

Lesson 12

116. dapper — 130. dexterous

116. **dap-per** adjective dăp'-ēr

[*dapyr* (Middle English), "elegant," probably from *dapper* (Low German), "agile"]

Definition: Neatly and stylishly dressed.

I'd hardly call someone who always looks as though he's slept in his clothes a **dapper** dresser.

Related Form: (*adverb*) dapperly

Usage Note:

As the example given above suggests, *dapper* is normally reserved for men. Accordingly, a stylishly dressed woman would probably be called *chic* (pronounced shĕk), not *dapper*.

Synonyms: (*adjectives*) natty, smart, spruce, stylish, chic

Antonyms: (*adjectives*) unkempt, sloppy, slovenly, shabby, seedy; dowdy, blousy, frowsy, frumpy

117. **de-fect** noun: dē'-fĕkt verb: dī-fĕkt'

[*deficere, defectus* (Latin), "fail; remove from"; from *de* (Latin), "away from" + *facere, factus* (Latin), "do; make"]

Definition:

a. (*noun*) A flaw or shortcoming.

Members of Congress may draft new legislation to correct the **defects** in our tax laws.

b. (*verb*) To desert one country, cause, or the like for another.

During the Cold War a good many Soviet artists and intellectuals **defected** to the West.

Related Forms: (*nouns*) defectiveness, defection, defector; (*adjective*) defective

Usage Notes:

a. Something that is *defective* is faulty. For example, a piece of machinery or a copy of a book may be defective. Do not confuse the word with *deficient*, which means "lacking." A person may be deficient in good judgment, for instance.

b. Someone who defects from one country or cause to another is called a *defector*, and the act of defecting is called a *defection*.

Synonyms: (*nouns*) blemish, fault, imperfection, weakness, failing, bug, kink; (*verbs*) abandon, forsake, bolt; repudiate, disown, abjure

118. **de-fer** verb di-fûr'
[de (Latin), "away" + ferre (Latin), "carry"]

Definition:

a. To put off or postpone.

Unfortunately, a person cannot **defer** payment of a debt indefinitely.

b. To yield courteously to the wishes or judgments of someone else.

It is usually a good idea to **defer** to the judgment of your elders in matters in which you are uncertain about what to do.

Related Forms: (*nouns*) deferment, deferral, deference; (*adjectives*) deferential, deferent

Usage Note:

The nouns *deferment* and *deferral* denote a temporary postponement of, or exemption from, something (for example, jury duty). *Deference* indicates a willing or courteous submission to another person's wishes or ideas, usually out of respect for the latter's age, wisdom, or experience. The adjectives *deferential* and *deferent* mean "respectful," as in "a deferential attitude."

Synonyms: (*verbs*) delay, table, shelve; bow (to), accede (to) (Word 8)

Antonyms: (*verbs*) expedite, facilitate, hasten; spurn, disdain, reject

Related Phrases: hold off on, put on ice, put on a back burner; give way to

119. **de-ject-ed** adjective dī-jĕk'-tīd

[*dejectere, dejectus* (Latin), "cast down"; from *de* (Latin), "down" + *jacere, jactus* (Latin), "cast, throw"]

Definition: In very low spirits.

The whole school was very **dejected** after our team's unexpected loss of the championship.

Related Forms: (*noun*) dejection; (*verb*) deject; (*adverb*) dejectedly

Synonyms: (*adjectives*) sad, blue, depressed, gloomy, despondent, melancholy, morose, downcast, dispirited, disheartened

Antonyms: (*adjectives*) happy, merry, elated, exultant, jubilant

Related Phrases: on top of the world; down in the dumps

120. **de-lete** verb dī-lēt'

[*delere, deletus* (Latin), "wipe away"]

Definition: To strike out or remove.

When my article for the student newspaper ran a bit long, I **deleted** enough material to make it fit.

Related Form: (*noun*) deletion

Usage Note:

Do not confuse the adjective *deleterious* with forms of the verb *delete*. *Deleterious* means “physically or morally harmful.”

Synonyms: (verbs) cancel, expunge, omit, efface, excise

Antonyms: (verbs) retain, include; add, insert

121. **de-lin-e-ate** verb dī-līn'-ē-āt

[*delineare, delineatus* (Latin), “draw lines”; from *de* (Latin), “completely” + *linea* (Latin), “thread; line”]

Definition: To make an accurate line drawing or diagram of; to portray or describe in detail.

The artist's pen-and-pencil sketch not only **delineated** the model's features accurately but also captured something of her personality.

Few writers have J. D. Salinger's remarkable ability to **delineate** the emotions, aspirations, and troubled confusion of the average teenager.

Related Forms: (nouns) delineation, delineator

Usage Note:

As a technical term, *delineate* and *delineation* indicate a drawing or engraving that consists of lines, as opposed to one that employs shading or tints. Note too that both words stress fullness and accuracy of detail.

Synonyms: (verbs) picture, depict, set forth, sketch, etch

122. **de-lin-quent** adjective and noun dī-līng'-kwěnt

[*delinquens, delinquentis* (Latin), “leaving completely undone”; from *de* (Latin), “completely” + *linquere* (Latin), “leave undone”]

Definition:

a. (adjective) Neglectful of a duty or obligation; seriously overdue.

Citizens who fail to vote out of indifference or laziness are **delinquent** in their civic duties.

“Pay your bills on time,” Mom advised. “It's not a good idea to let any of your accounts become **delinquent**.”

b. (noun) A person who fails to perform a duty; an offender.

The family court deals with juvenile **delinquents**, not adult offenders.

Related Form: (noun) delinquency

Synonyms: (adjectives) remiss, derelict, negligent; owing, outstanding, unsettled; (nouns) scofflaw; malefactor, wrongdoer

Antonyms: (adjectives) punctilious, scrupulous, dutiful, conscientious, meticulous; paid up

Related Phrases: dereliction of duty, in arrears

123. **de-lude** verb dī-lōōd'

[*deludere* (Latin), "play false"; from *de* (Latin), "away (i.e., from the truth)" + *ludere* (Latin), "play"]

Definition: To mislead or deceive.

More than one Roman emperor **deluded** himself into believing that he was divine rather than mortal.

Related Forms: (*nouns*) deluder, delusion; (*adjectives*) deluded, delusive, delusory

Usage Note:

A *delusion* is a false belief that usually results from trickery, self-deception, or mental disease (e.g., "*delusions of grandeur*"). Do not confuse the word with *illusion*, which indicates a mistaken impression based on faulty perceptions or wishful thinking (e.g., "*an optical illusion*").



Professional magicians like the one shown in this photo are always devising new and exciting illusions with which to entertain their audiences.

Synonyms: (*verbs*) dupe, gull, cozen, hoodwink, trick, beguile

Related Phrases: a complete hoax, a clever scam, a con(fidence) game, a sting operation

124. **de-mure** adjective dī-myōōr'

[*demore* (Old French), "quiet"; from *demorer* (Old French), "linger"; from *de* (Latin), "completely" + *morari* (Latin), "delay"]

Definition: Modest and reserved in dress, manner, or behavior.

The heroine of a popular action-adventure movie may be a far cry from the **demure** young women depicted in 19th-century novels.

The village is famous for its cozy thatched cottages and **demure** gardens.

Related Forms: (*noun*) demureness; (*adverb*) demurely

Usage Notes:

- a. Frequently, *demure* is used disparagingly to indicate false or affected modesty. In this sense, it is a synonym of *coy*.
- b. As the example given above indicates, *demure* is usually reserved for young women. Men who exhibit similar characteristics would probably be called *proper* or *staid*.
- c. Do not confuse the adjective *demure* (with an *e* at the end) with the verb *demur* (without an *a* at the end), which means “take exception to” or “object to.”

Synonyms: (*adjectives*) sedate, prim, decorous, seemly, staid; diffident, shy, self-effacing; coy

Antonyms: (*adjectives*) bold, forward, immodest; assertive, aggressive, jaunty, bumptious

Related Phrases: a wallflower, a shrinking violet

125. **de-noue-ment** *noun* dā-nōō-măn'

[*dénouement* (French), “an untying”; from *dé* (French), “un-” + *nouer* (French), “tie”]

Definition: The point at which the plot of a novel or drama is finally resolved; the outcome or solution of a complex sequence of events.

In the **denouement** of a Victorian novel, vice is usually punished and virtue rewarded.

Their impulsive, often blundering behavior has entangled them in a series of complicated problems whose **denouement** is far from clear.

Synonyms: (*noun*) unraveling (of a plot), disentanglement, climax; final solution, final issue

126. **des-ul-to-ry** *adjective* dēs'-əl-tō-rē

[*desultorius* (Latin), “relating to a jumper”; from *de* (Latin), “down” + *saltire* (Latin), “jump”]

Definition: Shifting from one thing to another without reason or purpose; haphazard or random.

The report on study habits indicated that fifteen minutes of concentrated effort produced better results than two hours of **desultory** labor.

Related Forms: (*noun*) desultoriness; (*adverb*) desultorily

Synonyms: (*adjectives*) fitful, erratic, spasmodic, intermittent; aimless, rambling; disconnected, unmethodical

Antonyms: (*adjectives*) constant, concentrated, steadfast; methodical, systematic, painstaking

Related Phrase: by fits and starts

127. **de-vi-ate** *verb*: dē'-vē-āt *noun*: dē'-vē-īt

[*deviare, deviatus* (Latin), "go off track"; from *de* (Latin), "away from" + *via* (Latin), "way, road"]

Definition:

- a. (*verb*) To move away from, especially what is considered normal, right, or acceptable.

"I'm afraid I'll get lost," the driver said, "if I **deviate** from the route I was told to take."

In any society, there are those who adhere to the accepted code of behavior and those who **deviate** from it.

- b. (*noun*) A person who differs markedly in behavior, belief, or attitude from what is accepted as normal or proper.

Most societies not only frown upon but also proscribe the behavior of various kinds of nonconformists and **deviates**.

Related Forms: (*nouns*) deviation, deviator; (*adjective*) deviant

Synonyms: (*verbs*) diverge, veer, swerve, stray, wander, ramble, digress; (*nouns*) nonconformist, maverick, oddball, heretic

Antonyms: (*verbs*) conform to, stick to, abide by, adhere to; (*nouns*) conformist, traditionalist

Maverick

The word *maverick* is derived from Samuel A. Maverick (1803–1870), a Texas cattleman who refused to brand his calves in accordance with common procedure. At first, the word *maverick* was applied to an unbranded calf that had strayed from the herd and thus could not be readily identified and sent back where it belonged. Later, *maverick* came to mean an individual who does not follow the dictates of the majority, a political or social dissenter, one who refuses to conform to convention. Some synonyms for *maverick* follow: (*nouns*) loner, individualist, insurgent; (*adjectives*) heterodox, recalcitrant, refractory.



128. **de-void** *adjective* dī-void'

[*devoide* (Middle English), "rid of"; from *desvuidier* (Old French), "get rid of"; from *des* (Old French), "completely" + *vuidier* (Old French), "empty"]

Definition: Empty; lacking in.

"They are so smug and self-satisfied!" I remarked. "Rarely have I encountered people so completely **devoid** of any awareness of their own imperfections."

That slogan may sound impressive, but it is totally **devoid** of meaning.

Synonyms: (*adjectives*) destitute (of), bereft (of), wanting (in), deficient (in), barren (in)

Antonyms: (*adjectives*) replete (with), fraught (with), saturated (with), full (of), teeming (with), bursting (with), stuffed (with)

129. **de-vout** *adjective* dī-vout'

[*de* (Latin), "completely" + *vovere*, *votus* (Latin), "vow"]

Definition: Deeply religious, earnest, or sincere.

Although they make no great show of their religion, they are **devout** believers in the teachings of their faith.

For more than 50 years, her allegiance to the cause of human rights has been truly **devout**.

Related Forms: (*verb*) devote; (*nouns*) devoutness, devotion, devotee; (*adjectives*) devoted, devotional; (*adverb*) devoutly

Synonyms: (*adjectives*) pious, faithful; reverent; ardent, zealous

Antonyms: (*adjectives*) irreligious, unreligious, unfaithful; irreverent; lukewarm, tepid

130. **dex-ter-ous** *adjective* dĕk'-strəs

[*dexter* (Latin), "(on the) right; skillful"]

Definition: Skillful in using one's hands or mind; clever.

Professional jugglers are among the most **dexterous** people on the face of the earth.

Any potentially explosive situation requires extremely **dexterous** and sensitive handling by all the parties concerned.

Related Forms: (*nouns*) dexterity, dexterousness; (*adverb*) dexterously

Usage Note:

Dexterous is sometimes spelled *dextrous*, but this is not the preferred form of the word.

Synonyms: (*adjectives*) handy, adroit, deft, adept, proficient

Antonyms: (*adjectives*) awkward, clumsy, gauche, inept, maladroit



A debate in the House of Commons about 1905, showing the seating arrangement. Members of the party in power (here the Conservatives) sit to the right of the speaker (the man in the wig on the throne); members of the opposition (*i.e.*, those not in the government) sit to his left.

A Curious Case of Linguistic Prejudice

Dexterous is one of several words which show that English has a curious preference for the right side. This probably stems, at least in part, from the fact that right-handed people have always outnumbered left-handed ones.

A number of other common English words display the same prejudice. For example, *sinister*, which means "ominous" or "evil-looking," is simply the Latin word for "left." Similarly, *gauche*, which means "clumsy" or "boorish," is in fact just the French word for "left." Finally, *adroit*, which means "clever" or "skillful," comes from a French phrase meaning "to the right."

This preference for the right may even be connected with the origin of some of our most common political terms. In medieval times, the most important guest at a banquet was seated in the most favored spot. This was to the right of the host. When parliaments and similar legislative bodies began to appear in Europe, the practice was carried over into politics. Accordingly, the dominant political group (almost always the conservative element) was seated on the right of the official head of the legislature. Liberal and radical groups sat on his left.

From this arrangement modern English derives such terms as *the right* (the conservative or traditionalist element in any political party or country) and *the left* (the more liberal or radical element). The expressions *right wing*, meaning "conservative," and *leftist*, meaning "radical," also come from the same source. Variations on this theme include *rightist*, *right-winger*, *left wing*, and *left-winger*.

Using the Word

Exercise I. Parts of Speech

Indicate the part of speech of each of the following words. In some cases, two answers are correct.

- | | | |
|------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. defer | 4. dexterous | 7. denouement |
| 2. demure | 5. defect | 8. delinquent |
| 3. deviate | 6. dapper | 9. delete |

Exercise II. Words in Phrases

In each of the following groups, select the item that best expresses the meaning of the *italicized* word in the introductory phrase.

- defer* a decision
a. withdraw b. overrule c. confirm d. postpone
- in a very *dejected* frame of mind
a. aggressive b. gloomy c. playful d. bizarre
- delinquent* behavior
a. callow b. remiss c. evasive d. puzzling
- in a very *demure* outfit
a. flashy b. odd c. staid d. elegant
- desultory* reading
a. dull b. careful c. banal d. fitful
- a truly *devout* follower of soap operas
a. lukewarm b. uninformed c. ardent d. sensitive
- deviate* from the straight and narrow
a. veer b. hale c. infer d. arise

Exercise III. Completing Sentences

Complete each of the following sentences or pairs of sentences by selecting the most appropriate word from the group of words given below. Make any adjustments that are necessary to fit the words into the sentences properly.

- | | | |
|--------|------------|------------|
| dapper | delete | delinquent |
| delude | denouement | devoid |
| defect | dexterous | delineate |

- Though the idea looked good at first glance, I soon came to the conclusion that it was _____ of any real merit.

2. "The ending of this novel isn't very satisfactory," Paula observed. "The _____ just doesn't follow logically from the plot developments that lead up to it."
3. "How _____ you look!" Mom exclaimed as I descended the stairs in my newly acquired finery. "You'll be the best-dressed young man at the dance!"
4. "Describing a character's outward appearance isn't enough to make the figure come alive," my creative-writing teacher told me. "You must also _____ his or her inner thoughts, feelings, and motivations."
5. It takes fairly _____ manipulation of the control strings to make a marionette's movements look smooth and natural.
6. I shortened some of the overly long sentences in my essay by _____ a few unnecessary words from each.
7. No one is perfect, but that doesn't mean we should completely ignore all of a person's _____.
8. "There is no point in _____ myself that I am a great artist," Walt said. "I am only a competent copyist."

Exercise IV. Synonyms and Antonyms

A. In each of the following groups, select the **two** words that are most nearly **synonyms**.

1. a. accede b. retain c. allude d. acquiesce e. reject
2. a. shabby b. remiss c. respectful d. jubilant e. negligent
3. a. mediocre b. final c. natty d. spruce e. constant
4. a. accelerate b. swerve c. elate d. infect e. veer
5. a. leave b. concern c. depict d. injure e. portray

Now, for each pair of synonyms that you have selected, supply a word from the Basic Word List for this lesson (Words 116–130) that means **the same** or **almost the same** thing.

B. In each of the following, select the item that is most nearly **opposite** in meaning to the numbered word at the left.

1. delete a. cancel b. harm c. encourage
 d. insert e. construe
2. dexterous a. clever b. scholarly c. inept
 d. accurate e. bold
3. devoid a. replete b. arbitrary c. wanting
 d. bleak e. destitute

4. defect a. forsake b. elude c. complete
 d. sketch e. adhere
5. desultory a. sober b. concentrated c. expensive
 d. merry e. awkward

Exercise V. Word Roundup

- What is an *optical illusion*? Give an example of the phenomenon.
- What is the difference between *devoted* and *addicted*? Use each in a sentence that clearly shows the difference.
- In your own words, describe the kind of person indicated by each of the following phrases.
 a devoted mother a devout Buddhist a devotee of the arts
- Explain the difference between the words in each of the following pairs.
 a. defective—deficient c. delusion—illusion
 b. deferment—deference d. demur—demure
- What is a *leftist*? a *right-winger*? Explain the story behind these expressions.
- Give **three** examples of words that indicate the preference English seems to have for the right side.
- Explain the meaning of each of the following phrases.
 a. down in the dumps e. a con artist
 b. on top of the world f. dereliction of duty
 c. a complete hoax g. in arrears
 d. a sting operation h. by fits and starts

Exercise VI. Framing Sentences

A. Use each of the following words in an original sentence.

- | | | |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. dapper | 4. delineate | 7. denouement |
| 2. delete | 5. delinquent | 8. desultory |
| 3. delude | 6. demure | 9. devoid |

B. Give a **noun** form of each of these words, and use it in an illustrative sentence.

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-----------|
| 1. dejected | 2. dexterous | 3. devout |
|-------------|--------------|-----------|

C. Give an **adjective** form of each of these words, and use it in an illustrative sentence.

- | | | |
|-----------|----------|------------|
| 1. defect | 2. defer | 3. deviate |
|-----------|----------|------------|

Completing Verbal Analogies

Analogy Question Type II This is probably the most common type of analogy question used on standardized vocabulary tests. It looks more or less like this:

Type II

A B

maple : tree =

- a. acorn : oak
- b. hen : rooster
- c. iris : flower

- d. shrub : lilac
- e. tiger : ferocious

As you can see, in a Type-II analogy question, the student is given the two words in the key relationship (*A, B*). This pair of words is followed by five other pairs of words (*not individual words!*) labeled *a* through *e*. From this group, the student is to select the *pair of words* that will complete the analogy correctly.

Completing Type-II Analogies Correctly. There are two basic steps in the correct completion of Type-II analogy questions.

Step 1. Look at the two words in the key pair (*A, B*), and determine the relationship between them. This is the same procedure that was used to complete Type-I analogies (see page 70).

In the sample analogy question given above, the word *maple* denotes a particular kind of tree. In other words, a maple is an example of a tree. For convenience, this relationship can be expressed as “*A* is an example of *B*.” This is the relationship that must appear on both sides of the equals sign if this particular analogy is to be correct.

A journalist at work on a story for a nightly news program. A job as a journalist of one type or another is an excellent career objective for someone who uses words well.



Step 2. Inspect the five choices given, and determine which illustrates the same relationship as the key pair of words.

In the example given above, only choice *c*, *iris : flower*, does this. An iris is an example of a flower, just as a maple is an example of a tree.

All the other choices do not illustrate the required relationship. An acorn is not an example of an oak, nor is a hen an example of a rooster. Similarly, a shrub is not an example of a lilac, though a lilac is an example of a shrub. In other words, the two components of choice *d* are given in the wrong order. Finally, both of the words in the key relationship (*A*, *B*) are nouns. Thus, *tiger : ferocious* is wrong because *ferocious* is an adjective, not a noun. Always remember to observe the parts of speech involved in the key relationship and the order in which its component parts appear. Doing this will help you eliminate many wrong choices quickly and efficiently.

Two Colons. On some standardized vocabulary tests (notably the Scholastic Assessment Test I), two colons (::) are used instead of the equals sign in the analogy questions. Thus, "maple : tree :: iris : flower" means exactly the same as "maple : tree = iris : flower." Both signs, of course, stand for the word *as*.

Exercise

The following items review what you have so far learned about analogy questions. Complete each.

Group A

- dexterous : clumsy =**
a. copious : plentiful
b. dapper : sloppy
c. obese : cutpable
d. devoid : lacking
e. affluent : agile
- corpulence : portly =**
a. corroboration : contradictory
b. criterion : saturated
c. denouement : virtuous
d. consensus : unanimous
e. desultoriness : methodical
- orange : sphere =**
a. grapefruit : ellipse
b. round : cylinder
c. rug : area
d. diameter : waist
e. wheel : circle
- creditable : praiseworthy =**
a. pivotal : crucial
b. sanguine : cynical
c. delinquent : consummate
d. demure : forward
e. sporadic : gaunt
- harmonious : discord =**
a. skill : inept
b. devout : sincerity
c. cursory : thoroughness
d. delusion : trickery
e. deferential : respect

Group B

6. **deviate : stray ::**
a. delete : include
b. adhere : defect
c. hasten : defer
d. curtail : enlarge
e. delineate : depict
7. **devotion : faithful ::**
a. intoxication : sober
b. warmth : bleak
c. mistaken : illusion
d. indigence : penniless
e. complacence : quarrelsome
8. **covert : overt ::**
a. verbose : laconic
b. tactful : diplomatic
c. stealthy : naive
d. ephemeral : transitory
e. frank : candid
9. **hammer : tool ::**
a. singer : soprano
b. horse : cow
c. typewriter : machine
d. continent : Asia
e. trunk : branch
10. **ambivalent : certainty ::**
a. plausible : reliability
b. inane : substance
c. pathos : feeling
d. manifest : openness
e. fretful : concern

Working with Context Clues

Handling Sentence-Completion Exercises Successfully. Study the following simple example of the kind of sentence-completion exercise that appears on standardized vocabulary tests:

When I told my landlord that I planned to _____ my apartment, he didn't seem too unhappy about my departure.

- a. clean b. inspect c. furnish d. vacate e. decorate

There are a number of simple steps involved in determining the answer to this or any other sentence-completion exercise you might encounter.

Step 1. Read the sentence containing the blank carefully, and make sure you understand what it says.

In the example given above, the sentence says two things. First, it tells you that the speaker ("I") informed the landlord of something. Second, it indicates the landlord's reaction to this information.

Step 2. Determine what you are to do, and where the clue to the correct answer is likely to be.

In the example given above, the part of the sentence indicating the landlord's reaction is complete. What you must do is finish the portion containing the speaker's initial statement.

This means that you must figure out what the speaker said *on the basis of* the landlord's reaction. Thus, the wording of this reaction is likely to contain the clue that you are looking for.

Step 3. Isolate the clue.

In the example given above, look carefully at the landlord's reaction. It reads, "he didn't seem too unhappy about my departure."

Notice the words *about my departure*. These words don't tell you about the landlord's reaction; they tell you about what he was reacting to. In other words, they repeat or imply the gist of what the speaker ("I") said. This must have been something like "I'm moving out of the building" or "I'm giving up my apartment."

Now you know what the speaker initially said. You also know how to determine which word goes in the blank.

Step 4. Look at the five items labeled *a* through *e*, and choose the correct answer.

In the example given above, only one of the five items has anything to do with the idea of leaving. It is choice *d*, *vacate*, which is, of course, the correct answer.

Step 5. Insert your answer into the blank, and reread the completed sentence silently. Check carefully to see that the whole thing makes sense. If it doesn't, discard the answer you have chosen, and repeat steps 1–4.

Here is what the example given above looks like when the correct answer is in place:

When I told the landlord that I planned to vacate my apartment, he didn't seem too unhappy about my departure.

Restatement Clues. The example given above contains a clue that more or less *repeats* the meaning of the missing word. This type of clue is called a **restatement clue**. It is the simplest and most obvious kind of clue used in sentence-completion exercises. As the example also suggests, a restatement clue is often simply a *synonym* or *near-synonym* of the missing word. Sometimes, it may even give a short *definition* of it.

Exercise

Complete each of the following by selecting the word that makes the best sense in the sentence as a whole. Underline the clue or clues that led you to make this choice.

- If you will agree to my price, I will _____ to your schedule.
a. defect b. cohere c. accede d. array e. atone
- A person with a(n) _____ attitude doubts that anyone is virtuous or honest.
a. adverse b. cynical c. belligerent d. bizarre
e. complacent
- I would like to look like those _____ male models wearing stylish clothes in the fashion magazines.
a. affluent b. desultory c. dapper d. bombastic
e. brash

4. Judges are often willing to _____ a first offense but will not overlook any further breaking of the law.
 a. condone b. abstain c. assimilate d. apprehend
 e. corroborate
5. The _____ of depressed people is so complete that they show no interest in any of their daily activities.
 a. attrition b. consensus c. credibility d. blight
 e. apathy

Enriching the Lesson

Exercise I. Borrowings from French

One of the words studied in this lesson is *denouement*, which English has borrowed more or less without change from French. A number of other French expressions that turn up in modern English are listed below. Define each. Then choose any **five**, and for each compose a short illustrative sentence.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. ennui | 11. macabre | 21. sabotage |
| 2. joie de vivre | 12. nuance | 22. de rigueur |
| 3. mystique | 13. tour de force | 23. par excellence |
| 4. fracas | 14. nouveau riche | 24. elite |
| 5. éclat | 15. charade | 25. sortie |
| 6. amour propre | 16. repertoire | 26. timbre |
| 7. rapprochement | 17. volte-face | 27. mot juste |
| 8. queue | 18. suave | 28. rapport |
| 9. avant-garde | 19. souvenir | 29. sangfroid |
| 10. pièce de résistance | 20. verve | 30. repartee |

Exercise II. Anemic Expressions

A great many inexact or meaningless expressions turn up in the speech and writing of what might be called “lazy thinkers.” Some of these items are descriptive adjectives such as *lousy*, *swell*, and *fabulous*. Others are empty phrases such as *or whatever*, *or something*, and *you know*.

What’s wrong with these weak or “anemic” expressions should be obvious. They are too inexact, too nonspecific, too fuzzy, to convey more than a vague impression of what the person using them has in mind.

Here’s an example of a sentence containing such anemic expressions. Study it carefully

The special effects in that movie were *out of this world*, but the acting was *awful*.

This sentence doesn't say very much, does it? To be sure, it tells the reader how the person who wrote it felt about certain aspects of the movie. Still, it doesn't make the reasons for these feelings very clear. What, for example, do you suppose the writer means by "awful" acting? special effects that are "out of this world"?

The reader really can't tell because the wording of the sentence is too imprecise, too unfocused. Instead of using more specific words whose meanings are clear and unambiguous, the writer has chosen empty expressions that convey nothing more than generalized emotions. Thus, the reader is left to guess at what the writer really had in mind.

Now look at the same sentence when it has been reworded in a more precise and meaningful way.

The special effects in that movie were *incredibly lifelike and convincing*. Unfortunately, the acting was *too wooden and stylized to make me believe that the characters were real human beings*.

Now the passage really tells the reader something not only about *how* the writer felt about the movie but also about *why*.

A number of sentences containing anemic expressions (printed in *italic* type) are given below. Substitute a more exact or meaningful expression for each italicized item. If you feel the sentence must be entirely rephrased in order to make it clearer, by all means rewrite it.

1. With a *terrific* quarterback, *dynamite* receivers, and a *super* defense, our team is sure to have a *fabulous* season.
2. Some of the paintings in the show were *gorgeous*; others were *blah*; still others were *just plain awful*.
3. Though I admit that his last novel was *pretty lousy*, I still think the man is a *fantastic* writer.
4. The food at the party was *heavenly*: *yummy* shrimp and lobster, a *lovely* salad, and a *swell* dessert.
5. Rose spent most of her vacation shopping, sightseeing, *etc.*
6. Even though the weather that day was *rotten*, we had a *great* time at the fair.
7. All their *neat* plans for improving the gym or *whatever* fell through at the last moment.

Exercise III. Fused Phrases

The members of one group of English words were formed in a very curious way. Each is made up of a two- or three-word phrase that has been written as if it were one word. This phrase is usually of foreign origin, though in a number of cases it is just plain English. A good example of such "fused phrases" is the word *adroit*, which is simply a French phrase meaning "to the right" all run together.

Another is *alarm*, which comes from the Italian phrase *All'arme!*, meaning "To arms!"

Below are listed a number of other fused phrases used in present-day English. Define each. Then indicate the phrase from which the word comes, and translate it into English if it is of foreign origin.

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. debonair | 7. nonplus | 13. lagniappe |
| 2. checkmate | 8. metaphysics | 14. puny |
| 3. sinecure | 9. akimbo | 15. jeopardy |
| 4. pedestal | 10. apropos | 16. orotund |
| 5. legerdemain | 11. pedigree | 17. tantamount |
| 6. namesake | 12. vouchsafe | 18. ado |

Exercise IV. Expanding Your Word Power

The words listed below are not on the Basic Word List, but they were mentioned in passing in Lesson 12. All of them would make useful additions to your working vocabulary. Define each, give its etymology, list **two** synonyms and **two** antonyms (where possible), and use in a short illustrative sentence.

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1. slovenly | 6. hoodwink | 11. intermittent |
| 2. repudiate | 7. jaunty | 12. expunge |
| 3. expedite | 8. bumptious | 13. digress |
| 4. melancholy | 9. systematic | 14. tepid |
| 5. scrupulous | 10. dowdy | 15. proficient |

Academic Vocabulary

The following vocabulary words and phrases are often used in the field of the visual arts. Like *connoisseur*, introduced in Lesson 11, they are useful when discussing painting, architecture, and sculpture.

assemblage *noun* a-säm-bläzh'; ə-sem'-blij

Definition: A form of art involving the assembly or arrangement of unrelated objects, parts, and materials; a group of persons gathered together.

The museum exhibition was dominated by a startling **assemblage**, in which the featured artist had combined painting, sculpture, found objects, and collage.

cantilever *noun* kan'-tə-lē-vər

Definition: A large block or bracket projecting from a wall to support a balcony or other structure.

Many modern buildings use a **cantilever** to support structures such as balconies.

chiaroscuro *noun* kē-är-ə-skyür'-ō

Definition: The combination of light and shade in a painting or drawing, especially created to produce the illusion of depth.

The artist's use of **chiaroscuro** contributed notably to the dramatic effect of his landscapes.

mise-en-scène *noun* mē-zäⁿ-sen'

Definition: The staging, and particularly the physical setting, of a play, opera, or film; the general surroundings or environment for an action or a series of events.

The **mise-en-scène** for the concluding act of Puccini's opera *Tosca* is the rooftop parapet of the Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome.

palimpsest *noun* pa'-ləm(p)-sest

Definition: A parchment or tablet that has been written upon or inscribed more than once, with the previous texts incompletely erased and still partly visible.

Scholars took painstaking efforts to decipher the original layer of lettering in the ancient **palimpsest**.

pediment *noun* pe'-də-mənt

Definition: A low-pitched, triangular gable on the front of some buildings in the ancient Greek style of architecture.

The designers of ancient Greek temples such as the Parthenon in Athens often used a **pediment** for the display of sculptures narrating the events of well-known myths and legends.

triptych *noun* trip'-tik

Definition: A set of three panels with designs, paintings, or carvings, often hinged so that the two side panels fold over the central one.

Byzantine and medieval altarpieces were often executed in the form of a **triptych** with two variations flanking a central scene.

trompe l'oeil *noun* tro' mp-lə'-ē

Definition: A painting or other art work that creates an illusion of reality so that the viewer may not be able to distinguish reality from representation.

In the period 1910–1940, the Art Nouveau and Art Deco movements testified to the popularity of **trompe l'oeil** as a visual style in decorative arts.

verisimilitude *noun* ver-ə-sə-mi'-lə-tüd

Definition: The appearance of being true or real.

In ancient classical art, Roman portrait busts reached the height of **verisimilitude**, with sculptors vividly portraying the individual personality and traits of their subjects.

Exercise. Completing Sentences

Complete each of the following sentences by selecting the most appropriate academic word or phrase.

1. Fallingwater is perhaps the most famous house designed by the architect Frank Lloyd Wright; built over a waterfall, the house depends on the _____ for support.
a. triptych b. cantilever c. mise-en-scène d. assemblage
2. Samuel Beckett's 1952 absurdist drama *Waiting for Godot* presents a bleak _____—a barren landscape with just one tree dominating the stage.
a. trompe l'oeil b. cantilever c. assemblage d. mise-en-scène
3. In the development of 20th century art, _____ can be seen as a natural outgrowth of collage, in which many disparate elements are juxtaposed in a single composition.
a. palimpsest b. assemblage c. chiaroscuro d. cantilever
4. Few architectural forms are more graceful than the _____ of an ancient Greek temple, which offers spectators a unique fusion of architecture and sculpture.
a. pediment b. triptych c. mise-en-scène d. trompe l'oeil
5. In a number of cities around the world, artists have used brick walls as canvases; using the artistic device of _____, passers-by often see "windows" painted on the sides of buildings, designed to fool the eye.
a. trompe l'oeil b. assemblage c. pediment d. palimpsest
6. The deep shadows and gleaming pools of light in many paintings by Rembrandt illustrate his dramatic use of the device of _____.
a. mise-en-scène b. chiaroscuro c. triptych d. cantilever
7. In the opening decade of the 20th century, the Ashcan School of American painters, centered in New York, portrayed urban life with intense realism and _____.
a. palimpsest b. assemblage c. verisimilitude d. cantilever
8. It is far more likely that a(n) _____ will exist on parchment than on papyrus, since parchment was the more costly and therefore less expendable writing material.
a. palimpsest b. triptych c. pediment d. chiaroscuro
9. Because a(n) _____ typically consists of a middle panel and two small ones, all painted or carved to depict similar subject matter, art historians often are able to identify the artist and origin of individual pieces centuries after the pieces were separated and dispersed.
a. chiaroscuro b. assemblage c. triptych d. pediment