

"By words the mind is excited and the spirit elated."

Aristophanes, The Birds

Vocabulary Lesson 08

- 1. exaggerate:** make something greater than it is; overstate
 - a. He wasn't trying to deceive* you when he said that his was the best car in the world; he was just exaggerating.
 - b. The bookkeeper exaggerated her importance to the company.
 - c. When he said that O'Neal was eight feet tall, he was undoubtedly* exaggerating.

- 2. amateur:** person who does something for pleasure, not for money or as a profession
 - a. The amateur cross-country runner wanted to be in the Olympics.
 - b. After his song, Don was told that he wasn't good enough to be anything but an amateur.
 - c. Professional golfers resent* amateurs who think they are as good as the people who play for money.

- 3. mediocre:** neither good nor bad; average; ordinary
 - a. After reading my composition, Mrs. Evans remarked that it was mediocre and that I could do better.
 - b. Howard was a mediocre scientist who never made any unique* discoveries.
 - c. The movie wasn't a great one; it was only mediocre.

- 4. variety:** lack of sameness; a number of different things
 - a. Eldorado Restaurant serves a wide variety of foods.
 - b. The show featured a variety of entertainment.
 - c. He faced unforeseen* problems for a variety of reasons.

- 5. valid:** supported by facts or authority; sound; true
 - a. The witness neglected* to give valid answers to the judge's questions.
 - b. Rita had valid reasons for denouncing* her father's way of life.
 - c. When Dave presented valid working papers, the foreman consented* to hiring him immediately.

- 6. survive:** live longer than; remain alive after
 - a. It was uncertain whether we would survive the torrent* of rain.
 - b. Some people believe that only the strongest should survive.

- c. The space capsule* was built to survive a long journey in space.

7. weird: mysterious; unearthly

- a. She looked weird with that horrible makeup on her face.
- b. Allen felt that weird things were starting to happen when he entered the haunted house.
- c. Becky had a weird feeling after swallowing the pills.

8. prominent: well-known; important

- a. My client* is a prominent businessperson.
- b. Napoleon is a prominent figure in the history of France.
- c. Her violet eyes were the prominent feature of the model's face.

9. security: freedom from danger, care, or fear; feeling or condition of being safe

- a. Our janitor likes the security of having all doors locked at night.
- b. When the president travels, strict security measures are taken.
- c. Pablo wanted to preserve* the security of his lifestyle.

10. bulky: taking up much space; large

- a. Charley and Morty removed the bulky package from the car.
- b. The massive* desk was quite bulky and impossible to carry.
- c. His client* wanted an item that wasn't so bulky, Olsen told us.

11. reluctant: unwilling

- a. It was easy to see that Herman was reluctant to go out and find a job.
- b. The patient was reluctant to tell the nurse the whole gloomy* truth.
- c. I was reluctant to give up the security* of family life.

12. obvious: easily seen or understood; clear to the eye or mind; not to be doubted; plain

- a. It was obvious that the lumberjack was tired after his day's work.
- b. The fact that Darcy was a popular* boy was obvious to all.
- c. The detective missed the clue because it was too obvious.

Read the following passage to see how the new words are used in it.

The Guitar

It is impossible to exaggerate the popularity* of the guitar. One out of every four amateur musicians in the United States plays the guitar. Even a mediocre player can produce a variety of music with this unique* instrument. Trying to find valid reasons for the guitar's ability to survive

through the years isn't hard. One weird theory* by a prominent musician states that guitarists find security hiding behind the bulky instrument. But most people are reluctant to accept this idea because there are more obvious reasons for playing a guitar. It can be carried anywhere, it is inexpensive* to buy, and only a few lessons are required to learn to play it well.

Fill in the Blanks

Place one of the new words in each of the blanks below.

1. Most people agreed that he was a _____ looking man because of the long red beard.
2. Chuck's reason for quitting his job was _____; he was not being paid.
3. The answer to the question was so _____ that everyone knew it.
4. The _____ tennis player would never make the Olympic squad.
5. She was _____ to take on any more responsibilities at work.
6. People often tend to _____ stories they hear.
7. The bank is kept under very tight _____.
8. Because the box was so _____ it took two men to lift it.
9. Even though he was not a professional, the _____ photographer entered the contest.
10. A wide _____ of shows is playing at the concert hall.
11. Mrs. Meyers is a _____ member of the staff.
12. We all hoped that the small boat would _____ the storm.

Match the 12 new words in Column I with the definitions in Column II.

Column I

1. Reluctant
2. Mediocre
3. Prominent

Column II

- a. large; taking up much space
- b. true; supported by facts
- c. person who does something for pleasure, not as a profession

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 4. Obvious | d. average; ordinary |
| 5. Exaggerate | e. mysterious; unearthly |
| 6. Bulky | f. unwilling |
| 7. Variety | g. easily seen or understood |
| 8. Valid | h. well-known; important |
| 9. Security | i. remain alive; live on |
| 10. Survive | j. overstate; make something greater than it is |
| 11. Weird | k. feeling or condition of being safe |
| 12. Amateur | I. a number of different things |

Spotlight On

Obvious-Like so many of our words, this one comes from Latin roots-ob meaning against and via meaning way. Something that met you on the way, therefore, was obvious. Look up the meanings of the Latin roots of some of the other words in Lesson 8 such as exaggerate, survive, and prominent.

"With words we govern men."

-Benjamin Disraeli, *Contarini Fleming*

Vocabulary Lesson 09

1. **vicinity:** region near a place; neighborhood

- a. Living in the vicinity of New York, Jeremy was near many museums.
- b. The torrent* of rain fell only in our vicinity.
- c. We approached* the Baltimore vicinity by car.

2. **century:** 100 years

- a. George Washington lived in the eighteenth century.
- b. The United States is more than two centuries old.
- c. Many prominent* men have been born in this century.

3. **rage:** violent anger; something that arouses intense but brief enthusiasm

- a. Joan's bad manners sent her mother into a rage.
- b. In a fit of rage, Francine broke the valuable glass.
- c. The mayor felt a sense of rage about the exaggerations* in the press.

4. **document:** something handwritten or printed that gives information or proof of some fact

- a. Newly discovered documents showed that the prisoner was obviously* innocent.
- b. The documents of ancient Rome have survived* many centuries.*
- c. We were reluctant* to destroy important documents.

5. **conclude:** end; finish; decide

- a. Most people are happy when they conclude their work for the day.
- b. The gloomy* day concluded with a thunderstorm.
- c. Work on the building could not be concluded until the contract was signed.

6. **undeniable:** not to be denied; cannot be questioned

- a. The jury concluded* that the teenagers were undeniably guilty.
- b. It is undeniable that most professionals can beat any amateur.*
- c. That Leon resented* Rita's good marks in school was undeniable.

7. **resist:** act against; strive against; oppose

- a. Totie could not resist eating the chocolate sundae.

- b. Tight security* measures resisted Jimmy's entrance into the bank.
- c. Harold resisted the opportunity to poke fun at the weird* man.

8. lack: be entirely without something; have not enough

- a. Your daily diet should not lack fruits and vegetables.
- b. His problem was that he lacked a variety* of talents.*
- c. As an amateur* dancer, Vincent knew that he lacked the professional touch.

9. ignore: pay no attention to; disregard

- a. Little Alice realized that if she didn't behave, her parents would ignore her.
- b. The student could not answer the question because he ignored the obvious* facts.
- c. Older brothers and sisters often feel ignored when their parents only spend time with a new baby.

10. challenge: call to a fight

- a. Aaron Burr challenged Alexander Hamilton to a duel.
- b. No one bothered to challenge the prominent* lawyer.
- c. Trying to become a doctor was quite a challenge, Dick discovered.

11. miniature: represented on a small scale

- a. The young boy wanted a miniature sports car for his birthday.
- b. Instead of buying a massive* dog, Teddy got a miniature poodle.
- c. We were seeking a miniature model of the bulky* chess set.

12. source: place from which something comes or is obtained

- a. The college student knew that he needed more than a basic textbook as a source for his report.
- b. The source of Buddy's trouble was boredom.
- c. Professor Smith's speech was a valid* source of information on chemistry.

Read the following passage to see how the new words are used in it.

More About the Guitar

The guitar is one of the oldest instruments known to man. It probably originated in the vicinity of China. There were guitars in ancient Egypt and Greece as well, but the written history of the guitar starts in Spain in the 13th century. By 1500 the guitar was popular in Italy, France, and Spain. A French document of that time concludes that many people were playing the guitar.

Stradivarius, the undeniable king of violin makers, could not resist creating a variety* of guitars. Also, there was no lack of music written for the instrument. Haydn, Schubert, and others wrote guitar music. When the great Beethoven was asked to compose music for the guitar, he went into a rage and refused, but eventually even Beethoven could not ignore the challenge; legend tells us he finally called the guitar a miniature orchestra. Indeed the guitar does sound like a little orchestra! Perhaps that is why in rural* areas around the world the guitar has been a source of music for millions to enjoy.

Fill in the Blanks

Place one of the new words in each of the blanks below.

1. Ernesto would constantly _____ his father's questions.
2. Historical _____ are kept in a special section of the library.
3. Great scientific progress has been made in this _____ .
4. The massive* wrestler accepted the _____ of the newcomer.
5. Not wearing warm clothing was the _____ of his illness.
6. "When do you expect to _____ your investigation of the case?"
7. It is _____ that this restaurant's food is delicious.
8. Lena showed a _____ of good judgment.
9. Everyone who lived in the _____ of the bomb test was in peril.*
10. Anita's habit of interrupting him sent her husband into a _____ .
11. My nephew was given a set of _____ soldiers for Christmas.
12. When you are tired it is hard to _____ staying in bed all day.

Circle the word that most nearly expresses the meaning of the word printed in bold type.

1. century

(a) countless years (b) three score years (c) one hundred years (d) generation

2. document

(a) official paper (b) critical review (c) decree (d) composition

3. undeniable

(a) essential* (b) unforeseen* (c) comprehensive (d) unquestionable

4. vicinity

(a) region near a place (b) division of a city or town (c) residential district (d) metropolitan area

5. challenge

(a) banish permanently (b) verify easily (c) call to a fight (d) join together

6. lack

(a) take responsibility (b) correct (c) be without (d) give freely

7. miniature

(a) balanced (b) tiny (c) eager (d) forbidden

8. rage

(a) extreme anger (b) foolish explanation (c) rapid movement (d) bad habit

9. conclude

(a) show (b) reorganize (c) examine (d) decide

10. source

(a) origin (b) task (c) onlooker (d) chart

11. resist

(a) discuss honestly (b) change completely (c) strive against (d) pay attention

12. ignore

(a) disregard (b) complete (c) exaggerate* (d) offer

Spotlight On

Century-In our slang, a C-note (century) stands for \$100. Other slang references to money are fin (\$5), sawbuck (\$10), and grand (\$1,000). Look up the origins of these colorful terms for our dollars.

"Clearness is the most important matter in the use of words."

-Quintillian, De Institutione Oratoria

Vocabulary Lesson 10

1. **excel:** be better than; do better than

- a. Because he was so small, Larry could not excel in sports.
- b. At least Hannah had the security* of knowing that she excelled in swimming.
- c. Clarence Darrow wanted to become a prominent* lawyer, but he felt that he must first excel in the study of history.

2. **feminine:** of women or girls

- a. When my sister wants to look feminine she changes from dungarees into a dress.
- b. Aunt Sarah can always be counted on to give the feminine viewpoint.
- c. My brother is ashamed to cry at a sad movie because people might think he is behaving in a feminine manner.

3. **mount:** get up on

- a. Congressman Jones mounted the platform to make his speech.
- b. The watchman mounted the tower to see if there were any people in the vicinity.*
- c. My sister couldn't mount the horse so they gave her a pony instead.

4. **compete:** try hard to get something wanted by others; be a rival

- a. The former champion was challenged* to compete for the tennis title.
- b. The runner was reluctant* to compete in front of his parents for the first time.
- c. When the amateur* became a pro he had to compete against better men.

5. **dread:** look forward to with fear; fear greatly; causing great fear

- a. The poor student dreaded going to school each morning.
- b. He had a dread feeling about the challenge* he was about to face.
- c. I dread going into that deserted house.

6. **masculine:** of man; male

- a. The boy became more masculine as he got older.
- b. It is undeniable* that his beard makes him look masculine.
- c. The girls liked Jerry because of his masculine ways.

7. **menace:** threat

- a. Irv's lack* of respect made him a menace to his parents.
- b. The torrents* of rain were a menace to the farmer's crops.
- c. Sergeant Foy's raw language was an obvious* menace to the reputation of the entire police department.

8. tendency: leaning; movement in a certain direction

- a. My algebra teacher has a tendency to forget the students' names.
- b. His tendency was to work hard in the morning and then to take it easy in the afternoon.
- c. The tendency in all human beings is to try to survive.*

9. underestimate: set too low a value, amount, or rate

- a. I admit that I underestimated the power in the bulky* fighter's frame.
- b. Undoubtedly* the boss underestimated his employee's* ability to work hard.
- c. The value of our house was underestimated by at least two thousand dollars.

10. victorious: having won a victory; conquering

- a. Playing in New Jersey, the Jets were victorious two years in a row.
- b. Terry faced the challenge* with the bad attitude that he could not be victorious.
- c. Our girls' volleyball squad was victorious over a taller team.

11. numerous: very many; several

- a. Critics review numerous movies every week.
- b. Dr. Fischer had resisted* accepting money from the poor woman on numerous house calls.
- c. The debater* used numerous documents* to back up his statements.

12. flexible: easily bent; willing to yield

- a. The toy was flexible, and the baby could bend it easily.
- b. Remaining flexible, Nick listened to arguments from both sides.
- c. A mouse's flexible body allows it to squeeze through narrow openings.

Read the following passage to see how the new words are used in it.

Bet on the Blond

Can women excel as jockeys in big-time horse racing? Years ago the feminine touch was kept out of racing, but now at tracks all over the country women mount horses and compete with men, many of whom dread the whole idea. Their masculine image, they feel, may be threatened.*

Also, some offer the weak argument that females are a menace on the track. But, as we all know, we should resist* the tendency to underestimate the power of women. A few female jockeys have been victorious in numerous races, and this is probably what has put the male jockeys in a rage.* It would be wise if the men were more flexible in their attitudes toward women athletes.

Fill in the Blanks

Place one of the new words in each of the blanks below.

1. The massive* tree on the corner was a _____ to traffic.
2. At parties, the shy girl would _____ being asked to dance.
3. My uncle has a _____ to repeat the same story over and over again.
4. The modest man used to _____ his own strength.
5. No person can ever _____ in all things he does.
6. Being _____ is far better than being stubborn.
7. We went to the beach on _____ occasions last summer.
8. Playing with dolls is traditionally* a _____ pastime.
9. Only the brightest students were invited to _____ for the prize.
10. Carole was ten years old before her parents finally let her _____ a horse.
11. The amateur* tennis player completed many matches without being _____.
12. When Stuart started growing a mustache, it was obvious* he was becoming more _____.

Now make up your own sentences, one for each of the new word you have just been taught.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____

Spotlight On

Mount-A salesman of worthless goods and phony remedies would often gather a crowd at a fair by juggling or doing some other lively antics. Sometimes he mounted a bench (bank) on which goods were displayed, and in that manner our English word mountebank came to mean quack or fake.