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15 Vocab Terms That Will Raise Your Score

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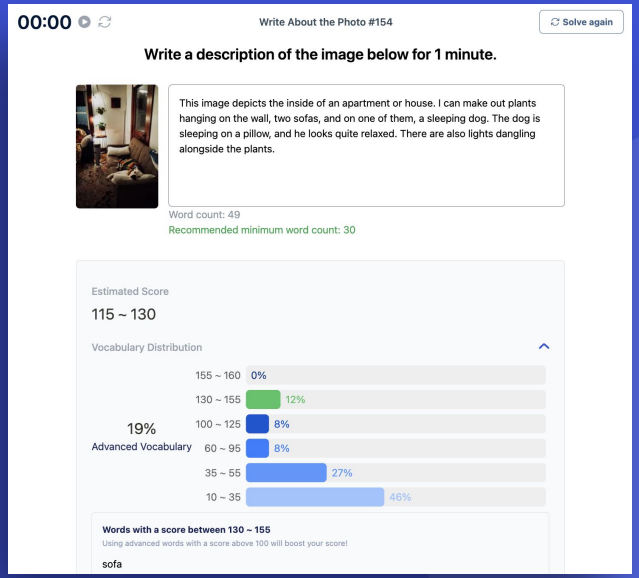

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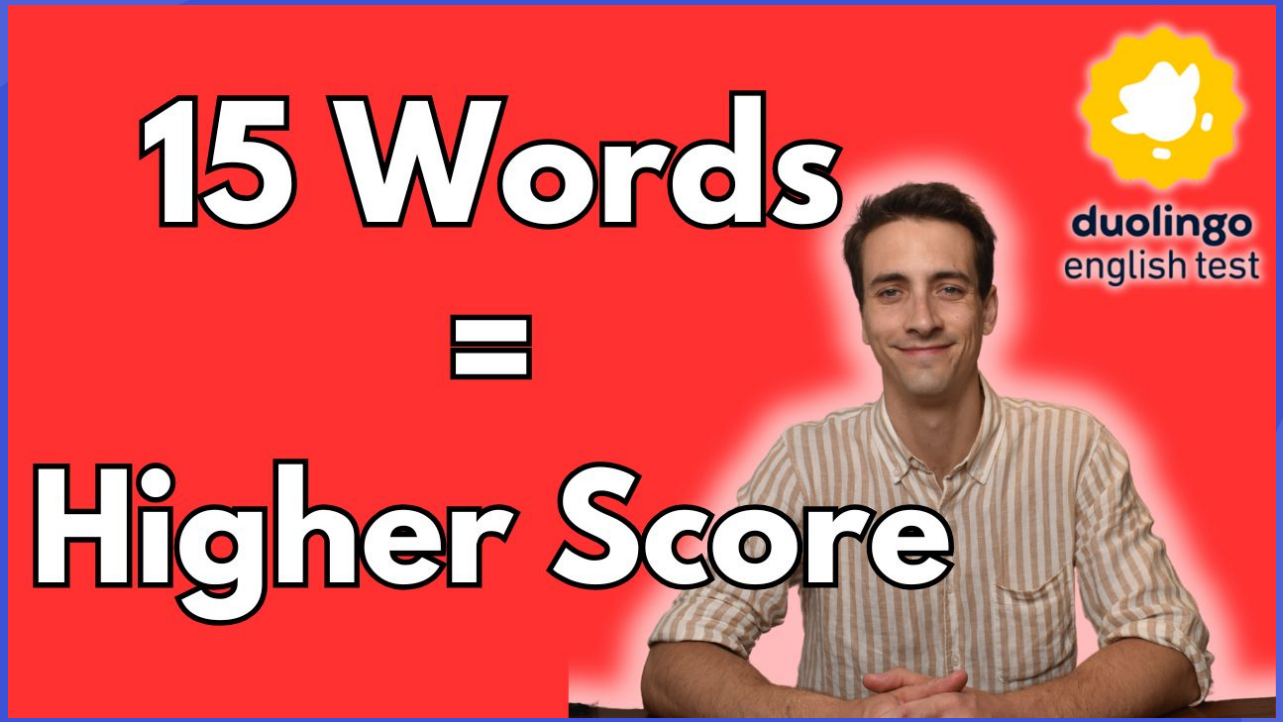

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1. However

- This is a direct synonym for “but”.
- However, it is more formal so it will get you more points!
- ☝ Note! It requires a different grammar.
- You have to start a new sentence.
- *I wanted to go to the gym, **but** I was too busy.*
- *I wanted to go to the gym. **However**, I was too busy.*

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2. On balance

- Great for questions in which you need to discuss advantages and disadvantages, which is common on the DET.
  - *Working from home has become popular, but working in an office is still common. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each. Which do you prefer and why? Provide examples.*
- Useful when you want to state your opinion succinctly.
- *Although there are advantages and disadvantages to both, **on balance** I prefer working from home.*

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3. Nonetheless

- Also great for questions in which you need to discuss advantages and disadvantages
- You can use it to transition from one side of the argument to the other.

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3. Nonetheless

There are many advantages to working from home. First, it is more convenient. I do not have to commute to the office, so I save time. Second, it is cheaper. I do not have to go to a restaurant for lunch. Third, my home is more comfortable than the office.

***Nonetheless**, there are disadvantages to working from home. The main disadvantage is that I don't get to spend time with my colleagues. In addition, I do not get to see as much of my city because I'm at home all day.*

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4. As a result

- This is a synonym for the simpler word “so”.
- ☝ Note! It requires a different grammar.
- You have to start a new sentence.
- *It was raining, **so** we did not go to the park.*
- *It was raining. **As a result**, we did not go to the park.*

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5. In contrast

- This is an elegant way to show difference.
- It's a synonym for "but" or "however" (but not a direct synonym).
- *I like chocolate ice cream.* ***In contrast****, my girlfriend likes vanilla.*
- *Paris is expensive.* ***In contrast****, Montreal is more affordable.*

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6. Although

- You can use “although” instead of “but” or “however”.
- ☝ Note! It requires a very different grammar.
- This is why it gets you more points: It completely changes your sentence structure.
- *I like the mountains,* ***but*** *my family likes the beach.*
- ***Although*** *my family likes the beach, I like the mountains.*

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7. In my view

- This is a direct synonym for “I believe” or “In my opinion.”
- But, it’s a little more formal, so you will get more points!
- ***In my view**, family is the most important thing.*
- ***In my view**, young people should focus on their education.*

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8. In retrospect

- Useful when describing the past.
- It literally means, “looking back.”
- You can use it to say that something is clear now that was not clear in the past.
- *My experience of living in China was difficult. However, **in retrospect** I can appreciate all of the lessons it taught me.*
- *I did not pass the exam. **In retrospect**, I should have studied more.*

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9. Profound

- This is a nice synonym for “important” and “significant.”
- It is emphasizes something that goes deep.
- *My trip through Vietnam had a **profound** impact on me.*
- *The new apartment buildings have **profoundly** changed the neighborhood.*

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10. In sum

- This is a direct synonym for “in conclusion” but is a little more elegant, so it will get you more points.
- It’s great for your concluding sentence or paragraph.
- ***In sum***, *I believe it is important for children to be taught about mental health in schools.*

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11. Depicts

- This is a direct synonym for “shows” but it is more elegant so it will get you more points.
- *This image **shows** = This image **depicts***
- *This image **depicts** a family having dinner.*

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12. Judging by

- This is a way to indicate why you are making a certain observation or conclusion about an image.
- In other words, it is a way to indicate your evidence.

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12. Judging by

Judging by the orange and red colors in the sky, I think that this picture was taken during sunset.

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12. Judging by

Judging by her smile, she seems to enjoy the scent of the flower.

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13. Background

- It means the stuff behind the main things in a photo.

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13. Background

In the background, there are many tall buildings.

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14. Foreground

- It is the opposite of “background”.
- It means things in front, close to the camera.
- If you use the “background” it’s a good idea to also use “foreground.”

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14. Foreground

In the background, there are many tall buildings.

In the foreground, there are people walking.

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15. Make out

- This is a synonym for “I see.”
- But, “I can make out” implies that something is difficult to see.

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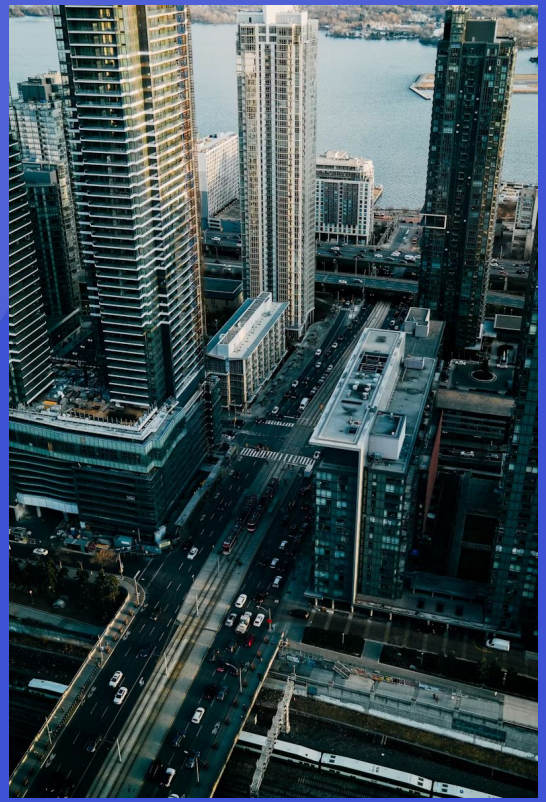
15. Make out



I can make out many cars on the road.

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15. Make out

I can make out three grey chairs.