

10 Things to Say About a Word*

1: **Semantic field:** What's the topic? Is this unexpected in the overall text? Might you expect to find it in a different type of text?

2: **Register:** Common / formal / colloquial / literary / scientific? Any surprises here?

3: Likely **etymology:** Old English / Middle English / Latinate / loan word / neologism? Impact?

4: **Syllables:** how many? Does this make the word more complex / more accessible?

5: **Morphology:** how many? How is inflection (tense, plurality, possession) adding to meaning? Does it make the word more complex?

6: **Orthography:** Is spelling regular / Americanised / phonetically regular? Any notable typographical features?

7: **Word formation:** How has the word been formed? Back-formation / compounding / blends / shortening / abbreviations / acronyms / conversion?

8: **Semantic change:** has the word changed over time Archaicism / broadening / narrowing / ameliorating / pejoration?

9: **Contextual change:** will the word change in contexts - political correctness / slang / euphemism / jargon?

10: **Effect:** so why might the reader have chosen this word in this context? What's its effect on you as a reader?

*Probably Mr B's best handout ever' says Ffoeg Ratnob