

The Oxford English Dictionary

Every family ought to have a dictionary at home, and there is no more comprehensive one than the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*. It is superior to any other dictionary that you could possibly buy, for the following reasons.

First, the OED is not just a dictionary supplying meaning and punctuation; it also contains the history of every word that has ever been used in the English language. It tells you everything that a word has ever meant, not just what it means today, and gives examples of how it has been used through time with millions of quotations from classical literature, specialist periodicals, film scripts and cookbooks. Of course you will find contemporary word meanings in the book too, but if you are reading a very old book, or reading in a specialized field, you may not be able to find the information you are looking for anywhere else.

The OED also contains far more words than you are likely to find in your average Webster's Dictionary. The latest edition of the OED contains over 600,000 words. Consequently, the OED is actually not one book, but a whole set of books, much like an encyclopedia. It has been in publication for over 150 years and is continually revised and updated; the online version is updated every three months.

Last but not least, the OED is a labor of love. It has never been commercially profitable for the Oxford University Press, and yet the press and the people who work on this project believe that it is worth their time to do. People with that kind of attitude are much more likely to produce a quality product than people who are only in it for the money.

If you want to really study and understand words, then the OED is the dictionary for you. Bigger, more comprehensive, and packed full of examples of word usage, the OED is the best dictionary on the market.

1. What is the author's position? _____

2. In the opening paragraph, the author claims that the OED is superior to any other dictionary that you could possibly buy. Does the author provide reasons and evidence to support this claim? If so, list the reasons and evidence.



Name _____ **Literary Non-fiction**

3. The author claims the OED contains the history of every word that has ever been used in the English language. Does the author support this claim? If so, list reasons and evidence.

4. The author claims that people who do things for love are more likely to produce a quality product than people who do things for money. Does the author support this claim? If so, list reasons and evidence.

5. Do you think that the author's claims make this argument effective? Why or why not?
