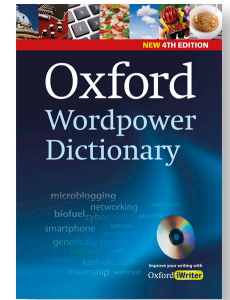


Exam preparation using the *Oxford Wordpower Dictionary, 4th Edition*



Introduction

Intermediate and Upper-Intermediate level students of English are likely to take one of the many examinations on the market and the *Oxford Wordpower Dictionary, 4th Edition* recognizes that these students need specific help in order to maximize their chances of exam success.

There are over 30 exam tips in the *Oxford Wordpower Dictionary*, in blue boxes clearly marked EXAM TIP. (There is a list of these at the back of the dictionary on page R62.) Students will also benefit from using the 16-page Writing Tutor, which offers notes, tips and models of task types commonly seen in intermediate-level examinations.

In addition, the *Oxford Wordpower* CD-ROM has a great deal to offer students preparing for examinations.

- Simply click on the 'extras' button to access specific guidance to help learners prepare for Graded Examinations in Spoken English (GESE) run by Trinity College London.
- For students taking examinations from the well-known Cambridge suite, there are two free practice exams from Oxford English Testing via the CD-ROM (one at PET level and one at FCE level). Click on 'tests' to access Oxford English Testing.
- By clicking on 'exercises', students preparing for the Cambridge PET exam in particular will be able to practise reading tasks and also writing. There are further exercises which are useful to all Intermediate and Upper-Intermediate exam students.
- The Oxford Wordpower Trainer, a self-study booklet accessed by clicking on 'extras', offers practice on a number of aspects mentioned in the dictionary's exam tips such as collocation and spelling. The tasks generally reflect those found in examinations such as FCE: cloze tests, sentence transformations, multiple-choice, word formation.
- The iWriter, accessed by clicking on 'iWriter' in the top right-hand corner, shows students how to plan, write and review their work and offers clear models of typical written task types.

The following activities focus on just three of the above-mentioned aspects of the *Oxford Wordpower Dictionary* and are intended to help students gain useful advice on exam preparation and put some of the exam tips into practice.

Level	Intermediate to Upper-Intermediate
Time	45 minutes–1 hour (or longer, if using the Extension task in Activity 2)
Aim	To gain useful advice and guidance on exam preparation and technique. To analyse the response to a written task at around FCE level. To practise sentence transformations, which is one of the more challenging tasks in Paper 3 Use of English at FCE. To learn about how the <i>Oxford Wordpower Dictionary</i> can aid preparation for FCE and other intermediate-level English examinations.
Skills	Speaking, reading, writing
Materials	You will need one copy of Worksheet 1 , cut up along the lines, for each pair of students. You will also need one copy of Worksheet 2 for each pair. Each student or pair of students will need a copy of the <i>Oxford Wordpower Dictionary 4th edition</i> . Students will also benefit from having computer access to complete the CD-ROM exercise. This is not essential as the teacher can display these activities on his/her computer.

PROCEDURE

Warmer [5 minutes]

Put the students in small groups and ask them to brainstorm how a dictionary might help them with their exam preparation. Elicit ideas from the class, e.g. learning new words, checking spellings, finding formal or informal equivalents of words. Explain that this lesson is about exam preparation, using the *Oxford Wordpower Dictionary*.

Activity 1 [20-25 minutes]

Put the students in pairs. Tell them that you are going to give them some words and phrases which are related to exams. Their task is to read the words and check they know the meanings. If any of them are unknown to both students in a pair, they should put them to one side. Hand out one set of cards a-f to each pair. Monitor the pairs' discussions. If more than half of the words/phrases are unknown, you will need to ask students to check them in their dictionaries at this point in the lesson.

Now explain that the *Oxford Wordpower Dictionary* has tips for students about each of these topics. Tell them that you are going to give them some sentences taken from these tips and they should try to match them to the words a-f without using their dictionaries. This is a challenging activity and they will need to discuss their ideas carefully.

Make sure each student or each pair has a copy of the *Oxford Wordpower Dictionary*. Tell them they are going to use the dictionaries to check whether they have matched the tips and sentences correctly. They should look up the words in **bold** and will find the exam tips printed in blue boxes with a clear EXAM TIP heading. Give them 10-15 minutes to do this.

By reading the full Exam Tip 1-6 the students will benefit from the advice given on each exam-related topic.

Answers:

a 4 b 6 c 1 d 5 e 3 f 2

Activity 2 [10-15 minutes]

Give each pair a copy of Worksheet 2. Tell them to read the exam question at the top of the worksheet. Now ask them to read the letter and identify problems with it. They should discuss their ideas in pairs. You can tell them that the spelling and grammar are correct but it is still not a very good letter.

Elicit answers from the class.

Encourage the students to check their answers against page WT15 of the Writing Tutor and then conduct class feedback.

Suggested answers:

The writer has

- not used the hotel manager's full name – using a first name only is too informal
- not used formal language
- used contractions
- not given details of his skills and experience or said why he would be suitable
- finished the letter incorrectly – *Yours faithfully* is only used when you don't know the recipient's name

Extension task

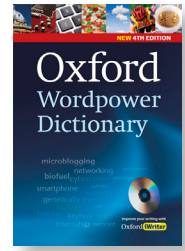
Give the students the following exam task and ask them to write the covering letter, either individually or in pairs. You have seen an advertisement in a local newspaper for a tour guide of your area. Write to the director of the tour company, Mr Ivan Swanson, to apply for the job. Give details of your skills and experience and say why you think you would be suitable. (120-150 words)

Activity 3 [10-15 minutes]

This activity uses the CD-ROM and students will need computer access themselves or to be able to see the exercises displayed on an interactive whiteboard. Click on 'extras' and then on *Oxford Wordpower Trainer*. Scroll down to page 5 and display the Sentence transformations on the board. If your students have not tried this kind of task before, explain that they need to complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence and that the word in brackets must be used. Show them the example sentence. If the students have computer access, they could use the CD-ROMs in pairs; otherwise, ask them to complete the sentences they see on the board. In any case, they should write their answers in their books. If you wish, students can do the task individually and then compare with their partner or they could do the task with their partner, discussing each answer in order to maximize speaking practice. Encourage them to use their dictionaries to check the key words and discover collocations, patterns, etc.

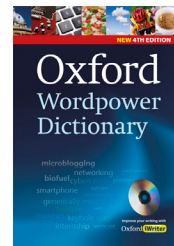
Check the answers as a class with the *Oxford Wordpower Trainer Key*.

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Activity 1

<p>✂</p> <p>a Predicting listening</p>	<p>6 Always make some notes about what you want to say before you start, and write down some key vocabulary.</p>
<p>b Planning your answer</p>	<p>1 When you learn a new word, learn the words that go with it.</p>
<p>c Collocations</p>	<p>4 Is the answer going to be a number, a date, a time, an occupation, a sport, etc.?</p>
<p>d Word limit</p>	<p>5 Knowing how many words you usually write on a line will help you to count as you write.</p>
<p>e Skimming</p>	<p>3 If you do this, it will be easier to understand when you read it for a second time.</p>
<p>f Spelling mistakes</p>	<p>2 Keep a list of all the words that you have got wrong more than once in your homework.</p>



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Activity 2

You have seen an advertisement for a hotel receptionist during the summer. Write to the hotel manager to apply for the job. Explain why you think you would be suitable. Give details of your skills and experience. (120 – 150 words)

Mrs Rachel Adams
The Lion Hotel
23 High Street
Hereford HR1 2LR

4th July 2012

Dear Rachel

I want to apply for the job of temporary receptionist, which I saw advertised in the local newspaper on 1st July. Here's my CV.

Can I be part of your team? I'm available for interview next week, and I am waiting for your answer.

Yours faithfully

Nick Woodward

8 St Peter's Close
Bromyard
Herefordshire HR7 4PS