The glossary is one of twenty in various subject areas of vocational education designed to assist the student in vocabulary mastery for particular vocational education courses. They are part of the Vocational Reading Power Project, Title III, E.S.E.A. This glossary is for a course in dental office assisting. It is divided into two parts: one provides the student with two definitions for each term listed; the second part lists the same words with space for the student's definition. It is intended that upon completion of the course, mutually agreeable definitions for each term will be arrived at by the instructor and the students. These definitions will be made available to future students taking the course. (AG)
DENTAL OFFICE ASSISTING
Glossary of Key Words

Vocational Reading Power
E.S.E.A. Title III
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To The Student

This Glossary of Key Words was prepared to help you in your course. The words that follow were judged by your instructor to be the most important for you to understand.

Directions

The Glossary is divided into two parts. The first part lists the key words at the left side of the page. Across from the key words are two definitions for that word. The "A" definition is more difficult and specific. The "B" definition is easier and more general. During a learning activity, you are to use both definitions to help you understand. After the learning activity, you are to write your definition of the word as you understand it.

The second part just lists words. There is space for you to write your understanding of those words. Also, at the end of the booklet are blank lines. Here, you and your instructor will list and define the words which were left out.

At the end of the course, your definitions and the instructor's definitions will be joined together. These will be printed and given to the students who come after you have graduated. It is hoped that, with your help, the future students of vocational education will be greatly benefited.
a) PRIMARY
b) SECONDARY

**TECHNICAL**

**ALGINATE**

- a) A gelatinous substance used in dentistry as an elastic impression material.
- b) A jelly-like material used in dentistry to make a mold of the teeth and surrounding tissues.

**AMALGAM**

- a) In dentistry a compound of mercury, silver, tin and other metals for filling teeth.
- b) A mixture of mercury with any other metal or metals.

**BASEPLATE**

- a) A temporary form of "Gutta-Percha" used in constructing trial plates for dentures.
- b) A sheet of plastic material. It is used in making a denture base. This base is then placed in the mouth to check the fit.

**BUCCAL**

- a) Pertaining to the cheek.
- b) Referring to the inner side of the cheek.
- a) The surface of a tooth which faces or lies against the cheek.
- b) The side of the tooth which is next to the cheek.

**CANINE**

- a) A cuspid tooth.
- b) The tooth situated after the four front teeth.

**CARIES**

- a) A disease process which attacks the hard tissues of the teeth, demineralizing and eventually destroying these hard tissues.
- b) Decay of the teeth.

**CAVOSURFACE**

- a) The margin of a cavity preparation, or the angle formed by the walls of the cavity preparation and the surface of the tooth.
- b) The edge of cleaned ground cavity.

**CEMENTOBLASTS**

- a) The special cells that are active in the formation of the cementum.
- b) The special cells that make up the tissue that covers the root of the tooth.
a) PRIMARY  
b) SECONDARY

CEMENTUM  
   a) A bone-like substance but not as hard as bone which forms a protective layer over the root portion of the dentin.  
   b) A thin bone-like tissue covering the root of the tooth.

CORONAL  
   a) Referring to the crown or visible portion of a tooth as seen in the mouth.  
   b) Same.

CUSP  
   a) A pointed or rounded part of tooth, usually on the chewing surface.  
   b) Same.

CUSPID  
   a) A canine tooth.  
   b) The tooth situated after the four front teeth.

CYANOTIC  
   a) Bluish tinge in the color of mucous membrane and skin due to excessive concentration of reduced hemoglobin in the blood.  
   b) Blueness of the skin, and especially the lips and nails. Caused by not enough oxygen in the blood.

DENTAL  
   a) Pertaining to teeth.  
   b) Same.

DENTIN  
   a) Calcified hard tissue forming the main body of a permanent tooth. It lies beneath the enamel on the crown of the tooth, and the cementum of the pulp. It surrounds and protects the pulp chamber and root canals which contain the dental pulp.

   b) Hard tissue forming the main part of a permanent tooth. It lies under the enamel (the covering of the visible portion of the tooth) and under the cementum (the covering of the root or that part of the tooth planted in the jaw bone). It surrounds and protects the pulp chamber and root canals which contain the dental pulp or nerve.
a) The profession that is concerned with the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the teeth, oral tissues, and the restoration of missing dental and oral structures. Treatment performed by dentists.

b) The health service that is concerned with the diseases of the mouth.

a) The natural or artificial teeth of an individual considered as a unit.

b) An entire set of teeth - either natural or artificial.

a) Pertaining to the face; the outer (buccal and labial) surfaces of the teeth.

b) Pertaining to the face; refers to those surfaces of the upper and lower teeth toward the lips and cheeks.

a) That part of the gum (oral mucous membrane) which surrounds the tooth and covers the alveolar process.

b) The gum.

a) Of or pertaining to the soft tissues which surround the tooth.

b) Same.

a) A very common mineral, native calcium sulfate, occurring in crystals and in masses, soft enough to be scratched by the fingernail. Used to make plaster of Paris.

b) A very common mineral used to make plaster of Paris.

a) In dentistry, an instrument designed to hold burs, stones, and other dental instruments and appliances to permit various operative procedures.

Example:
1. Star Futura High Speed
2. Contra-Angle Slow Speed
3. Dorit Straight Slow Speed

b) Same.
a) PRIMARY

b) SECONDARY

HARELIP

a) A congenital split or cleft in the upper lip.

b) A split or cleft in the upper lip which is present at birth.

INCISORS

a) A cutting tooth. Any one of the four front teeth of either jaw.

b) Same.

INLAY

a) A dental restoration constructed outside of the mouth in the form of the prepared cavity and then inserted and cemented into the cavity.

b) A filling made outside the mouth which corresponds with the form of a dental cavity and then cemented into the cavity.

INTERDENTAL

a) Between the proximal surfaces of adjacent teeth in the same dental arch.

b) Located or placed between the teeth.

INTERPROXIMALLY

a) Situated between the proximal surfaces of adjoining teeth of the same arch.

b) Between two adjoining tooth surfaces.

LABIAL

a) Pertaining to the lips. The outer surfaces of the anterior teeth, (or surfaces next to the lips).

b) Pertaining to the lips. The side or tooth surface (of anterior teeth) next to the lips.

LEUKOCYTES

a) A white blood cell. One of the colorless cells of the blood. Its chief function is to protect the body against microorganisms causing disease.

b) Same.

LINGUAL

a) Of or pertaining to the tongue; toward the tongue. That side of the tooth which lies next to the tongue.

b) Same.

MANDIBULAR

a) Pertaining to or involving the mandible (the bone of the lower jaw).

b) Same.
HARELIP

INCISORS

INLAY

INTERDENTAL

INTERPROXIMALLY

LABIAL

LEUKOCYTES

LINGUAL

MANDIBULAR
a) PRIMARY
b) SECONDARY

MATRIX
a) Any material that is used to supply a missing wall of a cavity in order to retain a filling material while in a plastic state.
b) Same.

MEDICAMENT
a) A substance used as a medicinal agent.
b) A substance such as a medicine or linament.

MEDICATION
a) The use or application of a drug or curative substance.
b) Same.

MEDIOLINGUAL
a) Pertaining to the mesial surface and the lingual surface of a tooth.
b) Pertaining to the side of the tooth closest the midline and the side of the tooth next to the tongue.

MIDLINE
a) An imaginary line that divides something into two equal parts.
b) Same.

MOLAR
a) One of the grinding teeth found in the back of the mouth.
b) Same.

NEUROGENIC
a) Forming nervous tissue or generating nervous energy.
b) Producing nerves or nervous tissue. Starting from nerves or from nerve impulses.

OCCLIDE
a) To close; specifically, to close so that the cusps of the posterior teeth fit together.
b) Upper and lower teeth meet and fit together so jaws are closed.

OCCLUSAL
a) The grinding or chewing surfaces of a posterior tooth; pertaining to closure of the jaws.
b) Same.
a) PRIMARY
b) SECONDARY

OCCLUSALLY
a) Pertaining to the chewing surfaces of the posterior teeth.
b) Same.

ORAL
a) Pertaining to the mouth.
b) Same.

OSTEOBLASTS
a) Any cell active in producing bone or any cell which develops into bone.
b) Any bone-forming or bone-producing cell.

PALATE
a) The roof of the mouth.
b) Same.

PAROTID
a) Situated near the ear, as the parotid gland.
b) Same.

PATHOGENIC
a) Disease producing, able to produce a disease.
b) Same.

PERIODONTAL
a) Around a tooth.
b) Same.

PHAGOCYTOSIS
a) The process by which certain cells of the body engulf or ingest bacteria and other undesirable organisms.
b) The process by which certain cells of the body destroy bacteria and other undesirable organisms.

PRESCRIBE
a) To lay down in writing or otherwise, and is to be followed as a remedy or treatment.
b) Same.

PROPHYLACTIC
a) Protecting from disease, preventive.
b) Same.
a) PRIMARY
b) SECONDARY

PROXIMAL
a) Nearest to the median line of the body, or to a point considered as the center of a system. Proximal surface - that surface next to the adjacent tooth.
b) Same.

PTYALIN
a) An enzyme, found in the saliva that converts starch to simple sugar - dextrin, maltose, and glucose.
b) Same.

PULP
a) The soft tissue found in the center of the tooth. The inner substance of the tooth containing arteries, veins, lymphatic and nerve tissue, all of which connect to the rest of the body, supply the tooth its means of sensation and nutrition.
b) The soft tissue found in the center of the tooth. The inner substance of the tooth contains arteries, veins, and nerve tissue, all of which connect to the rest of the body, supply the tooth its means of sensation, nutrition and protection against undesirable organisms.

PULPITIS
a) Inflammation of the dental pulp. It may cause a toothache.
b) Same.

PYORRHEA
a) A copious discharge of pus, especially progressive inflammatory and degenerative changes in the periodontium, usually characterized by a pus-like discharge from the alveoli of the teeth, it causes loosening of the teeth. The treatment requires special procedures.
b) A deep inflammation (heat, tender, red) of the gums, involving the covering of the roots of the teeth and the tooth sockets. If not checked, it causes loosening of the teeth. The treatment requires special procedures.
a) PRIMARY
b) SECONDARY

SALIVA

a) The liquid discharge into the mouth by the salivary glands. It serves to moisten and soften the food, thus aiding in chewing and swallowing. It contains an enzyme (a substance aiding some chemical action) which helps in the digestion of starch, converting it into a simple sugar.

b) Same.

SALIVARY

a) Pertaining to saliva; concerned with the production of saliva; as, salivary gland, a gland producing saliva.

b) Same.

SCALFÈL

a) A surgical knife with a short but very sharp blade.

b) Same.

SEDATIVE

a) A medicine which lessens nervousness, excitement, irritability, and indirectly also pain. Having a calming effect on nervousness, irritability, etc.

b) Same.

SPORES

a) A reproductive cell of some lower organisms including some bacteria; a "seed" from which a micro-organism may develop.

b) Same.

STERILE

a) Free from bacteria or other micro-organisms.

b) Same.

STERILIZATION

a) The complete destruction of bacteria and any other micro-organisms by the use of heat, chemicals, or any other means.

b) Same.

SYNCOPE

a) To faint. A temporary loss of consciousness, usually due to a failure in the blood supply to the brain. If such is the case, relief may be obtained by putting the patient down with his head lower than his feet.

b) Same.
a) PRIMARY

b) SECONDARY

TARTAR
a) A hard, crusty concentration that is often deposited on the surfaces of the teeth.
b) A hard crusty mass that collects on the teeth.

TOPICAL
a) Intended for application to the surface or to a particular spot.
b) Same.

VASCULAR
a) Pertaining to, or involving vessels.
b) Same.

VIRUS
a) A class of very small germs or infecting agents which cause many diseases. They are too small to be seen by the eye, even through a microscope, and are capable of multiplying only in the living cells of some organism.
b) Same.
a) PRIMARY
b) SECONDARY

GENERAL TECHNICAL

ANESTHETIC

a) (1) Pertaining to insensibility.
(2) Producing an absence of feeling or the senses of pain, pressure and touch.
(3) A substance which suspends temporarily the senses of pain, pressure and touch when administered in the proper manner.
b) Same.

ANESTHETIZED

a) To make a part of the body insensitive to feeling.
b) Same.

ANOMALIES

a) A deviation from the usual or normal, the location of a structure or organ (as the mouth) in an unusual place as on the forehead.
b) An organ or structure unusual in form or location. Example: Cleft Palate.

BACILLI

a) The plural for bacillus. A rod shaped microorganism. Sometimes the organisms have a tendency to link end to end, and thus form loose chains. Some of the bacilli are pathogenic (disease producing), others are harmless.
b) Same.

BUR

a) A cutting instrument used by a dentist in preparing a tooth for a restoration. They come in many shapes and sizes operated usually in the handpiece of the dental engine for excavating (removing) tooth decay and for other purposes.
b) Same.

CALCIFICATION

a) The process by which organic tissue becomes hardened by a deposit of calcium or any mineral salts within its substance.
b) The deposit of calcium in the tissues of the body whereby soft tissues are made hard.
a) A metallic element found abundantly in nature and present in nearly all tissues, especially teeth and bone.
b) Same.

a) A hard calcium deposit on the tooth, usually near the gum line or where the teeth overlap, places which are hard to brush clean.
b) This deposit must be removed by either the dentist or a dental hygienist.

a) A positive reproduction or duplication of all or part of the dental arch.
b) The duplication of several teeth or of the entire dental arch. Usually made out of plaster of Paris.

a) To form a substance, as molten metal or a plastic, into a particular shape by pouring or injecting into a mold.
b) Same.

a) Noun - A metallic object formed by using a wax replica, melting out the wax, and replacing it with molten metal.
Verb - The process of making the replica in the mold.
b) Noun - A metallic object formed by using a wax form, melting out the wax, and replacing it with liquid metal.
Verb - The process of making the forms in the mold.

a) A lesion or hollow space in the tooth made by dental decay.
A hollow or a space especially such as a space within an organ or within a body.
b) Same.

a) A dental instrument that has a wedged shape blade. The blade may be curved or straight.
This tool is used for cutting or trimming tooth tissues (enamel and dentin).
a) PRIMARY
b) SECONDARY

CURETTES

a) An instrument, shaped like a spoon or scoop, for scraping away diseased or dead tissue.
b) Same.

DISTAL

a) Farthest from the front or center, as the surface or side of a tooth farthest from the midline of the dental arch.
b) Same.

EMULSION

a) In roentgenology, a gelatin suspension of silver halide salts; the x-ray sensitivity material which is applied to the cellulose acetate film in the manufacture of x-ray films.

A liquid preparation of the color and consistency of milk. This liquid preparation consists of minute particles of an oily, or fatty substance suspended in an aqueous fluid. Dental instruments are dipped into this solution which coats the instruments with oil. This helps to prevent corrosion during sterilization procedures.

b) In roentgenology, it is the x-ray sensitive layer on the x-ray film.

A liquid preparation the color and consistency of milk in which instruments are dipped prior to sterilization procedures. This oily liquid coats the instruments with a film of oil which helps to prevent corrosion during sterilization.

ENAMEL

a) Calcified tissue that covers and protects the coronal portion of the teeth. It is the hardest substance in the body. The thickness varies on the crown of the tooth. It is thicker in areas that are subject to greatest wear. Once it has been damaged or removed it is incapable of repair.

b) A very hard substance that covers and protects the visible (or crown) part of the teeth. It is the hardest substance in the body. The thickness varies on the crown of the tooth. It is thicker in the areas which receive greatest wear. Once it has been damaged it will not repair itself.
a) PRIMARY
b) SECONDARY

HOE (HOES)

a) A dental instrument that is used primarily on anterior teeth for the removal of caries and forming line angles. The cutting edge of the blade is in a plane perpendicular to the long axis of the handle. Instruments that are used to scale calcium deposits from the teeth.

b) A dental instrument that is used mainly on anterior teeth for the removal of tooth decay and for the shaping of a tooth cavity. Instruments that are used to remove hard deposits from the teeth.

IMPRESSION

a) A reverse or negative mold of all or part of an arch or tooth, so that a model, cast or duplicate can be made by pouring a mix of plaster into it.

b) A reverse mold of all or part of the teeth, so that a duplicate or model can be made by pouring a mix of plaster into it.

INVESTMENT

a) Some form of plaster material enclosing the wax pattern for crowns, inlays and dentures while they are being cast or processed.

b) Same.

MANDREL

a) A shank or spindle designed to fit a dental engine handpiece for the purpose of carrying a revolving instrument.

b) A shaft which holds a tool for rotation.

RADIATIZED

a) To sensitize something with radiant energy through a medium as a wave, as heat, light, sound, etc.

b) An object that has been affected by the activity of a wave, heat, light, or sound.

RETAINERS

a) 1. An appliance designed to stabilize teeth after orthodontic treatment.

2. A dental appliance that fits a prepared abutment tooth and supports a dental bridge.

b) 1. Any device that holds the teeth in position after they have been straightened by orthodontic treatment.

2. A dental appliance that is supported by two teeth.
a) PRIMARY
b) SECONDARY

RETRACTOR

a) A blunt instrument used in surgery to hold back the edges of an incision, or to keep organs and other internal structures out of the way of the field of operation.
b) A blunt instrument used in surgery to hold back flaps of tissue, or to keep organs and other inside structures out of the way of the operating field.

RHEOSTAT

a) An adjustable resistor so constructed that its resistance may be changed without opening the circuit in which it may be connected.
b) An adjustable device that changes the speed of the handpieces (drills).

SCALERS

a) An instrument for removing deposits from the surfaces of the teeth.
b) Same.
a) PRIMARY
b) SECONDARY

**CLUSTER WORDS**

**ABUTMENT TOOTH**

a) A tooth used to support or stabilize one end of a prosthetic appliance, such as a dental bridge.
b) A tooth used to support one end of an artificial device. Example: Dental bridge.

**ALVEOLAR BONE**

**ALVEOLAR PROCESS**

a) The bone of the jaw immediately surrounding and supporting the roots of the teeth.
b) Same.

**APICAL FORAMEN**

a) The opening in the tip of the root through which nerves and blood vessels flow.
b) Same.

**ARCH WIRE**

a) In orthodontics, the main wire framework which is attached to bands and passes around the entire dental arch, either on the lingual surface or facial surface or on both, and which serves as the frame of attachment for springs.
b) In orthodontics, the main wire framework which goes around the entire arch on either the front or back side of the teeth.

**BRACKET TABLE-TRAY**

a) A pastic metal or glass tray supported on an extension arm from the dental unit.
b) Same.

**CAROTID ARTERIES**

a) Two great arteries (tubes or blood vessels) on each side of the neck, which carry blood to the head.
b) Same.

**CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM**

a) The brain and the spinal cord.
b) Same.

**CENTRAL INCISOR**

a) The two front teeth, both upper and lower.
b) Same.
ABUTMENT TOOTH

ALVEOLAR BONE
ALVEOLAR PROCESS

APICAL FORAMEN

ARCH WIRE

BRACKET TABLE-TRAY

CAROTID ARTERIES

CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM

CENTRAL INCISOR
CLEFT PALATE  

a) A condition in which the roof of the mouth has a crack or split in it. This happens when the two sides of the roof of the mouth do not grow together along the midline before birth.

b) Same.

DENTAL ARCH  

a) The horseshoe-shaped curve made by the boney projection, gums, and teeth of either the upper and lower jaw.

b) Same.

DENTAL UNIT  

a) That piece of equipment which centers the electrical supply needed for the dental engine, operating light and accessory electrical instruments.

b) That piece of equipment which contains the electrical supply needed for the operation of the dental engine, light and various electrical instruments.

GOLD FOIL  

a) A thin sheet of metal, especially gold, used for filling teeth or in dental laboratory work.

b) Same.

HYDROCOLLOID CONDITIONER  

a) An automatically controlled device for heating and controlling the temperature of reversible hydrocolloid impression materials. These conditioners have separate temperature controls.

b) An automatically controlled water bath device for heating impression materials.

LATERAL INCISOR  

a) The teeth located next to the front teeth both upper and lower.

b) Same.

MATERIA ALBA  

a) A soft cheese-like white deposit on the necks of the teeth and adjacent gums made up of epithelial cells, leukocytes, bacteria, and molds.

b) A soft white deposit that collects on the surfaces of the teeth when they are not cleansed properly.

ORAL EVACUATOR  

a) A suction-like device that removes large amounts of fluid from the mouth.

b) Same.
a) PRIMARY
b) SECONDARY

**ORAL VESTIBULE**
a) The space or corridor between the teeth, jawbone and the lips and cheeks.
b) Same.

**PETTY CASH**
a) A cash fund maintained for the purchase of miscellaneous low-cost items where the ordinary use of checks is impracticable.
b) Same.

**RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY**
a) Replacement of missing teeth and portions of teeth.
b) Same.

**RESTORATIVE MATERIALS**
a) Those used in the replacement of lost or missing structures in the mouth.
b) Same.

**SALIVA EJECTOR**
a) A device that removes small amounts of fluid from the mouth.
b) Same.

**SYRINGE HYPODERMIC**
a) An instrument for introducing liquids through a hollow needle into subcutaneous tissue.
b) An instrument for introducing liquids through a hollow needle into tissue.

**SYRINGE**
a) A glass instrument.
b) Same.

**LUER'S OR LUER-LOK**

**SYRINGE - TRIPLEX**
a) A small, fine-nozzled instrument on the dental unit for blowing, washing or spraying away chips and cuttings while excavating a tooth cavity.
b) A small, fine-nozzled instrument on the dental unit for blowing, washing or spraying away chips and cuttings while cleaning out a tooth cavity.

**ULTRASPEED HANDPIECE**
a) An instrument designed to hold burs, stones and other dental instruments and appliances to permit various operative procedures. These instruments are air-driven and will attain speeds of approximately 300,000 rpm.
b) An instrument which holds and rotates various shanks. These shanks have cutting ends which are used in various dental procedures.

**VERMILLION BORDER**
a) The margin or line formed where the lips meet with the face.
b) Same.