

Dictionary definitions

Read dictionary definitions for academic words and review parts of speech to practise and improve your reading skills.

Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the text and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the groups of words (a–f) with the parts of speech (1–6).

Parts of speech

1. verb (v)
2. noun (n)
3. preposition (prep)
4. article (art)
5. adjective (adj)
6. adverb (adv)

Group of words

- a. teacher/car/university
- b. go/study/work
- c. quickly/quietly/sadly
- d. good/happy/sad
- e. a/an/the
- f. for/in/on/at

Reading text: Dictionary definitions

attend (v)

to officially go to a place, like a school, university or class

You must attend 80 per cent of classes to pass the course.

dormitory plural **dormitories** (n)

1. a place where many people sleep

2. **US:** a big building at a university where students live (**UK: hall of residence**)

I know John. He lives in my dorm at university.

faculty plural **faculties** (n)

all the teachers who work at a university

Norman Brown was in the English faculty for twenty years.

teaching assistant (n)

a person who works to help a university teacher in a classroom

The teaching assistant has the exams for you at the end of class.

tuition fee (n)

an amount of money that you pay to go to university

Tuition fees are very high this year.

undergraduate (n)

A student at a college or university who is studying for a first degree

They met when they were undergraduates at Cambridge University.

Tasks

Task 1

Are the sentences true or false?

	Answer	
	True	False
1. (n) means the word is an adjective.	True	False
2. The words in the dictionary are in alphabetical order.	True	False
3. For each word there is an example.	True	False
4. Two words in the list change their spelling for the plural.	True	False
5. The dictionary does not tell you if a word has a different meaning in the United Kingdom and the United States.	True	False
6. There are two verbs in the list.	True	False

Task 2

Complete the sentences with the words.

faculty	undergraduate	attend
teaching assistant	tuition fee	dormitory

1. It's a small – we only have twelve teachers.
2. Students classes from Monday to Friday.
3. I'm an in my first year at university.
4. There are two students in every room in the
5. Malek works as a at Oxford University.
6. The is £30,000 for foreign students.

Discussion

How often do you use a dictionary?

Answers

Preparation task

1. b
2. a
3. f
4. e
5. d
6. c

Task 1

1. False
2. True
3. True
4. True
5. False
6. False

Task 2

1. faculty
2. attend
3. undergraduate
4. dormitory
5. teaching assistant
6. tuition fee