

## How many words are there in the English Language?

What do you think? Use the given numbers to complete the two paragraphs, then check the answers on the following page.

1. It has been estimated that about \_\_\_\_\_ words exist (including scientific and technical).
2. The largest dictionary has around \_\_\_\_\_ entries.
3. An educated native speaker knows about \_\_\_\_\_ words.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ words are sufficient for communication.
5. The \_\_\_\_\_ most frequently used words form a 'core' (those used by uneducated natives).

**50,000**

**2 million**

**5,000**

**600,000**

**2,000**

### The Portuguese Language

The biggest dictionary has about **230,000 entries**. It has been argued that the number of Portuguese words is indeed about the same as the number of English, but that no-one would want to buy a dictionary of **600,000 Portuguese words!** But since English is the "International" language in today's world, many people are willing to buy a comprehensive "reference" book of all possible words.

**Answers:**

1. It has been estimated that about **2 million** words exist (including scientific and technical).
2. The largest dictionary has around **600,000** entries.
3. An educated native speaker knows about **50,000** words.
4. **5,000** words are sufficient for communication.
5. The **2,000** most frequently used form a 'core' (those used by uneducated natives).