

# Vocabulary for Effective Narrative and Descriptive Writing

This is a compilation of words and phrases that can be used in narrative and descriptive writing.

Please **STUDY** this as thoroughly as you can. Familiarise yourselves with **HOW** the words and phrases are used. It is **IMPORTANT** to **NOTE** the **context** in which these words are used.

Look out for them when you read your story books. And most importantly **make every effort to USE** the words and phrases in your own writing.

Learning is not attained by chance.

It must be sought for with ardour and attended to with diligence -Abigail Adams

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page No</b>
<b>1 Fear in Varying Degrees</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Expressing Surprise</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3 Expressing Sadness</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4 Expressing Anger</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5 Different Ways of Moving</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>6 Different Way of Speaking</b>	<b>19</b>

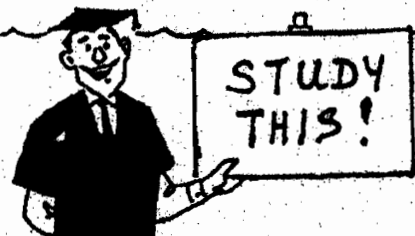
**Hard work - Good work habits help develop an internal toughness and a self-confident attitude that will sustain you through every adversity and temporary discouragement.**

**~ Paul J. Fleyer ~**


## *Fear in Varying Degrees*

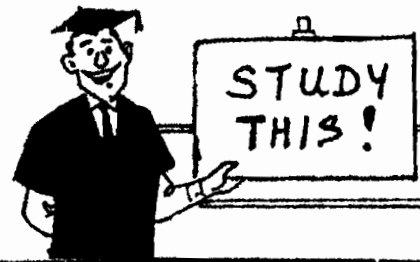
1. **apprehensive:** worried/filled with anxiety or fear  
e.g. Mei Li was apprehensive about meeting her mother in-law even after much assurance from her husband.
2. **alarmed:** sudden fear and anxiety, especially when caused by the possibility of danger  
e.g. The government is alarmed by the sudden increase in violent crime.
3. **fearful:** to be afraid  
e.g. We were fearful of her anger.
4. **panic-stricken:** filled with sudden anxiety or fear  
e.g. The audience were panic-stricken when the fire-alarm went off.
5. **terror-stricken/terrified:** very much frightened/afraid  
e.g. He was terrified of snakes.
6. **horrified:** filled with great shock or horror  
e.g. He was horrified to hear that she had been murdered.
7. **aghast:** suddenly filled with great surprise/fear/shock  
e.g. He was aghast when he was told that his son had been kidnapped.


8. **petrified:** extreme fear or shock so that one is unable to think or move  
e.g. He sat there petrified as the ghost glided across the room.
9. **frantic:** filled with desperation because you are frightened or worried  
e.g. When he saw the corpse rising from its coffin, he became frantic with terror.



## How Do You React When Afraid?

Body	Look	Eyes
<p>You ..... feel chilled                      become numbed                      shiver                      tremble                      shudder                      quake or shake                      are unable to move                      cower                      shrink back .....                      perspire</p> <p>Your ..... heart                      thumps/beats/pounds</p>	<p>You look ..... pale                      white                      ashen</p> <p>You look as if .....</p> 	<p>You ..... stare                      gaze in .....</p> <p>Your eyes widen</p>



Voice	Speech
<p>Your voice ..... trembles                      quivers                      quavers                      shakes</p> 	<p>You ..... stammer                      stutter .....                      mutter .....                      pray .....                      pant .....                      shriek/scream</p>

**EXAMPLES*****How Do You React When Afraid?***

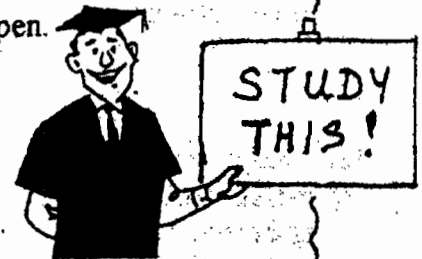
1. **chilled:** Chilled with fear, he.....; She felt a sudden chill as...  
His menacing eyes chilled her.
2. **numbed:** numbed with terror; numbed with fear  
Tom was numbed with terror as the creature approached him.
3. **shiver:** He was shivering with terror as.....; Shivering with fear, he....  
A sudden scream sent shivers up my spine.
4. **tremble:** He was trembling as.....; Trembling, he....  
He trembled with fear as he approached the principal.
5. **shudder:** shuddered violently; shuddered with fear  
I shuddered at the sight of the dead body.
6. **quake/shake:** quaking with fear; shaking with fear  
He was quaking at the thought of jumping off the plane.
7. **unable to move:** When he saw the cobra, he was too terror-stricken to move.
8. **cower:** cowering in a corner, cowered in fear  
The children cowered a corner as the bully approached them.
9. **shrink back:** shrink back in horror;  
Fearing a beating, the dog shrank into a corner.
10. **perspire:** perspire profusely; perspiration drips/ rolls down  
The man was perspiring profusely as he tried to defuse the bomb.
11. **heart thumps  
beats/pounds** thumps/beats/pounds violently/wildly/loudly  
He could hear his heart thumping loudly as he walked up the

- 12. pale/white:  
ashen**                      you look pale/white/ashen; your face turns pale/white/ashen  
When he heard the bad news, his face turned ashen.
- 13. look as if:**                      looked as if he had seen a ghost; looked as if he was about to faint  
When Tom emerged from the cave, his face was white and he looked as if he had seen a ghost.
- 14. stare/gaze:**                      gaze in horror; stare in horror; stare, horrified, as...  
gaze, horrified, as...  
The woman gazed in horror at the gigantic ape as it broke through its cage.
- 15. eyes widen:**                      Eyes wide with fear, he...; His eyes widened with fear as he gazed at...  
His eyes widened with fear and he began to tremble.
- 16. your voice  
trembles/  
quivers/  
quavers/shakes**                      voice was trembling; voice was shaking; voice was quivering;  
voice was quavering;  
His voice was trembling as he began his speech.
- 17. stammer/  
stutter:**                      stammer/stutter nervously  
The child stuttered nervously when the teacher questioned him.
- 18. mutter:**                      mutter a prayer  
John muttered a prayer for safety as he dashed into the flames to save the child.
- 19. pray:**                      pray desperately  
He prayed desperately for help to come.
- 20. pant:**                      "Help! Help! Someone's drowning in the river!" he panted.
- 21. shriek/scream:**                      She shrieked/screamed when the mouse ran over her feet.

# Expressing Surprise

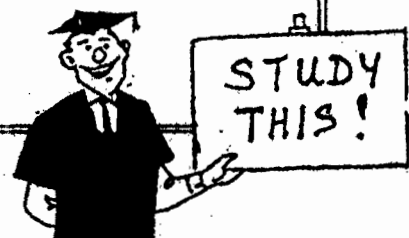


1. **startled** : to be given an unexpected, slight shock; made to jump  
"Boo!" he yelled. I was startled.
2. **wonder** : feeling of astonishment mixed with admiration or disbelief  
The children watched the gymnasts in silent wonder.
3. **amaze** : fill with great surprise  
**astonish** : I was amazed/astonished that he could do 100 sums in 10 minutes.
4. **stun** : to shock or surprise very greatly  
He was stunned by the jury's verdict of guilty.
5. **astound** : to fill with shocked surprise because of something unexpected  
The doctor was astounded by the cancer patient's sudden recovery.
6. **gape** : to look hard in surprise with the mouth open  
The men gaped at the belly dancer.
7. **dumbfound** : to surprise to the point of being unable to speak  
We were dumbfounded to see the blind man's eyes open.
8. **stupefy** : to surprise greatly  
We were stupefied by her ignorance.
9. **aghast** : suddenly filled with surprise/shock or fear  
She was aghast when told of her husband's huge debt.
10. **flabbergast** : to fill with shock/wonder so that one is unable to think clearly  
"Well!" I exclaimed, flabbergasted at Dr Ng's deceit.



## How Do You React When Surprised?

Body	Look	Eyes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● You jump (how?)</li> <li>● You stare (how?)</li> <li>● you faint</li> <li>● you are unable to speak (speechless)</li> <li>● your mouth falls open</li> <li>● you gasp/catch your breath</li> <li>● nearly die of shock</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● dumbstruck</li> <li>● dazed</li> <li>● thunder-struck</li> <li>● incredulous</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● open wide in .....</li> <li>● almost pop out of your head</li> <li>● you blink (how?)</li> <li>● rub your eyes in .....</li> <li>● can't believe your eyes</li> </ul>



*Examples**How Do You React When Surprised?*

1. **you jump:** you nearly jump out of your skin; something makes you jump;  
When I heard a loud knock on my door at midnight, I nearly jumped out of my skin.
2. **you stare:** You stare in amazement; stare in wonder; stare looking incredulous;  
He stared at me aghast, when I told him that his pet dog, Rover, had been run over by a car.
3. **you faint:** I almost fainted when I heard that my mother had been involved in an accident.
4. **you are unable to speak:** He stared at me, speechless...; he stared at me dumbfounded...; He stared at me, lost for words...;
5. **your mouth falls open:** her mouth fell open in surprise; you stare, open-mouthed at something...;  
She was speechless with astonishment when she saw the Principal, Mr. Tan, wearing a dress!
6. **you gasp/catch your breath:** gasped in amazement; caught his breath in surprise;  
He caught his breath when he saw the beautiful model, Claudia Schiffer in person.
7. **nearly die of shock:** I nearly died of shock when I heard that I had passed my 'O' Levels with flying colours.
8. **dumbstruck:** He looked dumbstruck when she rejected his proposal of marriage.
9. **dazed:** He stared at me, a dazed expression on his face, when I told him that his house had just burned down.



*Extremely surprised or shocked.*

- 10. thunderstruck:** The man was thunderstruck when he returned home and found that his wife had disappeared with his life savings.
- 11. incredulous:** stare at someone, incredulous; you sound incredulous;  
"What! You killed that tiger with your bare hands?" he asked, looking incredulous.  
*~ surprised*
- 12. eyes open wide:** your eyes widen in astonishment; eyes wide with surprise;  
Her eyes widened in astonishment when she saw a thousand dollar bill lying on the ground.
- 13. eyes almost pop out of your head:** My grandmother's eyes nearly popped out of her head when she saw the teenager with purple-green hair.
- 14. you blink:** When she saw Michael Jackson in the street, (she blinked several times, unable to believe her eyes.)
- 15. you rub your eyes:** rub your eyes in disbelief; rub your eyes in amazement  
He rubbed his eyes, unable to believe what he was seeing.
- 16. can't believe your eyes:** No one could believe their eyes when they saw Superman landing at Takashimaya.

## Expressing Sadness

1. **pensive** : thoughtful and quiet, perhaps sad.

pensive



Eg. He became so pensive that she did not like to break into his thoughts.

2. **sombre** : giving an impression of sadness or seriousness.

Eg. The doctor's face was sombre as he broke the bad news to us, "I'm afraid your father didn't make it ...."

3. **brooding** : to keep on thinking and thinking about something unpleasant.

Eg. He has been brooding over how furious he is with my father.

brooding



4. **miserable** : to be very unhappy.

Eg. Ronald felt depressed and miserable after losing his job.

5. **melancholy** : an intense feeling of sadness that lasts for a long time.

Eg. When he left, she sank into melancholy.



melancholy

6. **your heart aches** : you experience great sadness and emotional suffering.

Eg. It makes my heart ache to see pictures of starving children in Rwanda.

7. **a heavy heart** : you feel sadness and emotional pain.

Eg. With a heavy heart, I walked away from the man I loved.

8. **distressed** : upset because something unpleasant or alarming has happened.

Eg. He was really distressed when his wife left him.

9. **despairing** : you feel very unhappy and have no hope that things will improve.

Eg. Life in Africa as a medical worker was very difficult, and I was often quite despairing.



despairing

depress

10. **desolate** : sad, lonely and without hope.

Eg. When his entire family perished in the fire, he felt desolate.

11. **hopeless** : a feeling of desperation because there seems to be no possibility of comfort or success.

hopeless



Eg. A feeling of hopelessness gripped her when she realized what an enormous task she had undertaken.

MR

12. **inconsolable** : very sad and cannot be comforted.


Eg. Irene was inconsolably distressed and nothing we said could comfort her.

inconsolable



STUDY  
THIS!

***How do you React when Sad?***

Body	Look	Eyes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● a lump comes to your throat/ there is a lump in your throat</li> <li>● you swallow hard</li> <li>● your lips quiver</li> <li>● burst into tears</li> <li>● break down and cry</li> <li>● sob or weep (how?)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● mournful</li> <li>● forlorn</li> <li>● gloomy</li> <li>● depressed</li> <li>● grief-stricken</li> <li>● as if ....</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● fill with tears</li> <li>● brim with tears</li> <li>● are red from crying</li> <li>● stare .... (how?)</li> </ul>
Voice	Speech	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● trembles</li> <li>● quivers</li> <li>● is shaky</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● you sigh</li> <li>● you sniff</li> <li>● you moan</li> <li>● you wail</li> <li>● you howl</li> </ul>	

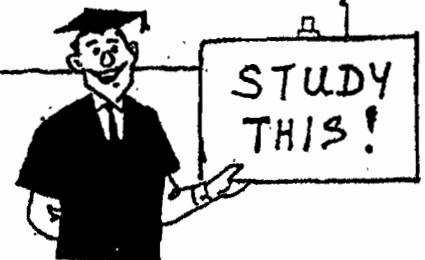
**Examples****How Do You React When Sad?**

1. **a lump comes to your throat:** there is a lump in your throat; a lump comes to your throat;  
A lump came to Sally's throat as she watched her husband leave for the army.
2. **you swallow hard: to cry.** Tony's eyes brimmed with tears but he swallowed hard and refused to cry.
3. **your lips quiver:** lips began to quiver...; lips quiver uncontrollably; lips quiver as....; Her voice grew shaky and her lips began to quiver as she narrated the horrors of the war.
4. **burst into tears:** When Jane heard that she had failed the examination, she burst into tears and ran out of the room.
5. **break down and cry:** The woman broke down and cried bitterly as she confessed to the murder of her child.
6. **sob/weep:** sobbed pitifully; sobbed uncontrollably; body was wracked with sobs; wept in anguish; wept uncontrollably  
The old woman wept loudly when she found her savings stolen.
7. **mournful:** looked mournful; had a mournful expression on his face  
Everyone at the funeral looked sad and mournful.
8. **forlorn:** looked forlorn; had a forlorn look on her face;  
Sally looked forlorn as she waved good-bye to her family.
9. **gloomy:** stared gloomily at...; appeared gloomy;  
The children stared gloomily at the floor when told that their fishing trip would be cancelled.
10. **depressed:** The manager came out of the office looking rather depressed.
11. **grief-stricken:** The residents were grief-stricken to find their loved ones buried beneath the rubble.  
*Broken stones or concrete.*

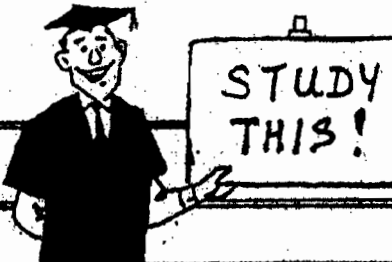
12. looked as if: looked as if she was about to break down . . . .  
She looked as if she had been crying for hours when she emerged from the room.
13. your eyes fill with tears: Her eyes filled with tears when the judge announced the verdict of "guilty."
14. your eyes brim with tears: Mr. Wu's eyes brimmed with tears as he stared at the devastation caused by the explosion.
15. eyes are red from crying: Aunt Mary, whose eyes were red from crying, could barely speak when she was called upon to testify.
16. you stare: stared blankly into space; stared gloomily; stared sorrowfully;  
The teenager stared sorrowfully at his report card and wished that he had studied harder.
17. your voice trembles/quivers: voice trembling with emotion; spoke in a trembling voice; voice was quivering; voice was shaky;  
The officer's voice was trembling with emotion as he told of how his comrades were beaten and tortured.
18. you sigh: sighed heavily; sighed and stared;  
As the woman gazed at the photograph of her son, she sighed and wished she had never allowed him to go bungee jumping.
19. you sniff: "It wasn't my fault. Please don't hit me," the boy sniffed, as he held out the palm of his hand.
20. you moan: moaned pitifully; moaned loudly  
"Who will help me? There's no hope. I will be a street beggar all my life," moaned the old man sorrowfully.
21. you wail: wailed uncontrollably; wailed loudly;  
"It's not fair...It's not fair! You can't take my father away," wailed the young boy.
22. you howl: howled in sorrow; howled in grief;  
The mourners howled loudly as the cortege left for the cemetery.  
*Someone who attends a funeral.*

## Expressing Anger

1. **irk** : to annoy/provoke  
It irks me to see food being wasted.
2. **annoy** : to make someone a little angry or impatient; irritate  
I was annoyed with him because he kept interrupting my conversation.
3. **enrage** : to make very angry; infuriate  
Mr. Tan was enraged to find workers had disobeyed his orders.
4. **fury** : a state of very great anger  
The young man walked out in fury after the argument.
5. **seethe** : to be very angry/agitated  
She was seething with rage at his remarks.
6. **fume** : to be angry and restless (often without expressing one's feeling fully)
  - a) She was fuming with annoyance because the books hadn't arrived.
  - b) He fumed at the delay.
7. **rage** : a sudden feeling of wild uncontrollable anger  
He flies into a rage every time his wife mentions money.
8. **exasperate** : to annoy or make extremely angry (especially by testing the patience of)
  - a) I was exasperated by/at all the delay.
  - b) In sheer exasperation, she gave the machine a kick.
9. **incense** : to make extremely angry; outrage  
The lawyer was incensed to find his car scratched.
10. **wrath** : strong fierce anger (especially based on the desire to punish someone for harm done)  
The management incurred the wrath of the union by breaking the agreement.



## How Do You React When Angry?

Body	Look	Eyes
<p>You ..... tremble                      quiver                      clench your fists                      shake your fists                      grit your teeth                      point an angry finger                      pound ..... <i>→ stepping heel</i>                      throw (something) at .....                      leave the room                      storm off                      stomp out</p>	<p>You ..... scowl                      frown                      pout                      sulk                      glower</p> <p>Your face                      turns ... red                      purple                      livid</p>	<p>Your eyes blaze                      flash with ...</p> <p>You ..... glare                      stare (how?)</p>
		
Voice	Speech	
<p>Your voice ..... quivers with .....                      is raised                      is sharp</p>	<p>You ..... screech                      shriek                      scream                      bellow                      roar                      snarl                      growl                      yell                      explode</p>	

*Examples**How Do You React When Angry?*

1. **you tremble/  
quiver:** Trembling with anger...; Quivering with anger....; her whole body trembled/quivered...; Quivering with rage, she shouted, " Get out of my sight!"
2. **you clench  
your fists:** The young man clenched his fists and muttered angrily as the policeman booked him for speeding.
3. **shake your fists:** The fruit-seller shook his fists furiously at the boys who had toppled his neatly-stacked piles of fruit.
4. **grit your teeth:  
eyes flash/blaze  
with anger:** His eyes flashed (blazed) with anger and he gritted his teeth as his father hurled abuse at him.
5. **point an angry  
finger:** Pointing an angry finger at the bully, the Principal roared, "Get to my office at once!"
6. **pound your fists:** pound your fists on the table; pound your fists at someone; The hysterical child pounded his fists against his mother as she dragged him out of the toy-store.
7. **throw something  
at someone:** The furious wife threw pots and pans at her husband.
8. **leave the room:** leave the room in a huff; leave in a fit of anger; The Committee members left the room in a huff when the Chairman insulted them.
9. **storm/stomp off:** storm in/out of a room; stomp out of a room; She stormed (stomped) off angrily after the argument with her boyfriend.
10. **you scowl:** I scowled angrily at him when he spilt ink all over my new text-book.



11. **you frown:** The teacher frowned when she walked into the class and saw litter everywhere.
12. **you pout:** She tossed back her hair and pouted when her boyfriend told her he could not take her out that night.
13. **you sulk:** After she was scolded by her mother she sulked the whole evening and refused to talk to anyone.
14. **you glower:** The librarian glowered at the students who were talking loudly and disturbing others.
15. **your face turns red:** Her face turned red as she shrieked, "Get lost, you two-timing snake!"
16. **your face turns purple:** His face turned purple...; purple with rage...; When he saw what the vandals had done to his Porsche, he turned purple with rage and roared, "Just wait till I get my hands on the culprits!"
17. **your face turns livid:** The gardener's face turned livid when he saw what the dogs had done to his seedlings.
18. **you glare:** The teacher glared angrily at the student who had made the rude remark.
19. **your voice quivers:** His voice was quivering with rage as he yelled at the boys who were stealing his mangoes.
20. **your voice is raised:** The teacher raised her voice and ordered the students to be quiet.
21. **your voice is sharp:** Tom's mother reprimanded him sharply for telling a lie.

**DIFFERENT WAYS OF MOVING**

When you are :

**PROUD**

**strut :** to walk proudly and stiffly (esp. when trying to look important)  
The man strutted up the stage to collect his prize.

**swagger :** to walk with a swinging movement (often showing self-confidence or satisfaction)  
The cowboy swaggered down the street after winning the fight.

**stride :** to walk with long steps.  
The head-master strode quickly up to the dormitory.

**ANGRY**

**stamp :** to bring the foot down hard; step with force  
The spoilt child stamped his feet and wailed loudly.

**stomp :** to walk with heavy steps  
When he heard the news, he stomped angrily up the stairs.

**storm :** to move with violent anger  
She stormed out of the room after the argument.

**ON A JOURNEY**

**tramp :** to walk (through or over) with firm heavy steps  
The scouts tramped over the hill and down the valley.

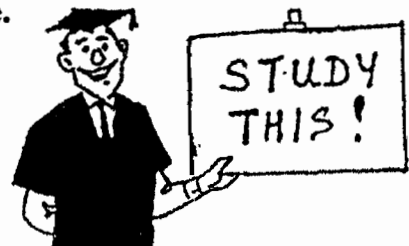
**trek :** to make a long difficult journey (esp. on foot)  
We went trekking in the mountains for our holiday.

**hike :** to take a long walk in the country (often over rough ground and for pleasure)  
The students hiked up Bukit Timah Hill.

**WALKING FOR PLEASURE**

**stroll :** to walk slowly/leisurely (esp. for pleasure)  
The couple strolled into the park hand in hand.

**saunter :** to walk in an unhurried way (esp. without much purpose)  
He sauntered into the classroom an hour late.



**INJURED**

**limp :** to walk with one foot moving less well than the other  
The poor wounded dog limped all the way home.

**hobble :** to walk with difficulty (esp. on one leg)  
I hurt my foot and had to hobble home.

**OTHER WAYS OF MOVING**

**pace :** to walk with regular, steady steps  
He paced up and down the corridor wondering what to do.

**march :** to walk with firm regular steps like a soldier  
"Start marching," bellowed the sergeant-major.

**waddle :** to walk with short steps like a duck  
The fat man waddled up to her.

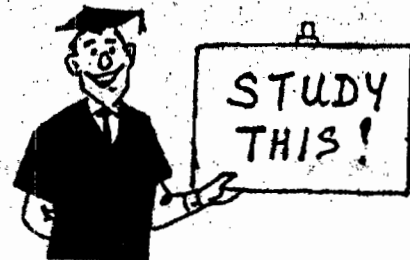
**shuffle :** to walk, dragging the feet.  
The old lady shuffled across the room.

**burst into :** to move suddenly / violently into.....  
The robbers burst into the room, armed with machine guns.

**creep :** to move slowly and quietly (esp. so as not to attract attention)  
We crept upstairs so as not to wake the baby.

**sneak :** move quickly and secretly, trying not to be seen  
I managed to sneak past the guard.

**prowl :** to move quietly trying not to be seen or heard  
I heard someone prowling about in the garden.



**ramble :** to take a long walk (often in the country)  
They rambled through the woods.

### UNSTEADY

**stagger :** to walk unsteadily and with great difficulty; almost falling  
The wounded man staggered towards us.

**stumble :** to fall while moving along  
He stumbled over a branch and fell.

**reel :** to walk unsteadily, moving from side to side as if drunk  
When I hit him, he reeled back and almost fell.

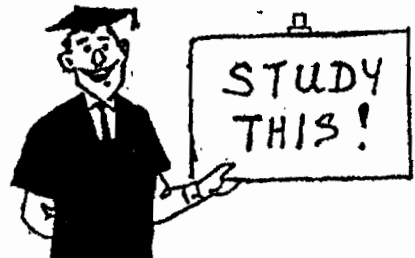
**totter :** to walk with weak, unsteady steps  
The old woman tottered down the stairs.

### IN A HURRY

**dash :** to run quickly  
He dashed across the street to catch the bus.

**dart :** to move suddenly and quickly  
The thief darted into the bushes.

**charge :** to rush (as if in an attack)  
The students charged into the gymnasium.



**sprint :** to run at one's fastest speed  
Tom sprinted all the way to school.

**scramble :** to move or climb quickly (esp. over rough, steep surface)  
I scrambled over the rocks to get a better view.

**scurry :** to move hastily (esp. with short quick steps)  
The mouse scurried into its hole when the cat appeared.

### TIRED

**plod :** to walk slowly often with great difficulty / effort  
He plodded up the hill with a heavy knapsack on his back.

**trudge :** to walk slowly with heavy steps and with effort  
The old man trudged home through the deep snow.

deep mud

## *Different Ways of Speaking*

### ANGER

- bark :** to shout at someone in a loud, rough voice  
"Get into line!" the sergeant barked.
- shriek :** to shout in a loud high-pitched voice  
"Watch out!" she shrieked.
- screech :** to make a loud, unpleasant, high-pitched cry  
"You'll be sorry you did that!" she screeched.
- bellow :** to shout in a deep, loud voice  
"Get out of my sight!" he bellowed.
- growl :** to speak in a low, angry voice  
"There's someone at the door," he growled.
- squawk :** a loud, sharp cry showing anger or surprise; complain loudly  
"Come back here !" she squawked. "How dare you cheat me!"
- thunder :** to speak loudly and forcefully because one is angry  
"Get out of my house!" he thundered.
- hiss :** to say something in a strong, angry whisper  
Pointing a shaking finger at me, he hissed, "You, get out!"

### CRYING OR COMPLAINING

- howl :** long, loud cry of pain or anger  
I can't stand the howling of my neighbour's children.
- whine :** to complain in an annoying way  
He was annoying me with his non-stop whining.
- wail :** to say something in a loud, high-pitched voice that shows you are unhappy or in pain.  
He raised a red, wet face and wailed, "I didn't start the fight, she did."
- groan :** to make a deep sad sound when in pain or when unhappy  
"Doctor, help me, I'm sick ," he groaned.
- whimper :** to say something in a frightened / unhappy way, as if about to cry  
"I want to get home," she whimpered.

**MOCKING**

- sneer :** to express contempt for someone's stupidity or inferiority  
She was afraid that he would sneer at her idea.
- mock :** to say something to make someone look foolish, especially by imitating them  
It is cruel to mock at the disabled.
- scoff :** to speak in a scornful way to show that you disagree with something someone has said  
"What nonsense!" he scoffed.
- jeer :** to show that you think someone is stupid by saying insulting things about them  
They jeered at him for being a foreigner.

**SPEAKING SOFTLY**

- murmur :** to say something very quietly so that not many people can hear  
She sat there, tears in her eyes, murmuring his name.
- mutter :** to speak softly often because you are complaining  
Danny could be heard muttering to himself about my stupidity.
- mumble :** to speak quietly and indistinctly  
"Stop mumbling and speak clearly," the teacher told the boy.
- whisper :** to say something under your breath  
Mary whispered, "Follow me and keep very quiet."

**OTHER SAYING WORDS**

- gasp :** to take a short, quick breath to show surprise or pain  
He gave a gasp of amazement.
- stammer :** to speak in a hesitant way, repeating sounds
- stutter :** "But...but...that's impossible," he stammered/stuttered.
- grunt :** to make a low, rough noise because you are bored or disinterested  
His father looked up, grunted and then went back to his work.
- retort :** to give a short angry reply  
"Mind your own business!" she retorted.

- jabber :** to talk quickly and excitedly  
There were a dozen of them, jabbering away in the kitchen.
- babble :** to speak in a confused, excited way  
He babbled on and on about his old enemies.
- protest :** to show publicly that you are opposed to something  
"You're wrong!" I protested.
- boast :** to talk about one's achievements, abilities, etc. with too much  
**brag:** pride and satisfaction.  
He boasted, "I'm the best athlete in Singapore."
- plead :** to ask in an intense, emotional way  
"Take me with you," he pleaded.
- beg :** to ask someone seriously to do something  
"Please do this favour for me," she begged.
- implore :** to beg desperately  
"Please, please, spare the life of my son," she implored.