

11.1 Building vocabulary

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 16 marks

KEY WORDS vocabulary 词汇 • building vocabulary 积累词汇

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on **building vocabulary** 积累词汇 — learning words in a way that makes them available when you write.

You must be able to:

- record a word with the information you will actually need
- use collocation and word families to multiply what one word gives you
- choose a precise word instead of a vague one plus an adverb

1 Worked examples

■ Record more than the translation

A word list of English and Chinese alone will not help you write. Record four things:

Word	Part of speech	Collocation	Your sentence
reluctant	adjective	<i>reluctant to do something</i>	She was reluctant to admit she was lost.
decline	verb	<i>decline an invitation</i>	He declined the invitation politely.

The **collocation** is what stops you writing *reluctant of doing*. The preposition is part of the word.

■ Word families multiply one word

decide (v) → decision (n) → decisive (adj) → decisively (adv) → indecisive (adj)

Learning the family costs a few minutes and gives you five words, plus the ability to vary a sentence: *He decided quickly → He was decisive.*

■ Precision beats intensifiers

Vague + intensifier	Precise
very tired	exhausted
very hungry	starving
very surprised	astonished
very big	enormous
very small	tiny
very good	excellent

An examiner sees *very* many times a day. A precise word is what earns the vocabulary credit.

■ Learn words from your own reading

The words worth learning are the ones you meet in something you were reading anyway. A word met in context, in a sentence you understood, is remembered; a word from a list of fifty is not.

2 Practice

2.1 Replace each phrase with one precise word.

[4]

(a) very cold

(b) very happy

(c) very frightened

(d) very interesting

2.2 Complete the word family.

[3]

(a) succeed (v) → _____ (n) → _____ (adj)

(b) strong (adj) → _____ (n) → _____ (v)

(c) analyse (v) → _____ (n) → _____ (adj)

2.3 Give the correct preposition.

[3]

(a) It depends _____ the weather.

(b) She is good _____ chemistry.

(c) He apologised _____ being late.

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Rewrite this paragraph, replacing every vague word with a precise one.

[4]

The trip was very good. We saw some very nice buildings and the guide was very interesting. It was a very long day but we were all very happy.

3.2 Explain why recording only the English word and its translation is not enough to be able to use the word. [2]
