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Introduction

The old adage “practice makes perfect” can really hold true for your child and his or her education. The more practice and exposure your child has with concepts being taught in school, the more success he or she is likely to find. For many parents, knowing how to help their children may be frustrating because the resources may not be readily available.

As a parent it is also difficult to know where to focus your efforts so that the extra practice your child receives at home supports what he or she is learning in school.

Practice Makes Perfect: Vocabulary is designed to help practice word skills that are taught in the classroom. Vocabulary skills that are appropriate for second grade are presented in this book. The words that appear in this book are standard vocabulary as well as some special and unusual words.

The following standards or objectives will be met or reinforced by completing the practice pages included in this book. These standards and objectives are similar to the ones required by your state and school district. Second grade students should be able to do the following:

- use a dictionary to define vocabulary words
- identify word meanings in context
- identify and use homonyms, synonyms, and antonyms
- divide words into syllables
- change singular words into plural words
- identify and use unusual plural words
- develop everyday vocabulary
- develop an on-going interest in learning and using new words.

Several exercises are provided for the student to practice each skill. There is also a section of word play to generate interest and prompt new learning. It is up to the adult to determine which pages are appropriate for his or her student.

An assessment unit at the end of the book reviews all of the concepts covered throughout the book. This assessment is provided in a Standardized Test format to allow students to practice their knowledge as well as their test-taking skills.

How to Make the Most of This Book

Here are some useful ideas for making the most of this book:

- Set aside a specific place in your home to work on this book. Keep it neat and tidy, with the necessary materials on hand.
- Set up a certain time of day to work on these practice pages to establish consistency, or look for times in your day or week that are less hectic and more conducive to practicing skills.
- Keep all practice sessions with your child positive and constructive. If your child becomes frustrated or tense, set the book aside and look for another time to practice.
- Help beginning readers with instructions.
- Review the work your child has done.
- Allow the child to use whatever writing instruments he or she prefers. For example, colored pencils can add variety and pleasure to drill work.
- Pay attention to the areas in which your child has the most difficulty. Provide extra guidance and exercises in those areas.
- Look for ways to make real-life application to the skills being reinforced. Play vocabulary games with your child.

Learning New Words

How do you learn new words? You may ask an adult the meaning of a word. You may guess. But do you know other ways of learning new words? Here are some ideas.

I. You can learn a new word in a sentence.

For example: Earth makes an *orbit*, or circle, around the sun every year.

The word *orbit* means *circle*. Both words in the sentence help you understand the meaning of orbit. If you read a sentence with a new word, see if there is a word you know that can help you.

II. Sometimes sentences give you clues by putting new words in special type.

For example: A **triangle** is a shape with three sides.

A *square* is a shape with four sides that are the same size.

The word *triangle* is in **bold** type. The word *square* is in *italic* type. The type tells you to pay attention to a new word. The meaning of the word may be right in the sentence.

III. You can understand a new word by reading and making a good guess.

A good guess happens when you use what you know to help you learn something new.

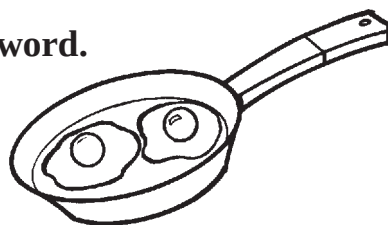
For example: Mrs. Kay bought such a *peck* of apples that she needed help to carry them.

If someone needs help to carry apples, you might make a good guess that the word *peck* means “a lot” or “many.” Your guess would be correct.

IV. Sometimes pictures can help you understand a new word.

For example: Use a *skillet* to fry the eggs.

The picture shows two eggs in a pan. From it, you can guess that a skillet is a type of pan.



V. You can use a dictionary to help you learn new words.

A dictionary is a terrific tool. It tells you all the meanings of a word. Dictionaries often have examples that tell you how a word is used. The next few pages will help you learn to use a dictionary.

ABC Animals

List the names of four of your favorite animals in alphabetical order.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Draw a picture of one of your animals and color it.

