

"When I use a word", Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean — neither more nor less".

Lewis Carroll

Analyse	Show the essence of something, by breaking it down into its component parts and examining each part in detail
Argue	Present the case for and/or against a particular proposition
Compare	Look for similarities and differences between propositions
Criticise	Give your judgement about the merit of theories or opinions about the truth of facts, and back your judgement by a discussion of the evidence
Define	Set down the precise meaning of a word or phrase. Show that the distinctions implied in the definition are necessary.
Describe	Give a detailed or graphic account
Discuss	Investigate or examine by argument, sift and debate, giving reasons for and against
Enumerate	List or specify and describe
Evaluate	Make an appraisal of the worth of something, in the light of its apparent truth or utility; include your personal opinion
Examine	Present in depth and investigate the implications
Explain	Make plain, interpret, and account for in detail
Illustrate	Explain and make clear by the use of concrete examples, or by the use of a figure or diagram
Interpret	Bring out the meaning of, and make clear and explicit; usually also giving your own judgement
Justify	Show adequate grounds for decisions or conclusions
Outline	Give the main features or general principles of a subject, omitting minor details, and emphasising structure and relationship
Prove	Demonstrate truth or falsity by presenting evidence
Relate	Narrate/show how things are connected to each other, and to what extent they are alike or affect each other
Review	Make a survey of, examining the subject critically
State	Specify fully and clearly
Summarise	Give a concise account of the chief points or substance of a matter, omitting details and examples
Trace	Identify and describe the development or history of a topic from some point or origin — adapted from Harry Maddox <i>How to Study</i> , 2nd edn., Pan Books, London, 1967, pp. 119–120.

SOURCE: MARSHALL, L.A. & ROYLANDS, F.A. (1990) *A Guide to Learning INDEPENDENTLY*. Longman Cheshire, Melbourne.