

Definitions

Note the spelling, pronunciation, part(s) of speech, and definition(s) of each of the following words. Then write the word in the blank spaces in the illustrative sentence(s) following. Finally, study the lists of synonyms and antonyms.

- 1. adjourn**
(ə jərn')

(v.) to stop proceedings temporarily; move to another place
The judge _____ the hearing until ten o'clock the following morning.
SYNONYMS: postpone, discontinue
ANTONYMS: open, call to order
- 2. alien**
(ā' lē ən)

(n.) a citizen of another country; (adj.) foreign, strange
Movies about _____ from outer space have been extremely popular for decades.
An _____ species of plant or animal can upset the balance of an ecosystem.
SYNONYM: (adj.) exotic
ANTONYMS: (adj.) native, endemic
- 3. comely**
(kəm' lē)

(adj.) having a pleasing appearance
The proud parents and their _____ children posed for a family portrait.
SYNONYMS: good-looking, attractive, bonny
ANTONYMS: plain, homely, ugly, repulsive
- 4. compensate**
(kəm' pən sāt)

(v.) to make up for; to repay for services
The manufacturer was ordered to _____ customers injured by the defective product.
SYNONYMS: pay back, recompense
ANTONYMS: fail to reward, stiff
- 5. dissolute**
(dis' ə lüt)

(adj.) loose in one's morals or behavior
The mad Roman emperor Caligula led an extravagant and _____ life.
SYNONYMS: dissipated, debauched, immoral, corrupt
ANTONYMS: chaste, moral, seemly, proper
- 6. erratic**
(e rat' ik)

(adj.) not regular or consistent; different from what is ordinarily expected; undependable
Students who have an _____ attendance record may find themselves disciplined by the principal.
SYNONYMS: irregular, inconsistent
ANTONYMS: steady, consistent, dependable

- 7. expulsion**
(ek spəl' shən)

(n.) the process of driving or forcing out
The Biblical story of the _____ of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden is told in Genesis.
SYNONYMS: ejection, removal, eviction
ANTONYMS: admittance, admission
- 8. feint**
(fānt)

(n.) a deliberately deceptive movement; a pretense; (v.) to make a deceptive movement; to make a pretense of
The chess master's opening _____ gave her an immediate advantage.
His uncanny ability to _____ and counterpunch made the champ unbeatable.
SYNONYMS: (n.) trick, ruse, subterfuge, bluff
- 9. fodder**
(fād' ər)

(n.) food for horses or cattle; raw material for a designated purpose
Every experience in life is _____ for a novelist's imagination.
SYNONYM: provender
- 10. fortify**
(fōr' tə fi)

(v.) to strengthen, build up
The soldiers _____ the garrison against the expected attack.
SYNONYMS: reinforce, shore up
ANTONYMS: weaken, undermine, sap, impair
- 11. illegible**
(i lej' ə bəl)

(adj.) difficult or impossible to read
The effects of air pollution have rendered the inscriptions on many old gravestones _____.
SYNONYMS: unreadable, scribbled
ANTONYMS: readable, distinct, clear
- 12. jeer**
(jēr)

(v.) to make fun of rudely or unkindly; (n.) a rude remark of derision
To _____ at someone with a disability is absolutely inexcusable.
Umpires and other referees quickly become immune to the _____ of angry fans.
SYNONYMS: (v.) laugh at, mock, taunt (n.) gibe, insult
ANTONYMS: (v.) applaud, praise (n.) applause, plaudits
- 13. lucrative**
(lü' krə tiv)

(adj.) bringing in money; profitable
Many people find that they can turn a favorite hobby into a highly _____ business.
SYNONYMS: gainful, moneymaking
ANTONYMS: unprofitable, losing, in the red

- 14. mediocre**
(mē dē ō' kər)
(*adj.*) average, ordinary, undistinguished
The team's number-one draft pick turned out to be a rather _____ player, not a star who could lead them to the championship.
SYNONYM: run-of-the-mill
ANTONYMS: outstanding, distinguished
- 15. proliferate**
(prō lif' ə rāt)
(*v.*) to reproduce, increase, or spread rapidly
Because malignant cells _____, early detection of cancer is absolutely crucial to successful treatment.
SYNONYMS: multiply, mushroom, burgeon
ANTONYMS: decrease, diminish, dwindle, slack off
- 16. subjugate**
(səb' jū gāt)
(*v.*) to conquer by force, bring under complete control
"We must act quickly," the general said, "in order to _____ the rebel forces."
SYNONYMS: subdue, vanquish
ANTONYMS: be conquered, submit
- 17. sully**
(səl' ē)
(*v.*) to soil, stain, tarnish, defile, besmirch
The Nixon-era Watergate scandal _____ the image of politicians in the minds of many voters.
SYNONYMS: pollute, taint, smear
ANTONYMS: cleanse, purify, decontaminate
- 18. tantalize**
(tan' tə līz)
(*v.*) to tease, torment by teasing
When I am on a diet, the treats in bakery windows seem to have been put there to _____ me.
SYNONYMS: tempt, lead on, make one's mouth water
ANTONYMS: satisfy, fulfill, gratify
- 19. terse**
(tərs)
(*adj.*) brief and to the point
The manuscript for my short story was returned to me with a _____ letter of rejection.
SYNONYMS: succinct, crisp, short and sweet
ANTONYMS: wordy, diffuse, prolix
- 20. unflinching**
(ən flin' chīŋ)
(*adj.*) firm, showing no signs of fear, not drawing back
Everyone admires the _____ courage with which firefighters and other rescue workers carry out their dangerous jobs.
SYNONYMS: resolute, steadfast, unwavering
ANTONYMS: irresolute, wavering, vacillating

Choosing the Right Word

Select the **boldface** word that better completes each sentence. You might refer to the selection on pages 22–23 to see how most of these words are used in context.

- We all experience fear and panic, but the leader of a great nation must be able to (**tantalize**, **subjugate**) such emotions.
- Though a veteran soldier is often a well-tuned fighting machine, a raw recruit must be trained to avoid becoming cannon (**feint**, **fodder**).
- His behavior is so (**erratic**, **terse**) that we never know what to expect from him.
- When I first noticed how (**illegible**, **lucrative**) my roommate's handwriting was, I suggested that he sign up immediately for a course in penmanship.
- I would be unwilling to vote for the (**expulsion**, **fodder**) of club members just because they are behind in their dues.
- The desire to force everyone to accept the same set of ideas is completely (**illegible**, **alien**) to the spirit of democracy.
- After the formal dinner was over, we (**adjourned**, **tantalized**) to the den in order to continue our conversation in a more relaxed atmosphere.
- At one point in our fencing match, my opponent unexpectedly (**sullied**, **feinted**) to the left and threw me completely off guard.
- The Rake's Progress* paints a grim and uncompromising picture of some of the more (**dissolute**, **alien**) and degrading aspects of human behavior.
- In my opinion, his writing is so bad that he will have to improve a great deal just to reach the level of (**mediocrity**, **compensation**).
- To keep my self-respect, I must stand (**comely**, **unflinching**) before the authorities and tell them the truth as I see it.
- For centuries people have turned to the support of their friends and family to (**fortify**, **proliferate**) themselves against the shocks of daily life.
- "No," she said, "I won't (**sully**, **adjourn**) your ears by repeating those mean and nasty rumors."
- All great athletes should know that the same fans who are cheering them today may be (**jeering**, **subjugating**) them tomorrow.
- As soon as I entered that charming little cottage, I noticed that everything in it was neat and (**erratic**, **comely**).



Over 16 million men and women served in the United States armed forces during World War II.

- 16. Over the years I've noticed one thing about rumors: Where the facts are few, fictions (**proliferate, fortify**).
- 17. A best-selling book that is then made into a movie may be more (**dissolute, lucrative**) than the proverbial pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.
- 18. Even though I must work hard for a living, I feel that the company I'm with amply (**subjugates, compensates**) me for my time and effort.
- 19. Instead of all those long, flowery passages, why don't you try to write more in the (**mediocre, terse**) and direct style of a good newspaper reporter?
- 20. I can understand how ordinary people sometimes feel (**tantalized, jeered**) by the wealth and luxuries they see displayed on television programs.
- 21. When I asked my mother why she wouldn't let me borrow the car, she (**comely, tersely**) explained that she needed it for herself.
- 22. The (**feint, alien**), two-headed and covered with green scales, was grateful that the local people had welcomed him in spite of their misgivings.
- 23. The basketball team's uncharacteristic losing streak made the (**jeers, feints**) echoing throughout the arena sting even more.
- 24. The detective was frustrated by the (**illegibility, expulsion**) of the letter, which made it difficult to determine who had written it.
- 25. The little girl wanted to see her brother flinch, so she made a sudden (**sully, feint**).

Synonyms

Choose the word from this unit that is the same or most nearly the same in meaning as the **boldface** word or expression in the phrase. Write that word on the line. Use a dictionary if necessary.

- 1. found myself in **unfamiliar** territory _____
- 2. ordered to **reimburse** the victims of the swindle _____
- 3. tried to **master** my hot temper _____
- 4. a reputation for being **unpredictable** _____
- 5. ordered the **ouster** of seven career diplomats _____
- 6. **dodged** to the left and ran for a touchdown _____
- 7. a supply of necessary **provisions** for our livestock _____
- 8. written in an **indecipherable** scrawl _____
- 9. **suspend** the discussion because of the late hour _____
- 10. a **concise** answer _____

Antonyms

Choose the word from this unit that is most nearly opposite in meaning to the **boldface** word or expression in the phrase. Write that word on the line. Use a dictionary if necessary.

- 1. an **virtuous** lifestyle _____
- 2. handwritten text that was **comprehensible** _____
- 3. delivered a **verbose** speech about the economy _____
- 4. the villagers were forced to **yield** to the invaders _____
- 5. judged the work to be **exceptional** _____

Completing the Sentence

From the words in this unit, choose the one that best completes each of the following sentences. Write the word in the space provided.

- 1. Though he had a great sinker ball, he was so _____ on the mound that fans started to call him "Wild Pitch Hickok."
- 2. When the national economy is expanding, new housing developments begin to _____; when times are lean, construction slacks off.
- 3. The fact that you say you are truly sorry does not _____ for the pain I have suffered as a result of your cruelty.
- 4. Their so-called peace initiative proved to be nothing more than a clever _____ designed to lull the enemy into a false sense of security.
- 5. A telegram was usually as _____ as possible, since there was a charge for every word used in it.
- 6. A(n) _____ student is one who neither fails any subject nor receives any marks that are above average.
- 7. To enlarge the areas under their control, kings of old sent out their armies to _____ their neighbors.
- 8. The speaker advised us not to imitate the _____ kind of person who squanders time and money in the vain pursuit of pleasure.
- 9. In spite of all the adverse criticism her ideas have received, she remains _____ in her determination to improve our community.
- 10. Despite all my efforts to make this a(n) _____ enterprise, it continues to be a decidedly unprofitable organization.

11. When it is time to end one of our meetings, a member must make a motion to _____.
12. Their only response to my warnings was to _____ at me scornfully and go ahead with their plans.
13. Our doctor's handwriting is so _____ that my brother used one of his prescriptions as a teacher's pass.
14. Some people drink quantities of orange juice and swallow vitamin C tablets in a valiant attempt to _____ themselves against winter colds.
15. Our laws protect not only citizens but also _____ legally residing in this country.
16. The thoroughly disgraceful behavior of a few dissipated officers effectively _____ the honor of the entire unit.
17. How can you be so cruel as to _____ those poor dogs by offering them tidbits that you will never let them have?
18. Though she is not a beautiful woman by conventional standards, she is certainly _____ and appealing.
19. The farmer must provide storage facilities for the _____ he plans to set aside for his cattle during the long winter.
20. He was a changed young man after his _____ from West Point for "conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman."

Writing: Words in Action

1. Look back at "Cowgirl Up!" (pages 22–23). The history of cowgirls is the history of individual women who embodied the independent spirit of the West. Which woman profiled seems like the most quintessential, or ideal, cowgirl? Write a short expository essay explaining your choice. Begin your essay with your own definition of what a cowgirl is and the traits she embodies, based on your reading of the passage. Use at least two details from the passage and three unit words to support your understanding.
2. Think of a job held by people today—men or women—that is often looked down upon by society or made to seem undesirable or unimportant. What judgments do people make about this job? Why is the job nevertheless important and necessary? Support your ideas with specific details from your own experience and observations, as well as information you have gained from your own reading or media viewing. Write at least three paragraphs explaining your viewpoint, and use three or more words from this unit.

Vocabulary in Context

Literary Text

The following excerpts are from Charlotte Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre*. Some of the words you have studied in this unit appear in **boldface** type. Complete each statement below the excerpt by circling the letter of the correct answer.

1. After dinner, we immediately **adjourned** to the schoolroom: lessons recommenced, and were continued till five o'clock.
If you have **adjourned** you have
 a. turned your attention to c. sent a message
 b. moved to another place d. given up on
2. "My dear children," pursued the black marble clergyman, with pathos, "this is a sad, a melancholy occasion; for it becomes my duty to warn you, that this girl, who might be one of God's own lambs, is a little castaway: not a member of the true flock, but evidently an interloper and an **alien**."
Someone who is an **alien** is a(n)
 a. enemy c. stranger
 b. orphan d. spy
3. "I don't think she can ever have been pretty; but, for aught I know, she may possess originality and strength of character to **compensate** for the want of personal advantage."
If you do NOT **compensate** for something, you
 a. fail to stay on schedule
 b. forget about it
 c. misplace it
 d. fail to make up for it
4. "I know how soon youth would fade and bloom perish, if, in the cup of bliss offered, but one dreg of shame, or one flavor of remorse were detected; and I do not want sacrifice, sorrow, **dissolution**—such is not my taste."
A state of **dissolution** is characterized by
 a. corruption c. uncertainty
 b. loneliness d. madness
5. "You make me a liar by such language: you **sully** my honor."
To **sully** is to
 a. ridicule c. tarnish
 b. praise d. proclaim



Joan Fontaine plays Jane Eyre and Orson Welles plays Mr. Rochester in the classic 1943 film *Jane Eyre*.

Interactive
Quiz



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