newspaper descriptions of drag races, "chickie" runs, gang fights, or other incidents involving so-called "hoods." From these accounts he picks up further additions to his garbled and unusual language.

Perhaps the most unfortunate aspect of the "hood's" language and the one most responsible for his behavior, however, is his incorrect interpretation of such abstract concepts as "faith," "courage," "heart," "loyalty," and the like. Perceiving the significance of these words by their use in reference to deeds of valor or love, yet failing to receive instruction in their exact meaning, the "hood" attaches the importance of these words to trivial occurrences within the realm of his own experience. Taken into custody for slaying a member of a rival gang, one teenager explained that his friends had "faith" in his ability to carry out his assignment, and, although he liked his victim personally, his "loyalty" to his gang was more important. The "hood" also uses the terms "courage" and "heart" in justifying his "chickie" runs, Russian roulette, and other deadly games. In his efforts to live up to his incorrect ideals, to flaunt his disrespect for his parents, and to be different from other teenagers, the "hood" is sometimes called a simple non-conformist, but an analysis of his language helps to explain his behavior as part of a group in more exact terms.

The Resources of the Dictionary

Don Mobley

A dictionary is many things to many people. To the businessman and the teacher, it is an indispensable tool. To a balking student, it may be a volume as vague as a folio of black magic. In order to discuss the use of a dictionary, however, one must find some means of comparison. Surely, the extraction of precious metals from ore seems analogous, and, as in metallurgy, both good and bad methods persist. Amalgamation and gravitation are, for example, important both to mining and to the mind.

In amalgamation, gold particles from crushed ore are obtained by associating them with mercury. A process of selective differentiation must then follow. Words, too, are associated and differentiated between, even some which seem at first glance to be synonymous. For example, although "stench" and "fragrance" are definitely allied, a rose does not possess "stench" nor garbage "fragrance." The words are associated, but in each case one noun is the gold and the other the mercury. The value of associating true synonyms, however, cannot be overestimated. Although standard dictionaries list many such specific works as Dr. Devlin's Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms have fulfilled a need, the wailing of which could be heard from the halls of Harvard to the doorsteps of Cal Tech.

Gravitation, the settling out of heavier particles, occurs in a huge vat. The lighter metals are held in the surface froth and can be skimmed off. A student, too, can lightly skim off the "surface froth" of his dictionary—and achieve only the mediocre triteness of cotton
candy. By scraping the bottom of the "vat," he obtains a syrupy sludginess which may adhere so to the feet of an unfortunate reader that comprehension is impossible. The old adage, "A rolling stone gathers no moss," can accurately be transformed into: "A rotating sphere of petrified terrain congregates no foliaceous bryophytes"; but all effectiveness is drowned out by the words. Only by the proper blending of words, therefore, can the maximum effectiveness be achieved.

Thus, with care, the best term with just the proper inflection can be chosen. After all, a ton of sea water contains only one-tenth pound of bromine. One remaining method, the most common, needs mentioning. This is osmosis. While it is an infallible law where nonliving particles are involved, the mere proximity of student to dictionary does not initiate a flow of words from saturated book to vacant skull. First, any item must be used in order to be useful; there are no intrinsic values. Secondly, words do live and even undergo Darwinian evolution in which the natural selections of weather and climate are replaced by those of the Johnsons, Websters, and national influences. Of words, as of the soul, it can truly be said, "There is no death."

The conclusion is a simple one. A dictionary can be allowed to repose unmolested on the bookshelf or it can become an invaluable sourcebook of information. Whether or not to take full advantage of this source is a decision each of us must make for himself.

**Individuals, Classified**

**Deirdre Porter**

STUDY is defined in Webster’s New International Unabridged Dictionary as a “setting of the mind or thoughts upon a subject to be learned or investigated; application of the mind to books, arts, or any subject, for the purpose of acquiring knowledge.” This starched wording makes the occupation sound rather serious, as of course it is—to some. A survey of the approaches pupils take to the matter makes an interesting study in trait. Students in their methods vary as greatly as do their individual personalities, but fall generally into three broad classifications.

In the first group we find the person who studies with such assiduousness that one could be quite certain it is, as the old saying has it, “a matter of life or death.” So intent upon his task is he that he hears or sees nothing of the activity around him, if such there be, for indeed his solemn presence all but discourages it. Attention solely on the stacks of texts, notebooks, pens and pencils laid neatly within his reach, he sits with his body in the same military order, feet flat on the floor and together, spine straight, shoulders back—orderliness at perfection. One can almost visualize his mind, areas of thought accurately categorized and deftly filed under the proper subject for efficient reference.