

In the Name of God

300

Must-Have Words for the

GRE

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The word “vocabulary” came to English in the 16th century. It came from the Latin word *vocabulum*. Vocabulary is the body of words that make up a language. Obviously, the importance of vocabulary in reading comprehension cannot be overstated. Without a good working knowledge of words and their meanings, both written and verbal communication will be muddled or poorly understood.

Broadly defined, vocabulary is knowledge of words and word meanings. However, vocabulary is more complex than this definition suggests. First, words come in two forms: oral and print. Oral vocabulary includes those words that we recognize and use in listening and speaking. Print vocabulary includes those words that we recognize and use in reading and writing. Second, word knowledge also comes in two modes, receptive and productive. Receptive vocabulary includes words that we recognize when we hear or see them. Productive vocabulary includes words that we use when we speak or write. Receptive vocabulary is typically larger than productive vocabulary, and may include many words to which we assign some meaning, even if we don’t know their full definitions and connotations – or ever use them ourselves as we speak and write.

Adding further complexity, in education, the word *vocabulary* is used with varying meanings. For example, for beginning reading teachers, the word might be synonymous with “high vocabulary,” by which they mean a set of the most common words in English that young students need to be able to recognize quickly as they see them in print. However, for teachers of upper elementary and secondary school students, *vocabulary* usually means the “hard” words that students encounter in content areas, texts and literature selections.

Students with poor reading comprehension skills either lack the vocabulary or the word recognition skills to make sense of the material. Students with poor reading comprehension don’t tend to read very often, which causes them to miss out on learning new words. Since most classes have some form

of written study sheets, articles, or textbooks, a limited vocabulary can affect many of their grades.

Communication is enhanced by knowing more words. They don't have to be big words, but the meanings should convey what the person is trying to say. When people cannot communicate clearly and accurately, giving instructions or understanding them may be difficult. Mistakes can be made, costing time, effort, and money in both school settings and the workplace.

Of the many compelling reasons for providing students with instruction to build vocabulary, none is more important than the contribution of vocabulary knowledge to reading comprehension. Indeed, one of the most enduring findings in reading research is the extent to which students' vocabulary knowledge relates to their reading comprehension. Most recently, the National Reading Panel (2000) concluded that comprehension development cannot be understood without a critical examination of the role played by vocabulary knowledge. Given that students' success in school and beyond depends in great measure upon their ability to read with comprehension, there is an urgency to providing instruction that equips students with the skills and strategies necessary for lifelong vocabulary development.

The present book consists of thirty units, each of which includes ten vocabulary items frequently occurred in GRE (Graduate Record Exam) tests. Each word, along with its derivatives, is introduced by the pronunciation, definition, and examples. Every six-unit is followed by a review section. The reader can find the answers in the "Key" section and also take advantage of the affixes provided in the appendix.

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