

504

Absolutely Essential Words

Fifth Edition

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CONTENTS

Introduction	iv
How to Use This Book	iv
Lessons 1-6	1
Word Review #1	19
Lessons 7-12	22
Word Review #2	40
Lessons 13-18	43
Word Review #3	61
Lessons 19-24	64
Word Review #4	82
Lessons 25-30	85
Word Review #5	103
Lessons 31-36	106
Word Review #6	124
Lessons 37-42	127
Word Review #7	145
Answers	148
Index	151
100 Frequently Misspelled Words	153
Bonus Lesson—125 More Difficult (But Essential) Words	154
Index of 125 More Difficult (But Essential) Words	166
Bonus Review	167

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

The pronunciation of the 504 *absolutely essential* words included in this book are those used by educated, cultured speakers in everyday, relaxed informal conversation.

Below are a list of symbols; the sound that each symbol represents can be easily understood from the key word in which it is shown.

a	back	ò	horn	f	fall	s	sit
ā	hay	oo	look	g	get	t	tin
ā	car	oo	too	h	hotel	v	voice
ā	care	oi	toy	j	joy	w	win
e	then	u	up	k	kill	ch	church
ē	easy	ú	toot	l	let	hw	white
è	bird	ū	you	m	man	zh	leisure
l	it	ou	out	n	not	y	yes
l	kite	b	bed	p	put	z	zebra
ò	home	d	done	r	rose	ŋ	drink

The unstressed vowel sound is symbolized as follows:

e	for a as in around	for i as in sanity	for u as in focus
	for e as in glitter	for o as in complete	

INTRODUCTION

This is a self-help book. If you use it intelligently, you will help yourself to strengthen and expand your word knowledge. The words you will learn, moreover, are essential in that they are known and used regularly by educated people. You will find that such words as *squander*, *rehabilitate*, *blunder*, *obesity*, and five hundred more will turn up in your newspapers, in the magazines you read, in books, on television, in the movies, and in the conversation of the people you meet daily.

504 Absolutely Essential Words is divided into 42 lessons, each containing 12 new words. Those words are first presented to you in three sample sentences; next, the new words appear in a brief passage; the last part of each lesson is a set of exercises that give you practice using the new words. One of the most important features of **504 . . . Words** is that each of the new words is repeated over and over again throughout this book so that you will have a greater chance to become familiar with it.

Included are seven Word Review sections, each containing challenging exercises that will help you to test your mastery of the new words.

Newly added are interesting exercises in letter writing and parts of speech that will familiarize you with our basic 504 essential words. Finally, this 5th edition features frequently misspelled words, a Bonus Review, and a Bonus Lesson with 125 More Difficult (But Essential) Words.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

504 Absolutely Essential Words can be used in a number of ways, depending upon the needs and the status of the reader. A student in a high school English class, for example, could work with the book over a period of one school year, learning a dozen words each week for 42 weeks. Pupils who are studying vocabulary in an individualized program can move through the text at their own speed, mastering the new words as rapidly as they are able. Adults, out of school, can dip into the book on a selective basis, paying attention to the new words and skipping over those with which they are already familiar.

The High School English Class Some teachers prefer to set aside one day a week for intensive vocabulary study. At such time the sentences containing the new words are often read aloud so that the students hear them used in context. The definitions may be copied into a vocabulary notebook to reinforce the learning. Next, the accompanying paragraph(s) containing the 12 new words should be read aloud, followed by the exercise in which the blanks are to be filled in. Some discussion of the "Spotlight On" word is appropriate, preceding a homework assignment in which the students compose original sentences for each of the new words.

Independent Study An interesting way to approach **504 Absolutely Essential Words** on one's own is to take an informal pretest on each week's words, comparing the definitions with the ones provided in the text. After studying the three sample sentences, the reader should compose several original ones, using the model paragraph(s) for resource material.

The "Spotlight On" word introduces students to the fascinating history of the English language. They are advised to look up other words in each lesson in order to find out about their origin and to expand their vocabulary in the process.

Finally, students who are working on their own should complete the exercises at the end of each section, filling in the blanks and striving for a perfect score.

Repetition The words with asterisks (*) are those that have been taught in previous lessons. They are planted everywhere in the book since the repetition of newly learned material is a recognized road to mastery. If you come across such a word but cannot remember its meaning, turn back to the lesson in which that word first appeared. (See the index on pages 170–172 for such information.)