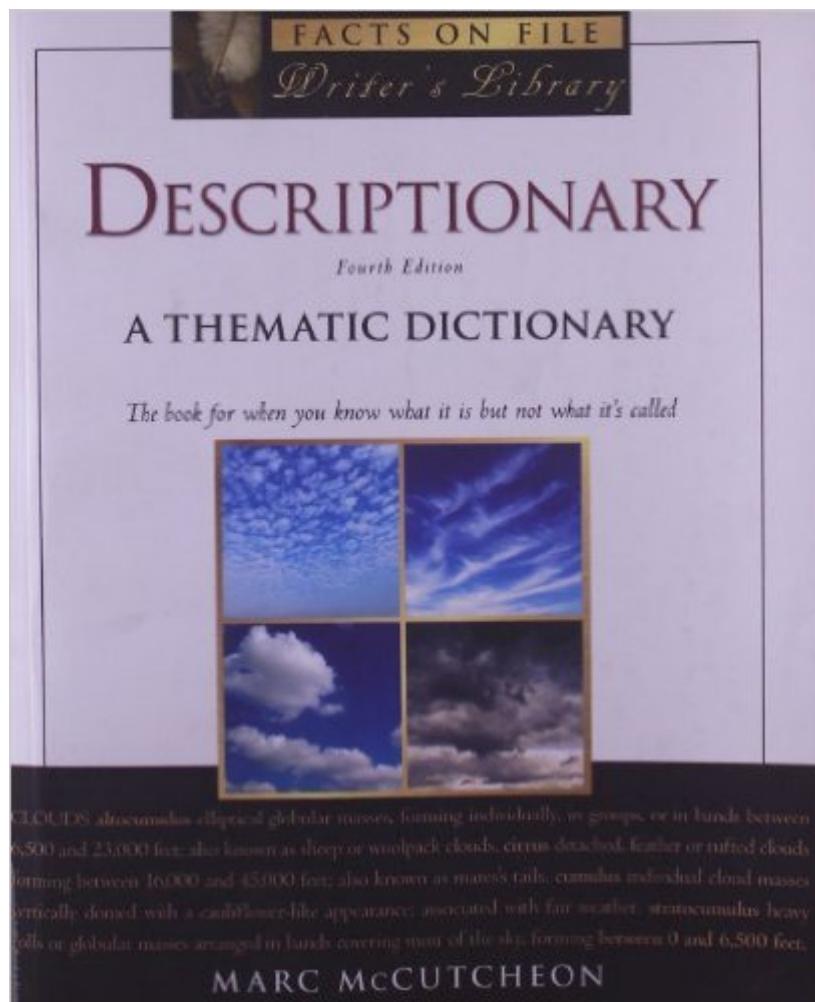


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# Descriptionary: A Thematic Dictionary (Writers Library) (Facts On File Writer's Library)



## Synopsis

At last, here's a reference book that works the way the mind works, allowing students to locate that elusive word to the specific thing, e.g., What do you call that belt for a tuxedo? Answer: Cummerbund. "This book is one of those small wonders...Highly recommended." -- THE BOOK REPORT.

## Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #546,122 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #138 inÂ  Books > Reference > Dictionaries & Thesauruses > Thesauruses #665 inÂ  Books > Textbooks > Reference > Dictionaries #957 inÂ  Books > Reference > Dictionaries & Thesauruses > Dictionaries

## Customer Reviews

The organization of this dictionary is unique and mostly successful. I set myself a task of trying to "find" seven items: igneous rock, a Nehru jacket, plie, onomatopoeia, ballast and cream. Finding a category called Environment led to a subcategory of Geology which was 3 pages long -- it took about 30 seconds to find "igneous". Looking under Clothing and then right on to the Jackets subcategory, I was able to find "Nehru jacket" in about ten seconds. Performing Arts and Broadcasting led to a subcategory of Dance and a sub-subcategory of Ballet which was 2 pages long -- it took only 12 seconds to find "plie". A category called Words About Words was 8 pages long -- trying to find "onomatopoeia" here, if you didn't know what letter it started with, was time-consuming; still, it was easier than finding it in a standard dictionary! It was surprisingly easy to find "ballast", listed under Transportation and located in the short listing under the sub-category Aviation, sub-subcategory Aircraft and sub-sub-subcategory Balloons. Finally, trying to find out about the layers of milk to find "cream" was unsuccessful. Looking under Animals and then the subcategory Livestock I found only a list of dairy cattle breeds, and looking in the index at the back

under "dairy" and "milk" I found nothing applicable, though I did look up "milk-kneading" and "milk-teeth" when I ran across them just out of curiosity. And that is a positive feature -- that this dictionary, like many good reference tools, allows and even encourages serendipitous forays into its contents. There is a very inclusive alphabetical index at the back, in case you don't know where to begin in an organizational map such as the Contents.

De.scrip.tion.ary, n., a big book of words arranged in a common sense order designed to help the reader find an unknown word. Similar to dictionary and thesaurus, with key differences. Many times, people have the word just on the tip of their tongues, but cannot find the word. Dictionaries are often no help in such instances. Despite the wealth of information contained therein, and the imminently logical organisation (the same goes for a thesaurus), often what is needed is more of a reverse directory. Indeed, comedians past and present have made entire routines out of the difficulties of using a dictionary (how does one look up the spelling of a word if one doesn't know how to spell it?). While these difficulties have doubtless been exaggerated, there is definitely room on the reference shelf for a book such as the Descriptionary, a wonderful resource for finding just the right word from a definition. A standard dictionary will tell you the meaning of a word, a thesaurus will give you a list of synonyms, but only Descriptionary directs you straight to the word itself. The Descriptionary is arranged thematically. These themes are developed and arranged by broad category, narrowing the field of research for any given word search. Under each broad theme, there are literally thousands of words. The definitions are not lengthy, but just of sufficient length to permit identification.

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