

# White nights, and other stories — Key Vocabulary

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

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## A2 words (10)

**abandon** /ə'bændən/

A2

the trait of lacking restraint or control

*“she danced with abandon”*

**abroad** /ə'brɔ:d/

A2

in a foreign country

*“markets abroad”*

**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”*

**acknowledge** /æk'nɒlɪdʒ/

A2

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

*“He admitted his errors”*

**acquire** /ək'waɪər/

A2

come into the possession of something concrete or abstract

*"She got a lot of paintings from her uncle"*

**active** /'æktɪv/

A2

chemical agent capable of activity

*"The boy threw the ball' uses the active voice"*

**actual** /'æktʃəwəl/

A2

presently existing in fact and not merely potential or possible

*"the predicted temperature and the actual temperature were markedly different"*

## **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"*

**acceptable** /ək'septəbəl/

B1

worthy of acceptance or satisfactory

*"acceptable levels of radiation"*

**accidentally** /,æksə'denəli/

B1

without advance planning

*"they met accidentally"*

**accomplish** /ə'kʌmplɪʃ/

B1

put in effect

*"carry out a task"*

**accordance** /ə'kɔrdəns/

B1

concurrence of opinion

*"we are in accord with your proposal"*

**adapt** /ə'dæpt/

B1

make fit for, or change to suit a new purpose

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

**adventure** /əd'ventʃər/

B1

a wild and exciting undertaking (not necessarily lawful)

*"When you buy these stocks you are gambling"*

**adviser** /əd'vaɪzər/

B1

an expert who gives advice

*"an adviser helped students select their courses"*

**alarm** /ə'lɑːm/

B1

fear resulting from the awareness of danger

*"I was horrified at the thought of being late for my interview"*

## B2 words (10)

**abject** /'æbdʒekt/

B2

of the most contemptible kind

*"abject cowardice"*

**abnormal** /æb'nɔːrməl/

B2

not normal

*"abnormal powers of concentration"*

**abolish** /ə'bɒlɪʃ/

B2

do away with

*"Slavery was abolished in the mid-19th century in America and in Russia"*

**abomination** /ə,bəmə'neɪʃən/

B2

a person who is loathsome or disgusting

*"his treatment of the children is an abomination"*

**abrupt** /ə'brʌpt/

B2

marked by sudden changes in subject and sharp transitions

*"abrupt prose"*

**abruptly** /ə'brʌptli/

B2

quickly and without warning

*"he stopped suddenly"*

**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"*

**absurdity** /əb'sərdəti/

B2

a message whose content is at variance with reason

*"the crowd laughed at the absurdity of the clown's behavior"*

## C1 words (9)

**aback** /ə'bæk/

C1

having the wind against the forward side of the sails

*"the ship came up into the wind with all yards aback"*

**abbreviate** /ə'brɪvɪ,eɪt/

C1

reduce in scope while retaining essential elements

*"The manuscript must be shortened"*

**abominable** /ə'bəməneɪbəl/

C1

unequivocally detestable

*"abominable treatment of prisoners"*

**accustom** /ə'kæstəm/

C1

make psychologically or physically used (to something)

*"She became habituated to the background music"*

**acme** /'ækmi/

C1

the highest level or degree attainable

*"his landscapes were deemed the acme of beauty"*

**acquaint** /ək'weɪnt/

C1

cause to come to know personally

*"permit me to acquaint you with my son"*

**admiringly** /əd'maɪrɪŋli/

C1

with admiration

*"he looked at his wife admiringly"*

**admonition** /,ædmə'niʃən/

C1

cautionary advice about something imminent (especially imminent danger or other unpleasantness)

*"a letter of admonition about the dangers of immorality"*

**adroit** /ə'drɔɪt/

C1

quick or skillful or adept in action or thought

*"an exceptionally adroit pianist"*

## C2 words (9)

**abjectly**

C2

in a hopeless resigned manner

*"she shrugged her shoulders abjectly"*

**apprehensively**

C2

with anxiety or apprehension

*"we watched anxiously"*

**apprehensiveness**

C2

fearful expectation or anticipation

*"the student looked around the examination room with apprehension"*

**arrant** /'ærənt/

C2

without qualification

*"an arrant fool"*

**astir**

C2

out of bed

*"are they astir yet?"*

**befog**

C2

make less visible or unclear

*"The stars are obscured by the clouds"*

**beggarly**

C2

marked by poverty befitting a beggar

*"a beggarly existence in the slums"*

**belabour**

C2

to work at or to absurd length

*"belabor the obvious"*

## **benumb**

C2

make numb or insensitive

*"The shock numbed her senses"*

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

<https://readingcorner.uk/books/white-nights-and-other-stories/vocabulary>