

# Increase Your Word Power

Compiled by

Dr. Aly N. El-Bahrawy

# Word Power

- A person's success in any field is closely related to his or her vocabulary and language skills.

# Roots:

## A Key to Word Power

- Analyze and understand how words are put together.
- Recognize the building blocks with which words are made.
- Notice that words are actually made up of related or identical parts that you already know.

# Salary

- salaries  
(Roman soldiers were given a special allowance to buy their own salt)
- salaried  
(paying or receiving a salary)
- sal (Latin) = salt
  - salads                      we put salt on
  - salami                      salted spiced meat
  - saline                      water or soil containing salt

## vit- or viv-

- revive, vitamin, viviparous, vital, vivacious, vivid
- vit- or viv- (Latin)  
= life or to live
- re (prefix)
- al, amin, acious (suffix)

# revive

- re = again + viv = to live

to live again or make live again

to bring back to life, strength, health, or  
consciousness

- *The lifeguard revived the man by artificial respiration.*
- *After a hard day's work, a hot meal revived him.*

# vital

- vit (life) + -al (pertaining to, full of )

Pertaining to life, full of life

- *Oxygen is vital to all animals.*
- *She is a happy, vital person.*

# vitamin

- vit- (life) + -amin (amine, organic chemical compound)

An organic substance found in most food stuff that is necessary to normal life functions in man and animals.

- *Vitamin C, found in citrus fruits, prevents scurvy.*



# vivacious

- viv- (to live) + -acious (abounding in, given to)  
full of life, lively, active
- *The young actress was charming and vivacious.*

# vivid

- viv- (to live) + -id (have a certain quality)  
having the quality of life, lively, not dull
- *The boy has a vivid imagination.*
- *Dicken's novels are full of vivid characterizations.*

# viviparous

- viv- (to live) + par- (to bring forth) + -ous  
(given to, characterized by)  
characterized by giving birth to live  
offspring (as opposed to laying or hatching  
eggs)
- *Man and most other animals are viviparous.*
- *Chickens are not viviparous.*

# *Keep building*

- *revival*
- *vitality*
- *survivor*
- *survival*
- *vital organs*

## acu-, acr-

- acrid, acrimony, acuity, acumen, acute
- acu- or acr- (Latin) = sharp
- -id, mony, ity (suffix)

# acrimony

- Acr- (sharp) + -mony (quality of being)  
sharpness of speech or temper
- *Our quarrel was full of acrimony.*
- *Their discussion turned into an acrimonious debate.*

# acuity

- acu- (sharp) + -ity (state, condition, or quality of being)

the state or condition of being sharp  
(applied to mind or senses)

- *The professor has great mental acuity.*

# acumen

- acumen (sharpness of mind, intelligence)
- *Johnny has shown great acumen in his schoolwork.*



# acute

- acute (to sharpen)  
sharp, coming to a sharp point, reaching a crisis,  
critical, keen, intense, violent
- *An acute angle is an angle of less than 90 degrees.*
- *He is suffering from acute appendicitis.*
- *The food shortage in India is becoming acute.*
- *The boy has a quick, acute mind.*
- *His toothache was causing acute pain.*

## ag-, act-

- agenda, agent, agile, active, actor, actual, enact.
- ag-, act (Latin) = to do, drive
- -ent, -ile, -or, -ual (suffix)
- en- (prefix)

# agenda

- agenda (a list of things to be done, a list of things to be discussed or decided upon)
- *There were three items on the agenda for the business meeting.*

# agent

- ag- (to do) + -ent (a person who)  
a person who does something, works for or represents an individual, company, or government bureau.
- *He is an FBI agent.*
- *Does the actor have a press agent?*
- *She works for an employment agency.*

# agile

- ag- (to do) + ile (pertaining to, like, having the character or quality of)

having the quality of doing or acting, or able to do or move quickly and easily.

- *Charles is agile and athletic.*
- *The quarterback had remarkable agility.*

# active

- act- (to do) + -ive (inclined to, tending to, having the character or quality of)  
inclined to action, working, busy, lively
- *She leads an active social life.*
- *This is an active volcano.*
- *Can you activate this machine?*

# actor

- act- (to do) + -or (a person or a thing that performs an action)  
a person who acts
- *My son was an actor in the struggle, not an onlooker.*
- *He was an actor in the play.*

# actual

- actus (a doing)
- act- (to do) + -al (pertaining to, characterized by)

pertaining to something that is in action or in existence now, existing, real.

- *What were his actual words?*
- *What did he actually say?*



# enact

- en- (to make, cause to be) + -act (to do)  
to cause to be done, to make into a law
- *The Senate enacted a bill against air pollution.*
- *The Senate's enactment of the air-pollution bill goes into effect today.*

# acrid

- acr- (sharp) + -id (having a particular quality)

Having a sharp quality in taste or smell; bitter or burning to the senses

- *The acrid smoke hurt out eyes.*
- *The acridity of smoke made our eyes water.*

# Keep building

- inactive
- transact
- interact
- react

## SOME BIG A'S

Here are fourteen words beginning with the first letter of the alphabet. Check the word or phrase you believe is closest in meaning to the key word. Answers follow.

1. **allusion** [ə·lōō'zhən]—(a) a false mental image. (b) an indirect reference. (c) a claim. (d) a temptation.
2. **apprehension** [ap'rə·hen'shən]—(a) approval. (b) fear of the past. (c) information. (d) dread of the future.
3. **affinity** [ə·fin'ə·tē]—(a) daintiness. (b) on and on without an end. (c) close relationship (d) strength.
4. **appropriate** [ə·prō'prē·āt]—(a) to take for one's own use. (b) to make fitting and suitable. (c) to express a favorable opinion. (d) to give away.
5. **adaptation** [ad'əp·tā'shən]—(a) imitation. (b) act of fitting into an environment. (c) surrender or yielding. (d) act of taking for one's own.
6. **abridge** [ə·brij']—(a) to shorten or cut off. (b) to delay. (c) to express resentment. (d) to bind together.
7. **append** [ə·pend']—(a) to shorten. (b) to judge. (c) to add to or attach. (d) to scold.
8. **affix** [ə·fiks']—(a) to spread about. (b) to interfere with. (c) to make temporary. (d) to fasten on or attach.
9. **accentuate** [ak·sen'chōō·āt]—(a) to emphasize or intensify. (b) to speak in a dialect. (c) to collect. (d) to increase the cost of.
10. **aspiration** [as'pə·rā'shən]—(a) breathing. (b) discouragement. (c) facial expression. (d) ambition or lofty aim.
11. **align** [ə·līn']—(a) to join with others in a cause. (b) to accuse or slander. (c) to measure. (d) to defame.
12. **appurtenance** [ə·pûr'tə·nəns]—(a) nasty remark. (b) accessory. (c) unnecessary detail. (d) projecting corner.
13. **admonitory** [ad·mon'ə·tôr'ē]—(a) gloomy. (b) death-dealing. (c) terrifying. (d) warning.
14. **appreciable** [ə·prē'shē·ə·bəl]—(a) perceptible. (b) grateful. (c) pleasant. (d) very small.

**ANSWERS:**

1. **allusion**—(b) an indirect reference. 2. **apprehension**—(d) dread of the future. 3. **affinity**—(c) close relationship. 4. **appropriate**—(a) to take for one's own use. 5. **adaptation**—(b) act of fitting into an environment. 6. **abridge**—(a) to shorten or cut off. 7. **append**—(c) to add to or attach. 8. **affix**—(d) to fasten on or attach. 9. **accentuate**—(a) to emphasize or intensify. 10. **aspiration**—(d) ambition or lofty aim. 11. **align**—(a) to join with others in a cause. 12. **appurtenance**—(b) accessory. 13. **admonitory**—(d) warning. 14. **appreciable**—(a) perceptible.

## 90-SECOND QUICKIE QUIZ

FOR MEN ONLY

Can you match the type of woman in the left-hand column with her description in the right-hand column? Answers follow.

- |                                  |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. winsome [win'səm]             | (a) little                       |
| 2. virago [vi·rā'gō or vi·rā'gō] | (b) a pert, saucy girl           |
| 3. hoyden [hoid'n]               | (c) a sharp-tongued scold        |
| 4. prima donna [prē'mə don'ə]    | (d) a temperamental woman        |
| 5. coquette [kō·ket']            | (e) a tomboy                     |
| 6. petite [pə·tēt']              | (f) coy                          |
| 7. minx [mingks]                 | (g) slender                      |
| 8. svelte [svelt]                | (h) a nag                        |
| 9. shrew [shrō]                  | (i) charmingly or shyly pleasing |
| 10. demure [di·myōor']           | (j) a flirt                      |

**ANSWERS:**

1. **winsome**—(i) charmingly or shyly pleasing. 2. **virago**—(c) a sharp-tongued scold. 3. **hoyden**—(e) a tomboy. 4. **prima donna**—(d) a temperamental woman. 5. **coquette**—(j) a flirt. 6. **petite**—(a) little. 7. **minx**—(b) a pert, saucy girl. 8. **svelte**—(g) slender. 9. **shrew**—(h) a nag. 10. **demure**—(f) coy.

## SHORT WORDS

The various tests throughout this book will not only review material covered in the text, but will introduce you to many new words. Below is a vocabulary test on short words. Check the word or phrase you believe is closest in meaning to the key word. Answers follow.

1. **aura** [ôr'ə]—(a) oppressive heat. (b) a characteristic atmosphere. (c) pertaining to the sense of hearing. (d) by word of mouth.
2. **avid** [av'id]—(a) stingy. (b) rapid. (c) greedy. (d) bitter.
3. **aver** [ə·vûr']—(a) to postpone. (b) to turn aside. (c) to declare positively. (d) to dismiss.
4. **avow** [ə·vou']—(a) to deny. (b) to curse. (c) to swear allegiance to. (d) to declare openly.
5. **allay** [ə·lā']—(a) to spread out flat. (b) to procrastinate. (c) to connect with. (d) to lessen.
6. **averse** [ə·vûrs']—(a) unpleasant. (b) opposed. (c) unfortunate. (d) in the opposite order.
7. **arch** [ärch]—(a) playfully sly or roguish. (b) incriminating. (c) patriotic. (d) wandering.
8. **bask** [bask]—(a) any large receptacle. (b) a native of Spain. (c) to luxuriate in pleasant warmth. (d) to swim slowly.
9. **crass** [kras]—(a) irritating. (b) vulgarly stupid. (c) bitter. (d) noisy.
10. **carp** [kärp]—(a) to be boisterous. (b) to wander about. (c) to find fault unreasonably. (d) to insult.
11. **coy** [koi]—(a) shy or coquettish. (b) vain. (c) quiet. (d) authentic.
12. **cull** [kul]—(a) to strip the leaves off. (b) to explain. (c) to select or pick out. (d) to gather.
13. **chide** [chīd]—(a) to scold or admonish. (b) to insult. (c) to scream. (d) to compensate for.
14. **chic** [shĕk]—(a) stylish. (b) impudent. (c) youthful. (d) merry.
15. **crux** [kruks]—(a) a laboratory report. (b) cleavage. (c) a problem. (d) the pivotal point.
16. **dire** [dīr]—(a) very poor. (b) cold and damp. (c) angry. (d) dreadful or calamitous.



## ANSWERS:

1. **aura**—(b) a characteristic atmosphere. 2. **avid**—(c) greedy. 3. **aver**—(c) to declare positively. 4. **avow**—(d) to declare openly. 5. **allay**—(d) to lessen. 6. **averse**—(b) opposed. 7. **arch**—(a) playfully sly or roguish. 8. **bask**—(c) to luxuriate in pleasant warmth. 9. **crass**—(b) vulgarly stupid. 10. **carp**—(c) to find fault unreasonably. 11. **coy**—(a) shy or coquettish. 12. **cull**—(c) to select or pick out. 13. **chide**—(a) to scold or admonish. 14. **chic**—(a) stylish. 15. **crux**—(d) the pivotal point. 16. **dire**—(d) dreadful or calamitous.

## 90-SECOND QUICKIE QUIZ

FOR WOMEN ONLY

Can you match the type of man in the left-hand column with his description in the right-hand column? Answers follow.

- |                                |                                      |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. tycoon [tī·kōon']           | (a) smoothly pleasant; ingratiating. |
| 2. suave [swäv]                | (b) a gruff, irritable old man.      |
| 3. philanderer [fi·lan'där·ər] | (c) a rake or seducer.               |
| 4. lout [lout]                 | (d) an awkward, rough fellow.        |
| 5. curmudgeon [kär·muj'ən]     | (e) an idler or loafer.              |
| 6. Don Juan [don wän']         | (f) a courtly gentleman; gallant     |
| 7. cavalier [kav'ə·lir']       | (g) a handsome man.                  |
| 8. wastrel [wäs'trəl]          | (h) a fickle suitor.                 |
| 9. debonair [deb'ə·nâr']       | (i) a powerful businessman.          |
| 10. Adonis [ə·don'is]          | (j) nonchalant; urbane.              |

## ANSWERS:

1. **tycoon**—(i) a powerful businessman.
2. **suave**—(a) smoothly pleasant; ingratiating.
3. **philanderer**—(h) a fickle suitor.
4. **lout**—(d) an awkward, rough fellow.
5. **curmudgeon**—(b) a gruff, irritable old man.
6. **Don Juan**—(c) a rake or seducer.
7. **cavalier**—(f) a courtly gentleman; gallant.
8. **wastrel**—(e) an idler or loafer.
9. **debonair**—(j) nonchalant; urbane.
10. **Adonis**—(g) a handsome man.