

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes — Key Vocabulary

by Arthur Conan Doyle

48 key English words, graded A2–C2 — each with a simple definition and an example. Learn them before you read, or review them after.

A2 words (10)

abandon /ə'bændən/

A2

the trait of lacking restraint or control

“she danced with abandon”

abroad /ə'brɔd/

A2

in a foreign country

“markets abroad”

absence /'æbsəns/

A2

the state of being absent

“he was surprised by the absence of any explanation”

absolutely /,æbsə'lutli/

A2

completely and without qualification

“an absolutely magnificent painting”

abuse /ə'bjuz/

A2

cruel or inhumane treatment

“the child showed signs of physical abuse”

accident /'æksədənt/

A2

an unfortunate mishap

“winning the lottery was a happy accident”

accompany /ə'kəmpəni/

A2

be present or associated with an event or entity

“French fries come with the hamburger”

accuse /ə'kjuz/

A2

bring an accusation against

"The neighbors accused the man of spousal abuse"

acknowledge /æk'nɒlɪdʒ/

A2

declare to be true or admit the existence or reality or truth of

"He admitted his errors"

acquire /ək'waɪə/

A2

come into the possession of something concrete or abstract

"She got a lot of paintings from her uncle"

B1 words (10)

absolute /'æbsə,lʊt/

B1

something that is conceived or that exists independently and not in relation to other things

"no mortal being can influence the absolute"

abstract /'æb,strækt/

B1

a concept or idea not associated with any specific instance

"he loved her only in the abstract--not in person"

accept /ək'sept/

B1

consider or hold as true

"I cannot accept the dogma of this church"

acceptance /ək'septəns/

B1

the mental attitude that something is believable and should be accepted as true

"he gave credence to the gossip"

accommodate /ə'kamə,deɪt/

B1

be agreeable or acceptable to

"This suits my needs"

accomplish /ə'kʌmplɪʃ/

B1

put in effect

"carry out a task"

accurate /'ækjərət/

B1

conforming exactly or almost exactly to fact or to a standard or performing with total accuracy

"an accurate reproduction"

achieve /ə'tʃi:v/

to gain with effort

"she achieved her goal despite setbacks"

B1

activity /æk'tɪvɪti/

any specific behavior

"they avoided all recreational activity"

B1

adapt /ə'dæpt/

make fit for, or change to suit a new purpose

"Adapt our native cuisine to the available food resources of the new country"

B1

B2 words (10)

abnormal /æb'nɔːrməl/

not normal

"abnormal powers of concentration"

B2

abnormally /æb'nɔːrməli/

in an abnormal manner

"they were behaving abnormally"

B2

abode /ə'boʊd/

any address at which you dwell more than temporarily

"a person can have several residences"

B2

abomination /ə,bəmə'neɪʃən/

a person who is loathsome or disgusting

"his treatment of the children is an abomination"

B2

abound /ə'baʊnd/

be abundant or plentiful

"The room abounded with screaming children"

B2

abrupt /ə'brʌpt/

marked by sudden changes in subject and sharp transitions

"abrupt prose"

B2

abruptly /ə'brʌptli/

quickly and without warning

"he stopped suddenly"

B2

absent /'æbsənt/

B2

go away or leave

"He absented himself"

absorb /əb'zɔrb/

B2

become imbued

"The liquids, light, and gases absorb"

absurd /əb'sərd/

B2

a situation in which life seems irrational and meaningless

"The absurd is the essential concept and the first truth"

C1 words (9)

abhorrent /æ'bhɔrənt/

C1

offensive to the mind

"an abhorrent deed"

abominable /ə'bəməneɪbəl/

C1

unequivocally detestable

"abominable treatment of prisoners"

absolve /əb'zɔlv/

C1

grant remission of a sin to

"The priest absolved him and told him to say ten Hail Mary's"

absurdly /əb'sərdli/

C1

in an absurd manner or to an absurd degree

"an absurdly rich young woman"

abut /ə'bət/

C1

lie adjacent to another or share a boundary

"Canada adjoins the U.S."

accustom /ə'kəstəm/

C1

make psychologically or physically used (to something)

"She became habituated to the background music"

acquiesce /,ækwi'ɛs/

C1

to agree or express agreement

"The Maestro assented to the request for an encore"

acquit /ək'wɪt/

C1

pronounce not guilty of criminal charges

"The suspect was cleared of the murder charges"

admirably /'ædmərəəbli/

C1

in an admirable manner

"the children's responses were admirably normal"

C2 words (9)

abjure

C2

formally reject or disavow a formerly held belief, usually under pressure

"He retracted his earlier statements about his religion"

astir

C2

out of bed

"are they astir yet?"

beggary

C2

a solicitation for money or food (especially in the street by an apparently penniless person)

"they were reduced to mendicancy"

cadaverous

C2

very thin especially from disease or hunger or cold

"emaciated bony hands"

chaffer

C2

wrangle (over a price, terms of an agreement, etc.)

"Let's not haggle over a few dollars"

cheerless

C2

causing sad feelings of gloom and inadequacy

"the economic outlook is depressing"

cobwebby

C2

so thin as to transmit light

"a hat with a diaphanous veil"

cocksure

C2

marked by excessive confidence

"an arrogant and cocksure materialist"

convulse

C2

make someone convulse with laughter

"The comedian convulsed the crowd"

Read it along with audio — tap any word to hear it and see it highlighted in the sentence:

<https://readingcorner.uk/books/the-adventures-of-sherlock-holmes/vocabulary>