

collins cobuild english language dictionary

Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary is a groundbreaking resource that has redefined the way learners of English approach the language. Since its inception in the early 1980s, this dictionary has been at the forefront of English language education, providing clear definitions, practical examples, and a user-friendly format designed specifically for non-native speakers. The Collins Cobuild dictionary not only offers definitions but also emphasizes how words are used in context, making it an invaluable tool for both students and educators alike.

History of Collins Cobuild

The Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary was first published in 1987, and it was developed by a team of linguists at the University of Birmingham, led by Professor John Sinclair. The primary goal was to create a dictionary that would be more accessible to learners of English, particularly those whose first language is not English.

- **Research-Based Approach:** The dictionary was based on a comprehensive corpus of real-life English usage, which allowed the creators to observe how words are used in everyday contexts. This approach ensures that the definitions are not just theoretical but grounded in actual language use.
- **Innovative Features:** Unlike traditional dictionaries that often provide definitions in a more formal and less practical way, the Collins Cobuild dictionary introduced several innovative features:
 - **Full Sentences:** Definitions are provided in full sentences, giving learners a clearer understanding of how words function within context.
 - **Usage Examples:** Each entry includes numerous examples of how the word is used in different contexts, enhancing comprehension.
 - **Synonyms and Antonyms:** To aid vocabulary expansion, synonyms and antonyms are often included in the definitions.

Structure of the Dictionary

The Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary is structured in a way that is intuitive and user-friendly.

Alphabetical Listings

Words are organized alphabetically, making it easy for users to find the terms they are looking for. Each entry provides:

1. **The Headword:** The word being defined, presented in bold for easy identification.
2. **Part of Speech:** Information on whether the word is a noun, verb, adjective, etc.
3. **Definitions:** Clear explanations of what the word means, often accompanied by multiple definitions to capture different usages.

4. Examples: Illustrative sentences showing how the word is used in context.
5. Collocations: Common phrases and combinations with the headword, helping learners understand typical usages.

Focus on Contextual Usage

One of the standout features of the Collins Cobuild dictionary is its emphasis on context. Each entry not only defines the word but also places it within real-world scenarios.

- Contextual Examples: Examples are drawn from a wide range of sources, including newspapers, magazines, and spoken language, illustrating how the word is used across different registers and contexts.
- Cultural References: Some entries include cultural notes that explain nuances and connotations, providing deeper insights into the language.

Target Audience

The Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary is designed for a diverse audience, including:

1. Students: High school and university students studying English as a second language benefit greatly from the clear definitions and contextual examples.
2. Teachers: Educators can use the dictionary as a teaching aid, helping students improve their vocabulary and understanding of English.
3. Professionals: Non-native English speakers in the workplace can use the dictionary to enhance their communication skills and navigate the complexities of business English.

Online and Digital Versions

In addition to the print edition, the Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary is available in digital formats.

Website and App

- Online Access: The Collins website offers an online version of the dictionary, which can be accessed from anywhere with an internet connection.
- Mobile Applications: The dictionary is also available as a mobile app, making it convenient for users to look up words on-the-go.

Features of Digital Versions

The digital versions come with additional features that enhance the user experience:

- Search Functionality: Users can quickly search for words, phrases, and examples using a powerful search engine.
- Audio Pronunciations: Many entries include audio pronunciations, allowing learners to hear how words are pronounced by native speakers.
- Interactive Exercises: Some online versions offer interactive exercises and quizzes to help reinforce learning.

Impact on Language Learning

The Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary has made a significant impact on language learning and teaching since its launch.

Promoting Vocabulary Development

- Rich Descriptions: The dictionary's comprehensive definitions and examples facilitate a deeper understanding of vocabulary.
- Encouraging Usage: By providing contextual examples, learners are more likely to incorporate new words into their speech and writing.

Supporting Teachers

- Teaching Resource: Teachers can utilize the dictionary to create lesson plans, vocabulary lists, and exercises tailored to their students' needs.
- Assessment Tool: The dictionary can also be used as a reference during assessments, helping to clarify word meanings and usage.

Comparisons with Other Dictionaries

While there are many English language dictionaries available, the Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary stands out in several ways.

Traditional Dictionaries

- Fewer Examples: Traditional dictionaries often provide shorter definitions and fewer examples, which may not fully convey the meaning of a word.
- Less Focus on Usage: Many dictionaries prioritize strict definitions over usage, making it harder for learners to understand how to use words in context.

Other Learner Dictionaries

- Depth of Information: Compared to other learner dictionaries, Collins Cobuild offers a greater depth of information, including collocations and cultural notes.
- Intuitive Format: The format is specifically designed to cater to learners, making it more accessible than many traditional or academic dictionaries.

Conclusion

In a world where English is increasingly becoming a global lingua franca, the Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary serves as an essential tool for learners and educators alike. Its innovative approach to definitions, emphasis on contextual usage, and user-friendly format have made it a favorite among those striving to master the English language. Whether used in print or digital form, the Collins Cobuild dictionary continues to empower individuals on their journey to becoming fluent English speakers, bridging the gap between language learning and real-world communication.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary?

The Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary is a comprehensive dictionary designed to help learners of English understand the language through clear definitions, examples, and usage notes.

How does the Collins COBUILD dictionary differ from traditional dictionaries?

Unlike traditional dictionaries, the Collins COBUILD dictionary emphasizes real-world examples and contexts, providing definitions based on actual usage in contemporary English.

Is the Collins COBUILD dictionary suitable for non-native speakers?

Yes, the Collins COBUILD dictionary is specifically tailored for non-native speakers, making it an excellent resource for learners at various levels.

What unique features does the Collins COBUILD dictionary offer?

It offers features like clear definitions, word frequency information, example sentences, and usage notes that help users understand how to use words correctly.

Are there any digital versions of the Collins COBUILD dictionary available?

Yes, the Collins COBUILD dictionary is available in various digital formats, including mobile apps and online versions, making it accessible for users on the go.

Can the Collins COBUILD dictionary help with academic writing?

Absolutely, the Collins COBUILD dictionary provides essential vocabulary and examples that can aid in improving clarity and precision in academic writing.

How often is the Collins COBUILD dictionary updated?

The Collins COBUILD dictionary is regularly updated to reflect changes in the English language and includes new words and phrases that gain popularity.

What age group is the Collins COBUILD dictionary intended for?

The Collins COBUILD dictionary is suitable for a wide range of age groups, from school-age learners to adults, providing resources for both beginners and advanced users.

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