Passage dictionaries 13

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What is a dictionary? A dictionary is a collection of words in one or more specific languages, often listed alphabetically with usage of information, definitions, etymologies, phonetics, pronunciations, translation, and other information; or a book of words in one language with their meanings in another.

The oldest known dictionaries were Akkadian Empire with bilingual Sumerian–Akkadian wordlists, discovered in Ebla (modern Syria) and dated roughly 2300 BCE. The early 2nd millennium BCE glossary is the Babylonian version of such bilingual Sumerian wordlists. A Chinese dictionary, the 3rd century BCE Erya, was the earliest surviving monolingual dictionary.

Why use a dictionary?

Using a dictionary will help you

* understand the learning material and your assignment questions. This is very important because if you misinterpret even one word in an assignment, you risk getting the answer wrong.
* choose the most appropriate words so that your writing is clear, interesting and reads well.
* use words correctly so that you say what you mean and your writing is easy to understand.
* spell words correctly – incorrect spelling may be penalized in assignments, and it certainly gives a bad impression.
* build your vocabulary – looking up a word not only helps you understand and use that word but the process of looking it up helps fix the word in your memory.

Things to think about when choosing and using a dictionary

Choose a dictionary that’s fit for purpose There are a number of different kinds of dictionaries depending on the word you’re looking up and what you want to know about it.

Choose from:

* Monolingual (one language), or explanatory dictionaries, e.g. English-English dictionaries.
* Bilingual (two languages) dictionaries, e.g. English – Arabic / Arabic – English.
* Specialized dictionaries, e.g. dictionaries for specific subjects (such as maths, biology, commerce, IT, etc.), technical terms, abbreviations, idioms, quotations, slang or jargon, etc.
* Thesauruses, i.e. dictionaries of synonyms (words with the same meaning) and antonyms (words with the opposite meaning).
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British vs. American English

New Zealand uses British English in preference to American English so choose a dictionary that uses British rather than American English (e.g. ‘colour’ and ‘lift’ rather than ‘color’ and ‘elevator’).

Make sure you know how to use your dictionaryAll dictionaries are slightly different so it’s worth spending a little time making sure you know how to use your dictionary.

**2-B 3- D 4-C 5- D**

**Questions**

1. **The main idea of paragraph 2 is………….**
2. History of dictionaries
3. Types of dictionaries
4. British dictionaries
5. Chinese dictionaries
6. 2**. If you want to find the Arabic meaning of an English word, you can use a …………. dictionary**
7. monolingual
8. bilingual
9. specialized
10. thesaurus
11. **“Antonyms” and “synonyms” can be found in …………………dictionaries.**
12. a monolingual
13. bilingual
14. specialized
15. thesaurus www.dalilk4step.com 9

**4.The spelling of words’colour’ and ‘lift’ shows the……………..spelling of both words.**

1. American
2. American and British
3. British
4. New Zealand and American
5. **The passage is mainly talking about……………..**
6. History of dictionaries
7. Kinds of dictionaries
8. British and American dictionaries.
9. The importance of dictionaries and how to use them.