

UNIT 12

Read the following passage, taking note of the **boldface** words and their contexts. These words are among those you will be studying in Unit 12. As you complete the exercises in this Unit, it may help to refer to the way the words are used below.

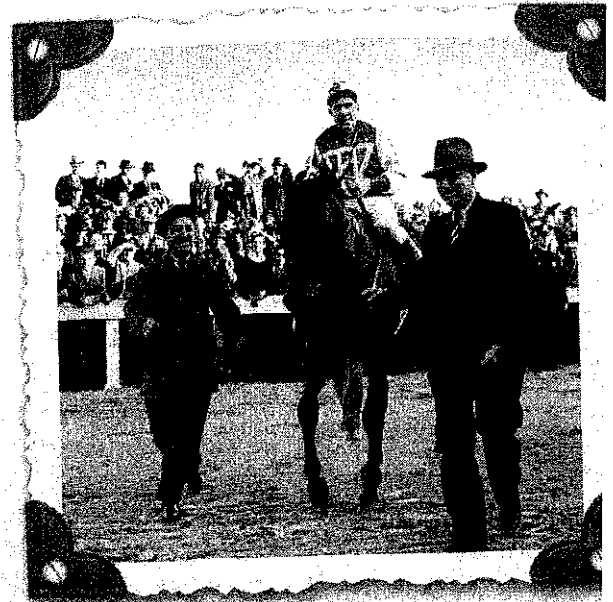
Hero From the Wrong Side of the Track Retires

<Profile>

by Chester Byron Langdon
November 11, 1940

The Great Depression had darkened almost every door in this country, and war clouds were gathering on the European horizon. America was hungry for a hero. Then came a horse named Seabiscuit, whose looks hid the champion he would become. He was knobby-kneed and undersized, and had a laid-back, **leisurely** demeanor. But he hadn't a trace of a **malady** where it counts in a champion—his heart. His heart **abounded** in courage and overflowed with determination.

Foaled in 1933, Seabiscuit grew up in Kentucky. His performance in his first races was mediocre—hard work at a young age had made him **lethargic**, and in 1936, his owners sold the tired colt to Charles S. Howard. Howard, a wealthy businessman, had pioneered the sale of automobiles in California. Howard formed an unorthodox team: Seabiscuit's new trainer was Tom Smith, known for his reluctance to speak, and Johnny "Red" Pollard was Seabiscuit's jockey. Most people in the racing world did not know that Pollard was blind in one eye, thus depriving him of bifocal vision and depth perception.



From left to right: Tom Smith, George Woolf, Seabiscuit, and C.S. Howard

The team led a **nomadic** existence, escorting their horse to races in the eastern states, the Midwest, and California. Against the odds, Seabiscuit's record improved, and he quickly gathered increasing attention in the racing community. Howard was a born marketer—a Western-bred underdog challenging the East Coast racing establishment. It was just the role that millions of Americans wanted a winning horse to play. Amid the



turmoil and confusion of the Depression, down and out and starved for hope, Seabiscuit's fans saw in him a gritty fighter. The horse became a celebrity almost overnight: "Seabiscuit-itis" swept the nation. A huge **cache** of press clippings devoted to the thoroughbred showed that Seabiscuit, at one point, enjoyed more publicity than President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

But, as the saying goes, trouble rides a fast horse, and it caught up with this racing team. In early 1938, jockey Pollard fell from another horse and shattered his collarbone in a **heartrending** accident that kept him from riding. The same year, with Pollard sidelined, the **quest** for a match-race against War Admiral, a scion of the Eastern horseracing establishment, came to an exciting end. Pimlico Racecourse, near Baltimore, announced it would host the "match of the century" on November 1, 1938. A new jockey, George Woolf, would pilot Seabiscuit in the most important contest of both of their careers.

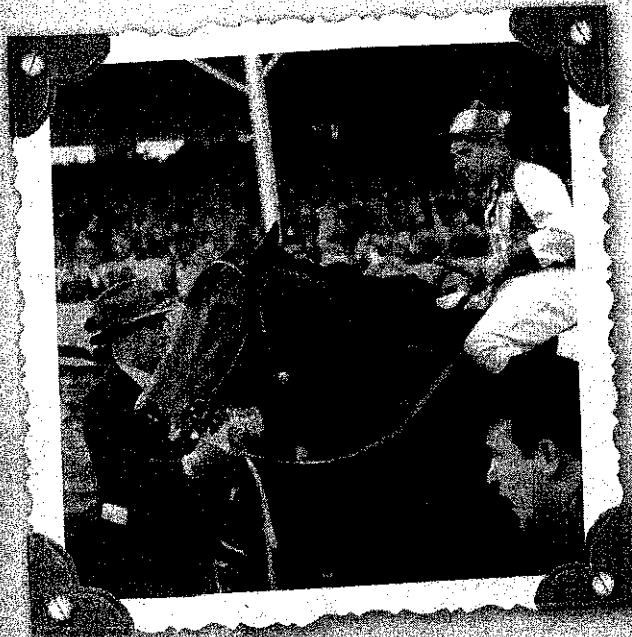
The outcome was sensational. Seabiscuit beat the favorite by four lengths—about 11 yards—to the delight of 40,000 fans at the track and an estimated radio audience of 40 million people. Never a **braggart**, Pollard



Seabiscuit makes a rear admiral out of War Admiral in their famous match race.

drily remarked from his hospital bed that his horse had turned War Admiral into a rear admiral.

In early 1940, Seabiscuit pulled a ligament and left the track to rest in the quiet **seclusion** of Howard's ranch. It was said he would never race again. Howard and Smith, however, did not become **despondent**; they believed in their horse. And Seabiscuit had one more race to claim: the coveted Santa Anita Derby in California, with its \$100,000 prize. Seabiscuit, with Pollard back in the saddle, came from behind to win, setting a record track time and **reinforcing** his **status** as the country's greatest racehorse. No wonder Seabiscuit had become an American legend. Now he will retire permanently at Howard's ranch to enjoy the lazy, **mellow** life he deserves.



In the winner's circle after the match of the century

Audio



For words and audio passages, snap the code, or

go to vocabularyworkshop.com.

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. abound**
(ə baʊnd')

(v.) to be plentiful, be filled

Lush fruit trees _____ in the orchards of central California.

SYNONYMS: burst with, overflow with, teem with
ANTONYMS: lack, want
- 2. braggart**
(brag' ɔrt)

(n.) a boaster; (adj.) boastful in a loud, annoying way

There seems to be a _____ in every family, who boasts about his or her achievements and worth.

Greek mythology is filled with _____ gods and heroes who take great pride in their deeds and skills.

SYNONYMS: (n.) bigmouth, blowhard
- 3. cache**
(kash)

(n.) a hiding place; something hidden or stored

We found a _____ of canned food hidden under the stairs in the cellar.

SYNONYMS: stockpile, hoard, store
- 4. clarification**
(klar ə fə kā' shən)

(n.) the act of making clear or understandable, an explanation

Reporters asked for a _____ of the politician's statement so that they could accurately report her position.

SYNONYM: elucidation
- 5. despondent**
(di spän' dənt)

(adj.) sad, without hope, discouraged

The doctor was _____ over the loss of his patient and dear friend.

SYNONYMS: dejected, depressed, forlorn
ANTONYMS: jubilant, elated
- 6. embezzle**
(em bez' əl)

(v.) to steal property entrusted to one's care

The senator's aide lost his job when he was caught trying to _____ campaign funds.

SYNONYMS: swindle, defraud
- 7. heartrending**
(härt' ren dɪŋ)

(adj.) causing mental pain or grief

The survivor told a _____ story about the shipwreck and the days she spent alone on the island.

SYNONYMS: moving, sad, heartbreaking, poignant
ANTONYMS: amusing, funny, hilarious

8. leisurely
(lē' zhər lē)

(*adj.*) unhurried, taking plenty of time; (*adv.*) in an easygoing or unhurried way

My parents enjoy taking a _____ stroll through the park on a Sunday afternoon.

We ate _____ and spent hours talking about old times.

SYNONYMS: (*adj.*) slow, relaxed

ANTONYMS: (*adj.*) hasty, hurried, rushed, hectic

9. lethargic
(lə thär' jik)

(*adj.*) unnaturally sleepy; dull, slow moving; indifferent

The twins often become _____ after eating a large meal at their grandmother's house.

SYNONYMS: lazy, sluggish, listless

ANTONYMS: wide-awake, alert, energetic, dynamic

10. malady
(mal' əd ē)

(*n.*) a sickness, illness, disease, disorder

Rheumatic fever, usually a childhood _____, can cause permanent damage to the heart.

SYNONYMS: ailment, affliction

ANTONYMS: health, well-being

11. mellow
(mel' ō)

(*adj.*) ripe, well-matured; soft, sweet, and rich; gentle, pleasant;

(*v.*) to become gentle and sweet

Hawaii is known for its _____ fruit, all of which is ripe and juicy.

Mom continued to hope that her upstart brother would _____ with age and experience.

SYNONYMS: (*adj.*) dulcet, creamy

ANTONYMS: (*adj.*) unripe, green, harsh, grating, strident

12. nomadic
(nō ma' dik)

(*adj.*) wandering, moving about from place to place

Many groups in the desert live a _____ life, traveling from place to place in search of water and grazing land.

SYNONYMS: roaming, vagrant, migratory, itinerant

ANTONYMS: stationary, settled, rooted, fixed

13. piecemeal
(pēs' mēl)

(*adj.*) one piece at a time; (*adv.*) gradually

The committee's _____ approach to the problem was taking more time and money than the school board could afford.

Patchwork quilts are sewn _____.

SYNONYM: (*adv.*) bit by bit

ANTONYM: (*adv.*) all at once

- 14. quest**
(kwest)
(*n.*) a search, hunt; (*v.*) to search, seek, ask
In _____ of a safe water route to the Pacific, Lewis and Clark journeyed more than three thousand miles.
Diplomats _____ for peaceful solutions to global problems.
SYNONYMS: (*n.*) pursuit, venture
- 15. random**
(ran' dəm)
(*adj.*) by chance, not planned or prearranged; irregular
According to a _____ sampling of voters, Proposition 10 will be approved by a wide margin.
SYNONYMS: haphazard, accidental
ANTONYMS: planned, systematic
- 16. rant**
(rant)
(*v.*) to speak wildly and noisily; (*n.*) loud, violent talk
When the speaker began to _____ like a rabble-rouser, the crowd shouted him down.
Listening to the _____ of that radio personality makes me want to give up on talk shows.
SYNONYMS: (*v.*) rave, fume, spout
ANTONYMS: (*v.*) whisper, murmur
- 17. reinforce**
(rē in fōrs')
(*v.*) to make stronger with new materials or support
They used steel beams to _____ the structure of the building.
SYNONYMS: strengthen, bolster, prop up
ANTONYMS: weaken, undermine, sap, impair
- 18. seclusion**
(si klü' zhən)
(*n.*) isolation from others, solitude
Some actors choose to live in _____, away from the prying eyes of journalists.
SYNONYMS: aloneness, solitariness
ANTONYM: the thick of things
- 19. status**
(stā' təs)
(*n.*) a person's condition or position in the eyes of the law; relative rank or standing, especially in society; prestige
Winning the prestigious book award boosted the young writer's literary _____.
SYNONYMS: recognition, standing
- 20. turmoil**
(tər' moil)
(*n.*) a state of great confusion or disorder; mental strain or agitation
For many years after the Civil War, the South remained a society in _____.
SYNONYMS: upheaval, tumult; ANTONYMS: peace and quiet, order

Choosing the Right Word

Select the **boldface** word that better completes each sentence. You might refer to the passage on pages 146–147 to see how most of these words are used in context.

1. (**Nomadic, Despondent**) groups of horse breeders still wander the plains of Central Asia in search of pasturage for their herds.

2. As soon as I opened the book, I realized that I had stumbled on a rich (**cache, braggart**) of useful information for my report.

3. In the (**heartrending, lethargic**) conclusion of the film, the hero dies in the arms of his beloved friend.

4. Although she appeared calm and composed, her mind was in (**turmoil, status**).

5. As I was in no hurry to get where I was going, I decided to set a rather (**random, leisurely**) pace for myself.

6. The eternal (**quest, seclusion**) for youth and beauty explains the huge sales of cosmetics, to men as well as to women.

7. There is a great difference between being quietly confident of your own ability and being an obnoxious (**nomad, braggart**).

8. Our present policy appears to be so contradictory that I believe some (**clarification, turmoil**) of it is in order.

9. Over the years, I have learned one thing about rumors: Where the facts are few, fictions (**abound, clarify**).

10. My experience on my summer job has (**reinforced, abounded**) many of the lessons I learned in the classroom.

11. Only the fact that they cannot see the seriousness of the emergency can explain their (**lethargic, nomadic**) response to our appeal for help.

12. Why would a world-famous writer choose to live in the (**quest, seclusion**) of a country village far from the “madding crowd”?

13. At the time of our very public argument, I was angry, but over the years my emotions have (**mellowed, reinforced**).

14. I believe that education, understanding, and experience provide the only cure for the (**malady, status**) of prejudice.

15. Many doctors believe that when sick people become (**heartrending, despondent**) over their health, it is more difficult for them to recover.



The nomadic horse riders of Central Asia move from place to place as seasons change.

16. After receiving his paper marked with a big red *D* in his teacher's handwriting, the student sulked (**despondently, leisurely**) for hours.
17. For weeks, a gang of muggers wandered the streets aimlessly, choosing their victims at (**random, piecemeal**) from those who happened by.
18. The least useful thing you could do at this moment is to deliver a long, loud (**rant, turmoil**) against your opponents.
19. People say that Brianna is a (**mellow, status**) person, but I've seen her lose her temper too often to believe them.
20. Though he (**rants, embezzles**) and raves about the problems of the world, he has little to offer in the way of solutions to them.
21. They drove (**piecemeal, leisurely**) through the countryside, taking time to view hills woods, and meadows full of blooming wildflowers.
22. The president went on the air to inform the general public of the present (**malady, status**) of the negotiations with the enemy.
23. Instead of such (**mellow, piecemeal**) efforts to prevent air pollution, we need a unified campaign that will be continued for as long as necessary.
24. People who waste the natural resources of this country are in a sense (**embezzling, reinforcing**) the wealth of future generations.
25. We repaired the house (**randomly, piecemeal**), doing one small task after another.

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. was among the last **roving** groups in Lapland _____
2. achieved a well-regarded **situation** among her peers _____
3. a loud **harangue** that persuaded no one _____
4. legal terms that will need **explication** _____
5. attempted to **make off with** money from the fund _____
6. made an **arbitrary** search for the lost keys _____
7. was caught up in the **chaos** left by the storm _____
8. is just another conceited **showoff** _____
9. rehearsed the play **little by little** _____
10. suffers from a serious **indisposition** _____

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. **confusion** resulting from my explanation _____
2. will **safeguard** the company's money _____
3. unwisely chose to **mumble** at the crowd _____
4. a **unified** effort to complete the task _____
5. witnessed a **deliberate** act of kindness _____

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. Apparently, the man could pay off his staggering gambling debts only by _____ funds from the company that employed him.
2. Though Ponce de León's _____ for the Fountain of Youth proved futile, he did explore Florida and claim it as territory for the Spanish.
3. In order to prevent the bridge from collapsing, it has been necessary to _____ its girders and foundations.
4. The lake so _____ with trout and pickerel that even a person with my limited skill in fishing can catch them easily.
5. Most detectives solve crimes in a(n) _____ fashion, as clues come to light, rather than all at once.
6. The _____ of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Era was succeeded by 100 years of relative peace and quiet in Europe.
7. Every once in a while, I like to take time out from my busy schedule to have a _____ dinner with old friends.
8. The park is always full of soapbox orators _____ about the inequality of government or society.
9. Arthritis is a(n) _____ that attacks many millions of people, especially in middle and old age.
10. After putting up all week with the noise and confusion of life in the big city, I enjoy the _____ of my mountain retreat on weekends.

11. Though I am always full of energy in the morning, I start to become a little _____ as the day wears on.
12. The tenor's voice was rich and _____, but the baritone's sounded somewhat harsh and unpleasant.
13. Instead of trying to decide which applicants were best suited for the job, he selected two at _____.
14. It's natural for you to feel a little _____ over not getting the job, but don't let that prevent you from applying for other positions.
15. At first, when I couldn't make out what she wanted me to do, I asked her for some _____ of her instructions.
16. Yesterday, I read a truly _____ account of the plight of millions of people suffering from the effects of a severe famine.
17. When I first entered this country, I was classified as a "resident alien," but my _____ has changed since then.
18. The two brothers are both fine athletes, but one is quiet and modest, while the other is an awful _____.
19. Many homeless people now lead essentially _____ existences on the streets of our major cities.
20. During warm months, foxes bury many animals they have killed, with the result that they have _____ to tide them over the winter.

Writing Words in Action

1. Look back at "Hero From the Wrong Side of the Track Retires" (pages 146–147). Notice how the author describes Seabiscuit over the course of his career in racing. Think of at least three more words or phrases to describe the horse's character and physique, including at least two Unit words. Then write a brief description of Seabiscuit, using the details you think are most essential to convey the horse's notable traits.
2. Many athletes become national heroes and inspire people. Seabiscuit inspired people, but he was an animal. Do you consider a racehorse to be an athlete, like a baseball player or a runner? Write a persuasive essay in which you state why you think Seabiscuit was, or was not, an athlete. Support your opinion with specific examples from your observations, reading (refer to pages 146–147), or personal experience. Use three or more Unit words.

The following excerpts are from Victor Hugo's novel *Les Misérables*. 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. An aged and falling apple-tree leans far over to one side, its wound dressed with a bandage of straw and of clayey loam. Nearly all the apple trees are falling with age. . . . The skeletons of dead trees **abound** in this orchard. Crows fly through their branches, and at the end of it is a wood full of violets.

Trees that **abound** are

- a. widespread c. tall
b. rare d. valuable
2. Once as he sat with his knees pressed together, and his eyes almost closed, in a **despondent** attitude, his daughter ventured to say to him, "Father, are you as angry with him as ever?"

Someone who is **despondent** feels

- a. sleepy c. humble
b. enthusiastic d. hopeless
3. All heads were raised: the sensation was indescribable; there was a momentary hesitation in the audience, the voice had been so **heartrending**; the man who stood there appeared so calm that they did not understand at first. They asked themselves whether he had indeed uttered that cry; they could not believe that that tranquil man had been the one to give that terrible outcry.

A **heartrending** voice is one that

- a. frightens others c. stirs deep emotions
b. depresses others d. makes no impression
4. She did not know what name to give to what she now felt. Is anyone the less ill because one does not know the name of one's **malady**?

Another word for **malady** is

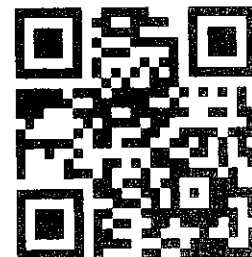
- a. feeling c. weakness
b. disease d. grief
5. A little beyond the barricade, it seemed to him that he could make out something white in front of him. He approached, it took on a form. It was two white horses . . . who had been straying at **random** all day from street to street, and had finally halted there.

An event that happens at **random** is NOT

- a. timely c. accidental
b. enjoyable d. planned



Hugo's novel tells the story of Inspector Javert's pursuit of the thief Jean Valjean.



Snap the code, or go to

Vocabulary for Comprehension

Read the following passage in which some of the words you have studied in Units 10–12 appear in **boldface** type. Then answer the questions on page 157.

This passage discusses how, long before the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, African Americans worked to end racial discrimination and segregation.

(Line)

Have you ever heard the term the *Great Migration*? If so, you may know that between 1870 and 1920, hundreds of thousands of African Americans moved from rural areas in the Southeast to the industrialized urban areas in the Northeast and Midwest. For most, this huge migration meant an escape from poverty and the **malady** of discrimination, of being treated unfairly. To these African Americans, the movement north was a **quest** for a better life, as northern factory jobs were a great improvement over farm work.

As more industrial jobs became available during World War I, about half a million African Americans went north. Although their economic **status** improved during the war years, African Americans in both the North and the South were still denied many basic rights. As a result, some notable African Americans rose to the challenge of righting injustices and achieving equal opportunity.

One African American who fought to end injustice was Booker T. Washington. Born enslaved, Washington taught himself to read.

Years later, in 1891, he founded the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. There, African Americans were taught skills such as bricklaying, printing, and teaching, which would help them improve their lives as they worked peacefully toward equality.

African American women also struggled for justice. Ida B. Wells, for example, strove to end the **notorious** practice of segregation—that is, of separating African Americans from other groups in society—and other forms of racial injustice. For Wells, her pen and her resolve were her only weapons. As editor of the newspaper *Free Speech*, which she founded in Memphis, Tennessee, Wells fought to end **random** acts of violence against African Americans. “Can you remain silent,” she wrote “. . . when such things are done in your own community and country?”

As these African American leaders and others lectured across the country, they inspired the growth of the civil rights movement. In fact, even today, their words and deeds still motivate organizations to continue the struggle for justice.

1. The main purpose of the passage is to
 - a. inform about African Americans' early struggles to end injustice
 - b. describe African American life in the North from 1870 to 1920
 - c. entertain the reader with several fictional anecdotes
 - d. tell a personal story about the writer's ancestors
 - e. persuade the reader to take action
2. The question in lines 1–2 functions as the focus for
 - a. paragraph 1
 - b. paragraph 2
 - c. paragraphs 3 and 4
 - d. paragraph 5
 - e. the entire passage
3. **Malady** (line 10) most nearly means
 - a. humiliation
 - b. stigma
 - c. sickness
 - d. oppression
 - e. crime
4. **Quest** (line 13) is best defined as
 - a. request
 - b. search
 - c. victory
 - d. competition
 - e. hope
5. In lines 12–16, it is clear that the main motivation for African Americans moving to the North from the South was their search for
 - a. political representation
 - b. sturdy housing
 - c. family and friends
 - d. a better life
 - e. a college education
6. **Status** (line 21) most nearly means
 - a. education
 - b. condition
 - c. skills
 - d. opportunities
 - e. successes
7. **Notorious** (line 42) is best defined as
 - a. haphazard
 - b. widespread
 - c. official
 - d. cruel
 - e. disgraceful
8. The meaning of **random** (line 51) is
 - a. planned
 - b. brutal
 - c. arbitrary
 - d. shocking
 - e. shameful
9. The author's attitude toward Booker T. Washington and Ida B. Wells is best described as one of
 - a. disbelief
 - b. hostility
 - c. indifference
 - d. admiration
 - e. sympathy
10. From the sentence "For Wells, her pen and her resolve were her only weapons" (lines 46–47), you can infer that Wells
 - a. gave in to pressure to stop writing
 - b. wrote countless editorials
 - c. defended herself against enemies
 - d. was weak and easily intimidated
 - e. kept her opinions to herself
11. Which of the following states something that both Washington and Wells had in common?
 - a. They founded newspapers.
 - b. They visited the White House.
 - c. They wrote best-selling books.
 - d. They lectured all across the country.
 - e. They founded schools.
12. Which paragraph tells about the efforts of African American women to fight injustice?
 - a. paragraph 1
 - b. paragraph 2
 - c. paragraph 3
 - d. paragraph 4
 - e. paragraph 5

Two-Word
Completions

Select the pair of words that best completes the meaning of each of the following sentences.

- A communication between the warring factions' two leaders was the _____ to a bold new peace _____ that would end a twenty-year-long conflict.

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| a. beneficiary . . . veto | c. overture . . . pact |
| b. stalemate . . . status | d. surplus . . . farce |
- Before we can even think about renovating this _____ old house, we must remove all the worthless _____ that is strewn around the rooms and blocking the entrances.

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| a. gigantic . . . cache | c. mellow . . . havoc |
| b. dilapidated . . . clutter | d. futile . . . surplus |
- Among law enforcement, his _____ is that of a _____ con artist who targets segments of the population that are likely to fall prey to his convincing words.

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. havoc . . . braggart | c. dialogue . . . grueling |
| b. misdemeanor . . . narrative | d. status . . . notorious |
- "I am still _____ the matter over in my mind," the president told the press. "When I have reached a decision, I will either sign the bill or _____ it."

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| a. mellowing . . . botch | c. mulling . . . veto |
| b. narrating . . . dismantle | d. clarifying . . . mar |
- As he sat by the fire that glowed in the _____, the old sailor entertained the children with a(n) _____ of his adventures on the high seas, beginning when he was a boy of twelve, almost sixty years before.

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| a. lair . . . farce | c. hearth . . . narrative |
| b. cache . . . dialogue | d. clutter . . . overture |
- The earliest inhabitants of North America lived _____ lives. They were constantly moving from place to place in search of the game that made up the greater part of their diet. This endless _____ for food eventually took them to all parts of the continent.

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| a. nomadic . . . quest | c. pampered . . . malady |
| b. grueling . . . cache | d. lethargic . . . status |
- Since the soil is so remarkably rich and fertile, a variety of crops can be grown in _____. The farmers keep what they need for themselves and sell off the _____ at a handsome profit.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. abundance . . . surplus | c. lavishness . . . hospitality |
| b. seclusion . . . reinforcements | d. leisure . . . adequacy |

In the passage about Babe Didrikson Zaharias (see pages 136–137), the author notes that the athlete would not be slowed by serious illness because she had “other fish to fry.”

“Other fish to fry” is an idiom that means “more important things to do.” An **idiom** is an expression that uses figurative language to express an idea. The meaning of an idiom can't be guessed from the literal meaning of its words. An idiom must be learned, as if it were a new word or phrase.

Read each sentence. Use context clues to figure out the meaning of each idiom in boldface print. Then write the letter of the definition for the idiom in the sentence.

1. You complain so much; must you always have **an ax to grind**? _____
 2. Don't ask me why she did it; **your guess is as good as mine**. _____
 3. Because we can never know **what lies in store**, I think we're better off not worrying about the future. _____
 4. **The ball is in your court** now, so I hope you'll give me an answer soon. _____
 5. Please tell us more about the **wild and woolly** days of the Old West. _____
 6. **Keep an eye on** that snake; don't let it slither away. _____
 7. The sound of those cats wailing in the middle of the night **drives me up the wall**. _____
 8. **Keep your eyes peeled** for Aunt Nina; she should be waiting for us in Terminal B. _____
 9. She really **hit the nail on the head** when she said that some people learn best in groups. _____
 10. **Lend me your ear**, and I'll tell you a tale. _____
- a. It's your turn; it's time for you to make a decision or make a move.
 - b. untamed, uncivilized
 - c. I don't know any more about the subject being discussed than you do.
 - d. makes me feel crazy
 - e. made the exactly right point
 - f. watch for
 - g. a readiness to quarrel or find fault
 - h. watch carefully
 - i. Listen to me.
 - j. what unforeseen events will occur later

WORD STUDY

Writing with Idioms

Find the meaning of each idiom. (Use a dictionary if necessary.) Then write a sentence for each idiom.

1. a chip on one's shoulder

2. brush up on

3. learn the ropes

4. living on borrowed time

5. keep your chin up

6. run circles around

7. toot your own horn

8. over the top

9. put up a fight

10. smell a rat

11. until the cows come home

12. out of steam



Denotation and Connotation

When you look up a word in the dictionary, you get its **denotation**, or literal meaning. Many words also have **connotations**—implied meanings that we commonly associate with them.

Connotations may be positive, negative, or neutral. A word's synonyms—words that mean nearly the same thing—can have very different connotations, some more positive or more negative than others. Consider these synonyms for the neutral word *avoid*.

sidestep *evade* *shirk* *neglect*

Sidestep and *evade* have neutral to mildly negative connotations, but *shirk* and *neglect* have strongly negative connotations.

Think: To sidestep or evade an issue you don't want to talk about shows avoidance, but to shirk or neglect an important duty shows irresponsibility and a lack of trustworthiness.

Look at these examples of words that are similar in denotation but have different connotations.

| NEUTRAL | POSITIVE | NEGATIVE |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| difficult | challenging | grueling |
| slowly | leisurely | slothfully |
| soft | mellow | slack |

Whether you are reading a text or writing one, you will do a better job if you understand the connotations of words. As a reader, you will sense the underlying meanings associated with a word. As a writer, you will know which word to choose to accurately express your meaning.

Practical Application

Write a plus sign (+) in the box if the word has a positive connotation.

Write a minus sign (-) if the word has a negative connotation. Put a zero (0) if the word is neutral.

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. hospitable <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. clutter <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. quest <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. abound <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. botch <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. narrative <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. emblem <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. lair <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. adequate <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. morbid <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. cache <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. surplus <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. vindictive <input type="checkbox"/> | 14. status <input type="checkbox"/> | 15. hearth <input type="checkbox"/> | 16. infamous <input type="checkbox"/> |

WORD STUDY

Expressing the Connotation

Read each sentence. Select the word in parentheses that better expresses the connotation (positive, negative, or neutral) given at the beginning of the sentence.

- negative 1. Melinda goes about her chores in a(n) (**lethargic, unhurried**) way.
- neutral 2. As a youth, Mr. Fredericks had pursued a (**vagrant, nomadic**) way of life.
- negative 3. The attack from Planet X-5155 created (**havoc, disorder**) in Earth's cities.
- neutral 4. A mysterious (**illness, malady**) forced me to miss class that day.
- positive 5. The care he received in the hospital after his accident was completely (**satisfactory, adequate**).
- positive 6. She was the (**recipient, beneficiary**) of the valuable knowledge passed down by her mother, a famous scholar.
- positive 7. Even after the "once in a lifetime" sales event, there was a (**surplus, glut**) of merchandise left in the furniture store.
- negative 8. Trying to find a gift he'll like is a(n) (**futile, ineffective**) exercise.

Challenge: Using Connotation

Choose vocabulary words from Units 10–12 to replace the **boldface** words in the sentences below. Then explain how the connotation of the replacement word changes the tone of the sentence.

gigantic
dismantle

heartrending
lax

innumerable
shirk

1. Looking up at the black sky, we gaped at the **many** _____ bright, twinkling stars.

2. It's natural to want to **avoid** _____ your chores, but completing them will make you feel good.

3. In the show's final episode, the main character faced a **sad** _____ outcome to his love story.

Classical Roots

note, not—to know, recognize, or mark

This Latin root appears in **notorious** (page 130), which means “widely and unfavorably known.” Some other words based on the same root are listed below.

connote
denote

notary
notation

noteworthy
notify

notion
notoriety

From the list of words above, choose the one that corresponds to each of the brief definitions below. Write the word in the blank space in the illustrative sentence below the definition. Use a dictionary if necessary.

1. to point out, give notice of, inform

We will _____ our attorney of your intention to sue us.

2. a public official who certifies statements and signatures

The _____ public witnessed the signing of Grandfather's will.

3. remarkable, outstanding because of some special excellence
("worthy of being recognized")

The senator made _____ remarks about the importance of reducing air pollution.

4. a record; a note to assist memory, memorandum; a set of symbols or expressions

Good students often write _____ in the margins of books.

5. an idea; a foolish idea or opinion; a small useful item

She has the odd _____ that no one in her class likes her.

6. ill fame; being famous for something bad

Jesse James achieved _____ as an outlaw in the Old West.

7. to suggest or imply in addition to giving an exact meaning

The name *Angela* means "angel," but it also _____ goodness.

8. to indicate, be the sign of, mean exactly

The child's high temperature and chills _____ severe illness.