

Vocabulary Reading Sentences

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Learning new vocabulary through sentences helps students understand not only what a word means, but also how it is used correctly in context.

This collection features useful vocabulary words drawn from different English preliminary examination papers. Unlike vocabulary passages, each item presents a separate sentence containing one key word or phrasal verb. The vocabulary word is highlighted in **bold**, while its meaning is provided in brackets.

Students can use these sentences to:

- learn useful words and phrasal verbs;
- understand their meanings through context;
- observe how they are used grammatically; and
- apply them in English PSLE Paper 2 -Vocabulary sections and composition writing.

If you need practice for English or Chinese Oral Exam, our [AI Oral Examiner](#) has real-time speech conversation and a personalised feedback report to help students improve. It's helped hundreds of students to improve and there's free credit for the first sign up as well to give it a try.

If you want to practice Composition and Situational Writing instead, you can use our [AI Compo Grader to grade compos and Sit Writing](#) instantly and get immediate feedback too.

1. The audience watched in awe as the archer hit the target with remarkable **precision** (accuracy).
2. The villagers struggled to **sustain** (keep going) themselves during the harsh winter with the limited food supplies they had.
3. The students completed the experiment **meticulously** (very carefully), following every step closely.
4. Engrossed in her book, Sarah was completely **oblivious** (unaware) to the noise around her.
5. Even though he was feeling unwell, Jayden decided to **follow through** (complete it) with his promise to volunteer at the old folks' home.

6. A loud **dispute** (argument) broke out between the two angry boys about who should get a bigger piece of the pie.
7. Asha raised her eyebrows and looked at her brother **incredulously** (in disbelief) when he claimed that he had finished the 1000-piece puzzle in 30 minutes.
8. The principal was upset to find out that someone had **vandalised** (damaged) the newly painted mural by spray-painting over it.
9. To fly a passenger plane, Devi had to become a/an **certified** (officially qualified) pilot by passing many tests and getting an official licence.
10. To make the school more environmentally friendly, Ramu **brought up** (mentioned) the idea of starting a recycling club to his teacher to encourage pupils to reduce waste.
11. Everyone wrinkled their noses as the room was filled with a **pungent** (strong-smelling) smell. The stench was unbearable.
12. When tensions arose during the group discussion, the leader skilfully attempted to **defuse** (calm down) the conflict before it worsened.
13. After months of training, the dancers finally **pulled off** (succeeded in) a flawless performance that impressed the judges.
14. The scientist was awarded a prize for her **innovation** (new idea) in developing a new method to clean polluted water.
15. Although Melissa was surprised by the unfair accusation from her classmate, she responded **tactfully** (sensitively) and avoided making the situation worse.
16. Even after the teacher explained many times, the child still could not **comprehend** (understand) the topic.
17. The clumsy boys wanted to set the table, but they were more of a **hindrance** (obstacle) than a help.
18. The Red Cross Society has been delivering aid to the **displaced** (forced to leave home) civilians after the tsunami wiped out their houses.
19. The team **held out** (resisted) against the pressure and won the match in the final moments.
20. I looked up at the clock which glared at me smugly, as if **gloating** (smugly enjoying) over my plight in the examination.
21. The teacher's warm smile **boosted** (increased) Siti's courage before she stepped onto the stage.
22. The jeweller took pains to craft **exquisite** (beautiful) patterns on the necklace that looked like little flowers.

23. The teacher loved the students' **spontaneity** (naturalness) during the activity, as they came up with creative ideas on the spot.
24. "Just tell me clearly what you're **driving at** (getting at) instead of beating round the bush," Tim said, feeling annoyed.
25. Amos **spun** (made up) a tall tale to explain his absence from the class but his teacher did not believe him.
26. We listened to Josh's complaining for an entire evening – he just wouldn't **let up** (stop)!
27. Ever since she started earning a higher salary, her spending has become rather **extravagant** (wasteful).
28. The renovation has **restored** (brought back) the old school to its former glory.
29. The marksman fired a few shots in rapid **succession** (one after another), hitting the bullseye each time.
30. "Don't be late again. You're already **on thin ice** (in trouble) as far as I am concerned," the discipline master warned me.
31. The team showed true **determination** (strong resolve) by continuing to try even after many failures to solve the problem.
32. The young painter **meticulously** (very carefully) worked on his watercolour piece, adding lots of details and shades to depict the scene vividly.
33. The pianist's **captivating** (fascinating) performance thrilled the audience, drawing everyone in with every note.
34. Before going on a school trip, Lisa had to **look over** (check) her backpack to make sure she packed everything she needed.
35. Hundreds of firefighters are working round the clock to **contain** (control) the wildfire.
36. Tim **nimbly** (quickly and lightly) weaved through the maze of the playground, dodging his classmates who were determined to catch him in a game of 'Tag'.
37. Mandy admires her older sister very much and **looks to** (relies on) her for emotional support and advice.
38. During an emergency drill, moving all students and staff quickly to a safe place is of **paramount** (most important) concern.
39. My mother furrowed her brows in **disapproval** (dislike) when she realised that my sister had gone to bed without taking a bath after a game of basketball.
40. When Tim shouted that his pet mouse had escaped its cage, a great **flurry** (sudden rush) of activity erupted in class as everyone ran around in fear.

41. After getting a standing ovation, the actress **basked** (enjoyed) in the limelight, her eyes gleaming with joy.
42. Maya showed **hypocrisy** (double standards) when she said not to gossip, then talked about June behind her back.
43. The **indulgent** (overly lenient) mother gives her only son anything he wants even when it is not good for him.
44. When I told Josh he was being too aggressive, he finally **backed off** (stopped pressuring) and stopped yelling.
45. When asked about the new school rules, Mark replied **indifferently** (without interest), showing little interest in the changes.