, which is why these words deserve special study from the student of academic English. It is these 'general academic' words that are the main focus of this dictionary.

A core headword list for this dictionary was drawn up through analysis of the Oxford Corpus of Academic English (OCAE), an 85-million word corpus composed of undergraduate textbooks, academic journals, and scholarly monographs and handbooks, drawn from a range of disciplines across the four main subject areas of physical sciences, life sciences, social sciences, and arts and humanities. We also paid due attention to the work of other researchers on academic vocabulary, especially the Academic Word List (AWL) (Coxhead, 2000) and Academic Keyword List (Paquot, 2010). Detailed lexicographic analysis of these core words followed, identifying their meanings, usage patterns and collocations in different academic contexts, together with useful synonyms, opposites and defining words. All words identified as collocations, synonyms or opposites, or used in common academic phrases or idioms, were then added to the headword list, along with the words needed for explaining them. The definitions are mostly written using a controlled defining vocabulary of 2,300 words. Where it has been necessary to use a word not on this list (typically in definitions of more technical, subject-specific words), they are displayed as cross-references. For further information about the Academic Word List and the treatment of collocations in the dictionary, see pages R22–23 in the

reference section. Other pages in the reference section explain the treatment of nouns, verbs and adjectives in the dictionary and also survey important aspects of academic grammar.

A key requirement in compiling the entries for this dictionary was that each meaning should be supported by example sentences based on authentic academic texts. In selecting examples from the corpus, we have not chosen individual, named citations, but have instead chosen to illustrate what seems to be most typical about each word across a range of texts, focusing especially on the most typical collocations and complementation patterns. Some examples have therefore been taken straight from the corpus, but many have been edited, in order to make them more accessible to students of a range of disciplines, whilst still presenting the key language.

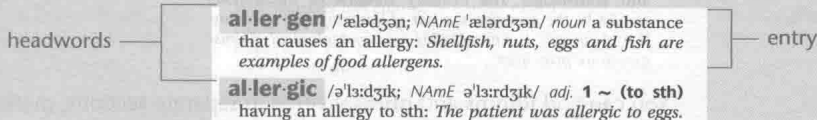
Our research with teachers and students of EAP indicated that it is academic writing, above all, that students find most challenging. We hope that the detailed treatment given to core academic vocabulary in this dictionary will enable students to increase their knowledge of these words and the ways in which they combine with other vocabulary, and so write more fluently, more easily and more precisely. However, we also acknowledge the challenges inherent in structuring and organizing a text and in choosing appropriate language and structures for different types of academic assignments. The Oxford Academic Writing Tutor, to be found directly after the A-Z of the dictionary, on pages AWT1–48, offers guidance on many different genres of academic writing, from essays and case studies, through to all the components of a dissertation, with authentic model texts, analysed and annotated, and tips on grammar, language and presentation.

This dictionary draws on a long tradition of learner lexicography at Oxford University Press; it also humbly acknowledges an even longer tradition of academic excellence and scholarship. It aims to be of use to students in bridging the gap between learner resources focused on general English and academic resources that do not address the specific needs of foreign learners. As such, we believe it is the first dictionary of its kind.

Guide to the dictionary

Finding the word

Information in the dictionary is given in **entries**, arranged in alphabetical order of **headwords**. **Compound words** are in separate entries, also arranged alphabetically.



Some headwords can have more than one part of speech.

The small **homonym number** shows that this is the first of two entries for *elite*.

elite¹ /eɪ'li:t; r'i:lɪt/ *noun* [C+sing./pl. v.] a social group that is thought to be the best or most important because of its power, money, intelligence, etc: *Economic and political elites blamed the crisis on the low skill levels of American workers.* ◊ *All organizations contain ruling elites and followers.* ◊ *In written Roman sources, a villa is usually the country estate of a wealthy member of the urban elite.*

A different part of speech is given at each headword.

elite² /eɪ'li:t; r'i:lɪt/ *adj.* [only before noun] better than others of the same group or type: *The pattern of advantage for graduates of elite schools is still in operation today.* ◊ *Many*

There are some words in English that have more than one possible spelling, often because of a difference between British and US English. Information about these words is usually given at the British spelling.

The US spelling is given in brackets.

col-our¹ (US *color*) /'kɒlə(r)/ *noun* **1** [C, U] the appearance that things have that results from the way in which they reflect light. Red and green are colours: *Each of the chromosomes shows a different colour when viewed with a fluorescence microscope.* ◊ *The haematite gives the rock its*

At the entry for the US spelling, a cross-reference directs you to the main entry.

color (US) = COLOUR¹, COLOUR²

Sometimes there is a difference between international academic usage and general British usage. In these cases, the main entry is placed at the preferred academic spelling, with a note to explain.

sul-fur (BrE also **sul-phur**) /'sʌlfə(r)/ *noun* [U] (*symp.* **S**) the chemical element of ATOMIC NUMBER 16. Sulfur is a pale yellow substance that produces a strong unpleasant smell when it burns and is used in medicine and industry: *All fossil fuels contain some sulfur.* **REPLACES** The spelling **sulfur** has been adopted by the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry and by the Royal Society of Chemistry in the UK. However, in non-scientific British English, **sulphur** still remains the usual spelling.

Again, there is a cross-reference from the alternative spelling.

sul-phate, sul-phide, sul-phur, sul-phur-ic acid (BrE) = SULFATE, SULFIDE, SULFUR, SULFURIC ACID

Irregular forms of verbs are treated in the same way.

sig-nif-i-cant /sɪg'nɪfɪkənt/

adj. **1** large or important enough to have an effect or to be noticed:

These voters could have a significant effect on the outcome of the election.

◇ *Although population ageing is a global phenomenon, there are significant regional differences.* ◇ *~ for sb/sth* The contributions of Islamic civilization proved to be as significant for the West. ◇ *it is ~ that...* It

was significant that its nearest rival only had a 5.5 per cent share of the market. **OP2** **INSIGNIFICANT** ⇨ thesaurus note at **IMPORTANT 2** having a particular meaning: *The lighting of a candle may be symbolically significant if it denotes the bringing of light, that is, enlightenment.* ◇ *it is ~ that...* It is particularly significant that Branagh selected Belfast for the play's United Kingdom debut. **3** (statistics) having statistical significance ⇨ see also **SIGNIFICANCE (3)**: *After 3 years, results for breast cancer were no longer statistically significant.* ◇ *Munafò et al. (2003) found significant associations between personality and polymorphisms in three genes.*

WORD FAMILY

significant *adj.*
significantly *adv.*
signify *verb*
significance *noun*
signification *noun*
insignificant *adj.*
insignificantly *adv.*
insignificance *noun*

Word families show words related to the headword.

Notes help you choose the right word or expression, and also help with difficult grammar points. They are all listed on pages xi–xii.

WHICH WORD?**effect • affect**

- **effect** *noun* a result or an influence: *This section discusses the effects of information technology on strategy.*
- **affect** *verb* to have an influence on sb/sth: *A reduction of caterpillar prey has been shown to adversely affect some birds.*
- **effect** *verb* to achieve or produce a result: *To effect change does not necessarily require a great intellect as much as a brave one.*

The noun **affect** is a technical term in psychology.

Cross-references refer you to information in other parts of the dictionary.

drift¹ /drɪft/ *noun* **1** [C, usually sing., U] a slow steady movement or change, from one situation, belief or place to another: *~ towards sth* The result was a drift towards socialism. ◇ *~ (from sth) (to sth)* The devastation of the land during the war had fostered the drift to the cities. ⇨ see also **GENETIC DRIFT 2** [U] the movement of the sea or air: *Drift is almost exclusively to the east.* ◇ *Wind direction is shown by smoke drift.* ⇨ compare **CURRENT² (1)** ⇨ see also **CONTINENTAL DRIFT 3** [U] *~ (from sth)* the movement of a ship, plane or bird away from its intended direction because of currents or wind: *This formula accounts for drift from the intended flight path caused by crosswinds.* **4** [U, C] a large mass of sth, for example soil, ice or snow, that has been left somewhere by the movement of water, wind, etc: *Water accumulates in depressions in glacial drift.* ◇ *~ of sth* Winter drifts of snow contribute to streamflow in early spring. **5** [sing.] *~ (of sth)* the general meaning of what sb says or writes: *When they were encouraged to reflect on specific problems in the past, the drift of their replies became more negative.*

See also refers you to a word with a similar or related meaning.

Compare refers you to a word with a contrasting meaning.

Notes on usage

In the dictionary, you will find many notes on various aspects of usage in academic English. These notes are listed below according to the type of note.

Which word?

These notes show the difference between words that are often confused. The word in **blue** shows you the entry where you can find the note.

actual / current / present / actually / currently / presently / at present

adverse / averse

almost / nearly

classical / classic

consent¹ / permission

continuous / continual

damage¹ / injury

disability / disabled / impairment / impaired / sighted / blind / deaf

economic / economical

effect¹ / affect

electric / electrical

especially / specially

generally / commonly

historic / historical

interesting / interested

narrow¹ / thin

old / older / oldest / elder / eldest

persuade / convince

principal¹ / principle

raise¹ / rise

strategy / tactics / strategic / tactical

subsequent / consequent / successive / consecutive

systematic / systemic

various / different

wide / broad

Grammar point

These notes help explain points of grammar that often cause problems. The word in **blue** shows you the entry where you can find the note.

can¹ / cannot / able / unable

data / bacteria / criteria / media / phenomena / strata / bacterium / criterion / datum / medium / phenomenon /stratum

despite / in spite of / although / even though / though

each / every

metre / kilometre / centimetre / millimetre / inch

might / could / may

modal¹ / can / could / may / might / must / shall / should / will / would

must / have to

none

per cent¹ / percentage

present³ / describe / examine / illustrate / reveal / show

so² / so that / in order to / to²

they / them / their / themselves / he / she

whether / if

will¹ / would

Thesaurus

These notes show the differences between groups of words with similar meanings. The word in **blue** shows you the entry where you can find the note.

argue / assert / claim / contend / maintain

carry / carry out / conduct / undertake / perform

challenge² / question / dispute / doubt

clear¹ / obvious / apparent / evident

company / business / conglomerate / corporation / firm / multinational / organization

confirm / support / verify / validate

contribute / donate / support

convincing / compelling / persuasive / strong

country / nation / state

debate¹ / controversy / disagreement / dispute

determine / establish / identify / ascertain

difficult / hard / challenging / demanding

discussion / debate / dialogue / talks / consultation

disease / illness / infection / disorder / condition
 essential¹ / crucial / critical / vital
 evidence¹ / proof / support / demonstration
 explore / examine / investigate / analyse
 feature¹ / characteristic / quality / property / trait / attribute
 financial / economic / fiscal / monetary
 fund² / finance / support / subsidize
 hypothesis / thesis / proposition / premise
 idea / concept / notion
 important / significant / notable
 indicate / suggest / imply / point to
 investigation / study / research / experiment / observation / analysis
 limit² / restriction / control / restraint / constraint / limitation
 main¹ / major / key / central / principal / prime / primary

mean¹ / involve / entail / imply
 money / capital / funds / income / revenue / wealth
 plausible / credible / reasonable
 provide / give / offer / present
 record² / document / register / chart / enter
 reference¹ / citation / quotation
 reject / deny / contradict / refute
 result¹ / outcome / finding / consequence
 show¹ / demonstrate / illustrate / prove
 situation / circumstances / position / conditions / the case
 suggest / propose / put sth forward / advance
 supply² / provide / yield / generate
 target¹ / aim / objective / goal / object / end
 theory / model / approach / framework
 use¹ / employ / draw on/upon / utilize / deploy

Language bank

These notes show you how to express similar ideas in a variety of ways in academic writing. The word in **blue** shows you the entry where you can find the note.

about² — Saying what a text is about

according to — Reporting someone's opinion

addition — Adding a further point

argument — Showing your position in an argument

because — Explaining reasons

broadly — Making generalizations

cause¹ — Cause and effect

compare — Comparing and contrasting

concede — Conceding a point and making a counterargument

conclusion — Stating a conclusion

critical — Critical evaluation

define — Defining language

emphasis — Emphatic language

evaluation — Making an evaluation of your **study**

evidence¹ — Discussing evidence

example — Giving examples

except¹ — Making an exception

exceptionally — Adverbs of degree

hedge — Hedging language

however — Ways of saying 'but'

i.e. — Explaining what you mean

impersonal — Giving opinions using impersonal language

organize — Organizing your writing

predict — Discussing predictions

process¹ — Describing a process

proportion — Describing proportions and relative quantities

purpose — Stating purpose

reflective — Reflective writing

report¹ — Reporting verbs

research¹ — Claiming that your research is important or relevant

research¹ — Indicating a gap, problem or need in current research

research² — Research verbs

statistic — Describing statistics

suggestion — Giving suggestions for future research

surprising — Highlighting interesting data

table — Referring to visuals

therefore — Ways of saying 'for this reason'

time¹ — Time expressions

trend — Describing trends

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a /ə; strong form eɪ/ (also an /ɑː; strong form æn/) indefinite article **HEAT** The form **a** is used before consonant sounds and the form **an** before vowel sounds. When saying abbreviations like 'FM' or 'UN', use **a** or **an** according to how the first letter is said. For example, **F** is a consonant, but begins with the sound /e/ and so you say: *an FM signal*. **U** is a vowel but begins with /j/ and so you say: *a UN agency*. **1** used before countable or singular nouns referring to people or things that have not already been mentioned: *A man came to the door that morning.* ◊ *Beadle was trying to find an organism that met all these criteria.* ◊ *The government announced a halt to oil and gas exploration in the area.* ◊ *Wright was apprenticed to Archibald Hamilton, a friend of Smollett's.* **2** used before uncountable nouns when these have an adjective in front of them, or a phrase following them: *The pictures have an undeniable beauty.* ◊ *They believed that the working classes of all countries enjoyed a solidarity that cut across state boundaries.* **3** any; every: *A baby is fully and completely born when it is completely delivered from the body of its mother.* **4** used to show that sb/sth is a member of a group or profession: *Like Chiang Kai-shek before him, Rhee was a Christian.* ◊ *He was originally trained as a doctor.* ◊ *They believe it to be a Picasso and worth several million pounds.* **5** used in front of two nouns that are seen as a single unit: *The defendant in this case was driving a horse and cart negligently.* **6** used instead of one before some numbers: *The likelihood of this happening is less than one in a hundred.* **7** used when talking about prices, quantities and rates **SEVEN PER**: *In March 2008, the price of gold reached \$1 000 an ounce for the first time ever.* ◊ *The rocket moves at 25 000 miles an hour relative to the surface of the Earth.* **8** used before the names of days of the week to talk about one particular day: *The war began on a Sunday.* **9** used before sb's name to show that nothing more is known about the person: *The author of this essay was a Mr Durand of the Royal Society.*

abandon **AWL** /ə'bændən/ verb **1** to stop doing sth, especially before it is finished; to stop planning to do sth: *~ sth* *The Australian Museum officially abandoned the project in 2005.* ◊ *The oil company was forced to abandon its plans to sink the oil platform.* ◊ *~ sth in favour of sth* *Free trade was abandoned in favour of protectionist policies.* ◊ *~ sth for sth* *Ovid abandoned public life for poetry.* **2** to stop believing in sth or supporting a party, cause, etc.: *~ sth* *He claims that the countries of Western Europe have abandoned the ideals of an open society.* ◊ *~ sth in favour of sth* *The Republican Party was increasingly abandoned by southern blacks in favour of the Democratic Party.* **3** to leave sb, especially sb you are responsible for, with no intention of returning: *~ sb* *Darius was forced to abandon his army and flee.* ◊ *~ sb to sth* *Abandoning a newborn child to its fate was not a crime at all, but rather an acceptable means of family planning.* **4** *~ sth* to leave a place or thing with no intention of returning, especially because of danger or economic problems: *Farms were abandoned as families moved in search of work.*

ABANDON + NOUN **quest, search • practice • policy • project • plan • attempt • career • experiment** *Peasant farmers are usually conservative and reluctant to abandon traditional practices.* | **ideal, principle • conception, idea, notion • assumption • belief • hope • commitment** *In an effort to obtain relief from persecution, many abandoned their beliefs.*

ADVERB + ABANDON **officially, formally • progressively, gradually • finally • quickly • virtually • largely • altogether, totally, completely** *Contemporary theorists have progressively abandoned this assumption of women's natural inferiority.* | **simply** *Normally, the slave traders would simply abandon the smallest children by the roadside to die.*

abandoned **AWL** /ə'bændənd/ adj. [only before noun] **1** (of a person or animal) having been left: *Workhouses were meant primarily for abandoned children, the aged and the sick.* **2** (of a place) no longer in use: *Many abandoned tin mines were used as landfill sites for the city's waste.*

abandonment **AWL** /ə'bændənmənt/ noun [U] **1** the act of leaving a person who depends on you **SEVEN DESERTION (1)**: *Individuals may suppress anger due to fears of rejection or abandonment.* **2** the act of leaving a building, a place or a business due to a natural disaster, war or economic problems, and with no intention of returning: *These forests formed after agricultural abandonment.* ◊ *~ of sth* *The apparent widespread abandonment of villas in Italy around the end of the second century is often attributed to the plague.* **3** *~ of sth* the act of giving up an idea or stopping a course of action: *Americans felt betrayed by the abandonment of Wilsonian principles.*

ab-bre-vi-ate /ə'brɪ:vɪət/ verb [usually passive] to make a word, phrase or text shorter: *~ sth* *There is a tendency to abbreviate the text.* ◊ **(be) abbreviated to/as sth** *Force is measured in newtons (usually abbreviated to N).* | **abbreviated adj**: *The framework then poses the following questions, stated here in abbreviated form.*

ab-bre-vi-ation /ə'brɪ:vɪ'eɪʃn/ noun a short form of a word or phrase: *Only standard, recognized abbreviations should be used.* ◊ *~ for sth* *k* is an abbreviation for kilo. ◊ *~ of sth* *'Et al'* is an abbreviation of the Latin phrase *'et alia'*, meaning *'and others'*.

ab-di-cate /'æbdɪkeɪt/ verb **1** [I] to give up the position of being king, queen, etc: *Charles IV had no choice but to abdicate in favour of his son, Ferdinand.* **2** [T] to fail or refuse to perform a duty: *The government was accused of abdicating its responsibility.* | **ab-di-ca-tion** /'æbdɪ'keɪʃn/ noun [U, C] *~ (of sb/sth)* *The second peace followed Napoleon's abdication in April 1814 and lasted until his return from exile on Elba in March 1815.* ◊ *Sceptics would say there is an abdication of public authority in favour of unrepresentative private interests.*

ab-do-men /'æbdəmən/ noun **1** the part of the body below the chest that contains the stomach, BOWELS, etc: *The pain began in the centre of the abdomen.* ◊ *the upper/lower abdomen* **2** the end part of an insect's body that is attached to its THORAX: *Females release their larvae by pumping their abdomens.*

ab-dom-in-al /'æbdɒmɪnəl; NAmE 'æbdɑːmɪnəl/ adj. [only before noun] (anatomy) connected with the abdomen: *Patients may have fever and abdominal pain.*

ability /ə'bɪləti/ noun (pl. -ies) **1** [sing.] the fact that sb/sth is able to do sth: *~ to do sth* *Many animals possess the ability to distinguish light of different wavelengths.* ◊ *Some of these children acquired an increased ability to cope with stress.* ◊ *~ of sb/sth to do sth* *Literacy affects the ability of target audiences to understand marketing messages.* **2** [U, C] a level of skill or intelligence: *Tests of both reading ability and non-verbal reasoning were administered.* ◊ *The all-round person possesses general abilities but is not a specialist.* ◊ + noun *The pupils were taught in mixed ability classes.*

ADJECTIVE + ABILITY **innate • limited • remarkable** *Research on newborn babies suggests an innate ability to attend to faces.* ◊ *Some animals exhibit a remarkable homing ability.* | **general • cognitive, mental, intellectual • academic • verbal, linguistic • reading** *Tests of mental abilities do not assess all important aspects of brain function.*

VERB + ABILITY **have, possess • lack • develop • test** *Children need opportunities to develop problem-solving abilities.* | **lose • retain • acquire • demonstrate •**

Saying what a text is about

In academic writing, there are various ways of presenting the subject matter of a text.

- ▶ a/an book/paper/article/chapter **about** sth
- ▶ a/an book/paper/article/chapter **on** sth
- ▶ a text/an author **deals with** sth
- ▶ a text/an author **discusses** sth
- ▶ a text/an author **presents an overview of** sth
- ▶ a text/an author **focuses on** sth
- ▶ a text/an author **explores** sth
- ▶ a text/an author **examines** sth
- ▶ a text/an author **considers** sth
- ▶ a text/an author **addresses** sth

- In 2001, Cell published a paper **about** a chromosomal duplication.
- His book included a chapter **on** religion.
- The next three chapters **deal with** the data collection aspects of conducting a survey.
- The author **discusses** partially random machines further in Chapter 12.
- Our aim in this chapter is to **present an overview of** research on problem-solving.
- Most studies have **focused on** large organizations.
- This article **explores** the background to the legislation.
- One recent study **examined** different coping functions used to deal with daily work demands... (Daniels and Harris, 2005).
- Several authors have **considered** the relationships between rationality and politics.
- This article **addresses** both the practical and the cultural implications of bereavement in wartime.

about³ /ə'baʊt/ adv.

TO DO **be about to do sth** to be close to doing sth; to be going to do sth very soon: *The material is about to become available to the public.* ◊ *The Cultural Revolution was about to begin.* **not be about to do sth** to not be willing to do sth; to not intend to do sth: *The more developed world is not about to initiate changes that would lessen its power and profits.*

above¹ /ə'baʊ/ prep. **1** at or to a higher place or position than sth/sb: *A light shines above the darkened stage.* ◊ *Fireflies hover above the pond.* **2** more than sth; greater in number, level or age than sb/sth: *Unemployment soared above 7 per cent nationally.* ◊ *There are mountains as high as 8854 m (29 048 feet) above sea level.* ◊ *Only nine villages have higher secondary schools for girls above the age of 15.* **3** of greater importance or of higher quality than sb/sth: *Bacon rated Tacitus above Plato and Aristotle as a moral thinker.* **4** too good or too honest to do sth: *Everything is made to appear fair and above suspicion.* ◊ *The members of that elite were not above making major concessions to 'barbarian' rulers, as the situation required.* **TO DO** **above** 'all most important of all; especially: *The work shows knowledge of the major Latin poets, and above all of Cicero.*

above² /ə'baʊ/ adv. **1** at or to a higher place: *By contact with the atmosphere above, the river slowly accumulates oxygen again.* ◊ *In the dry season, wind from above, Sero valley stands out as a green oasis among the brown and bare fields.* ◊ *These were reforms imposed from above.* **2** greater in number, level or age: *Success rates remained high (i.e. 80 per cent and above).* ◊ *All schools need to have at least 50 per cent of pupils achieve Level 5 or above in English, mathematics and science.* ◊ *More than 20 per cent of the population is aged 65 and above.* **3** earlier in sth written or printed: *King Malcolm of the Scots spoke English and Gaelic (see above, p. 212).* ◊ *As stated above, effective communication contributes to health outcomes in various ways.*

question, doubt *Liver cells retain the ability to divide, so the liver can regrow if part of it is removed.* | **affect** • **impair, limit, hinder, constrain, undermine, restrict** • **enhance, improve** *Poverty impairs the ability to obtain a healthy, balanced diet.*

▶ **ABILITY TO + VERB** cope • pay • innovate • adapt • communicate • predict • manipulate • control *Access to care was to be based on clinical need, not on the ability to pay.*

able /eɪbl/ adj. **1** (used as a modal verb) **be ~ to do sth** to have the power, skill, means or opportunity to do sth: *Some families earned so little they were barely able to survive.* ◊ *The larger companies are better able to take advantage of these opportunities.* **OPP** UNABLE ⇨ grammar note at CAN¹ **2** (abler /'eɪblə(r), ablest /'eɪblɪst/) intelligent; good at sth: *Hess was an able administrator as well as a brilliant scientist.*

ab-normal **AWL** /æb'nɔ:ml/; **NAmE** æb'nɔ:ml/ adj. different from what is usual or expected, especially in a way that may be harmful or not wanted: *A patient with slightly abnormal liver function tests was referred to hospital for investigation.* ◊ *Possible causes of abnormal findings in the measurements are also discussed.* **OPP** NORMAL¹ **ab-normally** **AWL** /æb'nɔ:mlɪ; **NAmE** æb'nɔ:mlɪ/ adv.: *All these enzymes were abnormally high, indicating a problem with the liver.* ⇨ language bank at EXCEPTIONALLY

ab-normality /'æbnɔ:mæləti; **NAmE** 'æbnɔ:r'mæləti/ noun (pl. -ities) [C, U] a feature in a person's body or behaviour that is not usual and may be harmful or cause illness: *The congenital heart abnormalities are seen in 40-50% of patients.* ◊ *The tests are offered to women with a family history of chromosomal abnormality.*

abol-ish /ə'boʊlɪʃ; **NAmE** ə'bɔ:liʃ/ verb ~ sth to officially end a system, practice, institution or law: *The slave trade was abolished by Act of Parliament in 1807.* ◊ *The decree completely abolished the death penalty.*

aboli-tion /'æbəlɪʃn/ noun [U] ~ (of sth) the ending of a system, practice, institution or law: *Between 1828 and 1830, some 5 000 petitions calling for the gradual abolition of slavery were submitted to Parliament.*

abortion /ə'bo:ʃn; **NAmE** ə'bɔ:rʃn/ noun **1** [U] the deliberate ending of a PREGNANCY at an early stage: *In the more traditional Buddhist countries, abortion is illegal with certain limited exceptions.* **2** [C] a medical operation to end a PREGNANCY at an early stage **SYN** TERMINATION (2): *The court held that the girl could have an abortion.* ⇨ compare MISARRIAGE

about¹ /ə'baʊt/ prep. **1** on the subject of sb/sth; in connection with sb/sth: *This book is all about moral philosophy.* ◊ *The courts generally obtain a social report about the young person's family.* ◊ *What was most unusual about Smith was the range of his intelligence.* ◊ *The most pressing question at the end of the war was what to do about Germany.* ◊ *Jefferson focuses on how African American soldiers felt about the army and the war.* **2** used to describe the purpose or an aspect of sth: **all ~ (doing) sth** *Politics in democracies is all about bargaining and compromise.* ◊ *These team-working and individual decision-making skills are what general practice training is all about.* **3** busy with sth; doing sth: *The state should not interfere with the right of a person to go about their legitimate business.*

about² /ə'baʊt/ adv. **1** a little more or less than; a little before or after **SYN** APPROXIMATELY: *These in-depth interviews lasted about an hour.* ◊ *This suggestion was put in practice about ten years later.* **2** nearly; very close to: *Anti-inflammatory pain-killing agents are about the most commonly used group of drugs.*

above³ /ə'baʊ/ *adj.* [only before noun] mentioned or printed previously in a letter, book, etc: *For the above reasons, diagnosis often has to be based on reports by others of changes in the patient's behaviour.* ■ **the above** *noun* [sing. + sing./pl. v.] All the above can be expressed in the form of simple graphs.

above-mentioned *adj.* [only before noun] mentioned or named earlier in the same letter, book, etc: *The above-mentioned studies have pointed to the critical role of family well-being in building a harmonious society.*

abroad /ə'brɔ:d/ *adv.* (especially BrE) in or to a foreign country: *English scholars who could afford it went abroad.* ◇ *Increasingly, patients are travelling abroad in search of health care.* ◇ *US firms and workers face increasing competition from abroad.* ◇ *In 2009, bad weather in the UK increased demand for holidays abroad.*

abrupt /ə'brʌpt/ *adj.* **1** sudden and unexpected, often in an unpleasant way: *Canada's embrace of free trade marks an abrupt change in its strategy.* ◇ *The period of high growth came to an abrupt end.* **2** steep; not gradual or gentle: *At this point, the river makes an abrupt turn to the south.* **3** speaking or acting in a way that seems unfriendly and rude; not taking time to say more than is necessary: *He had a reputation as a bully and stories circulated about an abrupt leadership style.* ■ **abruptly** /ə'brʌptli/ *adv.* The fossil insect record indicates that during the last 14 000 years, regional climates have often changed abruptly. ◇ *These terrains consist essentially of high ridges rising abruptly from the valley floors.*

absence /'æbsəns/ *noun* **1** [U] the fact of sb/sth not existing or not being available **SYN** LACK¹: ~ (of sb/sth) *The effects are difficult to measure because of absence of reliable data.* ◇ *This theory does not explain the absence of predatory insects in the marine environment.* ◇ **in the ~ of sth** *In the absence of a reliable network of roads, markets cannot extend their reach.* **OPP** PRESENCE (1) **2** [U, C] the fact of sb being away from a place where they are usually expected to be; the occasion or period of time when sb is away: *This condition is a leading cause of sickness absence due to ill health.* ◇ *Truancy may be defined as a specific number of unexplained absences in a certain time period.* **TEFL** see CONSPICUOUS

absent *adj.* /'æbsənt/ **1** not present as part of sth: *The possibility of civil war was never totally absent.* ◇ **~ from sth** *Women were conspicuously absent from most positions of authority.* **OPP** PRESENT¹ (3) **2** away from a place where you are usually expected to be: *Many absent fathers made no provision for their families.* ◇ **~ from sth** *Some youths are completely absent from school for an extended period of time.* **OPP** PRESENT¹ (4)

ab-so-lute¹ /'æbsəlut/ *adj.* **1** total; not limited in any way: *It is not possible to predict with absolute certainty what will happen in these cases.* ◇ *The use of abbreviations should be kept to an absolute minimum.* ◇ *The king's power was absolute.* ◇ *Absolute monarchs claimed to be accountable only to God.* **2** existing or measured independently and not in relation to sth else: *Competitiveness is a relative term which can only be interpreted in relation to a firm's competitors—it has no absolute value.* ◇ *The proportion of people living in absolute poverty, lacking such basic necessities as clean water, food and shelter, dropped significantly during this period.* **OPP** RELATIVE¹ (2)

ABSOLUTE + NOUN **certainty • necessity • priority • minimum • monarchy • monarch, ruler • sovereignty** *The conservation of biodiversity today represents the absolute priority in environmental politics.* | **poverty • value • truth • scale** *These authors are critical of the view that there are absolute truths about the social world that it is the job of the social scientist to reveal.*

PHRASES **in absolute terms** *During this period, Britain slowly advanced in absolute terms but declined relative to many other nations.*

ab-so-lute² /'æbsəlut/ *noun* an idea or a principle that is believed to be true or valid in all circumstances: *In relativity theory, time and space are not absolutes.*

ab-so-lute-ly /'æbsəlutli/ *adv.* totally; without any limitation: *The patient should not be moved unless it is absolutely necessary.* ◇ *Lawson was absolutely correct in his belief that major rift systems connect.* ◇ *The immense human population depends absolutely on these plants.* ◇ **~ no...** *Only 6% of people in the first age group have absolutely no academic qualifications.*

ab-sorb /əb'sɔ:b; əb'zɔ:b; NAmE əb'sɔ:rb; əb'zɔ:rb/ *verb* **1** to take in a liquid, gas or other substance from the surface or space around: **~ sth** *When immersed in water, such materials absorb water and swell.* ◇ **~ sth from sth** *Rainfall is naturally slightly acidic, absorbing small amounts of carbon dioxide from the air.* ◇ **~ sth into sth** *When the smoker inhales, nicotine is absorbed into the bloodstream.* **2 ~ sth** to take in and keep heat, light or other forms of energy, instead of reflecting it: *A black object absorbs all wavelengths of light.* ◇ *The steel bumper beam absorbed 23% more impact energy than the conventional bumper.* ⇨ **compare** REFLECT (2) **3** [often passive] to take control of a smaller unit or group and make it part of sth larger: **be absorbed by sth** *Wales was absorbed by Britain in 1536, and Scotland by the Act of Union in 1707.* ◇ **be absorbed into sth** *Many of these views were absorbed into early Christian thought.* **4** to take sth into the mind and learn or understand it **SYN** TAKE STH IN (2): **~ sth** *Patients and relatives need time to absorb information and to adapt to bad news.* ◇ **~ sth from sth** *Edison readily absorbed ideas from every source.* **5 ~ sth** to deal with or reduce the effects of changes or costs: *Economies of scale enable firms to absorb transport costs to remain competitive in world markets.* ◇ *The low cost means that any losses can be absorbed.* **6 ~ sth** to use up a large supply of sth, especially money or time: *A large percentage of the school's income is absorbed by fixed costs.* **7 be absorbed in sth** to be so interested in sth that you pay no attention to anything else: *Young people really absorbed in classroom activity can quickly forget about a quiet observer in the corner.*

ab-sor-bance /əb'sɔ:bəns; əb'zɔ:bəns; NAmE əb'sɔ:rbəns; əb'zɔ:rbəns/ *noun* [U, C] (physics) a measure of the ability of a substance to absorb light of a particular WAVELENGTH: *The absorbance was measured at 530 and 700 nm.*

ab-sorp-tion /əb'sɔ:pʃn; əb'zɔ:pʃn; NAmE əb'sɔ:rpʃn; əb'zɔ:rpʃn/ *noun* [U] **1** the process of energy or a substance being absorbed: *The drug should be taken with food or milk to increase its absorption.* ◇ **~ of sth** *Tyndall measured the absorption of infrared radiation by CO₂ and water vapour.* ◇ **~ (of sth) into sth** *The skin prevents the absorption of many agents into the bloodstream.* **2** the process of a smaller unit or group becoming part of a larger unit or group: *It was claimed that western states were created by conquest, whereas Russia grew by absorption.*

ab-stract¹ **AWL** /'æbstrækt/ *adj.* **1** existing in thought or as an idea but not as a physical thing: *Greek culture is full of abstract notions that are personified and treated as divine beings.* **2** based on general ideas and not on any particular real person, thing or situation: *The British constitutional system is the product of experience rather than abstract theories.* **3** representing an idea, a quality or a state rather than a physical object: *In comparison with George Eliot, Jane Austen used a smaller pool of abstract nouns such as love, manners and sensibility.* ⇨ **compare** CONCRETE¹ **4** (of art) not representing people or things in a realistic way, but expressing the artist's ideas about them using shapes, colours and textures: *Kandinsky was regarded as the first really abstract painter.* ⇨ **compare**

REPRESENTATIONAL ■ **ab-stractly** **AWL** *adv.*: Young children cannot think abstractly; therefore, teachers encourage them to use concrete materials such as blocks and sticks.

ab-stract² **AWL** /'æbstrækt/ *noun* a short piece of writing containing the main ideas of a research article, book or speech **SYN** **SUMMARY**¹: A review of dissertation titles and abstracts found approximately one hundred works on hazards research.

IDM **In the 'abstract** in a general way, without referring to a particular real person, thing or situation: **In the abstract, all heads of government are equal, but the fact that some have more power than others is implicitly understood by all.**

ab-stract³ **AWL** /æb'strækt/ *verb* **1** [T] ~ **sth** (from **sth**) to remove sth from somewhere **SYN** **EXTRACT**¹: Silicate rocks abstract CO₂ from the atmosphere. ◊ We abstracted soil data from the available soil surveys maps. **2** [T, I] ~ (sth) (from sth) to think about sth generally or separately from sth else: To abstract science and religion from their historical context can lead to anachronism.

ab-straction **AWL** /æb'strækʃn/ *noun* **1** [C, U] a general idea not based on any real person, thing or situation: Husserl emphasized the importance of lived experience over scientific abstractions. ◊ There is debate over the level of theoretical abstraction that can actually enhance empirical studies. **2** [U] the action of removing sth from sth else; the process of being removed from sth else: The rate of groundwater abstraction for irrigation can exceed natural recharge from rainfall. ◊ **the ~ of sth** The supply chain includes the abstraction of water, treatment and piping of water, and retailing to customers. **3** [U] the quality of representing ideas using shapes, colours and textures: Abstraction and conceptualism are pervasive in the arts of the non-western world.

IDM **In abstraction from sth** separately from sth else: A business cannot be studied in abstraction from its social environment.

abundance /ə'bʌndəns/ *noun* **1** [U] ~ (of sth) the quantity of sth present in a particular area or group: Seasonal changes in the relative abundance of different species may occur. **2** [sing.] ~ (of sth) a large quantity of sth that is more than enough: There was an abundance of good farmland and plenty of open pasture for animals.

IDM **In abundance** in large quantities: Pot fragments were found in abundance at the site.

abundant /ə'bʌndənt/ *adj.* **1** existing in large quantities; more than enough: There is abundant evidence for increased volcanic activity during the Little Ice Age. ◊ Calcium is the most abundant mineral in the body. ◊ Australia has an abundant supply of agricultural land. **2 ~ in sth** having a lot of sth: Low-wage countries are relatively abundant in low-skilled workers.

abundantly /ə'bʌndəntli/ *adv.* **1** in large quantities: Lakes and wetlands occur most abundantly where precipitation is high. **2 ~ clear** very clear: It was abundantly clear that reform was necessary.

abuse¹ /ə'bjʊ:s/ *noun* **1** [U, C] the use of sth in a way that is wrong or harmful: Alcohol and drug abuse are strongly associated with suicide risk. ◊ ~ of sth Serious abuses of human rights have continued ever since. ◊ **open to ~** In Conrad's work, power is systematically open to abuse. ◊ **compare MISUSE**¹ **2** [U] unfair, cruel or violent treatment of sb: Women who suffer domestic abuse are often unwilling to talk about it. ◊ Neglect is as much a form of abuse as a violent act. ◊ Investigations of child abuse require professionals to work together. ◊ 97% of this sample had experienced physical or sexual abuse. ◊ emotional/psychological abuse. ◊ + **noun** There was no legal requirement to report suspected abuse cases. **3** [U] rude and offensive

remarks, usually made when sb is very angry: Neighbours and other people have apparently shouted abuse from outside her house.

abuse² /ə'bjʊ:z/ *verb* **1** ~ **sth** to use power or knowledge unfairly or wrongly: Managers must be monitored to make sure they do not abuse their power. ◊ The European Commission also found that the company had abused its dominant position by charging unfair prices. **2 ~ sth** to make bad use of sth; to use so much of sth that it harms your health: People who have abused drugs for a long time may need considerable help in making social relationships. **3 ~ sb/sth** to treat a person or an animal in a cruel or violent way, especially sexually: They had been emotionally, physically and sexually abused. ◊ The first refuge for abused women was set up in London in 1971. **4 ~ sb** to make rude or offensive remarks to or about sb: Many asylum seekers reported that they had been verbally abused by police officers. ■ **abuser** /ə'bjʊ:zə(r)/ *noun*: Some drug abusers administer drugs intravenously. ◊ The abuser is usually known to the child.

abu-sive /ə'bjʊ:sɪv/ *adj.* **1** (of behaviour or a person) involving or using violence: Studies have shown that women in an abusive relationship are more likely to have depression. ◊ The relationship was fragile; John was verbally and physically abusive with Sue and Martin. **2** (of speech or a person) rude and offensive; criticizing in a rude and unfair way: Yelling, cursing, raging or other forms of abusive language may indicate more serious problems with anger.

aca-demia **AWL** /ækə'di:miə/ (also *academe* /ækə'di:m/) *noun* [U] the world of research and education at universities, and the people involved in it: These techniques had importance to both academia and industry.

aca-dem-ic¹ **AWL** /ækə'demɪk/ *adj.* **1** [usually before noun] connected with education, especially studying in schools and universities **SYN** **EDUCATIONAL**: This study assesses the motivational factors associated with academic achievement in high-school settings. **2** [usually before noun] involving a lot of reading and studying rather than practical or technical skills: There has been relatively little academic research in this area. ◊ **compare APPLIED, VOCATIONAL** **3** not connected to a real or practical situation and therefore not important: Questions of diversity are not merely academic: they have a real impact on people's lives. ■ **aca-dem-ic-ally** **AWL** /ækə'demɪkli/ *adv.*: These individuals succeeded academically despite disadvantaged backgrounds.

aca-dem-ic² **AWL** /ækə'demɪk/ *noun* a person who teaches and/or does research at a university or college: Leading academics in the field argue that the solution to health inequalities is a universalist approach.

acad-emy **AWL** /ə'kædəmi/ *noun* (pl. -ies) **1** a school or college for special training: In Sparta, boys were sent to military academy by the age of seven years. **2** (usually **Academy**) a type of official organization that aims to promote standards in a particular academic field such as the arts or sciences: The Academy of Sciences was reformed, making it a purely research body. **3** the academy all the established people and institutions within a field of research: Descriptive work on plants and animals continued in the academy and at the amateur level.

ac-cel-er-ate /ək'seləreɪt/ *verb* **1** [I, T] to happen faster or earlier; to make sth happen faster or earlier: Inflation was accelerating fast. ◊ In Alaska (Arendt et al., 2002), glaciers appear to be thinning at an accelerating rate. ◊ ~ **sth** Enzymes vary in the degree to which they accelerate reaction rates. ◊ The intensity of the protest might accelerate the process of liberalization. **2** [T] ~ **sth** (to sth) (physics) to make an object move faster: The electric fields accelerate electrons to a speed of about 300 000 km a