

## Using the Dictionary as a Writing Tool

A dictionary is in some respects superior to a thesaurus as a source for synonyms and antonyms. The dictionary provides definitions of words (so you know you are choosing an appropriate replacement) and in so doing it may also suggest new ideas that can help to extend or clarify your own thinking.

In the following sentences, replace the word **hard** with as many synonymous words or phrases as you can find by looking up the word in a college or (preferably) unabridged dictionary. (Note: do not use the obvious synonyms **difficult** or **firm**—we want this to be a “hard” exercise!)

Example: The currency is hard.

. . . stable.

. . . convertible into gold.

. . . backed with sufficient reserves.

1. The hard weather kept us inside.
2. It is a hard problem, indeed.
3. He was hard and selfish in his treatment of others.
4. She drove a hard bargain.
5. The incident left everyone with hard feelings.
6. The prosecution presented no hard evidence.
7. He’s been drinking hard stuff again.
8. The broadcast was entertaining but provided no hard news.
9. I fear I have hard news for you.
10. The bare lightbulb cast a hard light on the table.

11. She owes her fortune to long hours and hard work.
12. The water was extremely hard.
13. The tax placed a hard burden on the poor.
14. Too much tennis can be hard on the shoulder.
15. The essay was full of hard words.
16. She wore a hard smile.
17. The reactor shielding was too thin to stop hard radiation.
18. We need to take a hard look at this problem.