Independent Vocabulary Study

This document should help you to create an approach to learning vocabulary that works for you.

Quick Review: Studying Word Parts

As you learn new words, you may see that some definitions mention word parts and have them defined and listed. For example, there are prefixes that indicate numbers (e.g. uni, bi, tri). Pay attention to the word parts to help you expand your vocabulary and improve your skills at understanding vocabulary using context clues.

Helpful Definitions:

- Affix- "A word element, such as a prefix or suffix, that can only occur attached to a base, stem, or root."
- Prefix- "An affix, such as *dis-* in disbelieve, attached to the front of a word to produce a derivative word or an inflected form."
- Suffix- "An affix added to the end of a word or stem, serving to form a new word or functioning as an inflectional ending, such as *-ness* in gentleness, *-ing* in walking, or *-s* in sits."
- Root- "The element that carries the main component of meaning in a word and provides the basis from which a word is derived by adding affixes or inflectional endings or by phonetic change."
    - Check out this list of commonly used root words, prefixes, and suffixes.

Suggested Strategy

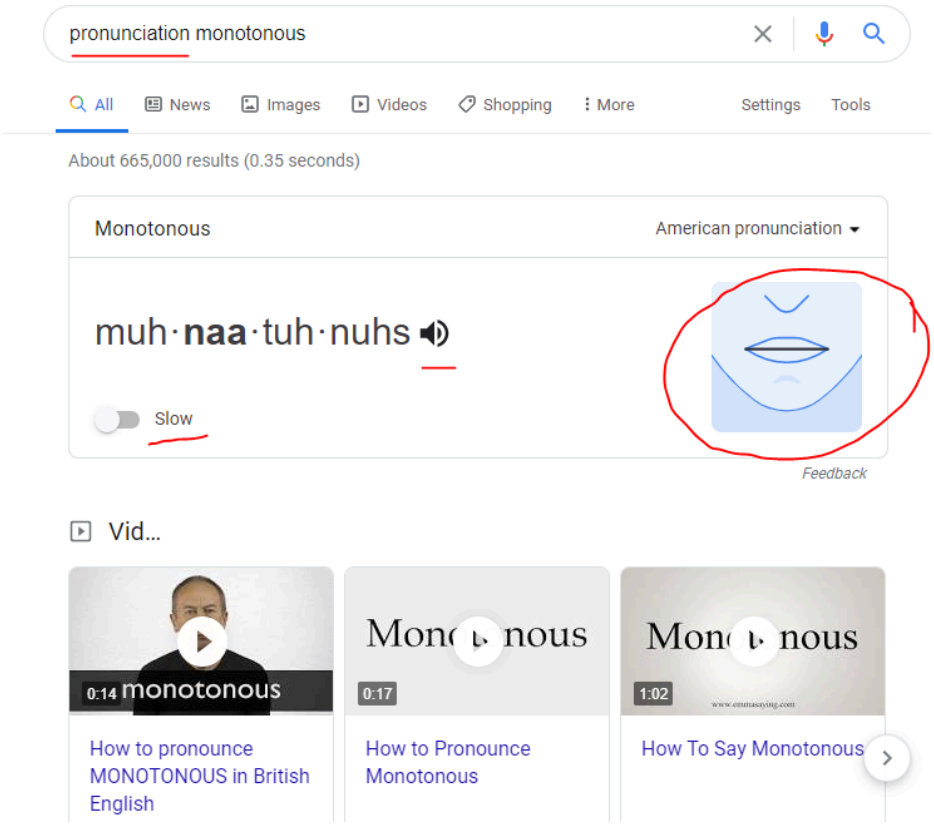
Here is a step-by-step strategy that might help you to learn vocabulary words.

1. Start by opening your vocabulary list and skimming through the list to get an idea of what types of words you'll be learning.

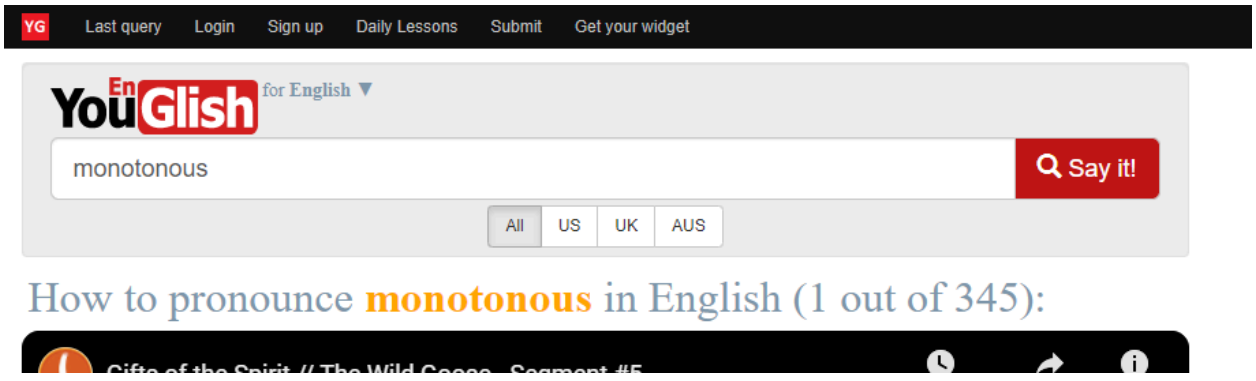
PRONUNCIATION:

2. Read each word and make sure you know how to pronounce it correctly. It would be helpful to pronounce the word out loud after you hear it pronounced.

    a. **Pro-tip:** If you type 'pronunciation' before a word you are learning into Google, it will often provide a pronunciation guide and an audio example.(See image below)



b. **Pro-tip #2**- Another pronunciation tool is a website called *Youglish* where you type a word into their search bar and it shows you many YouTube videos that include a person pronouncing that word. The site says “Use YouTube to improve your English pronunciation. With more than 50M tracks, YouGlish gives you fast, unbiased answers about how English is spoken by real people and in context.”- Here is the link: youglish.com. (See image below)



WRITING AND RECORDING:

3. Handwrite the list of words and their definitions on a piece of paper. There are many studies that show that physically writing things down helps us to retain them better.

a. **Vocabulary Notebook/Vocabulary Log:** I always suggest that students start a Vocabulary Notebook where you keep your growing list of vocabulary words and their definitions so that you can easily review. There are many resources that can help you decide how to set this up.
b. **Memory Helpers:** Flash cards, sticky notes, or posters with the words and their definitions could be useful as well. You could put the sticky notes in places that you will see often to remind yourself of the word and its meaning.
c. **Draw a picture:** Next to or below each definition, you could draw a picture of what the word means to help you remember.
d. **Write a sentence:** Writing a sentence using the vocabulary word also helps solidify its meaning into your memory. You might also search for example sentences using the word to make sure you really understand how to use it.

REPETITION:

4. **Study:** Review the list of words and what they mean each day of the week. Use whatever tool works best for you (vocabulary notebook, flash cards, etc.) and review the words often. It might help to break the list into chunks of 5-10 words and study/learn them throughout the week.

Utilize Technology

There are many apps, websites, and digital tools that can help you learn vocabulary. The list of resources can be used as general study helpers as well since they can aid in information retention in general.

a. **Quizlet**: Quizlet is a website that lets you create and study digital flashcards. There are many more features that you can explore as well.
b. **Anki**: Anki is a free flashcard/spaced repetition software that can also help you study and learn just about anything. You can easily find tutorials that'll show you the basics of how to use this tool.

There are probably many more tools and websites available that I'm not familiar with, so do some searching if you're looking for just the right studying companion tools.

Suggested Dictionary

I suggest using The American Heritage Dictionary for finding definitions of new words. Notice that it also has a function that allows you to hear how a word is pronounced.