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**Activity Sheet**

## TEACHERS INSTRUCTIONS – A1, A2, FCE, CAE

- Print copies of the article for students (or display with projector)
- Follow instructions below – you only need a board and chalk/marker

### PRE-READING – discussion

Is your vocabulary as strong in English as your native language?

Do you remember the first word you learnt in English? How did you remember it?

How do you remember new vocabulary?

What type of words do you usually forget?

How can you expand your vocabulary?

### READING

Underline/highlight any new words/idioms and use them in the following exercise

### AFTER READING

Give students one of the following words or idioms (or) give them five minutes to think of their own (or) give vocabulary from your book/materials – narrow, under the weather, chubby, roots, saucepan, windy, raining cats and dogs

Draw something to represent the word/idiom on the board (or paper) – play 'vocabulionary' – students take turns to guess the word/idiom in teams, scoring 1 point for a correct answer and double or nothing to use it correctly in a sentence (or) provide the opposite (or) provide at least two synonyms

Create a class dictionary

Fold a piece of A4 paper in half, each student takes one half

Each student should provide two entries for the class dictionary using all the methods mentioned in the article – be sure to add new idioms/vocabulary to the class dictionary  
Students should be encouraged to start a personal dictionary to present in the next class (see homework)

### HOMEWORK

- Make five entries into your personal dictionary – present in the next class and add any new words/phrases from classmates
- Additional – listen to [Dead air 2.3 – tips in language learning](#)

What advice do they give?

Do you agree with the advice?

Have you used any of these techniques or methods?

Is there anything you could add to the advice given?



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**Activity Sheet**

### Get vocABS: 4 easy steps to improve your vocabulary (Part 1)

One of the greatest obstacles in learning another language is confidence. Everybody experiences some level of shame, pride or the other emotions that make you feel paralysed when you can't express yourself properly. We know we can discuss all manner of topics, make jokes and form wonderfully poetic descriptions in our own language, but sometimes, just sometimes, the English tongue is heavy and mute.

Now, there are many elements in learning a language, for some people it is entirely academic and they prefer to know the rules inside-out. For others, the immersive experience of learning through acquisition is best, some like a mixture of techniques. The question is, how do you remember all those words in another language, how do you get the vocabulary that allows you *freedom* of expression?

The following tips are no secret, they are simple but when followed, very effective. The first thing you should consider, is a small book, a place to keep your valuable vocabulary. It should be small enough to fit in a pocket or carry in your bag. Take pride in it, buy one that looks special or decorate one so it feels important. Take it with you EVERYWHERE (except the shower).

**1 – Release the artist within** – this works best with nouns, but depending on your ability you can represent a scene involving actions, descriptions or almost any word. If you can't draw, find a picture (magazine/internet) and glue it into the book! One of my students made an entire dictionary dedicated to food in this way. The interaction with the words was incredibly beneficial and he fell in love with the word '[kumquat](#)' which is really fun to say.

**2 – Context is key** – simple, write a sentence with the word used in context. Context based learning provides a deeper understanding of vocabulary and it's use. It also makes words and phrases easier to remember.

**3 – There's more than one way to skin a cat** – here's a word that maybe you don't know – **podgy**. Now here is the same word amongst some friends that mean more or less the same thing; synonyms make your vocabulary game STRONG – fat, chubby, **podgy**, overweight, plump.

**4 – Opposites attract** – the same principle as using synonyms. Use an antonym to understand it's opposite, for example wide ~ **narrow**

An even better idea is to combine these techniques, for a maximum memory workout. Do you have any techniques for remembering vocabulary? Why not write about them?