

- 8. **A word of caution:** The exclamation mark (!), the three dots (...), the dash (-) and parentheses are not always used the same way in English as in French, and when used incorrectly, your writing will appear amateurish. The last two are more flexible than the first two. Note the following:
 - *We will have many problems to solve in the next decade!* (a period would be preferable to this exclamation mark, used in English mainly for surprise or shock)
 - *There are many reasons for violence: social inequality, unemployment, and so on! etc.!* (in English, three dots indicate that a whole, or part of thought is being purposely left out, for ex.: *Didn't she say she was...?*)
 - *Violence is a problem, but what can be done about it?* (comma preferable to dash)
 - *There are reasons for this, as we have seen.* (comma preferable to parentheses)

10. Colorful and colorless words

Throughout this book we have been talking about precision, and now we would like to give you a bit more material with which to bring your ideas into focus*. It's not that "general" words like good, bad, big and small aren't perfectly good words. On the contrary, they are absolutely necessary for expressing general ideas. Their only drawback is that they are extremely hungry words that have a tendency to devour all the particular words around them. This is not really fair*, and if we want to keep colorful and suggestive words alive, we have to put an end to our shameful* laziness* and make a special effort.

The words you see below are not synonyms for good, bad, etc., for there are very few synonyms in any language. They represent what are called semantic fields, families of words surrounding one general word - aspects of that word that have a particular color. For our purposes, we might say that "good" is a colorless word, but that "beneficial", one aspect of good-ness, immediately specifies what kind of good-ness we mean. The same for bad and dangerous, big and huge, small and insignificant, show and reflect, necessary and vital. Use an English dictionary, to define the unfamiliar words and discover the contexts in which they are used (a sizeable amount, a broad generalization, a leading company, a high-priority issue). And if you like this sort of work, we recommend a thesaurus (treasure) of English words. This fabulous book contains all the words and phrases suggested by one word. It will help you discover what you really mean to say. Here are a few examples.

- good** fine, valid, excellent, deserving, desirable, intelligent, beneficial, favorable, promising, advantageous, attractive, high-quality, efficient, effective, positive, reliable, dependable, workable, safe, sound, suitable, healthy, appropriate.
- bad** harmful, unhealthy, detrimental, damaging, dangerous, risky, disastrous, criminal, appalling, awkward, unacceptable, unsuitable, undesirable, unfavorable, not valid, inaccurate, ungrounded, poor, futile, useless, absurd, foolish, ridiculous.

- big** large, huge, enormous, tremendous, sizeable, vast, extensive, broad, significant, outstanding, leading, foremost, prominent, influential.
- small** minor, secondary, negligible, insignificant, inadequate, limited, unsatisfactory.
- stop** put an end to, destroy, wipe out, end, cease, forbid, outlaw, bar, ban, exclude, have done with.
- show** indicate, express, explain, illustrate, specify, make clear, shed light on, reflect, reveal, inform.
- succeed** turn out well, work out, find a workable solution, get off the ground, take off, get ahead, get somewhere in the world, advance, fulfill dreams, fulfill one's potential.
- make** create, invent, devise, put together, organize, set up, establish, develop.
- think** assume, suppose, claim, argue, consider, look into, examine, imagine, feel, believe, view, take it for granted that, analyze.
- like** enjoy, take pleasure in, be keen on, appreciate, be eager to, cannot do without, partial to, inclined to, prone to, have a tendency to.
- get** obtain, acquire, receive, inherit, become, turn into, grow.
- idea** observation, impression, insight, plan, project, aim, goal, conviction, assumption, outlook, feeling.
- problem** question, issue, difficulty, quandary, a critical situation, dilemma, inconvenience, disadvantage, drawback.
- necessary** essential, vital, indispensable, much needed, basic, fundamental, imperative, urgent, a matter of life and death, high-priority, compulsory, obligatory, unavoidable.
- important** significant, relevant, decisive, serious, crucial, impressive, high-level, well-known, respected, worthwhile, of paramount importance.
- understand** be conscious of, aware of, realize, figure out, grasp the essence of, gain insight into, know in depth, have more than a superficial knowledge of.
- Interesting** thought-provoking, exciting, fascinating, have a passion for, stimulating, innovative, tempting, novel, intriguing, entertaining, captivating, original.

bring into focus préciser - *fair* juste - *shameful* honteux - *laziness* paresse.