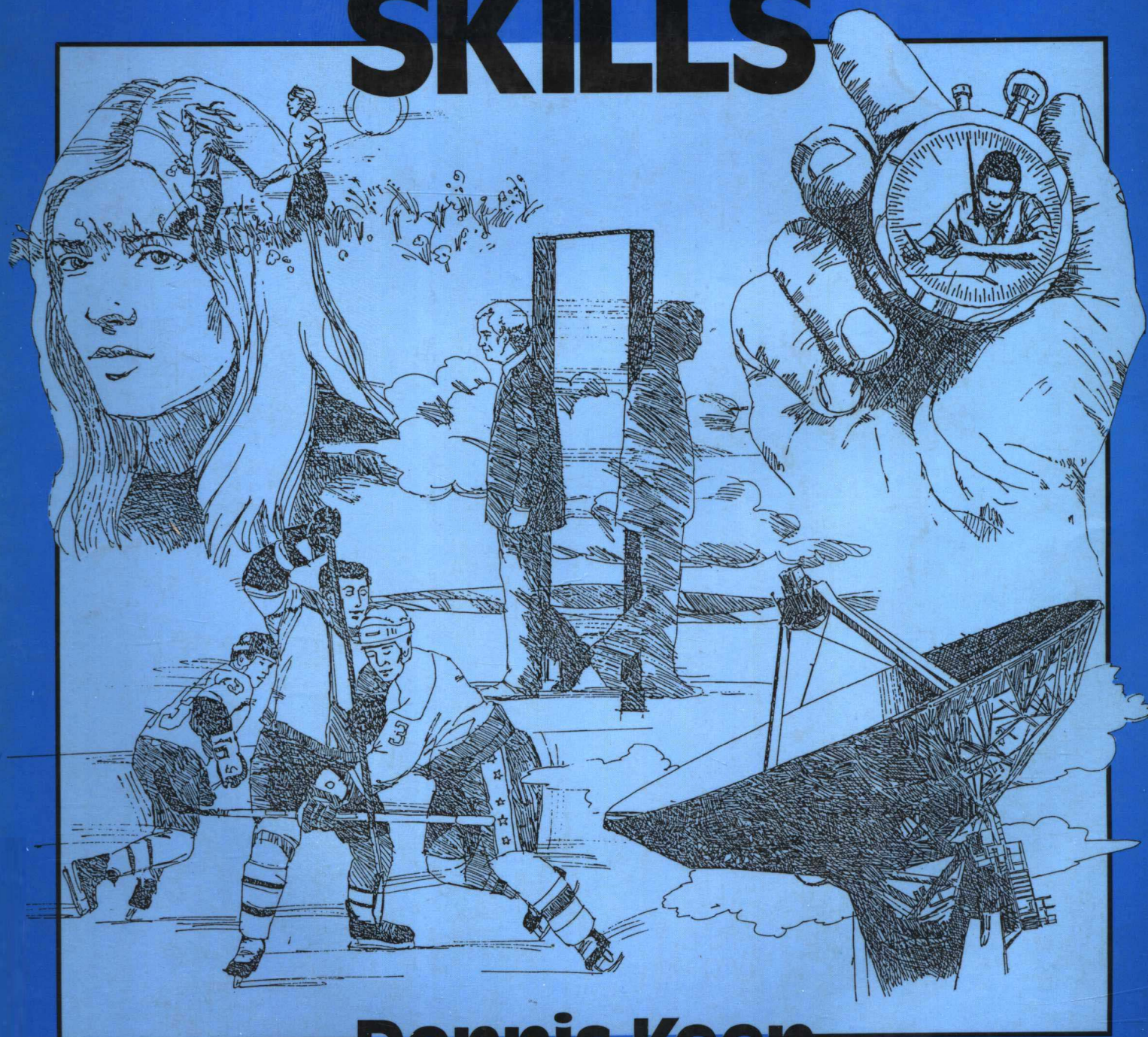


DEVELOPING VOCABULARY SKILLS



Dennis Keen

DEVELOPING VOCABULARY SKILLS

Dennis Keen

University of Washington



NEWBURY HOUSE PUBLISHERS
A division of HarperCollins *Publishers*

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Keen, Dennis.

Developing vocabulary skills.

1. English language--Text-books for foreign speakers. 2. Vocabulary. I. Title.

PE1449.K34 1985 428.1 84-29568

ISBN 0-88377-292-2

Cover design by Sally Carson

Cover and interior art by Dorothy Cullinan

NEWBURY HOUSE PUBLISHERS

A division of HarperCollins *Publishers*



Language Science

Language Teaching

Language Learning

Copyright © 1985 by Newbury House Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Publisher.

Printed in the U.S.A.

First printing: September 1985

12 13 14 15

A Note to Teachers

Developing Vocabulary Skills represents a significant departure from many vocabulary texts available today. Some emphasize roots and affixes; others emphasize the importance of context. This text treats both as equally important. First, it introduces words in a logical framework. Affixes and roots with related meanings have been grouped in units, and the attention paid to word analysis allows the student to develop a sense of the logic and structure behind English vocabulary. Second, words are always introduced in some context. In some instances, this context may be minimal, such as in a sentence or an analogy. More often, longer connected discourse—paragraphs and essays—serves as the contextual setting. Few, if any, current vocabulary texts contain as many readings which target related roots as does this text. The inclusion of longer readings filled with words sharing the same roots clearly differentiates this book from many others on the market today.

As the book develops the students' ability to analyze the internal structure of a word and their skill at sensibly guessing meanings from context, it strengthens their reading competence. Ultimately, then, the primary benefit to the student who uses the text is the development not of a large vocabulary (although that undoubtedly will begin to occur) but of a set of skills and a body of knowledge that will enable him or her to become an independent reader of English.

This book contains six major parts. Part I begins easily enough with familiar words and readily understood suffixes, and Part II introduces common prefixes. The emphasis in these initial units is word analysis—the ability to take apart words and examine their internal structure. Parts III to V introduce 123 important roots in 22 units. Emphasis here is on the application of word attack skills to the reading process itself; hence most of the longer readings are in these units. Part VI is a glossary of roots and affixes used in the book. It is not, however, a mere appendix, but rather an integral part of the text. Students will use it regularly as they work through the exercises and readings. Used properly and frequently, the glossary will help students move away from their dependence on the bilingual dictionary.

Developing Vocabulary Skills will be useful in a variety of classrooms. The book's general aim is to help students master general educated discourse and thus will be most useful for students either in or bound for colleges and universities. More specifically, it could be adopted for the following courses or programs:

- Intermediate or advanced college ESL courses
- Intensive summer programs for undergraduate and graduate students attending or soon to attend American colleges
- Precollege courses for college-bound ESL students in American high schools
- Overseas ESL programs for students preparing to study in the United States

While the book was written for ESL students, many developmental English, reading, and vocabulary classes will find *Developing Vocabulary Skills* well suited to their curriculum. Difficulty understanding educated discourse is not a problem limited to the ESL student.

The text can be used as the sole text for intensive vocabulary courses. At the advanced level, a unit a session is a reasonable load, provided outside work is assigned. At

this level, the book could be completed within 50 classroom hours. At the high-intermediate level, more instructional time would be required. The text can be and has been used as a supplementary text covering reading, writing, and speaking. In such classes, the material cannot be covered at a leisurely pace, but with regular homework assignments it could be completed in two quarters, probably, and one year, certainly. In shorter courses, it is recommended that Parts I and II be covered quickly so that more attention can be directed toward the roots in Parts III to V.

Developing Vocabulary Skills contains a number of features that are especially useful for ESL instructors and that may influence how the text is used in the classroom:

- There are few repetitive exercises. Each unit introduces different types of questions or problems. The “plug and chug” approach, so common to many older vocabulary texts, is not used here.
- For many exercises, there is no one right answer; many questions are open-ended and will serve better as a basis for discussion rather than rote response.
- The use of analogies is quite extensive. Students seem to enjoy these; furthermore, they promote logical and analytical thinking, help students see connections between words, and develop students’ sense of collocation.
- Effort has been made to use a word in several contexts so students can begin to see the range of a word’s meaning. Understanding, and accepting, polysemy is a hard task for many ESL students; this text pays some attention to this fundamental problem.
- In most units, a list of words containing similar roots or affixes is introduced. The words in these lists should be discussed before students do the exercises.
- The text strikes an even balance between readings and exercises. The former tends to develop comprehension skills; the latter allows students to strengthen their understanding of individual words.
- The fundamental concern of the book is to treat vocabulary development not as an end in itself but rather as an integral part of the reading process. The skills introduced, the variety of exercises used, and the number of reading selections included serve to increase the size of a student’s vocabulary, but more importantly to improve his or her skill in reading academic prose.

Many people have helped create this text. Mark Lowe and James Brown of Newbury House Publishers guided its development through encouragement and sound advice. The students in the ESL English classes at the University of Washington, as they worked through drafts, helped to separate those exercises and readings that worked from those that did not. Virginia Chappell at the University of Washington offered many suggestions for improvement, and Pat Davis gave up pleasant summer afternoons to type several very clean manuscripts. And my wife Barbara was the most honest critic and tireless supporter of the text as it grew from an idea to a book. What strengths the book has are due in large measure to the work and thoughts of these people.

Contents

	A Note to Teachers	v
Part I	Introduction to word analysis	1
	1. A Note to Students	3
	2. Compound Words	5
	3. Familiar Prefixes and Suffixes: <i>re-</i> , <i>-able</i> , <i>-ful</i> , <i>-less</i> , <i>-ly</i>	8
	4. "One Who" Suffixes: <i>-ar</i> , <i>-er</i> , <i>-or</i> , <i>-ist</i> , <i>-cian</i> , <i>-ary</i>	11
	5. Noun Suffixes: <i>-ion</i> , <i>-ance</i> , <i>-ment</i> , <i>-ity</i> , <i>-hood</i> , <i>-ship</i> , <i>-ness</i>	16
	6. Adjective Suffixes: <i>-y</i> , <i>-ous</i> , <i>-al</i> , <i>-ish</i> , <i>-ic</i> , <i>-ive</i>	20
	7. Verb Suffixes: <i>-ify</i> , <i>-ate</i> , <i>-ize</i> , <i>-en</i>	23
	Reading: "Outward Bound"	
	8. Review I	29
Part II	Prefixes	31
	9. Negative Prefixes: <i>il-</i> , <i>im-</i> , <i>in-</i> , <i>ir-</i> , <i>-non-</i> , <i>un-</i> , <i>a-</i> , <i>an-</i> , <i>anti-</i> , <i>dis-</i> , <i>mal-</i> , <i>mis-</i>	33
	Reading: "Manners in America"	
	10. Relational Prefixes I: <i>ante-</i> , <i>pre-</i> , <i>post-</i> , <i>inter-</i>	39
	11. Relational Prefixes II: <i>super-</i> , <i>sur-</i> , <i>sub-</i> , <i>dia-</i> , <i>peri-</i>	43
	12. Relational Prefixes III: <i>sym-</i> , <i>simil-</i> , <i>contra-</i> , <i>co-</i>	46
	13. Prefix of Movement I: <i>ad-</i> , <i>intro-</i> , <i>pro-</i> , <i>per-</i> , <i>trans-</i>	51
	Reading: "Advertising"	
	14. Prefix of Movement II: <i>ab-</i> , <i>ex-</i> , <i>se-</i> , <i>de-</i>	59
	Reading: "The Effects of Unemployment"	
	15. Review II	68
Part III	Roots of measurement, size, and location	71
	16. Roots of Number: <i>semi</i> , <i>uni</i> , <i>sol</i> , <i>mono</i> , <i>bi</i> , <i>di</i> , <i>tri</i> , <i>quad</i> , <i>pent</i> , <i>quin</i> , <i>dec</i> , <i>cent</i> , <i>milli</i>	73
	17. Roots of Size: <i>neg</i> , <i>vac</i> , <i>micro</i> , <i>brev</i> , <i>min</i> , <i>plen</i> , <i>omni</i> , <i>macro</i> , <i>poly</i> , <i>multi</i>	77
	Reading: "Communicable Diseases"	
	18. Roots of Location: <i>prim</i> , <i>centro</i> , <i>medi</i> , <i>equi</i> , <i>fin</i> , <i>loc</i> , <i>circum</i>	85
	Reading: "Man and Earth"	
	19. Roots of Measurement: <i>meter</i> , <i>graph</i> , <i>ology</i> , <i>scrib</i>	92
	20. Review III	97
Part IV	Roots of motion and action	99
	21. Roots of Motion I: <i>cycle</i> , <i>mob</i> , <i>cede</i> , <i>ven</i>	101
	22. Roots of Motion II: <i>cur</i> , <i>flu</i> , <i>duc</i> , <i>sequ</i> , <i>grad</i>	104
	Reading: "The Mississippi River"	
	23. Roots of Motion III: <i>tend</i> , <i>strict</i> , <i>junct</i> , <i>press</i>	111
	Reading: "Stress"	
	24. Roots of Motion IV: <i>fract</i> , <i>rupt</i> , <i>tort</i> , <i>vers</i> , <i>flect</i>	118
	Reading: "Sports Injuries"	
	25. Roots of Motion V: <i>port</i> , <i>mit</i> , <i>ject</i> , <i>pel</i> , <i>tract</i>	125
	26. Review IV	129
	27. Roots of Action I: <i>stru</i> , <i>clud</i> , <i>pend</i> , <i>pos</i> , <i>stat</i>	131
	28. Roots of Action II: <i>plic</i> , <i>lect</i> , <i>cep</i> , <i>tain</i> , <i>fic</i> , <i>sign</i>	135
	29. Roots of Action III: <i>cide</i> , <i>mort</i> , <i>tome</i> , <i>sect</i> , <i>term</i>	139
	Reading: "Death"	
	30. Review V	146

Part V	Roots of human activity	147
	31. Roots of the Senses I: <i>voc, dict, clam, loc, chor</i>	149
	32. Roots of the Senses II: <i>spec, vid, aud, tact</i>	152
	Reading: "Today's Museum"	
	33. Roots of Life Processes I: <i>bio, viv, gen, nat</i>	157
	Reading: "The Continuity of Life"	
	34. Roots of Life Processes II: <i>card, corp, hum, path, sent</i>	164
	35. Roots of Mental Activity: <i>intell, ment, cred, mem, gnosc, que</i>	168
	Reading: "Memory"	
	36. Review VI	174
	37. Roots of Quality: <i>fort, clar, dur, soph, grat, sat, val</i>	177
	38. Legal and Social Roots I: <i>just, leg, crim, pen</i>	181
	Reading: "Crimes, Trials, and Punishments"	
	39. Legal and Social Roots II: <i>ver, cert, rect, fid</i>	188
	40. Legal and Social Roots III: <i>soc, pop, demo, civ, polis</i>	190
	41. Legal and Social Roots IV: <i>reg, dom, liber, serve, vinc, arch</i>	194
	Reading: "The Role of Government"	
	42. Review VII	201
Part VI	A glossary of affixes and roots used in the text	203

PART **I**

Introduction to Word Analysis

1

A Note to Students

Many different methods have been developed over the years to help us increase the number of words we know. Some have said we should read as much as we can, write down all the words we do not know, and then look them up in a dictionary. Other systems involve writing down and memorizing five to ten new words every day. Another suggestion is to learn words related to a basic idea. For example, “happy” is a common word. We would try to learn a number of synonyms for “happy.” These might include “joyful, gleeful, and jovial.” And then we might learn “sad, morose, and tearful,” because they have a meaning opposite of “happy.”

One of the most effective methods of vocabulary building is to study the parts of a word which give clues to the meaning of whole words, and then to make sure the rough or literal definition you form makes sense in relation to what you are reading. Most of the longer and more difficult words in English are derived from Latin and Greek; fortunately, these longer words are also the ones that are the easiest to break down or analyze into parts which mean something. For example, you will learn that the word *portable* has two important parts: *port* (meaning *to carry*) and *able* (meaning *can or able to*). A *portable* radio, then, is one you *can carry* around with you. By breaking the word down into meaningful parts, you can often form a rough definition or make a reasonable guess at the meaning of a word. This system does not always work; few systems do. But as you become familiar with the method as you work through this book, you should be able to define more and more unfamiliar words.

Here is the method you should use as you read the selections and do the exercises in this book:

1. When you find an unknown word, first analyze the word. This means you should identify all the roots, prefixes, and suffixes in the word. For example, consider the word *transportation*. You know that *port* means “to carry,” and you will soon learn that *trans* means “across or from one place to another” and *tion* means “the state or condition of.” From this, you can form a literal meaning for *transportation*: “the state of carrying something from one place to another place.”

2. Once you have made a literal definition, test that definition to see that it makes sense in the reading. For example, consider this sentence: “Our transportation system faces serious problems: our highways are crowded and our roads and bridges are falling apart.” Now you can make your literal definition more exact, and define transportation as “any method of moving people or things from one place to another place.”

3. Always refine your literal definition so that it makes sense within the sentence you are reading.

4. If you try to analyze a word but do not know the meaning of a root or affixes, look up the word part in the glossary at the back of the book. Do not use a dictionary, especially a bilingual dictionary.

5. This method will seem hard at first, but as you become familiar with more and more word parts, you will soon find that it becomes much easier. You might find yourself becoming interested in how words are formed and how they have developed and changed over the years. If that happens, you will be surprised at how fast your vocabulary grows.

2

Compound Words

A compound word has at least two parts, and each part is, by itself, a separate word. *Sunlight*, for example, is formed by combining *sun* and *light*, and from that information we can make a good guess at what the word means. We could define it as “light that comes from the sun” or “light the sun gives off.” Another example is *overtime*, a compound word formed from *over* and *time*. A reasonable guess at this word’s meaning might be “a time that is longer than (or over) what is normal,” as in “We worked overtime” or “The game went into overtime.”

The first step in analyzing an unknown word, then, is to look at its parts. In compound words, you will find separate words that will often give clues to the meaning of the entire word.

The following short selections contain a number of compound words. You will know many of them already, but some may be new to you. Read the paragraphs, paying close attention to the **boldface** words. Try to make a reasonable guess or form a rough definition for each of the compound words.

1. I will never forget my first class in college. The **classroom** held 30 seats, and each one was filled with someone I did not know. The clean **chalkboard** covered one entire wall, and there were narrow windows on the wall to my left. I was very scared. I looked around at all the unfamiliar faces and saw that some of my **classmates** were already writing in their **workbooks**. I hadn’t even gone to the **bookstore** to buy mine! I was sure everyone else was smarter than I was, and I began to **daydream** that I would not understand any of the **homework**. I wonder now how many other students felt exactly as I felt on that first day.

Try to define the following words:

1. chalkboard: chalkboard is a board for writing on
2. classroom: is a place where you learn
3. workbook: is a book with pages for writing
4. bookstore: is a place where you buy books
5. homework: is a job that you have to do at home

170210 As I looked out my window, I could see the blue and orange **runway** lights. I was tired but excited because this was my first **airplane** trip. I fastened my **seatbelt**, and the plane edged slowly away from the ramp. We taxied to a far end of the **airport**, turned around, and I heard the pilot tell us we had been cleared for **takeoff**. Suddenly, the engines roared, and I felt myself being pushed back against my seat. The jet quickly picked up speed, left the runway, and climbed steeply away from the ground. My **midnight** flight to New York had begun.

Try to define the following words:

1. runway: the way for the plane to take off
2. seatbelt: the belt that you wear in a car or plane to keep you safe
3. airplane: a machine that can fly in the sky
4. takeoff: the time when the plane leaves the ground
5. midnight: the time when the sun is not visible

EXERCISE A

Give a short definition for the **boldface** terms in the sentences below. Do not use a dictionary.

1. We saw 14 **songbirds** on our last field trip.
songbirds: birds that sing
2. On his tour, the Pope took 15 **bodyguards**.
bodyguards: people who protect someone
3. The town where I now live has a **sandstone** courthouse.
sandstone: stone made of sand
courthouse: place where judges work
4. Almost everyone likes to eat **homemade** dessert.
homemade: made at home
5. When they fixed our **bathroom**, we had **sawdust** through the entire house.
bathroom: room for bath
sawdust: small pieces of wood
6. Each student has a new **notebook**.
notebook: a book with paper inside

7. Define the **underlined** terms.

underlined: if a person is

8. The **earthquake** destroyed the entire village.

earthquake: the earth shook

the ground or

3

Familiar Prefixes and Suffixes

Only a few words in English are compound words; so using that method of breaking down words has limited use. Many words, however, have parts that carry special meanings. For example, *re-* by itself means nothing, but if it is placed before another word, *re-* can mean “again,” as in *reread*, or “back,” as in *return*. Word parts like *re-* are called affixes. If an affix is placed at the beginning of a word, it is called a prefix; if placed at the end, it is a suffix. Knowing the meanings of affixes can help you make reasonable guesses at what a word means.

The five common affixes discussed in this unit are:

<i>re-</i> :	again or back
<i>-able</i> :	can do or can be
<i>-ful</i> :	full of or filled with
<i>-less</i> :	without
<i>-ly</i> :	in a way that is . . .

Use these definitions as you do the exercises which follow.

EXERCISE A

Read the following paragraph and explain the meaning of the **boldface** words. Use the meaning of the affix in your definition, but be aware of the clues in the sentences as well.

I will never go back to that restaurant. The food was **tasteless** and just barely **edible**. Our waiter was **cheerful** enough, but he was also **forgetful**. We had to **reorder** our meal twice before he got everything right. In fact, I cannot remember one **enjoyable** moment in the entire evening, unless it was the moment we left.

tasteless: As if it has no taste

edible: It can be eaten

reorder: order again

cheerful: full of cheer

enjoyable: can be enjoyed

EXERCISE B

Two words often go together. We say “husband and wife,” “shoes and socks,” and “salt and pepper.” Below are two lists. Words in column A are often used with words in

column B. Match these word pairs and write a short, simple phrase that contains them both.

A	B	Phrases
reconsider	furniture	<u>reconsider the problem</u>
curable	couple	<u>curable disease</u>
retake	fruit	<u>retake the test</u>
rearrange	situation	<u>rearrange the furniture</u>
regain	problem	<u>regain the problem</u>
edible	radio	<u>edible food</u>
portable	exam	<u>portable exam</u>
hopeless	snake	<u>hopeless situation</u>
harmless	lead	<u>harmless snake</u>
childless	disease	<u>childless couple</u>

EXERCISE C

This exercise has two steps. First, look at the **boldface** word in each sentence. You may not know what it means. Look up the root of the word in your glossary. This will give you a good clue to the word's meaning. Second, use that clue, the meaning of the affixes, and other information from the sentence to form a definition for the **boldface** term. Do not use a dictionary.

1. **Amiable** people are often invited to parties.

root: am meaning of root: with

amiable: with a friendly face

2. The judge **revoked** my driver's license after I had my accident.

root: re meaning of root: back

revoked: to take back

3. I was so poor, I was **grateful** for any job I could get.

root: grate meaning of root: to grate

grateful: to be thankful

4. **Regardless** of what danger might face her, the firefighter entered the burning building.

root: regard meaning of root: to regard

regardless: without regard

5. Our fat and overfed cat is **aptly** named "Tubs."

root: apt meaning of root: fitting, appropriate

aptly: in a fitting manner

6. Oil and water are not **miscible** substances.

root: misc meaning of root: mixed

miscible: able to be mixed

7. Oil and water are **formless** substances.

root: form meaning of root: shape, structure

formless: without shape or structure

8. During floods, this river is not **navigable**.

root: navig meaning of root: to sail or travel by water

navigable: able to be sailed or traveled by water

9. I could **repress** my feelings of anger for only a short time. If I didn't hit something soon, I would explode.

root: repress meaning of root: to suppress or hold back

repress: to suppress or hold back

10. The illness passed, and I **gradually** regained my strength and health.

root: grad meaning of root: step by step

gradually: step by step