

Cambridge Learner's Dictionary



Teacher's notes

Writing

Aims: to develop vocabulary in topic sets, activate passive vocabulary and support composition writing.

Skill: using the **SMART thesaurus** of the Cambridge Learner's Electronic Dictionary for writing compositions.

Level: Intermediate.

Introduction (10 minutes)

- Choose a topic or title that students are going to write a composition about. For example: pollution or environmental issues.
- Ask students to brainstorm words that they think could be used when writing about this topic. Write them up on the board.
- Ask them to explain the meanings to the class. If they aren't sure, they can check the meanings in the dictionary.
- Explain that students can recognise more words than they can produce. The words they recognise is their *passive* vocabulary and the words they can produce when writing or speaking is their *active* vocabulary. Everyone's passive vocabulary is larger than their active vocabulary in any language.
- Tell the students that the following activity will help them activate their passive vocabulary, so that they have more words to use in their writing.

2. Class activity (15 minutes)

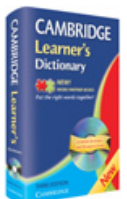
- Hand out the Class activity worksheet.
- If possible have the Cambridge Learner's Electronic Dictionary visible in class, and type 'pollution' in the *search field*, and then in the *definitions window* click on the **SMART thesaurus** button below the entry for "pollution". This will open the thesaurus window with a list of related words in the left panel.
- Scroll down the words in this list in the **SMART thesaurus** and ask students to say if they recognise any of them and to explain them either in English or in their first language.
- Now, to find more related words, click on one of the words in the *categories window* of the thesaurus. This will bring up a new list of related and relevant words with more vocabulary.
- Ask the students to work in pairs or small groups, using the **SMART thesaurus** to complete Tables 1, 2 and 3 on the worksheet.

How to find related words:

1. Enter the word you are looking for in the *search box* and click *find*, then in the *definitions window* click on the **SMART thesaurus** button below the relevant word.
2. This will open the **SMART thesaurus** window.
3. Scroll down the *definitions window* of the thesaurus to find the definitions you need, or click on any of the words in the *results window* to bring up a definition immediately.
4. Finally, the window on the right is the *categories window*; if there is more than one category for your chosen word, click on the link to explore other related words.

3. Homework (15 minutes)

- For homework hand out the Student research worksheets and assign the students a topic area to research in preparation for writing a composition. "Energy" and "politics" are good topics that offer related categories.
- Ask students to first complete the tables on their own using the **SMART thesaurus** in the Cambridge Learner's Electronic Dictionary.
- The students should then use the vocabulary they have researched to write a short composition on the selected topic.
- Ensure you allocate time next lesson for students to present their work to the class. Use the Cambridge Learner's Electronic Dictionary as a tool when providing feedback.



Class activity worksheet

Writing

- Complete the three tables with words related to “pollution”.
- Use the Cambridge Electronic Dictionary’s **SMART** thesaurus to help you.

Topic area: Pollution**Table 1**

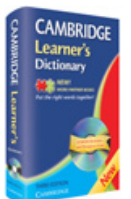
Words I know	Meaning

Table 2

Words I recognise	Meaning

Table 3

Words I recognise	Meaning



Student research worksheet

Writing

- You are going to use the Cambridge Learner's Electronic Dictionary **SMART Thesaurus** to research related words for the topic of the composition you are preparing to write.
- You can do this at home or in the school computer lab if you have one.
- Choose words that will help you write the composition that has been set. Record the words in the research worksheet tables.
- If you don't know how to pronounce a word then click on the audio symbols in the *definitions window* of the electronic dictionary. You will be able to listen to British and American pronunciations of the word. You may find being able to say it helps you to remember it.

Topic area:

Table 1

Words I know	Meaning

Table 2

Words I recognise	Meaning

Table 3

Words I recognise	Meaning

TIP

- Sometimes the **SMART thesaurus** provides extra categories for topics in the *categories window* on the right. Click on a category link to see more related words.

