

UNIT 1

Read the following passage, taking note of the **boldface** words and their contexts. These words are among those you will be studying in Unit 1. It may help you to complete the exercises in this Unit if you refer to the way the words are used below.

The Times of Zheng He

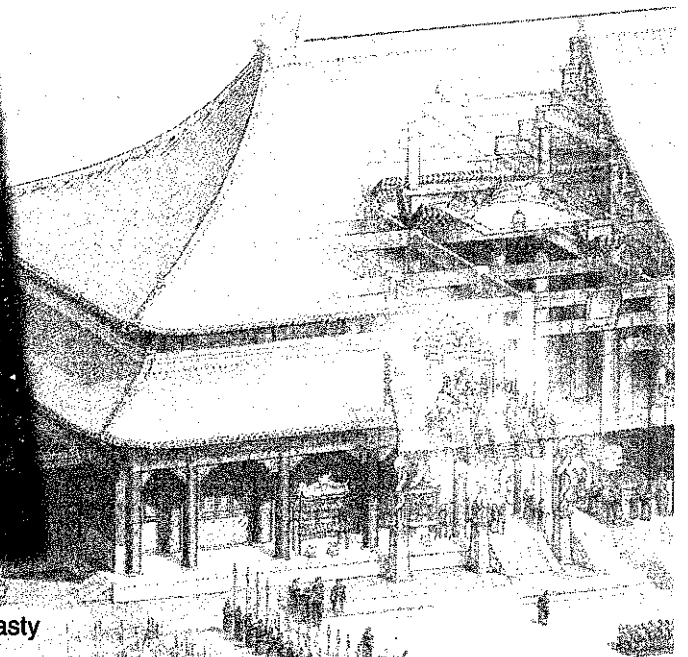
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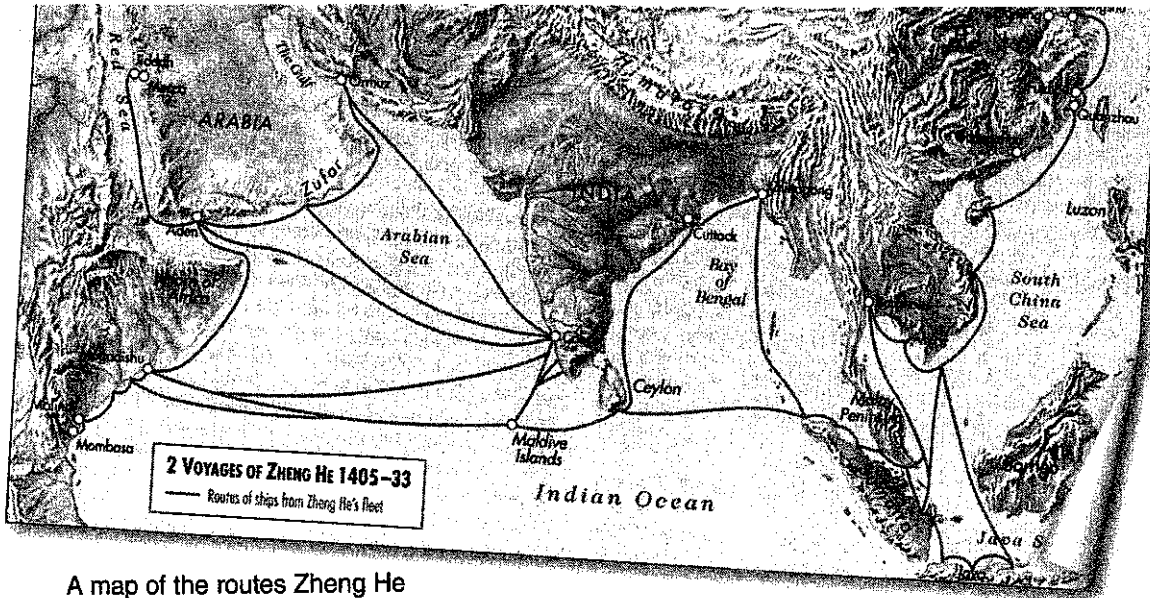
Zheng He was born in the year 1371, in the Chinese province of Yunnan. He was descended from a Persian who had been governor of Yunnan over a century before, in the early days of the Mongol-led Yuan **Dynasty**. The family retained its connections to the Mongol rulers of China through those years. But nothing is **interminable** in this world. A change was in the wind. About the time Zheng was born, the Ming clan asserted itself as the new ruling dynasty in China. Ming armies pushed the Mongols out of China and back to their homeland in Mongolia, an **adjacent** country in the north, dry and rather **barren**.

While Zheng was still a boy, pockets of Mongol loyalists remained in certain areas of China, not least in the southern province of Yunnan. Unrest erupted wherever loyalists lived. Zheng was about ten years old when political turmoil **disrupted** his life, forever altering its course. His father was killed in 1381 during the Ming army's conquest of Yunnan. Zheng was captured and sent to the court of Prince Zhu Di, son of the Ming emperor. If the boy was **sullen** and withdrawn at first, he did not remain so for long. He became one of the prince's trusted advisors, gradually **insinuating** himself into a position of respect. In time, Prince Zhu Di sought to depose his own nephew, who had become the second Ming emperor. When the hour came, he relied on Zheng's assistance. And when the insurrection proved successful, Zhu Di had become the third Ming emperor of China, and Zheng He was now the right hand to the emperor.



Emperor Zhu Di of the Ming Dynasty





A map of the routes Zheng He took during his expeditions

This adventure was only a **foretaste** of what lay ahead for Zheng He. The new emperor had ambitious plans to **renovate** China after years of **vicious** war had reduced the population and stalled production to a **trickle**. The emperor planned to restore the economy, promote construction, maintain order and protect the borders, stimulate culture and learning, and extend China's influence throughout the world. As part of his vision, he sponsored a series of massive naval expeditions, appointing Zheng to be chief envoy and leader of the fleet.

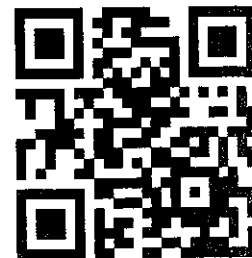
Zheng led six expeditions for the emperor, his own prestige increasing with each notch in his **résumé**. The first expedition set off in 1405, with about 300 huge ships and nearly 30,000 men. At the time, it was the largest fleet ever to have sailed from China.

The main purpose of the expeditions was not exploration, or conquest, or commerce, but diplomacy. Zheng's giant fleet and the soldiers who manned it made a strong impression wherever they went. They projected an image of Chinese wealth and power. The troops were rarely called on for a display of force; the size of the fleet was intimidating enough. Wherever Zheng **alighted**, he had an opportunity to **interrogate** the locals for news, meet with local elites to exchange gifts and information, and represent the interests of the Chinese emperor.

The emperor died in 1424. His successors did not continue his maritime policy. Zheng He led one more fleet in 1433. He died during this last great expedition and was buried at sea. Seeds of foreign relations planted during his lifetime **germinated** even after he was gone.

The Hall of Supreme Harmony, one of China's greatest buildings, was built in 1406 for the Ming emperor Zhu Di.

Available



For Words and audio passages, snap the code, or go to www.ck12.com/workshop/001/.

Definitions

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

1. adjacent
(ə jās' ənt)

(*adj.*) near, next to, adjoining

Boston and its _____ suburbs were severely flooded after three days of heavy rain.

SYNONYMS: alongside, nearby, neighboring

ANTONYMS: faraway, distant

2. alight
(ə līt')

(*v.*) to get down from, step down from; to come down from the air, land; (*adj.*) lighted up

The passengers hurried to _____ from the small airplane.

The sky was _____ with a red glow as the fire raged in the distance.

SYNONYMS: (*v.*) dismount, land, touch down

ANTONYMS: (*v.*) mount, board, take off

3. barren
(bar' ən)

(*adj.*) not productive, bare

In contrast to the rich land we left behind, the plains appeared to be a _____ landscape.

SYNONYMS: unproductive, sterile, desolate, arid

ANTONYMS: fertile, fruitful

4. disrupt
(dis rəpt')

(*v.*) to break up, disturb

Even the loud demonstration on the street below was not enough to _____ the meeting.

SYNONYMS: upset, displace, disorder

ANTONYMS: organize, arrange

5. dynasty
(dī' nə stē)

(*n.*) a powerful family or group of rulers that maintains its position or power for some time

The Han _____ of China was in power for about 400 years.

SYNONYMS: ruling house, regime

6. foretaste
(fôr' tāst)

(*n.*) an advance indication, sample, or warning

The eye-opening first scene of the new play gave the audience a _____ of things to come.

SYNONYMS: preview, anticipation

- 7. germinate**
(jər' mə nāt)
(v.) to begin to grow, come into being
After he interrogated the suspect, suspicion began to _____ in the inspector's mind.
SYNONYMS: sprout, shoot up, burgeon
ANTONYMS: wither, die, stagnate, shrivel up
- 8. humdrum**
(həm' drəm)
(adj.) ordinary, dull, routine, without variation
All household tasks are _____, according to my brother, who never helps with them.
SYNONYMS: monotonous, prosaic, boring
ANTONYMS: exciting, thrilling, exhilarating
- 9. hurtle**
(hər' təl)
(v.) to rush violently, dash headlong; to fling or hurl forcefully
After separating from its booster rocket, the capsule began to _____ through space.
SYNONYMS: speed, fly, catapult, fling
ANTONYMS: crawl, creep
- 10. insinuate**
(in sin' yū āt)
(v.) to suggest or hint slyly; to edge into something indirectly
The attorney attempted to _____ that the witness's testimony was false.
SYNONYM: imply
ANTONYMS: barge in, broadcast
- 11. interminable**
(in tər' mə nə bəl)
(adj.) endless, so long as to seem endless
We had an _____ wait in the hot, crowded train station.
SYNONYM: never-ending
ANTONYMS: brief, short, fleeting
- 12. interrogate**
(in ter' ə gāt)
(v.) to ask questions, examine by questioning
Two detectives helped the young, inexperienced officer to _____ the suspect.
SYNONYMS: question, query
- 13. recompense**
(rek' əm pens)
(v.) to pay back; to give a reward; (n.) a payment for loss, service, or injury
My grandparents were happy to _____ the little girl who found their lost puppy.
As _____, the landlord offered all tenants a month free of rent.
SYNONYMS: (v.) repay; (n.) compensation

14. renovate
(ren' ə vāt)

(*v.*) to repair, restore to good condition, make new again
The young couple brought in an architect and a contractor to help them _____ the old house.

SYNONYMS: repair, recondition

15. résumé
(rez' ə mā)

(*n.*) a brief summary; a short written account of one's education, working experience, or qualifications for a job

The job applicant gave a copy of her _____ to the person in charge of the employment agency.

SYNONYM: synopsis

16. sullen
(səl' ən)

(*adj.*) silent or brooding because of ill humor, anger, or resentment; slow moving, sluggish

The _____ student sat down in the back of the classroom.

SYNONYMS: grumpy, surly, peevish, morose

ANTONYMS: cheerful, blithe, vivacious

17. trickle
(trik' əl)

(*v.*) to flow or fall by drops or in a small stream; (*n.*) a small, irregular quantity of anything

The water began to _____ from the rusty old pipe.

The runoff, which is quite heavy in the spring, dwindles to a _____ by late summer.

SYNONYMS: (*v.*) dribble, drizzle, drip; (*n.*) small amount

ANTONYMS: (*v.*) gush, pour, flood; (*n.*) deluge

18. trivial
(triv' ē əl)

(*adj.*) not important, minor; ordinary, commonplace

The general left all _____ details to subordinate officers.

SYNONYMS: insignificant, trifling

ANTONYMS: important, weighty

19. truce
(trūs)

(*n.*) a pause in fighting, temporary peace

After tense negotiations, the warring nations reluctantly agreed to a five-day _____.

SYNONYM: cease-fire; ANTONYMS: war, warfare

20. vicious
(vish' əs)

(*adj.*) evil, bad; spiteful; having bad habits or an ugly disposition; painfully severe or extreme

The _____ rumor was damaging to their budding friendship.

SYNONYMS: wicked, malicious

ANTONYMS: good, kind, kindly, mild

Choosing the Right Word

Select the **boldface** word that better completes each sentence. You might refer to the passage on pages 12–13 to see how most of these words are used in context.



Pep rallies raise team spirit and are rarely humdrum.

1. Our team spirit is so high that there is never a (**sullen, trivial**) reaction from players who aren't chosen to start a game.
2. Sometime in mid-August, you can view the spectacular Perseid meteor shower, as comet debris (**hurtle, alight**) through space and enter Earth's atmosphere.
3. The principal asked the students not to hang around in front of the houses and other buildings (**adjacent to, alighting**) the school.
4. The administration had no major scandals, but it was also (**barren, sullen**) of outstanding accomplishments.
5. I am angry not because she criticized me but because she made remarks that were untrue and (**trivial, vicious**).
6. I'd been looking forward to the new TV series on Monday nights, but the first episode turned out to be just another (**humdrum, adjacent**) detective story.
7. Are we going to allow minor disagreements to (**disrupt, recompense**) the club that we have worked so hard to organize?
8. He said that he was going to ask only "a few casual questions," but I soon saw that he wanted to (**recompense, interrogate**) me thoroughly.
9. Even the most (**humdrum, vicious**) work can be interesting if you regard it as a challenge to do the very best you can.
10. Representatives from both nations met to negotiate a (**dynasty, truce**) to give each side a chance to care for its wounded.
11. If the sights we've seen today are a true (**recompense, foretaste**) of what lies ahead, we're in for some real treats.
12. For three generations, their family has formed one of the leading automotive (**truces, dynasties**) of this country.
13. As he grew old, the torrent of beautiful music that he had produced for so many years was reduced to a mere (**foretaste, trickle**).
14. "The program the usher handed you contains a brief (**résumé, hurtle**) of the action of the opera you are about to see," I replied.
15. When we are having fun, time rushes by, but even five minutes in the dentist's waiting room may seem (**adjacent, interminable**).

16. What would you consider an adequate (**résumé, recompense**) for having worked so many extra hours on the job?
17. The flight attendant asked the passengers to make sure that they had all their personal belongings before (**disrupting, alighting**) from the aircraft.
18. Regardless of who started this silly quarrel, isn't it time for us to declare a (**dynasty, truce**) and work together for the best interests of the school?
19. What we want to do is (**recompense, renovate**) the old house without harming its charm and beauty.
20. With flattery and clever half-truths, the newcomers (**insinuated, renovated**) themselves into the inner circle of the organization.
21. Planted in the fertile soil of her imagination, the seed of a great idea soon (**germinated, disrupted**) into a workable proposal.
22. The way to be successful at a job is to carry out all instructions carefully, even though you think some of them are (**trivial, sullen**) or silly.
23. Only twenty yards from the finish line, the horse stumbled and (**hurtled, insinuated**) its rider to the ground.
24. When I saw a big "A" on my term paper in English, I felt that I had been fully (**germinated, recompensed**) for all my hours of hard work.
25. The senator's speech seemed (**interminable, vicious**) as he droned on for an hour.

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. **intimate** that it was her fault _____
2. chased by the **savage** bear _____
3. decided to **fix up** the old theater _____
4. sit through an **uneventful** play _____
5. his attempt to **descend** from the plane _____
6. sent a **job history** to the company _____
7. sign a binding **armistice** to end the fighting _____
8. **race** through space _____
9. a **petty** matter not worth pursuing _____
10. to **reimburse** her expenses _____

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. to **move slowly** down the narrow path _____
2. definitely a **momentous** decision _____
3. leads a **lively** existence _____
4. hope to continue their **battle** _____
5. would **rip off** his idea _____

Completing the Sentence

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

1. As we sat at the side of the lake, we enjoyed watching the wild geese swoop down and _____ on the surface of the water.
2. She was so happy and grateful that I felt more than _____ for all that I had tried to do to help her.
3. After the big party, cleaning up, which was supposed to take "just a few minutes," proved to be an almost _____ job.
4. Although they lived in a house _____ to ours, we never really got to know them well.
5. In only a few days, the seeds that I had planted in the fertile soil of the garden began to _____ and take root.
6. When I applied for the job, I left a(n) _____ of my previous work experience with the personnel office.
7. Our carefully laid plans were completely _____ by a sudden and totally unexpected turn of events.
8. The "coming attractions" shown before the main feature gave us a distinct _____ of what the next film would be like.
9. Though they didn't say it in so many words, they did _____ that I was responsible for the accident.
10. I never would have thought that so bitter and long-lasting a quarrel could result from such a(n) _____ and unimportant cause.

11. In the 11th century, a foreign warlord invaded the country and set up a(n) _____ that ruled for more than 250 years.
12. After the warring nations had agreed to a(n) _____, they faced the far more difficult task of working out a real peace.
13. Although the building is old and needs repair, we are convinced that we can _____ it without spending a lot of money.
14. During the exciting chase, the police cars _____ through the town.
15. Though my dog Rover is huge and fierce-looking, children are fond of him because he doesn't have a(n) _____ disposition.
16. We need large sums of money to keep our school system going, but we are getting only a(n) _____ of funds from the state.
17. Many people who lead rather _____ lives get a great thrill from watching the exciting adventures of TV and movie superheroes.
18. The judge said to the lawyer, "You have a right to _____ the witness, but there is no need to bully her."
19. The suspect's only reaction to the detective's question was a wry smile and _____ silence.
20. As the drought continued without a letup, the once fertile farmlands of the region slowly became _____ "dust bowls."

Writing Words in Action

1. Look back at "The Times of Zheng He" (pages 12–13). Imagine that you are Zheng He near the end of his life. What do you think are your greatest accomplishments? How would you like to be remembered? Write a journal entry, using at least two details from the passage and three Unit words.
2. What do you think are the qualities, or personality traits, that make a person successful? Write a brief essay in which you define success and describe at least three qualities a person needs in order to achieve it. Support your views with specific examples from your own observations, studies, reading (refer to pages 12–13), or personal experience. Write at least three paragraphs, and use three or more Unit words.

The following excerpts are from four short stories by Edgar Allan Poe. 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. As the original design was to cross the British Channel, and **alight** as near Paris as possible, the voyagers had taken the precaution to prepare themselves with passports directed to all parts of the Continent. (“The Balloon-Hoax”)

When voyagers **alight** from their means of transportation, they

- a. take off c. reach up
b. step down d. move to
2. These phenomena were occasioned by the expansion of the gas, through increase of heat in the atmosphere, and the consequent **disruption** of the minute particles of ice with which the network had become encrusted during the night. (“The Balloon-Hoax”)

A **disruption** of ice particles involves

- a. breaking them up c. melting them
b. arranging them d. ruining them
3. “In respect to the **insinuations** leveled at Beauvais, you will be willing to dismiss them in a breath. You have already fathomed the true character of this good gentleman.” (“The Mystery of Marie Roget”)

Insinuations are statements that are

- a. stated clearly c. thought to be true
b. proven to be false d. hinted at or implied
4. . . . Our attention was again arrested by the appearance of the sun. It gave out no light, properly so called, but a dull and **sullen** glow without reflection, as if all its rays were polarized. (“Ms. Found in a Bottle”)

A **sullen** glow would be

- a. gloomy c. healthy
b. romantic d. bright
5. “This mistake made a difference of about two inches and a half in the ‘shot’—that is to say, in the position of the peg nearest the tree; . . . of course the error, however **trivial** in the beginning, increased as we proceeded with the line. . . .” (“The Gold-Bug”)

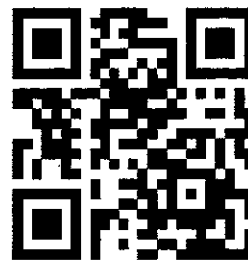
Something that is **trivial** is definitely NOT

- a. accurate c. important
b. small d. petty



Poe published “The Mystery of Marie Roget” in 1850.

Interactive
Quiz



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