IN OTHER WORDS



One of the BIG CHALLENGES for learners of a foreign language is to BUILD UP their VOCABULARY. In your own language you may know many different words to say the same thing but in English you may find yourself repeating the same words and expressions. This can have the effect of making you sound a little flat or uninteresting. It can also be frustrating and make you get stuck looking for another way to say something. The best way to learn new words is to write down new ones whenever you see them.

Remember, it's hard to learn things out of CONTEXT, so try to WRITE DOWN words which you associate with different EVENTS and PLACES and never try to separate them into alphabetic lists, GROUP them TOGETHER at the time you first see them.

Activity One: Let's play a **word association** game to get your creative juices flowing!
In a circle, the first person will say a word and the second will say what that word makes him or her think of.

Activity Two: Taboo
Let's play taboo - with this game there are certain words you can't say, so you will have to find alternatives!

Activity Three: Team competition
In teams find three words that mean the same thing as the one your teacher shouts out.

Activity Four: Poem
For some people there just aren't enough words in the English language and so they have to make them up! Try reading the poem and pay great attention to your intonation and stress. Then say which words were invented.

Being-in-Love
By Roger McGough

you are so very beautiful
I cannot help admiring
your eyes so often **sadnessful**
and lips so **kissinspiring**

I think about my being-in-love
and touch the flesh you wear so well
I think about my being in love
and wish you were as well
as well
and wish you were as well



Activity Five - Now it's your turn. In pairs invent some new words to describe one of the following experiences:



1. Really wanting some chocolate
2. Being aggressive in the queue in a supermarket
3. Driving to work/school when you are a bit late
4. Admiring someone for their beauty
5. Someone who is really annoying and sure of themselves

Activity Six: Subtitle Silliness

Your teacher will show you a clip from a film/series (without the sound). In partners, write your own funny subtitles that you will read out while watching the clip again in front of the class.

Use the dictionary to try and find words that the others in the class don't know the meaning of. You get a point for each word you use in your subtitles one which no-one else knows.

Activity Seven: Text – "The words in the mental cupboard" by Carol Gall,.

Children are to be offered lessons on how to speak English formally amid fears that many are suffering from "word poverty", it has been reported. But how many words do people tend to know and use?

Do people know more words than they actually use? And is having a large vocabulary something you learn or have a natural ability for? These are burning issues in the worlds of linguistics and education. On Monday it was reported that children in England will have lessons in formal language amid fears that some are suffering from stunted vocabularies.

US company Global Language Monitor (GLM) believes that the one millionth word will be added to the English language in mid-June. While there is agreement that a word becomes a word when it is used by one person and understood by another, grammarians and lexicographers stand divided when deciding which to include when calculating a total. Obamamania, bankster and bloggerati are just some of the "brand new words" GLM has been tracking.

The operation, based in Austin, Texas, says 25,000 citations in the worldwide media, social networking sites and elsewhere are its benchmark for a word to be included in its total. They estimate a new word is created every 98 minutes. The English language is likely to contain the most words

of all languages, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, and estimates for the number of words range from one to two million.

So, can a precise word total ever be known? No, says Professor David Crystal, known chiefly for his research in English language studies and author of around 100 books on the subject. "It's like asking how many stars are there in the sky. It's impossible to answer," he said. An easier question to answer, he maintains, is the size of the average person's vocabulary.

He suggests taking a sample of about 20 or 30 pages from a medium-sized dictionary, one which contains about 100,000 entries or 1,000 to 1,500 pages.

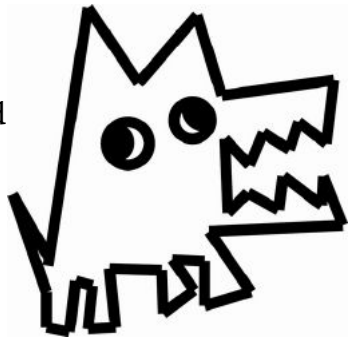
Tick off the ones you know and count them. Then multiply that by the number of pages and you will discover how many words you know. Most people vastly underestimate their total.

"Most people know half the words - about 50,000 easily. A reasonably educated person about 75,000 and a really cool, smart person well, maybe all of them but that is rather unusual.
"An ordinary person, one who has not been to university say, would know about 35,000 quite easily."

The formula can be used to calculate the number of words a person uses, but a person's active language will always be less than their passive, the difference being about a third.
Prof Crystal says exposure to reading will obviously expand a person's vocabulary but the level of a person's education does not necessarily decide things.

Use the following words from the test in another sentence :

Amid	Benchmark	Vastly
Report	Range	expand
Issue	Chiefly	
Stunted	Underestimate	



Questions –

1. Do you consider that you have a good vocabulary in your native language?
2. Have you ever wondered how many words you know?
3. Do you read a lot in French?
4. Do you read a lot in English?
5. Do you make an effort to learn and remember new words in English and which method do you use?

Activity Eight: English Mania
http://www.ted.com/talks/jay_walker_on_the_world_s_english_mania.html

Watch the video then answer the following questions:

1. What different examples of "mania" does the speaker give?
2. How do Chinese students practice English?
3. How many people are trying to learn English worldwide?
4. When do they start learning English in China?
5. What will happen in China this year?
6. Why English?
7. What percentage of the Chinese student' grades are based on English?
8. What metaphor does he use to describe the effects of English on the world?
9. What are the other universal languages of the world?
10. What does English represent?

Activity Nine: Song – "Fly me to the moon"

Listen and sing along to the song. Then, in two groups write your own lyrics to the same tune on the subject of the English language and how to improve your vocabulary.

Fly me to the moon
Let me swing among those stars

Let me see what spring is like on
Jupiter and Mars

In other words, hold my hand
In other words, baby, kiss me

Fill my heart with song
Let me sing forever more
You are all I long for all I worship
and adore

In other words, please be true
In other words, I love you

Why don't you fill my heart with
song?
Let me swing forever more

Because you are all I long for
All I worship and I adore

In other words, please be true

In other words …In other words, I,
I love, you

Activity Ten – at home.

TEST YOUR VOCABULARY LEVEL AT HOME : http://testyourv ocab.com
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