

## Part Two

### Diction

Diction is the choice and use of words. The English language has a very large vocabulary: as many as 400,000 words are collected in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Of course no one knows or need to use so many words. Only a small part of them are used by ordinary people for ordinary purposes. Students learning to write should learn to use the words that are most useful and most often used to express themselves. Sometimes one may use the wrong words, but more often the words one uses are not entirely wrong, but inappropriate, inexact, unidiomatic or uninteresting. A basic knowledge of diction may be of help.

#### I. Levels of Words

The words that are often used may be divided, from a stylistic point of view, into three types: **formal**, **common**, and **informal**.

**Formal** words may also be called learned words, or literary words, or “big” words. They mainly appear in formal writing, such as scholarly or theoretical works, political and legal documents, and formal lectures and addresses. Many such words contain three or more than three syllables; most of them are of Greek or Latin origin. They are seldom used in daily conversation, except for special purposes. Here is a paragraph from a scholarly paper which contains some of the features of formal English:

There is nothing new in the recognition, within a given language, of a distinction between common usage and uses of the language for more restricted purposes and often enough, perhaps characteristically, more elevated purposes. The monolithic nature of English is not questioned when literary essayists like Emerson contrast poetry and common speech. The latter is recognized in America to be the proper subject for the investigation of linguists who, however, now show some incipient inclination to investigate poetry, too, and other noncasual utterances in a given language.

—C. F. Voegelin

There are only three sentences in this paragraph; all of them are long and involved. And there are in it quite a few formal or learned words, such as *recognition*, *characteristically*, *elevated*, *monolithic*, *investigation*, *incipient*, *inclination*, *noncasual*, and *utterances*. Long sentences and formal words are appropriate here because the paper, which discusses a rather complex question, needs them to be theoretically clear and exact.

Most of the words in the paragraph, however, are those that people use every day, and appear in all kinds of writing. Because of this, they are called **common** words. Read the following paragraph:

When I was a kid, and reading every science fiction book in the local library, I used to wonder exactly how the future would happen. By that I don't mean what the future would be *like*—science fiction already told me that—but rather how we'd actually get there. Science fiction books seemed to agree, for example, that in the future there would be no money—all transactions would be made via identity cards and centralized computers. But that seemed dubious to me: how, I wondered, are you going to get everybody to give up money in the first place?

—Michael Rogers

In this paragraph, except one or two words that are informal, like *kid*, and one or two that are a little formal, like *transactions* and *dubious*, all the words are commonly used words. The sentences are much shorter and simpler than those in the preceding paragraph. Such vocabulary and sentence structure fit the content of the paragraph, as it describes the thoughts of a child.

There are words which are mainly used in **informal** or familiar conversation. They seldom appear in formal writing, and in literary works their main use is to record people's thoughts and dialogs. They are usually short words of one or two syllables and most of them are of Saxon origin (i.e., not borrowed from Greek, Latin, or French). We may call them informal words, such as *guts* (meaning courage), *guy* (man), and *hassle* (bother).

Here is a paragraph with some of these words:

You have your tension. Sometimes you come close to having an accident, that upsets you. You just escape maybe by a hair or so. Sometimes maybe you get a disgruntled passenger on there, and starts a big argument. Traffic. You have someone who cuts you off or stops in front of the bus. There's a lot of tension behind that. You got to watch all the time. You're watchin' the drivers, you're watchin' other cars. Most of the time you have to drive for the other drivers, to avoid hitting them. So you take the tension home with you.

—Studs Terkel

This is part of a talk given by a Chicago driver. He uses very colloquial words and expressions like *there's*, *you're*, *by a hair or so*, *on there*, *cuts you off*, and *you got to*. But most of the words he uses are common words.

Thus there are three levels of words, with the formal or learned at the top, the informal at the bottom, and the common in the middle. Common words are good for all kinds of writing; formal words are as a rule seldom used in informal writing, while informal words are seldom used in formal writing, unless for some special purpose or effect.

These are all words of standard English, which is used by all educated speakers of the language. There are words which are used only by special groups of people for special effect. Among these are slang words, dialectal words and certain words that are often used by uneducated speakers.

**Slang** words are highly informal; they may be vivid and interesting, but they may, when used inappropriately, make the writer or speaker sound offensive or funny:

On hearing that his father had *kicked* the *bucket*, we wrote him a letter to express our sympathies.  
The big banquet held in honor of the distinguished guests was really *neat*.

Because of the slang expressions, the first sentence does not really sound sympathetic, and the second one is not serious in tone.

In the following passage a farmer said some angry words about the school teacher who had taken his pupils out on a field trip:

I'll attend to that myself in th' mornin'. I'll take keer o' 'im. He ain't from this county nohow. I'll go down there in th' mornin' and see 'im. Lettin' you leave your books and gallivant all over th' hills. What kind of a school is it nohow! Didn't do that, my son, when I's a little shaver in school.

—Jesse Stuart

The farmer's dialect is shown in his pronunciation: he omits certain sounds and pronounces *-ing* like *-in* and *care* like *keer*. He uses *ain't* for *isn't*, *I's* for *I was*, and *nohow* for *anyhow*. These words, which may be used by uneducated speakers, are not of standard vocabulary. *A little shaver* is a slang expression meaning a little boy.

Such nonstandard (or substandard) words and expressions are often seen in stories describing poorly educated people. Foreign students of English need to understand them, but should not try to use them in speech or writing.

**Task 1 Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions:**

1. From what type of book is this passage taken? What do you think is the purpose of the book?
2. Is the book written for scientists or for ordinary readers?
3. Are there slang expressions in the passage? Are there formal words in it? Give examples.
4. Is the diction appropriate for the content of the following passage? Give reasons.

Language is our facility to talk to each other. The word 'talk' is used not merely to avoid a rather more technical and high-sounding word like 'communicate'; talk is more precise and more relevant to the special nature of human language than 'communicate'. In the first place, all creatures—cat, sparrow, and bee—can be said to *communicate* with each other to some extent. They can attract each other's attention, warn of danger, woo their mates, and direct the way to food. We are still learning just how well animals can communicate with each other, but there can be no doubt that animal communication is wholly rudimentary as compared with the complex and subtle control of language possessed by even the least intelligent or least educated English tramp or Australian aboriginal. It is

therefore appropriate to say that language involves 'talk' to emphasize that language is a peculiarly human activity.

—Randolph Quirk

## II. The Meaning of Words

The **meaning** of a word has two aspects: **denotative** and **connotative**. A word's denotation is what it literally means, as defined by the dictionary; its connotation is the feeling or idea suggested by it.

For instance, *country*, *nation*, *state* and *land* have more or less the same denotation and may all be translated into *guojia* [国家] in Chinese, but their connotations are quite different. *Country* refers to an area of land and its population and government, *nation* emphasizes the people of a country, *state* refers to the government or political organization of a country, and *land* is less precise but more literary and emotive than country.

an island *country*; neighboring *countries*

In area China is the third largest *country* in the world.

a peace-loving *nation*; the awakening *nations* of Africa

The modernization program has won the support of the whole *nation*.

*state* organs; *state*-owned enterprises

China is my native *land*.

As compared here, these four words may be said to be synonyms. English is particularly rich in synonyms as a result of incorporating words from other languages over the centuries. But we should remember that it is difficult to find two words that are exactly the same in meaning and use. They may be different in stylistic level, in the degree of emphasis, in emotional coloring, in tone, and in collocation.

Generally speaking, words of Anglo-Saxon origin are often common or informal, whereas those of Latin or French origin are often learned or formal. Look at these words:

ask

time

rise

question

age

mount

interrogate

epoch

ascend

In each group the first word is from Anglo-Saxon and the second and third from French or Latin. The first one is clearly more common or colloquial.

*Big* and *large* are both commonly used words, but *large* is slightly more formal and may be used to describe things that are unusually big, so it is more emphatic than *big*. *Huge*, which is more literary than these two words, means extremely large, and is more emphatic than *large*.

a *big/large* city; a *big/large* house

Wuhan is a very *large* city in Central China.

The team has got a *huge* man over two meters tall.

*Small* and *little* are often interchangeable, but there is some difference in emotional coloring between them. *Small* is objective, while *little* may imply a feeling of fondness:

They lived in a *small* town.

I can never forget the *little* town where I spent my happy childhood.

*Modest* and *humble* both indicate a lack of pride, but modesty is a virtue and humbleness is not. *Humble* often connotes undue self-depreciation. So they are different in tone: one is laudatory and the other is derogatory.

*Modest* and hardworking, he made very quick progress at school.

Clearly Gompers was overawed by Wilson. His face took on a servile look; his voice was *humble*.

Some synonyms have different collocations: they are habitually used with certain words. *Large*, not *big*, for instance, is used to modify nouns like *amount*, *number* and *quantity* (a *large* amount of money, a *large* number of people, a *large* quantity of beer, etc.). Similarly, with nouns denoting personal qualities, such as *courage*, *confidence*, *ability*, and *wisdom*, not *big* or *large*, but *great*, is commonly used.

All this shows that to discriminate between synonyms is important to a student learning to write. When in difficulty, one should use a good dictionary with notes on usage or synonyms. Here is an example of such notes:

**SYN.—proud** is the broadest term in this comparison, ranging in implication from proper self-esteem or pride to an overweening opinion of one's importance [too *proud* to beg, *proud* as a peacock]; **arrogant** implies an aggressive, unwarranted assertion of superior importance or privileges [the *arrogant* colonel]; **haughty** implies such consciousness of high station, rank, etc. as is displayed in scorn of those one considers beneath one [a *haughty* dowager]; **insolent**, in this connection, implies both haughtiness and great contempt, esp. as manifested in behavior or speech that insults or affronts others [she has an *insolent* disregard for her servant's feelings]; **overbearing** implies extreme, domineering insolence [an *overbearing* supervisor]; **supercilious** stresses an aloof, scornful manner toward others [a *supercilious* intellectual snob]; **disdainful** implies even stronger and more overt feelings of scorn for that which is regarded as beneath one —**ANT. humble**

—*Webster's New World College Dictionary* (4th ed.)

There is one thing about the meaning of words that Chinese students should be on guard against: taking the Chinese equivalent of an English word as its exact meaning, or understanding the meaning of an English word from its Chinese equivalent. It is true that the Chinese equivalents of many English words express their true meanings, but very often an English word has no exact Chinese equivalent and it has to be translated in different ways in different contexts.

Take a very simple word, *send*, for instance. A student who thinks its meaning is *song* [送] in Chinese may make sentences like: “He came to *send* me the letter” (He brought me the letter); or “I went to the station to *send* a friend yesterday” (I went to the station to see a friend off yesterday). In fact, to *send* means to cause to go or be taken to a place without going oneself. If you *sent* something to a place, you asked someone else to take it there; you did not go there yourself.

To understand the meaning of an English word one had better find out how it is defined in English in a dictionary with English explanations. Chinese translations are not always reliable, and sometimes they are misleading.

English words that may be translated into the same Chinese expression are not necessarily synonymous. *Family* and *home*, for instance, may both be translated as *jia* [家], but they are not synonyms. *Family* refers to the people related to one, while *home* to the place where one lives. *Except* and *besides* are sometimes both translated as *chule* [除了], but they are opposite in meaning: *except* means leaving out or not including, and *besides* means in addition to or as well as.

**Task 2 Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions:**

1. Read the sentences with *shocked*, *raging*, *slashing*, *mocking*, and *amazed* again and explain the meaning of each of these words.
2. Think of two words that are synonymous to each of the above words, substitute them for the latter, and then compare the effect of your words with that of the original ones.

That night in my rented room, while letting the hot water run over my can of pork and beans in the sink, I opened [H. L. Menken's] *A Book of Prefaces* and began to read. I was jarred and *shocked* by the style, the clear, clean, sweeping sentences. Why did he write like that? And how did one write like that? I pictured the man as a *raging* demon, *slashing* with his pen, consumed with hate, denouncing everything American, extolling everything European or German, laughing at the weaknesses of people, *mocking* God, authority. What was this? I stood up, trying to realize what reality lay behind the meaning of the words. Yes, this man was fighting, fighting with words. He was using words as a weapon, using them as one would use a club. Could words be a weapon? Well, yes, for here they were. Then maybe, perhaps, I could use them as a weapon? No. It frightened me. I read on and what *amazed* me was not what he said, but how on earth anybody had the courage to say it.

—Richard Wright

**Task 3** In each sentence, choose the more precise of the two in italics, and explain your reasons.

1. A few listeners were *disinterested/uninterested* and dozed off.
2. Though she has grown up, her behavior is often *childlike/childish*.
3. I am quite *jealous/envious* of your opportunity to study at such a famous university.
4. Her clothes, though made of *cheap/inexpensive* material, are quite elegant.
5. This *homely/ugly* old man is a well-known musician.
6. I am sorry to *refuse/decline* your invitation.
7. He was *surprised/stunned* to find that his little sister had become a pretty, *slim/skinny* young woman.
8. My uncle became *fat/stout* as he grew older.
9. This servile man was especially *modest/humble* when he was talking with his superiors.
10. I asked *every/each* boy in the group the same question, and interestingly, *everyone/each* gave me a different answer.
11. The enemy troops were driven back when they *attempted/tried* to cross the border.
12. They all felt *sympathy/pity* for the victims of the disaster and made donations.
13. Empress Dowager Cixi was *famous/notorious* for her cruelty.
14. Is that *old/elderly woman/lady* sitting on the bench your mother?

### III. General and Specific Words

Comparatively speaking, some words are more general or more specific in meaning than others. *Professionals*, for instance, is more general than *scientists, doctors, teachers, lawyers, journalists*, etc., all of which are more specific. But *scientists* may be called a general word when compared with *physicists* or *chemists*, which, in turn, is more general than *biochemists*.

Although both general and specific words are useful, a student learning to write should make an effort to master and use specific words wherever possible. Specific words help to make writing clear, exact, vivid, and striking, for they are more informative and expressive than general words.

Compare:

<i>a good man</i>	kind, honest, just, generous, sympathetic, warm-hearted, selfless, brave, honorable
<i>good food</i>	tasty, delicious, nourishing, rich, wholesome, fresh, appetizing, abundant
<i>house</i>	mansion, villa, chateau, cottage, bungalow, cabin, hut, shack, shanty, shed, barn
<i>laugh</i>	smile, grin, beam, giggle, titter, snigger, chuckle, guffaw, chortle

It is easy to see that the specific words on the right are much more concrete and colorful than



the general ones on the left; they seem to make the reader see, hear, or feel what the writer wishes to describe.

Using specific words should go along with providing details, and then there will be effective and impressive writing. Study the following examples:

**General** It is often windy and dusty here in spring.  
**Specific** In spring there is often a very strong northwest wind. It carries so much fine dust with it that sometimes the sun becomes obscure. There is no escape from the fine dust; it gets into your eyes, your ears, your nostrils, and your hair. It goes through the cracks of closed windows and covers your desks and chairs.

**General** Students do many interesting things after classes.  
**Specific** Every morning and afternoon the sports fields are alive with energetic students. Football and basketball matches, volleyball, and badminton, track-training and gymnastics are all in full swing. Even the alleyways under the trees and around the flower beds provide enough space for enthusiasts to practice. Through the windows comes the pitter-patter of ping-pong balls, the sound of songs and music, or laughter and discussion.

**General** An old Negro woman was walking in the woods.  
**Specific** Far out in the country there was an old Negro woman with her head tied in a red rag, coming along a path through the pinewoods. She was very old and small and she walked slowly in the dark pine shadows, moving a little from side to side in her steps, with the balanced heaviness and lightness of a pendulum in a grandfather clock. She carried a thin, small cane made from an umbrella, and with this she kept tapping the frozen earth in front of her. This made a grave and persistent noise in the still air, that seemed meditative like the chirping of a solitary little bird.

—Eudora Welty

**General** Not far from the railway there was a cottage with a garden and trees and flowers around it.

**Specific** On the outskirts of a little town upon a rise of land that swept back from the railway there was a tidy little cottage of white boards, trimmed vividly with green blinds. To one side of the house there was a garden neatly patterned with plots of growing vegetables, and an arbor for the grapes which ripened late in August. Before the house there were three mighty oaks which sheltered it in their clean and massive shade in summer, and to the other side there was a



border of gay flowers. The whole place had an air of tidiness, thrift, and modest comfort.

—Thomas Wolfe

**Task 4** The following words are rather general in meaning. Think of words that are more specific.

walk	look at	cry
angry	tree	animal
flower	wind	rain

## IV. Idioms

An idiom is a fixed group of words with a special meaning which is different from the meanings of the words that form it. To “read a book,” for instance, is not an idiom, for the meaning of the phrase is the meanings of the three words put together, and “a book” can be replaced by other words like “a newspaper” or “a novel.” To “**read between the lines**” is different. The four words that form the phrase give no hint as to what it means and none of the words can be changed to form another understandable phrase.

English is rich in idioms. The following types of idioms are most common:

<b>phrasal verbs</b>	put up with turn out look forward to carry on come across
<b>n. + prep. + n.</b>	a straw in the wind the apple of one's eye like a fish out of water in a world of one's own
<b>prep. + n.</b>	in kind on the air at length with flying colors
<b>v. + n.</b>	won't hold water slip one's mind kill two birds with one stone
<b>as ... as</b>	go to the dogs as easy as pie as big as life

**pairs of words**

as different as night and day  
 as poor as a church mouse  
 wear and tear  
 high and dry  
 touch and go

**sayings**

in black and white  
 One man's meat is another man's poison.  
 A stitch in time saves nine.  
 Take it or leave it.  
 Don't count your chickens before they are hatched.

Idioms are frequently used in speech and writing. They help to make one's language sound natural and idiomatic. But in using them foreign learners of English should remember the following two points:

- Most idioms are informal or colloquial in style and can be used in conversation; but a few are slang and should be used with care, such as *all balled up*, meaning troubled or confused, and to *cough up*, meaning to produce something.
- Many idioms have become clichés and are no longer fresh or interesting, such as *armed to the teeth* and *as good as gold*, and should be used sparingly.

**Task 5 Give phrasal verbs that mean the same as the following verbs:**

continue	endure	investigate
expect	destroy (a building)	build
start	postpone	begin to like

**V. Figures of Speech**

Words used in their original meanings are used literally, while words used in extended meanings for the purpose of making comparisons or calling up pictures in the reader's or listener's mind are used figuratively. In "a *colorful* garden" the word *colorful* is used in its literal sense, but in "a *colorful* life" and "a *colorful* career" the word is used in its figurative sense. Neither life nor career has any color; *colorful* here has a new extended or figurative meaning: exciting, interesting, and rich in variety. The word suggests a comparison between life or career and something that has different colors, like a garden, and because of this association the word is more impressive than a word used in its literal sense, such as *interesting* and *exciting*.

There are various ways of using words figuratively. They are called figures of speech. Among the most common of them are:

## 1. Simile

It is a comparison between two distinctly different things and the comparison is indicated by the word *as* or *like*:

O my love's **like** a red, red rose. —Robert Burns

That man can't be trusted. He's **as** slippery **as** an eel.

The old man's hair is **as** white **as** snow.

In the above three examples people and things of different categories are compared: a woman and a rose, a man and an eel, and hair and snow, each pair having one similarity respectively: loveliness, slipperiness and whiteness. The discrepancy between the two things compared makes their similarity all the more striking.

## 2. Metaphor

It is the use of a word which originally denotes one thing to refer to another with a similar quality. It is also a comparison, but the comparison is implied, not expressed with the word *as* or *like*. If Robert Burns had written "O my love's a red, red rose" with the word *like* omitted, he would have used a metaphor instead of a simile. In the changed line, "my love" is also compared to a red rose, but there is no word to indicate the comparison; hence *rose* is a metaphor. Similarly, in sentences like "He is the *soul* of the team" and "Irrigation is the *lifeblood* of agriculture", *soul* and *lifeblood* are used metaphorically.

Metaphors are used not only after verb to *be*, and not only nouns can be used metaphorically. Study the following examples:

The **picture** of those poor people's lives was **carved** so sharply in his heart that he could never forget it.

There was a **medieval** magnificence about the big dining-hall.

The street **faded** into a country road with **straggling** houses by it.

There were a few **lordly** poplars before the house.

All his former joy was **drowned** in the embarrassment and confusion he was feeling at the moment.

He often **prefaced** his remarks by "I can't help thinking..."

The charcoal fire glowed and dimmed **rhythmically** to the strokes of the bellows.

As is shown in these sentences, nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs can all be used in a metaphorical way. There is always a comparison implied. Take sentence 4 for instance. The word *lordly* suggests that the poplars before the house were tall, straight and stately, just like ancient aristocrats. The verb *prefaced* in sentence 6 compares that man's way of beginning every remark

with “I can’t help thinking...” to providing a preface to a book.

A metaphor or a simile has to be fresh to be effective. One that has been frequently used over a long period of time will become dull and stale, and cease to function as a metaphor or simile. “The *leg* of a table” must have been a metaphor when it was first used, but today we feel that *leg* is used in its literal sense.

### 3. Personification

It is to treat a thing or an idea as if it were human or had human qualities. In poetry personification is very common:

Youth is hot and bold,  
Age is weak and cold,  
Youth is wild, and Age is tame.

—William Shakespeare

In these lines Youth and Age are described like two persons. In prose personification is also used, though not so often as in poetry.

The match will soon be over and defeat is **staring** us in the face.  
This time fate was **smiling** to him.  
Thunder **roared** and a pouring rain started.  
Dusk came **stealthily**.  
The storm was **raging** and an **angry** sea was continuously **tossing** their boat.

### 4. Metonymy

It is substituting the name of one thing for that of another with which it is closely associated. Thus the *crown* can stand for a king, and the *White House* for the American government, the *bottle* for wine or alcohol, and the *bar* for the legal profession. When metonymy is well used, brevity and vividness may be achieved:

**Sword** and **cross** in hand, the European conquerors fell upon the Americas.  
When the war was over, he laid down the **sword** and took up the **pen**.  
His **purse** would not allow him that luxury.

### 5. Synecdoche

When a part is substituted for the whole or the whole is substituted for a part, synecdoche is applied:

The farms were short of **hands** during the harvest season.

He had to earn his daily **bread** by doing odd jobs.

**Germany** beat **Argentina** 2 to 1 in this exciting football match.

The poor **creature** could no longer endure her sufferings.

In the above sentences *hands* stands for men, *bread* for food or living expenses, the names of the two *countries* for the two teams, and *creature* for a woman.

Metonymy and synecdoche are similar as both involve substitution. Sometimes they can hardly be distinguished from metaphor, which in a way is also substitution.

## 6. Euphemism

It is the substitution of a mild or vague expression for a harsh or unpleasant one, for example:

to die	to pass away, to leave us; one's heart has stopped beating
old people	senior citizens
mad	emotionally disturbed
dustman	sanitation worker
lavatory	bathroom, men's/women's room
invasion, raid	military action
driving inhabitants away or controlling them	pacification
concentration camps	strategic hamlets

It is obvious that those euphemisms used by the ordinary people are meant to soften harsh reality, but those used by politicians may aim at deceiving the public.

## 7. Irony

It is the use of words which are clearly opposite to what is meant, in order to achieve a special effect. Suppose you planned an outing on a certain day, expecting it to be fine; but when the day came it was raining heavily. If you said, "What *fine* weather for an outing!" you were speaking ironically. If a barbarous act was called *civilized* or *cultural*, irony was used.

## 8. Overstatement and Understatement

In overstatement the diction exaggerates the subject, and in understatement the words play down the magnitude or value of the subject. Overstatement is also called **hyperbole**.

Both aim at the same effect: to make the statement or description impressive or interesting.

She is **dying** to know what job has been assigned her.

On hearing that he had been admitted to that famous university, he whispered to himself, "I'm the **luckiest** man in the world."

It took **a few** dollars to build this indoor swimming pool.

"He is really **strange**," his friends said when they heard he had divorced his pretty and loving wife.

## 9. Transferred Epithet

An epithet is an adjective or descriptive phrase that serves to characterize somebody or something. A transferred epithet is one that is shifted from the noun it logically modifies to a word associated with that noun. When one says that he has had *a busy day*, one is using such a figure of speech. For it is the person, not the day, that is busy.

She was so worried about her son that she spent several **sleepless** nights.

In his **quiet** laziness he suddenly remembered that strange word.

The assistant kept a **respectful** distance from his boss when they were walking in the corridor.

He said "Yes" to the question in an **unthinking** moment.

The old man put a **reassuring** hand on my shoulder.

## 10. Oxymoron

In oxymoron apparently contradictory terms are combined to produce a special effect.

The coach had to be **cruel** to be **kind** to his trainees.

When the news of the failure came, all his friends said that it was a **victorious defeat**.

The president was **conspicuously absent** on that occasion.

She read the long-awaited letter with a **tearful smile**.

## 11. Alliteration

It refers to the appearance of the same initial consonant sound in two or more words, such as "*proud as a peacock*" and "*blind as a bat*". Alliteration is often used in poetry to give emphasis to words that are related in meaning:

Wherefore feed, and clothe, and save,  
From the cradle to the grave,  
Those ungrateful **d**rones who would  
**D**rain your sweat—nay, **d**rink your blood?

—Percy Bysshe Shelley

Alliteration is sometimes used in prose for the same effect—to join two or more related words.

I see also the **d**ull, **d**rilled, **d**ocile, brutish masses of the Hun soldiery plodding on like a swarm of crawling locusts.

The Russian danger is therefore our danger, ...just as the cause of any Russian fighting for his **h**earth and **h**ome is the cause of free men and free peoples in every quarter of the globe.

These two sentences are taken from Winston Churchill's speech on Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941.

**Task 6 Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions:**

1. Is the style of the passage formal or informal?
2. Give examples of the formal words and expressions in the passage.
3. What rhetorical devices are used? Give examples.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of captivity.

But one hundred years later, we must face the tragic fact that the Negro is still not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. So we have come here today to dramatize an appalling condition.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Task 7 Name the figures of speech used in each of the following sentences:**

1. Her rich relatives rained birthday presents on her only son.
2. Wrong ideas may harm man just like diseases.
3. Some words may be defaced by careless usage.
4. The leaves are trembling in the cold wind.
5. The storm was so angry that it wanted to destroy everything in its way.
6. Many people bowed before Force, but eventually Force would surrender to Reason.
7. Selfless people are like cows, which eat straw but produce milk.
8. "What do you think of the roast duck?" "Not bad."



9. His friends praised his daughter's performances to the skies.
10. His writing is clear and clean.
11. His unfriendly tongue surprised her.
12. There is fertile soil for popular music in China today.

## VI. Dictionaries

### 1. Using Dictionaries

Foreign learners of English need to keep a good dictionary handy when they read or write. It will help them a great deal in learning and using words.

When in doubt about the spelling, division, and pronunciation of a word, they should look it up in a dictionary. If more than one spelling is given, they can choose either one, for both are in good use, such as: *judgment, judgement; aging, ageing* (the first may be more preferable). It is often difficult to decide where to divide a word at the end of a line, and it is not easy to remember all the rules involved. A dictionary shows the syllabication of a word either by leaving a space or by inserting a dot between syllables, like *ma te ri al ism, in • sep • a • ra • ble*. It also shows whether a compound word is generally written as one word, two words, or with a hyphen, like *gaslight, shortsighted, far-sighted, gas mask*. The pronunciation of a word is shown in International Phonetic Symbols in many dictionaries. Some dictionaries have their special symbols, the key to which is either printed at the bottom of each page or explained in the front matter. If more than one pronunciation is given, each is acceptable.

A dictionary entry shows the part or parts of speech of a word, the transitive or intransitive use of a verb, the past tense and past participle of an irregular verb, the plural form of an irregular noun, and other forms a word may have. The history of a word—its etymology—is given in some bigger dictionaries. For instance, there may be the following information about *autocrat*:

[Fr. *autocrate* <Gr. *autokrates*, absolute ruler <*autos*, self + *kratos*, power, rule]

From this etymology one learns that *autocrat* is of Greek origin, which is likely to make the word formal, not colloquial, in style. Besides, one learns that *auto* means self; this will help one to understand and remember words beginning with *auto*, such as *automobile, automatic, autograph, automaton*, and *autonomous*.

To one learning to write, the most useful information a dictionary contains is the definitions, together with examples or illustrations, and usage labels and notes. As has been mentioned in a previous section, Chinese students should not depend on Chinese translations for the understanding of the exact meaning of an English word; instead, they should study the definitions given in English. Here is how the word *dangerous* is defined in English:

**dan·ger·ous** ˈdeɪndʒərəs / *adj*

**1** able or likely to harm or kill you; → **harmful**: *laws about dangerous dogs* |

*Some of these prisoners are extremely dangerous. | It's dangerous for a woman to walk alone at night. | [+ for ] The crumbling sidewalks are dangerous for old people. | [+ to] The virus is probably not dangerous to humans. | highly/very dangerous The aircraft caught fire, a highly dangerous situation. | The powdered milk was not as good as breast milk, and was downright dangerous (=actually dangerous) when it was mixed with unclean water.*

**2** involving a lot of risk, or likely to cause problems;

**risky**: *The business is in a dangerous financial position. | a politically dangerous strategy*

**3 dangerous ground/territory** a situation or subject that could make someone very angry or upset: *Teachers can be on dangerous ground if they discuss religion.*

—**dangerously adv**: *people who drive dangerously*

#### WORD FOCUS: DANGEROUS

*similar words*: **hazardous, risky, treacherous, perilous** *literary*

—*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2003 ed.)

The definition and illustrations make the meaning and use of *dangerous* very clear, and may prevent one from making a sentence like “I was very dangerous” when one means to say “I was in great danger.”

Words that are not labeled in a dictionary are supposed to belong to the general vocabulary, and therefore they can be used for ordinary purposes. There are words labeled *nonstandard, slang, colloquial, obsolete, archaic, dialectal, informal, vulgar, derogatory*, etc. Such words should be used with care. *Nigger*, for instance, is labeled *derogatory* or *taboo*, because it is an offensive word; *ain't* is labeled *nonstandard*, because no educated people use it; *hassle* as a verb is labeled *informal* and is not used on formal occasions. Where there is a difference between British and American usage, the difference is usually marked.

Synonyms are also compared and differentiated in some dictionaries (see Section II of this part).

To know what a dictionary contains and how it can best be used, one should spend some time reading its front matter or introductory material, and look at its table of contents. A dictionary may include in its appendices tables of weights and measures, irregular verbs, geographical and biographical names, and other useful information.

## 2. Some Good Dictionaries

*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (LDOCE), compiled mainly for foreign learners of English, aims to provide them with information on the core vocabulary of

contemporary English. In the new edition published in 2003 around 106,000 words and phrases are entered, and the top 3,000 most frequent words are indicated in red. All words are defined in simple English, the defining vocabulary containing some 2,000 words. The meanings and uses of words are illustrated in over 155,000 natural examples and one million additional sentences from books and magazines. The front matter contains guides to using the dictionary, and the back matter contains six tables, including those of numbers, weights and measures, word formation, and geographical names. In the new 4th edition there are 17 colored full-page illustrations showing parts of things as well as three maps and a CV/Résumé. There is information on grammar, idioms and phrases, phrasal verbs, spoken and written frequency, British and American English, register, and synonyms, opposites and related words. Particularly helpful to foreign learners are examples of collocations, and Word Focus and Word Choice boxes.

**Collocations** under *attention*:

**sb's attention is on sb/sth**

**pay attention (to sb/sth)**

**turn your attention to sb/sth** (=start listening to, looking at, or thinking about something)

**give (your) attention to sb/sth** (=listen to, look at, or think about something, so that you can deal with a problem)

**sb's full/complete/undivided attention**

**keep sb's attention**

**close/careful attention**

**attention to detail**

**sb's attention wanders**

**may/could I have your attention?** (=used when asking a group of people to listen carefully to you)

*My **attention wasn't** really **on** the game. | She tried to **pay attention to** what he was saying. | If you **paid** more **attention** in class, you might actually learn something! | Scott sat down at his desk and **turned** his **attention to** the file he had in front of him. | As a society we need to **give** more **attention to** the needs of older people. | Now he's gone, I can **give you my undivided attention**. | This game is fun and is sure to **keep the attention of** any young student. | They listened to the speech with **close attention**. | **Attention to detail** is essential in this job. | During the lecture Sarah's **attention** began to **wander**.*

**Word Choice** under *big*:

**WORD CHOICE: big, large, great**

**big** and **large** have the same meaning, but **large** is slightly more formal and more likely to

be used in written than spoken English: *a big lunch* | *a large house*

**large** is used with quantity words such as 'number' and 'amount': *large amounts of money* | *a large proportion of the students*

**great** is not usually used to talk about size but it can be used in literary writing to describe very large and impressive things: *Before them stood a great palace.*

**great** is used with **length**, **height**, and **age**, and in the expression **a great deal** (=a lot): *The grass had reached a great height.* | *a great deal of money*

WORD CHOICE: **big**, **tall**, **high**

**big** is not used just to describe a person's height. It is used to describe a child who is growing, or a person who is heavy, with a lot of fat or muscle on their body.

**tall** is used to describe a person's height. It can also be used to describe trees, buildings, or other things that are narrow and measure a long distance from bottom to top: *She is tall and thin.* | *the tallest building in London*

**high** is used to describe things or places that are a long way from the ground: *a high shelf* | *the highest mountain in the world*

**Word Focus** under *airport*:

#### WORD FOCUS: AIRPORT

*what you do at the airport*: When you arrive at the airport, you go into the **terminal** building. You check in for your flight at the **check-in desk**. You show your passport at **passport control** and then go through **security**, where they check that you are not carrying any weapons. If you have time you can wait for your flight in the **departure lounge**. When your flight is called, you go through the **departure gate** in order to get onto the plane. The plane then takes off from the **runway**. After your plane has landed, you go to the **baggage reclaim** to collect your bags, then go through **customs** and **immigration**, where they check your passport and your bags. You then go out into the **arrivals** area of the airport.

—*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2003 ed.)

On the CD-ROM, the new edition of the *Longman Language Activator*® is integrated into the entries of the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* as an even greater aid toward writing better and more natural English.

*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (ALD) is also a good dictionary for foreign learners of English. The 80,000 entries are explained in 3,000 common words, with plenty of examples and pictures. Phrasal verbs like *get about*, *get across*, *get along* are given fuller treatment than in many other dictionaries. One special feature of the dictionary is the use

of Verb Patterns, which help learners to use verbs correctly. The verbs *show* and *tell*, for instance, can be followed by an indirect object and a direct object, as in “Please show me the way” and “Please tell me the meaning,” but the verbs *explain* and *suggest* cannot be used in this way—they are used in different patterns. The Verb Patterns, if carefully studied and memorized, are a valuable guide to students learning to use English verbs. The signs C and U for countable and uncountable nouns are also helpful. The 7 appendices at the back of the dictionary, which include Irregular verbs, Geographical names, Numbers, Punctuation, The language of literary criticism, Notes on usage, and Defining vocabulary are very useful to foreign students.

Besides maps and color illustrations showing fruits, vegetables, clothes and fabrics, etc., there are **Topic pages** concerning computing, cooking, health, musical instruments and sport, and **Language study pages** which show links between words, collocations, phrasal verbs, idioms, new words, etc. The Language study pages also include formal and informal letters, faxes, memos, e-mails, and writing a CV or résumé, which are useful to Chinese learners of English.

Here are some examples.

### Topic pages

On pages 250-251 we find illustrations and vocabulary connected with the topic **Computing**. There are pictures of *keyboard*, *mouse*, *monitor*, *CD-ROM*, etc. Nouns such as *server*, *software*, *disk*, *virus*, *chat room*, and *e-mail address* and verbs such as *log in*, *click on*, *corrupt*, *load*, and *save* are introduced in complete sentences.

### Language study pages

One special feature of the dictionary is the provision of verb patterns, with which all the verbs in the dictionary are marked. These verb patterns are listed inside the front cover and explained with examples in B6-11 of the study pages. They help the reader to use verbs correctly. For example, under **Transitive verbs + two objects [VNN]**, we see:

- Some verbs, like **sell** and **buy**, can be used with two objects. This is shown by the code [VNN]:  
*I sold Jim a car.*  
*I bought Mary a book.*
- You can often express the same idea by using the verb as an ordinary transitive verb and adding a prepositional phrase starting with **to** or **for**:  
*I sold a car to Jim.*  
*I bought a book for Mary.*

—*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (6th ed.)

In *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (7th ed.) published in 2007, there are 2,000 new words, 7,000 synonyms and opposites, plus 200 special synonym notes, and

2,600 cultural words such as *Capitol Hill* and *the Dow Jones Index*.

*Webster's New World College Dictionary (WNWCD)* is larger in size and has a larger vocabulary than the *LDOCE* and *ALD*; it contains over 163,000 entries. Instead of the International Phonetic Alphabet it uses its own symbols; a guide to pronunciation is included in "Guide to the Dictionary" in the front matter. The meanings of a word are arranged in historic order from the earliest to the most recent meaning so that the development of the word is shown. The etymology of each word is given in square brackets after the headword and phonetic symbols. The dictionary contains many short paragraphs in which synonyms are listed and discriminated and examples of usage supplied. Under the entry word *small*, for instance, there is the abbreviation SYN., followed by a discussion of the meaning and use of *small*, *little*, *diminutive*, *minute*, *tiny*, *miniature*, and *petite*. Also provided are the antonyms *large*, *big*, and *great*. In the entries for *little*, *diminutive*, *minute*, *tiny*, *miniature*, and *petite*, there is —SYN. SMALL, meaning synonyms are discriminated under *small*.

**SYN.**—**small** and **little** are often used interchangeably, but **small** is preferred with reference to something concrete of less than the usual quantity, size, amount, value, importance, etc. [*a small man, tax, audience, matter, etc.*] and **little** more often applies to absolute concepts [*he has his little faults*], in expressing tenderness, indulgence, etc. [*the little woman*], and in connoting insignificance, meanness, pettiness, etc. [*of little importance*]; **diminutive** implies extreme, sometimes delicate, smallness or littleness [*the diminutive Lilliputians*]; **minute** and the more informal **tiny** suggest that which is extremely diminutive, often to the degree that it can be discerned only by close scrutiny [*a minute, or tiny, difference*]; **miniature** applies to a copy, model, representation, etc. on a very small scale [*miniature painting*]; **petite** has specific application to a girl or woman who is small and trim in figure —**ANT. large, big, great**

—*Webster's New World College Dictionary* (4th ed.)

Abbreviations, biographical and geographical names are entered in alphabetical order with ordinary words. In the Reference Supplement are Nations of the World, World City Populations, Geographical and Astronomical Data, Monetary Units, Books of the Bible, Alphabetical List of the Chemical Elements, Meteorology, etc. Also included are Presidents of the United States, The Declaration of Independence, Constitution of the United States, and Amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

*Collins Cobuild English Dictionary (CCED)* First published in 1987, this is a relatively new dictionary. *Cobuild* in the name refers to Collins Birmingham University International Language Database, *Collins* being the name of the company that publishes the dictionary. In size

this dictionary is larger than the three mentioned above. *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary* is helpful in that definitions of words are all given in complete sentences with situations, so that the user of the dictionary is shown the typical collocates of a word: that is, the other words that are used with the headword. For example, meaning 1 of the verb **wag** says:

When a dog **wags** its tail, it repeatedly waves its tail from side to side.

This shows that the subject of meaning 1 of **wag** refers to a dog, rather than a human or any other kind of animal, and the object of the verb is “tail.”

Meaning 2 of the adjective **refreshing** says:

A **refreshing** bath or drink makes you feel energetic or cool again after you have been uncomfortably tired or hot. *Herbs have been useful for centuries to make refreshing drinks.*

This shows that you use the adjective **refreshing** to describe bath or drink, rather than other kinds of thing.

By giving definitions and examples in complete sentences, the dictionary is actually showing the commonest ways in which the headword is used, the typical collocations of a word as well as words that can be used as subject and/or object of a verb.

The dictionary has a lot of information on pragmatics—the study and description of the ways in which people use language to do things. “No kidding,” for instance, is explained in this way:

You can say ‘No kidding’ to emphasize that what you are saying is true, or that you mean it; an informal expression. *I’m scared. No kidding, really.*

—*Collins Cobuild English Dictionary* (1995 ed.)

There are marginal notes on whether a noun is countable or uncountable, whether a verb is transitive or intransitive, and on phrasal verbs, synonyms and antonyms.

There are also five *frequency bands*, shown by black diamonds in the margin. The most frequent words (approximately 700) have five black diamonds, the next most frequent (approximately 1,200), four. There are approximately 1,500 words in the band with three black diamonds, 3,200 words in the band with two black diamonds, and approximately 8,100 words in the band with one black diamond. The words in the top two bands account for approximately 75% of all English usage—so these are the words we should learn first.

**Dictionaries of Idioms** As idioms are useful and difficult, foreign learners had better keep a dictionary of idioms, for it contains more idiomatic expressions, clearer explanations and more illustrative sentences than corresponding entries in an ordinary dictionary. *A Dictionary of*



*American Idioms*, first published in 1966 and revised and thoroughly updated in 2004, defines and explains the use of over 8,000 idiomatic words and phrases specific to American-style English. *NTC's American Idioms Dictionary, 3rd ed.* (2000) contains over 8,500 proverbs, informal phrases and common sayings. *Longman Phrasal Verbs Dictionary* treats idiomatic combinations of a verb and adverb, or a verb and preposition, or a verb with both adverb and preposition, such as *take in*, *set about* and *put up with*. Each phrasal verb is defined and explained with one or two examples. There is a grammar code for each entry to show how the phrase is used in sentences. Similar dictionaries of idioms are *Oxford Phrasal Verbs Dictionary for Learners of English* (2001), which gives information of over 6,000 common British and American phrasal verbs. Common subjects and objects are shown, and synonyms and opposites given. "Guide to the Particles" at the end of the dictionary explains the most important meanings of the main adverbs and prepositions used in phrasal verbs to help learners see patterns. *Oxford Idioms Dictionary for Learners of English* (2001) explains more than 10,000 of the most frequently used idioms from British and American English and other English-speaking countries, ranging from expressions used in business and newspapers to very up-to-date informal English and slang expressions.

**Dictionaries of Collocations** *Collocation* means the way in which words go together. In Chinese *da* [大] is often used to modify *yu* [雨], but in English *heavy*, not *big*, goes with *rain*. Similarly, in Chinese we say *qude jinbu* [取得进步], but in English we say *make progress*. When in doubt about the collocation of a word, a student may seek guidance in a dictionary of collocations, such as *Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English* (《牛津学生英语搭配词典》), *The Kenkyusha's Dictionary of English Collocations* (《英语搭配大辞典》) published in Beijing and *Dictionary of Contemporary English Collocations* (《当代英语搭配大词典》) published in Beijing.

**Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English** This dictionary is intended especially for help with writing. The collocations in each entry are divided according to part of speech, and within each part of speech section they are grouped according to meaning or category. Here is an example from *attention*.

**attention** *noun*

1 act of watching/listening/showing interest

- ADJ. **full, rapt, undivided** *They listened with rapt attention.* | **assiduous, careful, close, meticulous, scrupulous** | **scant** *Policy-makers paid scant attention to the wider issues.* | **urgent** | **special** | **unwanted, unwelcome** | **international, media, public**
- VERB + ATTENTION **devote, direct, give (sb/sth), pay, turn** *How many times do I have to ask you to pay attention?* ◇ *He had a cup of tea and then turned his attention to the report.* | **get, have, receive** *Can I have your attention, please?...* | **attract, call, capture, catch, command, compel, draw, excite, grab** *I tried...* | **deflect, distract, divert, draw**

*The government...* | **hold, keep, rivet** *There was...* | **concentrate, confine, focus** *In this chapter...* | **refocus, transfer** *The firm...* | **deserve, need, require** *a matter requiring...* | **jostle for, vie for** *dozens of...* | **repay...** | **bring sth to...** | **come to** | **avoid, escape...**

- ATTENTION + VERB **focus** *Media attention focused today on the prince's business affairs.* | **wander...**
- ATTENTION + NOUN **span**
- PREP. **for sb's ~, for the ~ of** *a letter for the attention of your doctor*
- PHRASES **attention to detail** *He is a designer known for his meticulous attention to detail.* **care and attention...** **the centre of attention...** **the focus of attention...** **force your attention on sb...** **not pay much attention to sth, pay little/no attention to sth** (=not take something very seriously)...

## 2 care

- ADJ. **constant** | **individual, personal, special** *the child needs special attention.* | **medical**
- VERB + ATTENTION **devote, give, lavish** *He devoted all his attention to his mother...* | **be in need of, need, require, want...**

—*Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English* (2001 ed.)

In *The Kenkyusha Dictionary of English Collocations* published in Beijing in 2006, more collocations are provided. Let us take the example of *attention*. Under <动词 + >, there are listed in alphabetic order from *absorb* to *win* altogether nearly 60 verbs, and under <形容词 · 名词 + >, we find from *active* to *worldwide* over 90 adjectives.

**Dictionaries of Synonyms and Thesauri** There are special dictionaries of synonyms which give fuller treatment to synonyms than general dictionaries. One such dictionary is *Webster's Dictionary of Synonyms*. If synonyms are grouped together without explanations, it is a book called *thesaurus*, which means a treasure house. Such a book is useful in that it may remind you of words you have forgotten or may acquaint you with new words with the meaning you are interested in. So it is a word-suggester. But before you use a new word, you have to learn more about it as it is not explained in the thesaurus you are using. The best-known thesaurus is perhaps *Roget's*, first published in 1852 by Peter Mark Roget, a British surgeon and inventor. The revolutionary achievement of Dr. Peter Mark Roget was the development of a brand-new principle: the arrangement of words and phrases according to their meanings. Dr. Roget's system brings together in one place all the terms associated with a single thought or concept. The book became so popular after publication that by the time of Roget's death in 1869, there had been twenty-eight editions and printings. Today, Roget's name in the title of a thesaurus does not necessarily indicate any relationship to Dr. Roget; it has come to be seen as a generic thesaurus name.

*Roget's 21st Century Thesaurus, 3rd Edition* (2005) combines the dictionary format with the arrangement of words according to ideas. At the end of the A-to-Z listings is the Concept Index,

which helps users to organize their ideas and leads them from those ideas to the words that can best express them.

Below are entries of the word *small*; synonyms that represent colloquial or slang terms are marked with an asterisk:

**small** [*adj*1] *tiny in size, quantity* baby, bantam, bitty\*, cramped, diminutive, humble, immature, inadequate, inconsequential, inconsiderable, insufficient, limited, little, meager, microscopic, mini\*, miniature, minuscule, minute, modest, narrow, paltry, petite, picayune, piddling\*, pint-sized\*, pitiful, pocket-sized\*, poor, puny\*, runty\*, scanty, scrubby, short, shrimp\*, slight, small-scale, stunted, teensy\*, teeny, toy, trifling, trivial, undersized, unpretentious, wee\*, young; CONCEPTS 773, 789—**Ant.** big, enormous, generous, huge, immense, large

**small** [*adj*2] *unimportant* bush-league\*, inadequate, inconsiderable, ineffectual, inferior, insignificant, lesser, light, limited, lower, mean, minor, minor-league\*, minute, narrow, negligible, paltry, petty, secondary, set, small-fry\*, small-time\*, trifling, trivial, unessential; CONCEPT 575—**Ant.** Distinguished, excellent, famous, fine, important, untrivial

**small** [*adj*3] *narrow-minded, nasty* base, grudging, ignoble, illiberal, limited, little, mean, narrow, petty, selfish, set, vulgar; CONCEPT 401—**Ant.** benevolent, broad-minded, considerate, giving, kind

—*Roget's 21st Century Thesaurus, 3rd Edition* (2005 ed.)



## Keys for Reference

### Task 1

1. Apparently the passage is taken from a book about the science of language. It intends to give the reader the impression that language is peculiarly a human activity.
2. The book is written mainly for ordinary readers, because very few technical terms are used.
3. There are no slang expressions. As for formal words, there are a few like *communicate* and *rudimentary*.
4. The diction is appropriate for the content of the passage, because it is in a common expository style.

### Task 2

1. *Shocked* means greatly surprised, *raging* means violently strong, to *slash* means to violently attack, to *mock* means to laugh at somebody or something by ridiculing, to be *amazed* means to be extremely surprised.
2. Take *surprised*, for instance, for a substitute for *shocked*, the force would be greatly weakened.

### Task 3

1. *Uninterested*, because *disinterested* means not related to selfish interest.
2. *Childish*, because *childlike* is often laudatory.
3. *Envious*, because *jealous* means unhappy.
4. *Inexpensive*, because *cheap* has a bad meaning.
5. *Homely*, because *ugly* is too strong.
6. *Decline*, because to *refuse* is too blunt.
7. *Surprised*, because *stunned* is too strong; *slim*, because *skinny* gives an unpleasant feeling.
8. *Stout*, because it means slightly *fat* and heavy.
9. *Modest*, because *humble* is derogatory.
10. *Every*, because *each* refers to individuals; *each*, because individuals are meant.
11. *Attempted*, because it was difficult to cross the border.
12. *Sympathy*, because *pity* has a condescending meaning.
13. *Notorious*, because it has a bad meaning.
14. *Elderly lady*, because it is more polite.

### Task 4

walk: run, stroll, wander, pace, swagger, creep, sneaker

look at: gaze, peep, regard, glance, catch sight of, glimpse, stare

cry: sob, weep, wail, shed tears, moan, whimper

angry: irritating, fiery, hurting, distressing, biting

tree: lime, elm, willow, fir, maple, locust, mulberry, olive

animal: tiger, lion, cat, dog, pig, horse

flower: rose, narcissus, acacia, chrysanthemum, camellia, jasmine

wind: breeze, gust, draft, cyclone, whirlwind

rain: shower, dew, sprinkle, drizzle, raindrop, downpour

### Task 5

continue: go on

endure: put up with

investigate: look into

expect: look to

destroy: pull down

build: put up

start: set off

postpone: put off

begin to like: take to

### Task 6

1. The style of the passage is very formal.
2. Formal words and expressions in the passage: symbolic shadow, momentous decree, a great beacon light of hope, seared in the flames of withering injustice, a

joyous daybreak, the long night of captivity, etc.

3. Simile: (as) a great beacon light of hope... (as) a joyous daybreak to end the long night of captivity.

Metaphor: ...seared in the flames of withering injustice; ...on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity.

Antithesis: One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of **poverty** in the midst of a vast ocean of material **prosperity**.

Parallelism: But one hundred years later... One hundred years later... One hundred years later... One hundred years later...

Paradox: One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land.

Allusion: Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand signed the Emancipation Proclamation.

#### Task 7

1. rained: metaphor
2. (like) diseases: simile
3. defaced: personification
4. trembling: personification
5. angry: personification
6. Force and Reason: personification
7. (like) cows: simile
8. "Not bad": understatement
9. to the skies: overstatement
10. clear and clean: alliteration
11. tongue: metonymy
12. fertile soil: metaphor