

Advanced Vocabulary in Context

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The Key begins on page 113 of the With Key edition.

INTRODUCTION

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

The purpose of **Advanced Vocabulary in Context** is to enable advanced-level students to practise vocabulary in natural contexts, to help develop an awareness and appreciation of collocation, and to prepare for certain gap-filling sections in examinations such as Cambridge CAE and CPE (Proficiency). It is suitable for use in the classroom, for homework, or (in the case of the With Key edition) for self-study.

HOW THE BOOK IS ORGANISED

There are 24 four-page units arranged thematically in four groups of six. They can be done in any order, although *within each group* the units are ordered approximately in terms of difficulty. After each group of units there are two Review pages to test how well some of the most useful phrases from those six units have been retained. The Key contains all the answers, plus the complete texts, not simply the answers to the gaps.

HOW EACH UNIT IS ORGANISED

Each unit is built around an extract or a complete article of up to 600 words from a quality newspaper or magazine (see Acknowledgements on page 3), in which approximately 40-50 words have been blanked out. These words are listed separately, and the text has to be completed by placing each word in the right position. This central exercise – **Vocabulary in Context** – is preceded by two preparatory sections – **Vocabulary Check** and **Collocation** – and followed by a final page of **Further Practice**.

Vocabulary Check

In this first section of the unit, some of the words and expressions from the text that might be unfamiliar are defined and practised. Sometimes word elements are combined to form new words, which are also matched with definitions or practised in example sentences.

Collocation

In this group of exercises, some of the word combinations used in the text (noun + noun, adjective + noun, verb + noun, verb + adverb, etc.) are built up by matching words from lists, and these combinations are used in typical example sentences.

Vocabulary in Context

In this central exercise, the words listed before the text are used to fill the gaps in it. Nouns, adjectives, adverbs and sometimes participles are listed as they appear in the text, but verbs are listed in the infinitive and have to be put in the correct form according to the grammar of the sentence.

Further Practice

The final section of the unit contains various types of practice on vocabulary and idioms used in the text or related to it, including more collocations, word formation, figurative meanings, register and connotation. Occasionally there is an additional text for manipulation or gap-filling.

A NOTE ON COLLOCATION

Collocation is the placing together (*con* + *location* = 'with' + 'place') of words which are often associated with each other, so that they form common patterns or combinations. For example, *crimes* are not 'made' or 'done' but *committed*; we don't 'start' or 'begin' a *bank account*, but *open* it; in the middle of the day we don't have an 'interval', or a 'period' or a 'pause' for *lunch*, but a *lunch break*. (These three relatively easy collocations appear in Unit 1.) Using words together that do not commonly occur together, through ignorance of the normal collocation patterns, can make a person's English sound foreign. Using the normal collocations, on the other hand, makes their English sound natural and idiomatic.

HOW TO USE THE COLLOCATION EXERCISES

The best way for students to become familiar with the way words combine is to look first only at the lists of words and to try to match them in as many ways as possible. Only when they have made what they think are acceptable combinations should they try to use them in the sentences. There is only one way of using all the words once in the sentences, but by first manipulating and experimenting with many word combinations students gradually develop a greater awareness and appreciation of collocation.

OTHER WAYS TO USE THE GAP-FILLING EXERCISE

There are various ways in which the gap-filling exercise – **Vocabulary in Context** – can be made more testing or challenging. For example, students could complete the text

- (a) without doing the first two sections (*Vocabulary Check* and *Collocation*) first as preparation
- (b) without referring back to the wordlist, having read it through perhaps once or twice before starting the gap-filling exercise
- (c) after hearing the teacher read out the complete text (from the Key), listening with their own books closed.

In the last two variations of this exercise other answers will often be possible, using words not included in the wordlist, so students may need to refer to the teacher to check their versions.

THE REVIEW PAGES

The Review pages are a way of checking that some of the most common word combinations (or collocations) from each unit have been learned. Each example has to be completed not with one missing word but with two words that are often used together in this way.

FINALLY ...

By the time students have done all the exercises in the book they will have increased enormously their ability to use the right words in the right combinations. And they will have enjoyed reading a wide variety of interesting and stimulating texts.