

Ignoring and Paying Attention

According to Charles Dickens, "The one serviceable, safe, certain, remunerative, attainable quality in every study and every pursuit is the quality of attention." Even though Dickens made his observation in the nineteenth century, you probably experience daily the real-life applications of his statement. For example, when you ignore distractions and concentrate on what you are studying, you undoubtedly understand and remember more information. On the other hand, when you overlook certain key phrases in a set of directions, you may get lost or confused. The words in this lesson will help you to understand and apply the value of attention.

WORD LIST

assess
disregard
enthrall
heedless
indifferent
oblivious
preoccupy
receptive
scrutinize
vigilant

DEFINITIONS

After you have studied the definitions and example for each vocabulary word, write the word on the line to the right.

1. **assess** (ə-sēs') *trans. verb* a. To determine the significance or importance of; evaluate; appraise. b. To estimate the value of property for taxation; set the amount of a tax, fine, or other payment. (From the Latin word *assidere*, meaning "to sit by in council")

RELATED WORDS **assessment** *noun*; **assessor** *noun*

EXAMPLE The personnel director *assessed* the skills of each applicant for the job.

2. **disregard** (dīs-rī-gārd') *trans. verb* a. To pay little or no attention to; ignore or neglect. b. To treat as unworthy of notice. *noun* Lack of thoughtful attention or proper respect.

EXAMPLE Realizing that Pat was in a bad mood, Jared *disregarded* her apparent rudeness.

3. **enthrall** (ēn-thrōl') *trans. verb* To captivate; hold spellbound; charm. (From the English *en-*, meaning "in," and the Old Norse word *thraell*, meaning "slave")

RELATED WORD **enthrallment** *noun*

EXAMPLE Luciano Pavarotti's voice *enthralls* opera lovers throughout the world.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. **heedless** (hēd'lis) *adjective* a. Unmindful; inattentive; unobservant. b. Careless.
RELATED WORDS **heed** *noun*; **heed** *verb*; **heedful** *adjective*; **heedlessly** *adverb*; **heedlessness** *noun*
EXAMPLE Karen, *heedless* of the weather report, did not take a raincoat or umbrella.

4. _____

USAGE NOTE The noun *heed* is usually used with *give* and *to* or with *pay* and *to*: "Pay heed to my warning."

5. **indifferent** (in-dif'ər-ənt, in-dif'rənt) *adjective* a. Marked by a lack of interest in or concern about something; uninvolved. b. Showing no preference; impartial; unbiased. c. Neither good nor bad; mediocre.

5. _____

RELATED WORDS **indifference** *noun*; **indifferently** *adverb*

EXAMPLE The nonvoters were *indifferent* to the outcome of the election.

6. **oblivious** (ə-bliv'ē-əs) *adjective* a. Lacking conscious awareness. b. Forgetful. (From the Latin word *oblivisci*, meaning "to forget")

6. _____

RELATED WORDS **oblivion** *noun*; **obliviously** *adverb*; **obliviousness** *noun*

EXAMPLE When Zoe is reading a book, she is *oblivious* to almost anything happening around her.

7. **preoccupy** (prē-ōk'yə-pī') *trans. verb* To hold the attention or interest of; engross.

7. _____

RELATED WORDS **preoccupation** *noun*; **preoccupied** *adjective*

EXAMPLE The technical details of database development often *preoccupy* Alan.

8. **receptive** (rī-sēp'tiv) *adjective* Ready or willing to receive something favorably. (From the Latin word *recipere*, meaning "to receive")

8. _____

RELATED WORDS **receptively** *adverb*; **receptivity** *noun*

EXAMPLE The director of the play appreciated the *receptive* attitude of the cast.

9. **scrutinize** (skrōōt'n-īz') *trans. verb* To pay close attention to minute detail; examine something carefully, critically, or searchingly. (From the Latin word *scrutari*, meaning "to search" or "to examine")

9. _____

RELATED WORD **scrutiny** *noun*

EXAMPLE The structural engineer *scrutinized* the damage to the apartment building.

10. **vigilant** (vij'ə-lənt) *adjective* Watchful; on the alert; wary. (From the Latin word *vigilare*, meaning "to be watchful")

10. _____

RELATED WORDS **vigil** *noun*; **vigilance** *noun*; **vigilantly** *adverb*

EXAMPLE Without the efforts of the *vigilant* forest ranger, many acres of trees might have been destroyed by the fire.