

How to learn vocabulary most effectively? Of course, there is no single answer, let us rather say there are many ways of doing it. Each of us may have their own learning style and the same will hold true for ways of vocabulary building – some ways are more enjoyable, convenient and effective than others for each learner/student. We should, though, remember that the more descriptive and illustrious way, the better for us; also, words get their meanings in context and, last but no least, words we do not use we tend to forget (“*USE IT OR LOSE IT!*” rule).

Let us present some further hints:

- Connect the word with anything that helps you to remember it
- Close your eyes and imagine what the word shows or describes
- Draw pictures and describe them – say the words out loud for yourself
- Learn words in context – especially in English, words only carry their full meanings when used in context, in other words, when a learner can recognize what is used in front of the word and what is used behind the word – write down sentences of your own or copy them from your dictionary
- Use a combination of bilingual and monolingual dictionaries
- Use word families – opposites – synonyms – homonyms

familiar/unfamiliar/family/familiarity/familiarize yourself with something

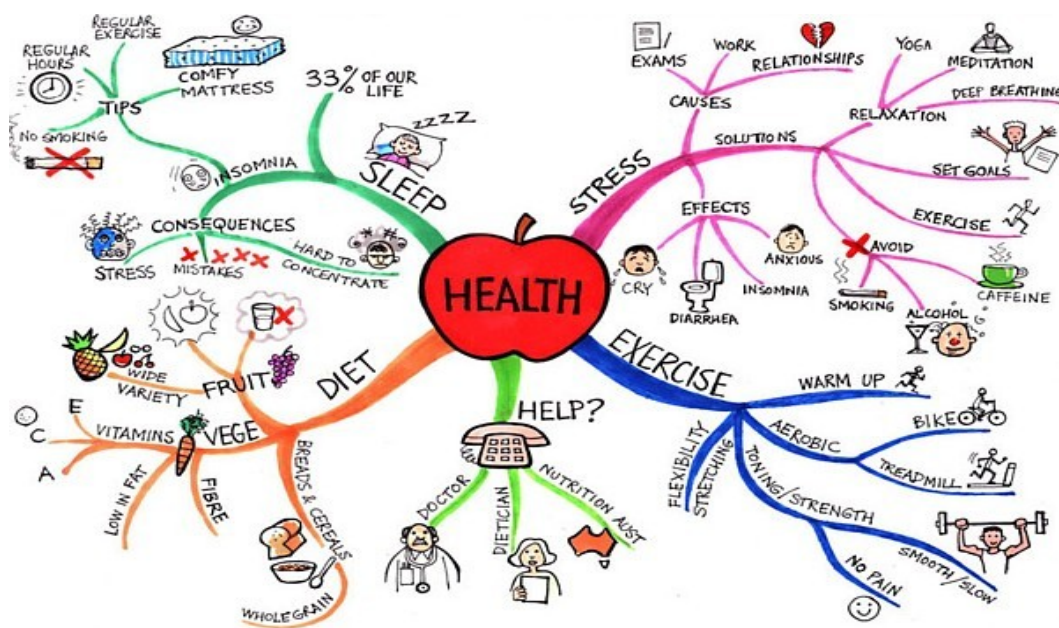
black x white / subordinate x superior / male x female / improve x deteriorate

idea – brilliant/marvelous/perfect/unfinished/clear/blurry

calf – cow baby x part of human leg

swallow – bird x action of passing food down the throat

- Build your own mind maps – treat words and phrases more like ideas rather than isolated words



- Build your own word bank – divide your vocabulary notebook according to categories and expand the categories gradually
- Learn with your computer using a variety of websites offering different English accents and cultural backgrounds
- Read, listen, write, speak – immerse yourself in English as often as you can

What does it mean to KNOW a word? In order to know a word/phrase we should be able to:

- recognize its elementary meaning, recognize secondary meanings
- recognize its use within idioms, recognize its grammar features (countable/uncountable, infinitive/past simple/past participle)
- recognize its use in collocations, recognize correct spelling, recognize correct sound
- recognize and use in the right context, - recognize if it is a formal /neutral/ informal expression (so called *register*)
- use it without thinking hard **GOOD LUCK ☺!**