

800 High-Frequency GRE Words

UNIT 1

abate *v.* to decrease; reduce

*NASA announced that it would delay the launch of the manned, spacecraft until the radiation from the solar flares **abated**.*

abdicate *v.* to give up a position, right, or power

*Romulus Augustus, the last Western Roman emperor, was forced to **abdicate** the throne in 476 a.d., and the Germanic chieftain Odovacar became the de facto ruler of Italy.*

*The appeals judge has **abdicated** his responsibility to review the findings of the high court.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

de facto: in fact, whether by right or not; exercising power without being legally established (Latin: *from the fact*)

aberrant *adj.* deviating from what is normal

*When a person's behavior becomes **aberrant**, his or her peers may become concerned that the individual is becoming a deviant.*

Aberration is a noun meaning something different from the usual or normal.

*For centuries, solar eclipses were regarded as serious **aberrations** in the natural order.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

deviant: a person whose behavior differs from the accepted standards of society

abeyance *n.* temporary suppression or suspension

*A good judge must hold his or her judgment in **abeyance** until all the facts in a case have been presented.*

abject *adj.* miserable; pitiful

*John Steinbeck's novel The Grapes of Wrath portrays the **abject** poverty of many people during the Great Depression.*

abjure *v.* to reject; abandon formally

*Most members of the Religious Society of Friends (commonly known as the Quakers or Friends) **abjure** the use of violence to settle disputes between nations.*

*For a foreigner to become a U.S. citizen, he or she must take an oath **abjuring** allegiance to any other country and pledging to take up arms to defend it if required.*

abscission *n.* the act of cutting; the natural separation of a leaf or other part of a plant

*Two scientists, Alan G. Williams and Thomas G. Whitham, have hypothesized that premature leaf **abscission** is an adaptive plant response to herbivorous attack.*

The verb *abscise* means to cut off or away.

*The surgeon **abscised** a small growth on the patient's hand.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

hypothesized: form a hypothesis, that is a proposition put forward as a starting point for further investigation

adaptive: relating to adaptation, an alteration in structure or habits by which a species improves its condition in relationship to its environment

herbivorous: feeding mainly on plants

abscond *v.* to depart secretly

*A warrant is out for the arrest of a person believed to have **absconded** with three million dollars.*

abstemious *adj.* moderate in appetite

*Some research suggests that people with an **abstemious** lifestyle tend to live longer than people who indulge their appetites.*

abstinence *n.* the giving up of certain pleasures

*The monk's **abstinence** includes all intoxicating substances.*

REVIEW 1 Matching

Match each word with its definition:

	1.
abate	
a.	
to abandon formally	2.
abdicate	
b.	
temporary suppression	3.
aberrant	
c.	
to give up a position or power	4.
abeyance	
d.	
giving up of certain pleasures	5.
abject	
e.	
to depart secretly	6.
abjure	
f.	
miserable; pitiful	7.
abscission	
g-	
to decrease	8.
abscond	
h.	
moderate in appetite	9.
abstemious	
i.	
the act of cutting	

abstinence

j-

deviating from what is normal

Fill-ins

Choose the best word to fill in the blank in each sentence.

abate abdicated aberrations abeyance abject
abjured absconded abscission abstemious abstinence

1. The 90-year-old monarch_____ the throne to allow his son to become king.
2. Psychotherapy relies on psychological rather than physiological approaches to curing mental_____ .
3. Implementation of the new plan has been held in_____ pending an investigation of its effectiveness to date.
4. Ms. Johnson's_____ lifestyle helped her to amass a fortune.
5. The crew of the vessel waited for the storm to_____ before going on deck to make repairs.
6. The alcoholic's physician recommended total_____ from liquor for her patient.
7. The documentary filmmaker was accused of using misleading footage to make it appear that nearly everyone in the country lived in_____ conditions.
8. The judge said he would reduce the convicted woman's sentence if she_____ all association with those convicted of treason.

Unit 2

abysmal *adj.* very bad

*The **abysmal** failure of the free market system in Russia has led some people to argue that the planned economy of the Soviet Union, while not perfect, was better suited to Russia's history and culture than Western-style capitalism.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

free market: an economic market in which the demand and supply of goods and services is either not regulated or is slightly regulated

planned economy: an economic system in which the production, allocation, and consumption of goods and services is planned in advance. Another term for planned economy is "command economy."

capitalism: an economic and political system in which a country's industry and trade are controlled by private owners rather than the government

accretion *n.* growth in size or increase in amount

*In the 1960s, the American geophysicist Harry Hess conceived the idea of sea-floor spreading, a process in which the new crust in the ocean is continually generated by igneous processes at the crests of the mid-oceanic ridges, causing a steady **accretion** of the crust*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

geophysicist: one who specializes in the physics of the earth and its environment

igneous: in geology, relating to the formation of rocks by solidification from a molten state. The word *igneous* is from Latin *ignis* (fire).

accrue *v.* to accumulate; grow by additions

*Regulating the growth of large companies when they begin to become monopolistic is a difficult task for government in a capitalist county; if it limits monopolies too much, the nation's firms could become less competitive than foreign companies that enjoy the advantages **accruing** from greater monopolies.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

monopolistic: an economic market in which the demand and supply of goods and services is either not regulated or is slightly regulated

adamant *adj.* uncompromising; unyielding

*Despite widespread opposition to his plan, the party's leader is **adamant** that it must move to the center to appeal to moderate voters.*

adjunct *n.* something added, attached, or joined

*Speed walking, cross-country running, and marathons are normally regarded as **adjuncts** of track and field athletics since races in these sports are not normally held on a track.*

admonish *v.* to caution or reprimand

*The judge **admonished** the jury to discount testimony that had been ruled inadmissible.*

adulterate *v.* to corrupt or make impure

*The unscrupulous company sells an **adulterated** version of the drug, and doesn't inform consumers that they are getting a less efficacious drug than they think they are getting.*

aesthetic *adj.* relating to beauty or art

*Members of the English **aesthetic** movement, such as Oscar Wilde, were proponents of the doctrine of art for art's sake, which is the belief that art cannot and should not be useful for any purpose other than that of creating beauty.*

Aesthetic is also a noun that means a conception of what is artistically beautiful.

*The Gothic **aesthetic** dominated European art and architecture from approximately the twelfth to the fifteenth century.*

Aesthetics is the conception of what is beautiful; it is also a branch of philosophy dealing with beauty and art, and standards in judging them.

*An **aesthete** is someone who cultivates a special sensitivity to beauty; often the word refers to a person whose interest in beauty and art is regarded as excessive or superficial.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

***Gothic**: a style of architecture that was very popular in the late Middle Ages characterized by such features as pointed arches, soaring spaces, and light. In literature the term refers to a genre of fiction that was popular in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Gothic novels have an atmosphere of gloom, mystery, and horror.*

affected *adj.* pretentious, phony

*It has been argued that the emphasis on so-called "proper English" leads to unnatural and **affected** speech.*

affinity *n.* fondness; liking; similarity

The female students in the class felt an affinity for the ancient Greek playwright Euripides because he sympathized with women, slaves, and other despised members of his society.

Unit 3

aggrandize *v.* to make larger or greater

*One of the concerns of the framers of the U.S. Constitution was that one branch of government would try to **aggrandize** itself at the expense of the others.*

aggregate *ad/*, amounting to a whole; total

*The **aggregate** wealth of a country includes private as well as public resources and possessions.*

Aggregate is also a verb meaning to collect into a mass.

*Portals are Web sites designed to **aggregate** information and are used as a starting point*

on the Web.

Aggregate is also a noun meaning collective mass or sum.

alacrity *n.* cheerful willingness; eagerness; speed

*The football coach was pleased to see the team get to work on the task of improving its tackling skills with **alacrity**.*

alchemy *n.* medieval chemical philosophy based on changing metal into gold; a seemingly magical power or process of transmutation.

Alchemy was the forerunner of the modern science of chemistry.

*None of their friends could understand the mysterious **alchemy** that caused two people as different from one another as Rob and Barbara to fall in love.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

alchemy: Modern scientists believe alchemy was not a true science since there's no evidence that anyone succeeded in turning a base metal into gold. Interestingly, however, the word for the modern science of "chemistry" is derived directly from the word "alchemy."

allay *v.* to lessen; ease; soothe

*Improvements in antivirus software have **allayed** many people's fears of having their computers "infected" with malicious software.*

alleviate *v.* to relieve; improve partially

*According to some commentators, one of the weaknesses of capitalism is that although it is very efficient at increasing absolute wealth, it is not as successful at **alleviating** relative poverty; thus, a person living in a slum in America may be reasonably well off by historical standards, but he might perceive himself to be poor compared to members of the bourgeoisie, whom he sees regularly buying luxury goods that he is not able to afford.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

bourgeoisie: the social order dominated by the property-owning class. The term is associated with Marxism, the political and economic philosophy of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, but today it is often used disparagingly to suggest materialism and philistinism (an unenlightened and smug attitude toward culture).

alloy *n.* a combination; a mixture of two or more metals

Scientists formulate **alloys** to create properties that are not possessed by natural metals or other substances.

allure *n.* the power to entice by charm

*Political groups in the United States often lobby Congress to use the **allure** of America's vast market as an incentive for countries to pursue policies in accordance with American policies.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

lobby: & group whose members share certain goals and work to bring about the passage, modification, or defeat of laws that affect these goals

Allure is also a verb meaning to entice by charm. The adjective is *alluring*.

*The idea of a clockwork universe is very **alluring** to some people because it explains how the universe was created, yet allows human beings to live in it without believing in supernatural intervention.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

clockwork universe: a theory of the origin of the universe that compares the universe to a mechanical clock created by God. According to this theory, once created, the universe continues to run according to the laws of nature and does not require further Divine intervention. This idea was very popular in the Enlightenment, an eighteenth-century philosophical movement that emphasized the use of reason to examine accepted beliefs and traditions.

amalgamate *v.* to combine into a unified whole

*In early 1999, six municipalities were **amalgamated** into an enlarged city of Toronto, Canada.*

ambiguous *adj.* unclear or doubtful in meaning

*The gender of the Mahayana Buddhist deity Avalokitesuara, the god of infinite mercy, is **ambiguous** in both China and Japan, where the god is sometimes called a goddess.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Mahayana Buddhist: one of the three major traditions of Buddhism. It regards the historical Buddha as a manifestation of the celestial Buddha.

Unit 4

ambivalence n. the state of having conflicting emotional attitudes.

*John felt some **ambivalence** about getting married before finishing college.*

The adjective is *ambivalent*

*In public opinion surveys in the United States, scientists rank second only to physicians in public esteem, yet much of the public is increasingly **ambivalent** about some of the implications for society of "Big Science" and its related technology.*

ambrosia n. something delicious; the food of the gods

*The combination of flavors in the Moroccan baked eggplant was pure **ambrosia**.*

The adjective is *ambrosial*

*The food critic praised the chef for preparing what he called an "**ambrosial** meal."*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

In Greek mythology, *ambrosia* and *nektar* were the delicious and fragrant food and drink of the gods that gave them immortality. The English word *nektar* (from Greek *nektar*) means a sweet liquid secreted by flowers, or a delicious drink.

ameliorate v. to improve

*Knowing they could not stop the spread of a contagion in a few days, health authorities worked to inhibit its spread and to **ameliorate** its effects by issuing warnings to the public and initiating immunization programs.*

amenable adj. agreeable; cooperative; suited

*The young writer is **amenable** to suggestions for improving her prose style to make it more interesting.*

amenity n. something that increases comfort

*Many **amenities** considered normal and necessary by people in developed countries, such as indoor plumbing, were luxuries only a few generations ago.*

amulet n. ornament worn as a charm against evil spirits

*The early Christian Church forbade the use of **amulets**, which had become common in the Roman Empire at the time the Christian Church began to develop.*

anachronism n. something out of the proper time

*Some experts regard the retirement age of 65 as an **anachronism** at a time when people in the developed world have much longer life expectancies than previously.*

analgesic n. medication that reduces or eliminates pain

*Aspirin (the trademark of the drug acetylsalicylic acid) is a powerful **analgesic** that was introduced in 1899 and is still one of the most effective medicines available to alleviate pain, fever, and inflammation.*

analogous *adj.* comparable

*The psychology researcher's experiment postulates that the brain is **analogous** to a digital computer.*

Analogy is a noun meaning a similarity in some ways between things that are otherwise dissimilar.

*The idea of evolution in nature is sometimes misconstrued and applied by **analogy** to other areas in which there is scant evidence for its existence; a notable example of this is Social Darwinism, in which it is argued that society is like nature, and thus people, like animals, are competing for survival, with those who are genetically superior at surviving and reproducing.*

Analog is a noun meaning something that is comparable to something else.

*Some commentators have posited the existence of an **analog** to the Protestant work ethic in Chinese culture, which they call the "Confucian work ethic." to explain the economic success of some countries with large Chinese populations.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Social Darwinism: a theory in sociology that individuals or groups achieve advantage over others as the result of genetic or biological superiority

Protestant work ethic: a view of life that encourages hard work and a rational view of the world as a way to achieve material success

Confucian: a system or ethics based on the teachings of the ancient Chinese sage Confucius. It places a high value on family relationships.

anarchy *n.* absence of government; state of disorder

*The American philosopher Robert Nozick does not advocate **anarchy**; rather, he argues for the merits of a minimal state that would not violate the natural rights of individuals.*

The adjective *anarchic* means lacking order or control.

*The student of mythology speculated that Dionysos was created as a projection of the pleasure-loving, **anarchic** aspect of human nature.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Dionysos: known as Bacchus to the Romans, Dionysos was the son of Zeus and Selene. He was the Greek god of agriculture, fertility, wine, and ecstasy, and later regarded as a patron of the arts. Dionysos was worshipped by an emotional cult that held secret rites called *Bacchanalia*—wild orgies of frenzied revelry, drunkenness, and debauchery.

The noun *anarchism* refers to the theory that all forms of government are oppressive and should be abolished. It also means the advocacy of this theory or the attempt to bring about anarchism.

Most political scientists do not believe **anarchism** to be a tenable theory of government.

Unit 5

anodyne n. something that calms or soothes pain

*Some people use alcohol as an **anodyne** to numb their emotional pain.*

Anodyne is an adjective that means relaxing, or capable of soothing pain.

*The public relations officer is remarkably **anodyne**; all he does is mouth comforting, politically correct platitudes, saying nothing of substance.*

anomalous adj. irregular; deviating from the norm

*The psychologist discounted the **anomalous** behavior of the soldier, saying it was merely a short-term effect of the stress of battle.*

The noun is *anomaly*.

*A moral dilemma that arises with humanity's ability to clone is posed in the following hypothetical scenario: a pig that produces much more meat than a normal pig can be cloned, but the pig's life span would be cut in half because of **anomalies** in the cloning process: Is it right to clone such an animal?*

antecedent n. something that comes before

*Historical factors, such as the increased emphasis on the individual, the invention of printing, and the rise of the bourgeoisie, contributed to make the Reformation, which had its **antecedents** in the reform movement within the Roman Catholic Church, into a much broader phenomenon that created powerful churches that grew to rival the original church.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Reformation: a sixteenth-century movement aimed at reforming abuses in the Roman Catholic Church. It led to the establishment of new churches.

antediluvian adj. prehistoric

*Most of our knowledge of **antediluvian** times has been built up as a result of one of humanity's grandest collaborative endeavors—the gathering, identification, dating, and categorization of fossils as they are discovered.*

antipathy n. dislike; hostility

*Heathcliff, the protagonist of Emily Bronte's novel *Wuthering Heights*, feels great **antipathy** for Edgar Linton, the man who marries the woman he loves.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

protagonist: the main character in a work of literature

apathy n. indifference

Apathy was high in the election because there was no major controversy or issue to arouse voter interest.

The adjective is *apathetic*.

*One criticism of the welfare state is that it makes people overly reliant on government, with the result that democracy is gradually weakened as citizens take a more **apathetic** and detached view of politics.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Welfare state: the provision of welfare services by the state (that is, the government)

apex n. the highest point

*In English literature, classicism reached its **apex** in the poetry of Alexander Pope and the other Augustans.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Classicism: an aesthetic tradition that values simplicity, elegance, restraint, and order

Augustans: a period of English literature from around 1700 to 1789. Satire was a feature of the writing of many authors of this period. Two notable authors of the Augustan Age were Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift.

apogee n. the point in an orbit most distant from the body being orbited; the highest point

*The Ottoman Empire reached its **apogee** in the seventeenth century, when it controlled a territory running from Budapest to North Africa.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Ottoman Empire: an empire that arose in Anatolia (which corresponds to the Asian portion of modern Turkey) in the fourteenth century, destroying the Byzantine Empire. By the early sixteenth century it controlled much of Persia, Arabia, Hungary, the Balkans, Syria, and Egypt.

apothegm n. a terse, witty saying (pronounced AP-uh-them and also spelled *apophthegm*)

*One of the best-known political **apothegms** was written by the British historian, Lord Acton: "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely"*

Appease v to calm; pacify; placate

Many historians have criticized British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain for trying to

appease Adolf Hitler in the 1930s.

Unit 6

appellation n. name

*The discovery of the bones of a person with the **appellation** Kennewick Man in the state of Washington in 1996 has raised important questions about who the earliest people to populate America were.*

apposite ad/, strikingly appropriate and relevant

*The writer searched two dictionaries and a thesaurus before finding the perfectly **apposite** word he was looking for.*

apprise v. to inform

*Nadine Cohodas's biography of the blues singer Dinah Washington keeps the reader **apprised** of the racism black Americans had to endure.*

approbation n. praise; approval

*The Congressional Medal of Honor is the highest **approbation** an American soldier can receive.*

appropriate v. to take possession for one's own use; confiscate

The pronunciation is uh-PROH-pree ayt. The adjective appropriate is pronounced uh-PROH-pree-it.

*The invading army **appropriated** supplies from the houses of the local people.*

apropos adj. relevant

***Apropos** of nothing, the speaker declared that the purpose of life is to love.*

arabesque n. ornate design featuring intertwined curves; a ballet position in which one leg is extended in back while the other supports the weight of the body

*The ballerina stunned the audience with her perfectly executed **arabesque**.*

archeology n. the study of material evidence of past human life

*Carbon-14 dating is of great use in **archeology** because it can determine the age of specimens as old as 35,000 years, but it is of less use in geology because most of the processes studied in this field occurred millions of years ago.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Carbon-14 dating: determining the actual or relative age of an object, of a natural phenomenon, or of a series of events through the use of the isotope carbon-14, which occurs naturally

ardor n. great emotion or passion

The twentieth-century American poet Wallace Stevens said, "It is the unknown that excites the **ardor** of scholars, who, in the known alone, would shrivel up with boredom."

arduous *adj.* extremely difficult; laborious

The task of writing a research paper is **arduous**, but if it is broken down into logical steps it becomes less daunting.

Unit 7

argot *n.* a specialized vocabulary used by a group

Writers of crime fiction often use the **argot** of criminals and detectives to create a realistic atmosphere.

arrest *v.* to stop; to seize

Temporary **arrest** of the patient's respiration made it easier for the doctor to perform surgery on him.

artifact *n.* item made by human craft

Marxists contend that appreciation of art has declined because capitalism has trained people to perceive human **artifacts** as commodities, and has alienated people from nature, their true humanity, and their creations.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Marxist: a follower of Marxism, the political and economic philosophy of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. In Marxism the concept of class struggle plays a central role in understanding society's inevitable development from bourgeois oppression under capitalism to a socialist and ultimately classless society.

artless *adj.* guileless; natural

The source of the meaning of **artless** as guileless is the poet John Dryden, who wrote of William Shakespeare in 1672: "Such artless beauty lies in Shakespeare's wit..."

ascetic *n.* one who practices self-denial

Muslim **ascetics** consider the internal battle against human passions a greater jihad than the struggle against infidels.

Ascetic is also an adjective meaning self-denying or austere.

The writer's **ascetic** lifestyle helped her to concentrate on finishing her novel.

The noun is *asceticism*.

*One tradition of **asceticism** derives from the belief that the body is fundamentally bad and must be subjugated to the soul.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

***jihad**: the religious duty of Muslims to defend their religion (Islam) by war or spiritual struggle against nonbelievers*

asperity *n.* severity; harshness; irritability

*In his autobiography Gerald Trywhitt, the British writer, composer, artist, and aesthete, recounts a humorous incident: "Many years later, When I was sketching in Rome, a grim-looking Englishwoman came up to me and said with some **asperity**, "see you are painting MY view."^{9*}*

aspersion *n.* slander; false rumor

*The Republic of Singapore is a young democracy, and its leaders often respond strongly to journalists and others who cast **aspersions** on their integrity.*

assiduous *adj.* diligent; hard-working

*The **assiduous** people of Hong Kong live in a territory with one of the highest per capita incomes in the world.*

assuage *v.* to make less severe

*On November 21, 1864, during the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln wrote the following in a letter to Mrs. Bixby of Boston, who had lost five sons in battle: "I pray that our Heavenly Father may **assuage** the anguish of your bereavement and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom."¹*

astringent. *adj.*- harsh; severe

*Bob tends to nick himself when he shaves, so he uses an **astringent** aftershave to stop the bleeding.*

Unit 8

asylum *n.* place of refuge or shelter

*The Stoic, accused of seeking **asylum** in the consolations of philosophy, rebutted this charge, saying that Stoicism is simply the most prudent and realistic philosophy to follow.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

***Stoic**: follower of Stoicism, a pantheistic philosophy emphasizing submission to divine*

will and freedom from emotion

atavism *n.* in biology, the reappearance of a characteristic in an organism after several generations of absence; individual or a part that exhibits atavism; return of a trait after a period of absence

*Some modern political theorists reject nationalism as a tribal **atavism**.*

attenuate *v.* to weaken

*Modern digital radio equipment allows even signals that have been greatly **attenuated** to be transmitted by one station and received by another station.*

audacious *adj.* bold; daring

The German army commander Erwin Rommel was known as the "Desert Fox" as a result of his **audacious** surprise attacks on Allied forces in World War II.*

austere *adj.* stern; unadorned

*Deism is an **austere** belief that reflects the predominant philosophy of the Age of Enlightenment: a universe symmetrical and governed by rationality.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Deism: the belief in a God who created the universe and then abandoned it, assuming no control over life or natural phenomena, and giving no supernatural revelation

Age of Enlightenment: a period in European philosophy during the eighteenth century that emphasized reason

autonomous *adj.* self-governing; independent

*Some biologists have theorized that our belief in our ability to act as **autonomous** agents is in conformity with the theory of evolution because it gives us a sense of meaning and purpose in our lives that helps us to survive.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

theory of evolution: the theory that living things originate from other similar organisms and that differences between types of organisms are due to modifications in successive generations. A central tenet of Darwinian evolution is that surviving individuals of a species vary in a way that enables them to live longer and reproduce, thus passing this advantage to future generations (Natural Selection).

avarice *n.* greed

*Successful investment bankers are sometimes accused of **avarice**; their defenders,*

however, say that they are simply very good at what they do and should be rewarded accordingly.

aver v. to affirm; declare to be true

Yogis *aver* that everyone has a guru, whether it be a person, God, or the experiences of the world, that helps him or her practice the yoga that is in accordance with his or her nature, and assists on the path toward enlightenment.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

yogis: a yogi is the Sanskrit (an ancient Indian language) name for a man who practices yoga. A woman who practices yoga is a *yogini*.

guru: a personal spiritual teacher. The term is also used to refer to a trusted advisor or an authority.

yoga: spiritual practices in the Hindu and Buddhist religions that are believed to help one to attain higher awareness and union with God

avocation n. secondary occupation

Dan became so proficient at his **avocation**—computer programming— that he is thinking of giving up his job as a teacher to do it full time.

avuncular adj. like an uncle, benevolent and tolerant

Walter Cronkite, who was the anchorman of CBS News during much of the 1970s and 1980s, had an **avuncular** manner that made him one of America's most trusted personalities.

UNIT 9

axiomatic adj. taken for granted

In nineteenth-century geology, uniformitarianism was the antithesis of catastrophism, asserting that it was **axiomatic** that natural law and processes do not fundamentally change, and that what we observe now is essentially the same as what occurred in the past

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

uniformitarianism: & geological theory popular in the nineteenth century.

Uniformitarianism holds that geological processes have slowly shaped the Earth and continue to do so.

catastrophism: a theory that was a rival to uniformitarianism. It postulates an Earth formed in a series of unique, catastrophic events.

bacchanalian adj. pertaining to riotous or drunken festivity; pertaining to revelry.

For some people New Year's Eve is an occasion for **bacchanalian** revelry.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Bacchus: known as Dionysos to the ancient Greeks, Bacchus was the god of agriculture, fertility, and wine. He was worshipped by an emotional cult that held secret rites called *Bacchanalia*—wild orgies of frenzied revelry, drunkenness, and debauchery. Bacchanalian is derived from *Bacchanalia*.

banal *adj.* commonplace; trite

*The writer has a gift for making even the most **banal** observations seem important and original.*

banter *n.* playful conversation

*The governor engaged in some **banter** with reporters before getting to the serious business of the news conference.*

bard *n.* poet

*The great **bards** of English literature have all been masters of the techniques of verse.*

bawdy *adj.* obscene

*Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales is the story of a group of Christian pilgrims who entertain one another with stories, ranging from the holy to the **bawdy**, on their journey to Canterbury Cathedral*

beatify *v.* to sanctify; to bless; to ascribe a virtue to

*In the year 2000 Pope John Paul II traveled to Fatima in Portugal to **beatify** two of the three children who said they saw the appearance of the Virgin Mary there in 1917.*

Beatification is the noun.

***Beatification** is the second and next to last step on the path to sainthood.*

bedizen *v.* to dress in a vulgar, showy manner

*Paul went to the costume party **bedizened** as a seventeenth-century French aristocrat.*

behemoth *n.* huge creature; anything very large and powerful

*In the 1980s and 1990s, the trend in American business was toward increased privatization of government industries (such as power generation), partly because it was believed that private industry is more efficient and partly because foreign private companies were becoming commercial **behemoths**, outstripping government-owned companies in competitiveness.*

belie *v.* . to contradict; misrepresent; give a false impression

The boxer's childlike face **belies** the ferocity with which he can attack opponents in the ring.

unit 10

beneficent *adj.* kindly; doing good

The theologian discussed the question of why a **beneficent** and omnipotent God allows bad things to happen to good people.

bifurcate *v.* to divide into two parts

Contemporary physicists generally **bifurcate** their discipline into two parts—classical physics and modern physics; the former are the fields of study that were already well developed before the momentous breakthroughs of the early twentieth century by scientists such

as Albert Einstein, Niels Bohr, and Werner Heisenberg, which inaugurated the age of modern physics.

Bifurcation is the noun.

Some people regard the Hindu-Buddhist philosophy on animals as more in accordance with the modern scientific view than the traditional Western view, since it does not posit a radical **bifurcation** of man and nature.

blandishment *n.* flattery

Despite the salesperson's **blandishments**, Donna did not buy the car.

Blandish is the verb, meaning to coax with flattery.

blasé *adj.* bored because of frequent indulgence; unconcerned

We were amazed by John's **blasé** attitude toward school; he seems to have made it a rule never to open a book.

bolster *v.* to give a boost to; prop up; support

The president has visited the state several times to **bolster** his sagging popularity there.

bombastic *adj.* pompous; using inflated language

Nearly lost in the senator's long, **bombastic** speech were several sensible ideas.

boorish *adj.* rude; insensitive

Bob apologized for his **boorish** behavior at the party, saying he hadn't realized that it was such a formal occasion.

bovine *adj.* cowlike

Following the slow-moving group of students up the long path to the school's entrance, the word "**bovine**" popped into the English teacher's mind.

brazen *adj.* bold; shameless

The **brazen** student irritated his teacher by saying that he could learn more from a day

spent "surfing" the World Wide Web than a day spent in school

broach v. to mention for the first time

*Steve's boss knew that she couldn't put off warning him about his poor performance and decided to **broach** the subject the next time she saw him.*

Unit 11

bucolic adj, characteristic of the countryside; rustic; pastoral

*The south end of Toronto's beautiful High Park is a **bucolic** expanse of land that is perfect for anyone wanting a quiet walk.*

burgeon u. to flourish

*After World War II, the increased speed of industrialization and the **burgeoning** world population resulted in such an increase in pollution that it began to be recognized by some people as a threat to the human habitat, Earth.*

burnish v. to polish

*The poet T S. Eliot **burnished** his reputation as one of the master poets of the twentieth century with Four Quartets, four long poems published between 1936 and 1942.*

buttress v. to reinforce; support

*Some critics of the American legal system argue that the requirement of proving guilt "beyond a reasonable doubt"*¹ is too difficult a criterion to use, and **buttress** their case by citing the fact that objective studies suggest that only a very small number of criminals are successfully prosecuted.*

cacophonous adj. unpleasant or harsh-sounding

*The dissonant harmonies of the great jazz pianist and composer Thelonious Monk might seem **cacophonous** to some listeners, but to many jazz aficionados they are sublime.*

A cacophony is a jarring, unpleasant noise.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

aficionados: people who are enthusiastic admirers or followers

cadge v. to beg; sponge

*An enduring image of the Great Depression in America is the out-of-work man **cadging** money with the line, "Hey, mister, can you spare a dime for a cup of coffee?"*¹*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Great Depression: a very large economic decline that began in 1929. Major industrial nations such as Great Britain, Japan, and the United States were greatly affected by declines in nearly all measures of economic prosperity (such as employment and profits).

callous *adj.* thick-skinned; insensitive

*Jim's terrible experiences in the war have made him **callous** about the suffering of others.*

calumny *n.* false and malicious accusation; slander

*"Be thou chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape **calumny**."*

—William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* Act III, Scene 1 (Hamlet addressing Ophelia)

canard *n.* false, deliberately misleading story

*Most politicians do not want to be associated with the old **canard** that big government in Washington can solve all of America's problems.*

canon *n.* an established principle; a basis or standard for judgment; a group of literary works

Canons of aesthetic taste vary over the years; the Rococo period, for example, valued ornate art.

*The 60-volume Great Books of the Western World is an attempt to gather the central **canon** of Western civilization into one collection.*

Canon is also an adjective.

*The system of civil law originated in the Roman Empire and was kept alive in the Middle Ages in the **canon** law of the Church.*

Canonical is an adjective meaning belonging to a group of literary works.

*The English professor is trying to persuade the chairperson of her department to let her teach some writers that are not **canonical**.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Rococo: refers to a style of architecture in eighteenth-century Europe that made use of elaborate curved forms. The word is often used to refer to something that is excessively ornate.

UNIT 12

cant *n.* insincere talk; language of a particular group

*Many of the beat artists of the 1950s reacted against what they regarded as the **cant** of bourgeois society.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

bourgeois: both *bourgeois* and *bourgeoisie* come from Old French *burgeois*, citizen of a *bourg* (town). *Bourgeois* refers to a person who belongs to the middle class or has middle-class attitudes. It can be used in a neutral way. However, it is frequently used to suggest that someone is not sophisticated.

cantankerous *adj.* irritable; ill-humored

*Many of us have in our mind the stereotype of the **cantankerous** old man who is constantly complaining about something or other.*

capricious *adj.* fickle

*The rule of law is regarded by many historians as one of humanity's great achievements because since its inception citizens are no longer subject to **capricious** decisions and penalties of rulers.*

Caprice is a noun meaning an inclination to change one's mind compulsively.

*Styles in high fashion seem governed by **caprice** as much as anything else.*

captious *adj.* faultfinding; intended to entrap, as in an argument

*The pedantic and **captious** critic seems incapable of appreciating the merits of even the most highly regarded books.*

cardinal *adj.* of foremost importance

*The **cardinal** rule of any weight-loss diet must be limiting the intake of calories.*

carnal *adj.* of the flesh or body; related to physical appetites

*The yogi's goal is to achieve nirvana through, among other things, the overcoming of **carnal** desires.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

nirvana: ideal condition of rest, harmony, or joy. Nirvana is from Sanskrit *nirvanam* (a blowing out), as in the blowing out of a flame. According to Buddhism and Hinduism, in order to reach nirvana one must extinguish the fire fueled by the ego, which causes suffering, ignorance, delusion, and greed.

carping *v.* to find fault; complain

Cost-benefit analysis *owes much of its origin to utilitarian thought; despite the **carping** of critics that such analysis is based on faulty premises, the technique has proved useful in many areas.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Cost-benefit analysis: the process of weighing the total expected costs against the total expected benefits of one or more actions in order to choose the best option

utilitarian: the ethical philosophy that human activity should be aimed at achieving the greatest good for the greatest number. Jeremy Bentham was the founder of the theory and his student John Stuart Mill was its most famous proponent. Mill used the theory to argue for social reform and increased democracy.

cartography n. science of making maps

*Satellites in Earth orbit take pictures of topography that have greatly aided **cartography**.*

caste n. any of the hereditary social classes of Hindu society; social stratification

*The dalits, formerly known as untouchables, are at the bottom of the thousands of **castes** that make up Indian society.*

Caste is also an adjective.

*Most modern corporations employ a sort of **caste** system, with senior executives at the top and ordinary workers at the bottom.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

There are four main *castes* or heredity groups (and thousands of subcastes) in Hindu society that restrict the occupations of members and limit their interaction with members of other castes. There are four main castes:

Brahmans (priests and teachers)

Ksatriyas (noblemen)

Vaisyas (merchants and traders)

Sudras (laborers)

A fifth group, called "Harijans" or "untouchables" are considered impure and are discriminated against. They toil in lowly occupations such as cleaning up waste and leatherworking.

castigation n. punishment; chastisement; criticism

*Many British writers recall with loathing the **castigation** they received at school*

Unit 13

cataclysm n. a violent upheaval that causes great destruction and change

*The French Revolution of 1789 was a **cataclysm** whose effects are still felt today.*

catalyst n. something causing change

Among the catalysts of the Romantic movement were the libertarian ideals of the French

Revolution.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Romantic movement: a late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century movement in literature and the arts. The movement was a very varied one, and so is not easily described in a few words. Romanticism was a revolt against classicism and reason and emphasized the individual and the emotional. The Romantics also stressed the inherent goodness of man and nature and valued freedom highly. Important Romantic poets in England include William Blake, John Keats, William Wordsworth, and P. B. Shelley. Famous Romantic composers include Hector Berlioz, Franz Liszt, and Frederic Chopin.

libertarian: libertarians place great importance on individual freedom. They believe that no limitations should be placed on a person's freedom unless that person's actions limit the freedom of others.

French Revolution: a crucial period (1789-1799) in French, and more generally, Western civilization. France's absolute monarchy was replaced by republicanism. It is regarded by most historians as a major turning point in Western civilization, ushering in the era of citizens as the major force in politics.

categorical *adj.* absolute; without exception

*Although incest is **categorically** forbidden by every state, recent evidence that marriage between cousins is no more likely to produce abnormal offspring than "normal" marriages may allow the constitutionality of bans on marriage between cousins to be challenged.*

caucus *n.* smaller group within an organization

*The workers formed an informal **caucus** to discuss their difficulties.*

causal *adj.* involving a cause

*The philosopher Plato believed there is a **causal** relationship between income inequality, on the one hand, and political discontent and crime, on the other hand: in his *Laws* he quantified his argument, contending that the income of the rich should be no more than five times that of the poor, and he proposed policies to limit extremes of wealth and poverty.*

caustic *adj.* sarcastically biting; burning

*The columnist's **caustic** comments on government policy did not win her any friends among government officials.*

celestial *adj.* concerning the sky or heavens; sublime

*Astronomers make use of the Doppler effect to measure the velocities and distance from Earth of stars and other **celestial** objects.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Doppler effect: change in the wavelength and frequency of a wave as a result of the motion of either the source or receiver of the waves

centrifugal *adj.* moving away from a center

*As the empire expanded, there was an ever-increasing **centrifugal** stress as remote colonies sought autonomy.*

centripetal *adj.* moving or directed toward a center

*Astronomers calculate that the **centripetal** force exerted by the Earth's gravity on the Moon will keep the Moon in orbit around the Earth for billions of years.*

champion *v.* to defend or support

*Robin Hood is famous for **championing** the underdogs of England.*

UNIT14

chasten *v.* to correct by punishment or reproof; to restrain or subdue

*The child's behavior improved after she had been **chastened** by punishment*

chicanery *n.* trickery; fraud

*The governor ordered an audit to investigate alleged financial **chicanery**.*

chivalry *n.* the qualities idealized by knighthood such as bravery and gallantry toward women

***Chivalry** was rooted in Christian values, and the knight was bound to be loyal to Christian ideals; the Crusades enhanced this idea, as knights vowed to uphold Christianity against heathens.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

chivalry: The code of chivalry dictated how a knight should act; this code enjoined the knight to defend the Church, make war against infidels, perform scrupulously feudal duties, and in general champion virtue against evil.

Crusades: military expeditions by Christians in the Middle Ages to win the Holy Land from the Muslims

churlish *adj.* rude; boorish

*According to the chivalric code, a knight was never supposed to be **churlish**, especially toward noble ladies, to whom he was supposed to be unfailingly gentle and courteous.*

circuitous *adj.* roundabout

*According to Hindu philosophy, some souls take a **circuitous** path through many births to reach God.*

clairvoyant *n.* one who can predict the future; psychic

*Edgar Cayce was a famous **clairvoyant** who some people believe was able to go into a trance during which he was in touch with a spiritual realm.*

clamor *n.* noisy outcry

*Over the past 12 years or so the voices **clamoring** for better protection of the Earth's rain forests have increased dramatically.*

Clamor is also a verb meaning to cry out noisily.

*The crowd **clamored** their disapproval of the plan.*

clique *n.* a small, exclusive group

*The principal of the high school is concerned that one **clique** of students is dominating the student council.*

cloister *v.* to confine; seclude

*The writer **cloistered** herself in a country house to finish her novel.*

*The adjective **cloistered** means shut away from the world.*

*The journalist described the large American philanthropic foundations as arrogant, elitist, and **cloistered**.*

*The noun **cloister** means a monastery or convent.*

coagulate *v.* thicken; congeal

*In normal individuals, blood begins to **coagulate** about 20 seconds after a wound is sustained, thus preventing further bleeding.*

Unit 15

coalesce *v.* to cause to become one

*President John F. Kennedy said that Americans must be vigilant so that the interests of business and the military do not **coalesce** and thus undermine those of society as a whole.*

coda *n.* concluding part of a literary or musical composition; something that summarizes or concludes

*The **coda** of the Danish composer Per Norgard's Sixth Symphony seems to return to the serene sounds of the opening.*

codify *v.* to systematize

The state legislature voted to **codify** regulations governing banking fraud.

Codification is the noun.

The most influential **codification** of civil law was the Napoleonic Code in France, which became the paradigm for law in the non-English-speaking countries of Europe and had a generally civilizing influence on most of the countries in which it was enacted.

Codified is the adjective.

Common law is the system of laws that originated in England; it is based on court decisions and on customs rather than on **codified** written laws.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

civil law: a system of law developed from Roman law that is used in continental Europe, the U.S. state of Louisiana, and several other places. The basis of civil law is statute rather than custom and precedent, which are the basis of common law.

Napoleonic Code: French legal code enacted by Napoleon in 1804. It made uniform the private law of France.

common law: body of law that includes many nonstatutory laws based on many years of precedent derived from rulings by judges

cognizant *adj.* informed; conscious; aware

*O. Henry's "The Gift of the Magi" is a simple evocation of a young couple's love for one another, a story in which a husband and wife in straitened circumstances each sacrifices to buy a Christmas present for the other, not **cognizant** of what the other is doing.*

collage *n.* artistic composition of materials pasted over a surface; an assemblage of diverse elements

*The cubist Juan Gris is noted for his use of **collage** to create trompe l'oeil effects—the illusion of photographic reality.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

cubist: a movement in art in the twentieth century that represented subjects from severed points of view rather than from a single perspective. Pablo Picasso and Georges Braques were the two most influential cubist artists.

trompe l'oeil a French term meaning "deceive the eye." It refers to a style of portraying objects in a way that deceives the observer into believing it is the object itself.

commensurate *adj.* proportional

*In the United States, malpractice suits have raised the cost of medicine because doctors must pay more for insurance, and thus increase their fees **commensurately**.*

compendium *n.* brief, comprehensive summary

The Mozart **Compendium**: A Guide to Mozart's Life and Music by *H. C. Robbins Landon* is a convenient reference for finding information about the life and music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

complacent *adj.* self-satisfied

Although Tom received an "A" on his midterm exam, Professor Donovan warned him not to become **complacent** since the work in the second term would be harder.

complaisant *adj.* overly polite; willing to please; obliging

Although France and Germany have a close relationship, neither would consider the other a **complaisant** ally.

complement *n.* something that completes or makes up a whole

Some people envision chess developing into a game played at the highest levels between teams of humans and computers, each **complementing** the other and providing investigators with insight into the cognitive processes of each.

Unit 16

compliant *adj.* yielding

The young negotiator is trying to learn the skill of being open to proposals by the other side without seeming too **compliant**

compunction *n.* uneasiness caused by guilt

The American psychiatrist Frank Pittman said, "Men who have been raised violently have every reason to believe it is appropriate for them to control others through violence; they feel no **compunction** over being violent to women, children, and one another."

concave *adj.* curving inward

Concave lenses are used in glasses to compensate for myopia (nearsightedness).

conciliatory *adj.* overcoming distrust or hostility

The leader of the country made **conciliatory** statements assuring the world that his country did not intend to acquire nuclear weapons.

concoct *v.* to invent

The various human cultures have **concocted** a great many explanations to describe the beginning of the Earth, life, and humanity.

concomitant *n.* existing concurrently

A rebuttal of the argument that homo sapiens's higher cognitive functions could not be the result solely of evolution is that such abilities arose as **concomitants** of language, which gave early hominids a tremendous advantage over other species.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

hominids: a hominid is any member of the biological family Hominidae (the "great apes"), which include, chimpanzees, gorillas, orangutans, and humans.

condone v. to overlook voluntarily; forgive

Mahatma Gandhi *believed in the principle of ahimsa and refused to condone violence of any kind, even if used in a just cause.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Mahatma Gandhi twentieth-century Indian political leader who was instrumental in India's gaining independence. Gandhi is widely revered for his championing of nonviolence.

ahimsa a belief in Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism that advocates noninjury to all living beings

confound v. to baffle; perplex; mix up

*Everyone but an astrophysicist seems to be **confounded** by the question, "What happened before the Big Bang?"*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Big Bang: a model of the origin of the universe stating that it began as infinitely compressed and has been expanding since then

congenial adj. similar in tastes and habits; friendly; suited to

*The physicist Freeman Dyson has expressed his awe at how **congenial** the universe is to intelligent life and consciousness.*

condone adj. pertaining to marriage agreement

*The goal of the Bennett sisters in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is to find a suitable man to marry with whom they can live in **conjugal** happiness.*

Unit 17

connoisseur n. a person possessing expert knowledge or training; a person of informed and discriminating taste

*The art **connoisseur** selected works by Van Gogh, Rembrandt and Picasso for the exhibition.*

conscript n. person compulsorily enrolled for military service

*The position of NOW (The National Organization for Women) is that having male-only **conscripts** violates the principle of gender equality.*

Conscript is also a verb meaning to enroll a person for military service

*The French writer Andre Breton was **conscripted** into the artillery and had to put his medical studies in abeyance for the duration of World War I*

Conscription is the noun.

*During the War of 1812, American political leaders considered national **conscription** to augment state militias, but Daniel Webster successfully argued before Congress that such a measure would be unconstitutional and thus the proposal was rejected.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

War of 1812: a war fought between the British Empire and the United States from 1812 to 1815. The war ended in a stalemate.

conscription: forced enlistment of people in the military. Modern conscription originated during the French Revolution.

Daniel Webster: American lawyer and political leader during the period before the Civil War, which he tried to avert

consecrate v. to declare sacred

*In his Gettysburg Address, President Abraham Lincoln said of the soldiers who died in the Battle of Gettysburg in July, 1863: "We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live...But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot **consecrate**—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have **consecrated** it, far above our poor power to add or detract"*

contend v. to assert

One of the most famous philosophers to argue for ethical relativism was the German Friedrich Nietzsche, who contended that the lightness of a particular action is dependent on the circumstances of the time and culture in which it occurs.

Contention is a noun meaning an assertion.

*The study's **contention** is that obesity is America's biggest health problem.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

ethical relativism: the view that there is no objective truth in issues of what is right or wrong

Friedrich Nietzsche: nineteenth-century German philosopher. Nietzsche is best known for his doctrine of "the Superman/ which held that superior people should reject the "slave morality" of traditional Christianity in favor of a new morality centered on the individual.

contentious *adj.* quarrelsome; causing quarrels

*When genetic engineering began in the 1970s, there was a **contentious**, and sometimes acrimonious, debate among scientists themselves about its dangers.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

genetic engineering: the use of various methods to manipulate the DNA (genetic material) of cells to change hereditary traits or produce biological products

contiguous *adj.* touching; neighboring; connecting without a break *There are 48 contiguous states in the United States of America*

continence *n.* self-control; abstention from sexual activity

*Saint Augustine's famous line "Give me chastity and **continence**, but not just now" is sometimes used to highlight the idea that action is desirable at some point, but not at present.*

contrite *adj.* very sorrowful for a wrong

*In sentencing the convicted man to a life sentence, the judge took into consideration the fact that he did not seem to be at all **contrite** about his crime.*

contumacious *adj.* disobedient; rebellious

*In the late eighteenth century, Great Britain tried unsuccessfully to put down the uprising against their rule by **contumacious** Americans, leading eventually to the establishment of a separate nation.*

conundrum *n.* riddle; puzzle with no solution

*The paradoxical statement "This statement is false" presents us with a **conundrum**.*

Unit 18

convention *n.* practice widely observed in a group; custom; accepted technique or device

*The work of French artist Henri Rousseau demonstrates a naiveté that many people find more attractive than the sophistication of highly complex works that make use of all the **conventions** of their genre.*

Conventional is an adjective meaning customary or commonplace

*Guerilla war presents a dilemma for framers of rules of war: should guerilla fighters be subject to the same rules as those imposed on soldiers who fight **conventional** wars?*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Henri Rousseau: French painter (1844-1910) famous for his paintings, often of jungles, done in a Primitive manner

guerilla war: a war involving small groups of soldiers that are flexible and mobile. In

guerilla war there is no front line as there is in conventional war.

converge v. to approach; come together; tend to meet

*Although the People's Republic of China and India are rivals in many ways, in certain areas their interests **converge**.*

convex adj. curved outward

*The term for a lens with one **convex** and one concave side is "convex-concave."*

convivial adj. sociable

*One of the jobs of an ambassador is to provide a **convivial** atmosphere for diplomats to meet.*

convoluted adj. twisted; complicated

*Unraveling the **convoluted** genetic code is one of the great achievements of modern science.*

copious adj. abundant; plentiful

*The **copious** rainfall was welcomed by farmers in the parched land.*

coquette n. woman who flirts

*After she had played the part of a **coquette** in the college play, Pam's boyfriend felt that he needed to remind her that real life was quite different from the theater.*

cornucopia n. horn overflowing with fruit and grain; state of abundance

*The U.S. economy has produced a **cornucopia** of employment opportunities.*

cosmology n. study of the universe as a totality; theory of the origin and structure of the universe

*Albert Einstein downplayed the strength of the evidence for quantum theory because a universe governed by laws that are inconsistent in their application was not congruent with his personal **cosmology**.*

Cosmos is a noun meaning the physical universe regarded as a totality.

*Shakespeare embodies the incredible confidence and vitality of Renaissance artists and writers, depicting the entire **cosmos**, not intimidated by its vastness.*

Cosmic is an adjective meaning relating to the physical universe, especially as distinct from Earth, and suggests infinite vastness.

*The gods of ancient Greece were concerned not only with **cosmic** events, but also with the ordinary events of everyday life.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

quantum theory: a theory in physics based on the principle that matter and energy have the properties of both particles and waves

Renaissance: the period of revival in art and learning that occurred in Europe during the fourteenth to the seventeenth century

covert *adj.* hidden; secret

*The CIA gathers information about foreign intelligence through many means, including **covert** ones.*

Unit 19

covetous *adj.* desiring something owned by another

*The astronomer is **covetous** of the time that his colleague gets for research using the Hubble Space Telescope.*

Covet is the verb.

*The latest model cell phone is designed to make people **covet** it so much that they go out and buy it even though their present phone is perfectly adequate.*

cozen *v.* to mislead by trick or fraud; deceive

*The writer H. L. Mencken pointed out that a common strategy of politicians is to **cozen** the people by exaggerating the seriousness of a problem and then offering a solution that, conveniently, only they can provide.*

craven *adj.* cowardly

*In the Hindu epic poem the Bhagavad-Gita, Lord Krishna warns the hero, who is reluctant to fight, that refusing to fight would be a **craven** act.*

credence *n.* acceptance of something as true

*One of the lessons in Aesop's fable *The Shepherd Boy and the Wolf* is that if a person "cries wolf too many times without real danger being present (that is, raises too many false alarms) people will be less likely to give **credence** to future alarms raised by that person.*

credo *n.* statement of belief or principle; creed *The **credo** of Google is "Don't be evil."*

daunt *v.* to discourage; intimidate; dishearten

*Do not let the difficulty of learning the 800 words in Essential Words for the GRE **daunt** you.*

*Daunting is an adjective that means discouraging or disheartening. *Earning a PhD. is a **daunting** task, but it can be done.**

*The adjective *dauntless* means fearless.*

dearth *n.* scarcity

*In his book *The Affluent Society*, published in 1958, the economist J. K. Galbraith pointed out that in America affluence is located disproportionately in the private sector, leaving a **dearth** of resources available for the public sector.*

debauchery *n.* corruption

*The prince lived a life of **debauchery** until he discovered a spiritual dimension to life.*

decorum *n.* proper behavior

*When addressing the nation, the president generally has an air of **decorum**.*

The adjective is *decorous*.

defame: v. to malign; harm someone's reputation

*The ancient Greek philosopher Socrates was **defamed** as a teacher who corrupted the morals of his students.*

UNIT 20

default v. to fail to act

*Economists have pointed out the danger of using government money to help banks in danger of **defaulting** on a loan: such help might encourage banks to take excessive risks on the future, knowing they will be "bailed out" by the government.*

deference n. respect; regard for another's wish

*There was a movement to condemn slavery among some of the writers of the Declaration of Independence, but despite many misgivings, the proposal was dropped in **deference** to the objections of a number of people.*

The verb *defer* means to submit to the wishes of another due to respect or recognition of the person's authority or knowledge.

*The young lawyer **deferred** to the view of the senior partner in the law firm.*

defunct adj. no longer existing

*Skeptics have been prognosticating that Moore's Law, which says computer processing power doubles every 18 months, will soon become **defunct**, but the ingenuity of engineers, coupled with commercial incentives, has so far succeeded in preventing the law from being invalidated.*

delineate v. to represent or depict

*Quantum theory led to the formulation of the uncertainty principle, which was **delineated** in 1937 by Werner Heisenberg.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

uncertainty principle: the statement in quantum mechanics stating that it is impossible to measure accurately two properties of a quantum object, such as its position and momentum

demographic adj. related to population balance

***Demographic** trends in many European countries indicate that in the next generation there will be relatively fewer working people to support retired people.*

Demography is the study of human population.

***Demography** makes use of the knowledge of other fields such as geography and statistics.*

A demographer is one who studies human population.

*If, beginning in the mid-twentieth century, many governments in the world had not taken steps to promote birth control among their citizens, causing a diminution in the birth rate, **demographers** say the world would now have a much greater population than it does.*

demotic *adj.* pertaining to people

*Walt Whitman is considered by many to be a quintessentially American poet, a poet who celebrated the glory of the ordinary person; one critic praised him as a poet who was able to "make the **demotic** sing."*

demur *v.* to express doubt

*The Supreme Court's decision was not unanimous; one justice **demurred**, saying that the majority decision used specious reasoning.*

denigrate *v.* to slur someone's reputation

*According to a recent biography of Napoleon Bonaparte, the famous leader felt a need to **denigrate** women.*

denizen *n.* an inhabitant; a regular visitor

*The U.S. Census Bureau has the responsibility of collecting information about the **denizens** of the United States.*

denouement *n.* outcome; unraveling of the plot of a play or work of literature

*The book tells the story of what was for Europe a rather embarrassing **denouement** to the Crusades.*

Unit 21

deride *v.* to mock

*Innovation often requires challenges to orthodox thinking; for example, in the late 1960s, scientists from the U.S. Department of Defense's Advanced Research Projects Agency presented their idea of a vast network of computers to leading scientists from IBM and AT&T—companies with innumerable research breakthroughs to their credit—and were **derided** as impractical visionaries.*

derivative *n.* something derived; unoriginal

*The drug morphine—considered by doctors to be one of the most effective analgesics—is the principal **derivative** of opium, which is the juice in the unripe seed pods of the opium poppy.*

Derivative is also an adjective.

*The critic dismissed the new novel as dull and **derivative**.*

*The verb *derive* means obtained from another source.*

*One of the attempts to create a lingua franca resulted in Esperanto, a synthetic language whose vocabulary is created by adding various affixes to individual roots and is **derived** from Latin and Greek, as well as Germanic and Romance languages.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

lingua franca: a language used as a medium of communication between peoples of different languages

affixes: word elements that are affixed to the beginning (prefixes) or the end (suffixes) of words to refine the meaning or change the word's grammatical form

Romance languages: the Romance languages, or Indo-European languages that descended from Vulgar Latin, include Italian, Romanian, Spanish, Portuguese, French, their many dialects, and the pidgins and Creoles (mixed languages) that developed from them.

The term "Romance" is from Vulgar Latin *romanice loqui* (vulgar languages derived from Latin).

desiccate *v.* to dry completely

*The dry desert air caused the bodies of the dead animals to **desiccate** quickly.*

desuetude *n.* state of disuse

*NASA is considering a plan to refurbish booster rockets from the Apollo Program that have fallen into **desuetude**.*

desultory *adj.* random; disconnected; rambling

*The jury had difficulty following the witnesses' **desultory** testimony.*

deterrent *n.* something that discourages or hinders

*During the Cold War, the United States maintained a large number of nuclear weapons as a **deterrent** to aggression by the Soviet Union and its allies.*

detraction *n.* the act of taking away; derogatory comment on a person's character

*The writer responded in a letter to the critic's long list of **detractions** about his book.*

diaphanous *adj.* transparent; fine-textured; insubstantial; vague

*In World War II, many soldiers went to war with **diaphanous** dreams of glory, but found instead horror and death.*

diatribe *n.* bitter verbal attack

*The speaker launched into a **diatribe** against what he called "the evils of technology."*

dichotomy *n.* division into two usually contradictory parts

*The philosopher is a dualist who argues that there is a **dichotomy** between the mind and physical phenomena.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

dualist one who believes in dualism, the theory that two basic entities constitute reality (such as mind and matter or good and evil)

Unit 22

diffidence *n.* shyness; lack of confidence

*As a result of the strength of his opposition to the Vietnam War Senator Eugene McCarthy overcame his **diffidence** and ran against President Lyndon Johnson for the Democratic nomination for president.*

diffuse v. to spread out

*The idea of equality and liberty **diffused** through society after the French Revolution.*

Diffuse is also an adjective meaning wordy; rambling; spread out.

*This essay is so **diffuse** it is difficult to follow its central argument.*

digression n. act of straying from the main point

*The novel Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance by Robert M. Pirsig contains many fascinating **digressions** from the main story that discuss topics such as Platonic philosophy.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Platonic: refers to the philosophy of Plato, an ancient Greek philosopher who held that both actual things and ideas such as beauty and truth are copies of transcendent ideas

The adjective *platonic* (with a small "p") means spiritual, without sensual desire, or theoretical.

dirge n. funeral hymn

*The music critic described the movement of the symphony portraying the hero's last days as "**dirgelike**."*

disabuse v. to free from a misconception

*The chairman of the Federal Reserve used his testimony before Congress to **disabuse** his audience of the idea that the business cycle had been eliminated by the unprecedented period of prosperity.*

discerning adj. perceptive; exhibiting keen insight and good judgment

***Discerning** movie critics have praised the work of producer Stanley Kubrick, who produced such excellent films as 2001, Dr. Strangelove, A Clockwork Orange, and Lolita.*

Discern is a verb that means to perceive something obscure.

*Superficially, expressionism can appear to be unrealistic because of its extreme distortion of reality, but upon closer examination, an inner psychological reality can often be **discerned**.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

expressionism: an artistic style in which the artist expresses emotional experience as opposed to his or her view of the external world. Expressionists often use distortion and

exaggeration. El Greco, Van Gogh, and Edward Munch are examples of expressionist artists.

discomfit v. to make uneasy; disconcert

*The young man was **discomfited** being the only male in the play.*

discordant adj. not in tune

*In a pluralistic society there exists a cacophony of **discordant** voices, each shouting to be heard.*

discredit v. to dishonor; disgrace; cause to be doubted

*The candidate's attempt to **discredit** his opponent by spreading damaging rumors about him failed.*

discrepancy n. difference between

*The book studies the **discrepancy** in values and outlook between men who fought in the war, whether voluntarily or not, and those who remained civilians.*

Unit 23

discrete adj. constituting a separate thing; distinct

*Like the physicist, the abstract artist strives to identify the **discrete** elements of reality and to understand how they interact*

discretion n. quality of showing self-restraint in speech or actions; circumspection; freedom to act on one's own

*In nineteenth-century Britain gentlemen were expected to behave with **discretion**.*

disingenuous adj. not candid; crafty

*When a person starts a sentence, "I don't mean to appear **disingenuous**," one might be tempted to suspect that the person is being just that.*

disinterested adj. unprejudiced; objective

*The newspaper reporter looked for **disinterested** witnesses to the events so that she could get an objective account of what had happened.*

disjointed adj. lacking order or coherence; dislocated

*The technique of telling a story through a **disjointed** narrative is a technique best left to masters of the modern novel such as James Joyce and William Faulkner.*

dismiss v. put away from consideration; reject

*Investigators **dismissed** the man's account of a visit to another planet aboard an alien spacecraft as the product of an overactive imagination.*

disparage v. to belittle

*Though sometimes **disparaged** as merely an intellectual game, philosophy provides us with a method for inquiring systematically into problems that arise in areas such as medicine, science, and technology.*

disparate *adj.* dissimilar

Many technological projects are interdisciplinary, requiring a knowledge of fields as disparate as physics and biology.

Disparity is a noun meaning the condition of being unequal or unlike.

The huge income disparity in the world is clearly illustrated by the fact that the assets of the world's 200 richest people exceed the combined income of 41% of the world's population.

dissemble *v.* to pretend; disguise one's motives

"Miss," the prosecutor said, "I believe you are dissembling. I want you to tell me the whole truth about what happened that night."

Disseminate *D.* to spread; scatter; disperse

While belief in reincarnation appeared as doctrine first in India and was disseminated throughout Asia by Buddhism, it is interesting that it was accepted by the most influential philosophy of the West, Platonism, and by some important early Christian thinkers, such as the theologian Origen.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Platonism: the philosophy of Plato, which holds that both actual things and ideas such as beauty and truth are copies of transcendent ideas

UNTT 24

dissident *n.* person who disagrees about beliefs, etc.

Some of the most notorious concentration camps in history were the Gulag camps used by the Soviet Union to control dissidents.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Gulag: forced-labor prison camps in the Soviet Union. Established in the 1920s, the Gulag system had 476 camps throughout the country used to imprison people considered a threat to the state.

dissolution *n.* disintegration; debauchery

Some philosophers maintain that the dissolution of the body does not mean the destruction of the mind.

dissonance *n.* discord; lack of harmony

In psychology, the term "cognitive dissonance" refers to a conflict resulting from inconsistency between one's beliefs and one's actions. For example, a soldier who believes that all killing is immoral but is forced to kill by his superiors might experience cognitive dissonance.

distend v. to expand; swell out

*People in an advanced stage of starvation often have **distended** bellies.*

distill v. extract the essential elements

*In his book Men of Ideas: Some Creators of Contemporary Philosophy, Bryan Magee manages to **distill** the essence of leading thinkers such as W.V. Quine, John Searle, Iris Murdoch, and Noam Chomsky.*

distract adj. inattentive; preoccupied

*The chairperson became **distract** because his secretary was not sitting in her usual position on his right.*

diverge v. to vary; go in different directions from the same point

A famous line in American poetry is from Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken":

*Two roads **diverged** in a wood, and I— I took the one less traveled by*

Divergence is the noun.

*Psychological tests show that there is a wide **divergence** between citizens of different countries in how much importance they place on the virtue of justice, on the one hand, and the virtue of mercy, on the other hand.*

divest v. to strip; deprive; rid

*The candidate for secretary of defense pledged to **divest** himself of the shares he held in defense-related companies.*

divulge v. to make known something that is secret

*Under the Geneva Conventions, prisoners of war cannot be tortured and forced to **divulge** information.*

doctrinaire adj. relating to a person who cannot compromise about points of a theory or doctrine; dogmatic; unyielding

*The **doctrinaire** Marxists say that capitalism is merely a temporary phenomenon on the road to socialism.*

Unit 25

document v. to provide with written evidence to support

*The insurance company asked Debbie to **document** her claim with letters from the doctors who treated her for her condition.*

doggerel n. poor verse

*In his book Poetic Meter and Poetic Form, the literary critic Paul Fussell quotes this bit of **doggerel** from a U.S. Army latrine during World War I*

Soldiers who wish to be a hero Are practically zero. But those who wish to be civilians, Jesus, they run into millions.

dogmatic adj. stating opinions without proof

*Since every case is unique, jurists must not be **dogmatic** in applying precedents to make their decision, but instead must base their decision on a combination of such precedents and the facts of the case at hand.*

*Dogma is a noun meaning a belief asserted on authority without evidence
Religions whose **dogma** specifies a time of the creation of the world have found difficulty in reconciling their view of creation with that of modern science.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

The original meaning of *dogma* was "that which seems good." In Christian theology it came to mean truths known by divine revelation and taught by the Church.

dormant *adj.* inactive

*There is a considerable body of evidence showing that many diseases, such as ulcers, asthma, and hypertension have a large psychological component; the working hypothesis is that they represent manifestations of **dormant** emotional disturbances.*

dross *n.* waste; worthless matter; trivial matter

*One of the ways the **dross** among blogs on the Internet are filtered out from the worthwhile ones is through links good blogs provide to other good blogs.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

blog: short for weblog, an on-line journal

dupe *v.* to deceive; trick

*"In friendship, as well as in love, the mind is often **duped** by the heart." (Philip Dormer Stanhope)*

ebullient *adj.* exhilarated; enthusiastic

*The **ebullient** candidate for president appeared before his supporters to announce that he had won in a landslide.*

eclectic *adj.* selecting from various sources

*Neo-Platonism—an **eclectic** third-century synthesis of Platonic, Pythagorean, Aristotelian, Stoic, and Jewish philosophy— was an essentially mystical belief that a person can achieve spiritual emancipation through union of the soul with the ultimate source of existence.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Platonic: refers to the philosophy of Plato, an ancient Greek philosopher who held that both actual things and ideas such as beauty and truth are copies of transcendent ideas

Pythagorean: refers to the philosophy of Pythagoras, a sixth-century **B.C.** philosopher and mathematician. Pythagoras described reality in terms of arithmetical relationships.

Aristotelian: refers to the philosophy of Aristotle, an ancient Greek scientist and philosopher whose teaching had a great influence on Western thought, especially in the areas of logic, metaphysics, and science

Stoic: refers to Stoicism, a philosophy of ancient Greece that taught that the highest good is virtue, which is based on knowledge. The Stoics believed that the wise live in harmony with Divine Reason that governs nature and are indifferent to suffering and the changing fortunes of life.

mystical: related to mysticism, the practice of putting oneself into direct relation with God, the absolute, or any unifying principle of life

effervescence *n.* state of high spirits or liveliness; the process of bubbling as gas escapes

Effervescence occurs when hydrochloric acid is added to a block of limestone.

The adjective is *effervescent*.

A person who believes himself to be physically unattractive might develop an effervescent personality as a compensation for his perceived deficiency.

effete *adj.* depleted of vitality; overrefined; decadent

In 1969, U.S. Vice President Spiro T. Agnew denounced people protesting against the Vietnam War: "A spirit of national masochism prevails, encouraged by an effete corps of impudent snobs who characterize themselves as intellectuals."

UNIT 26

efficacy *n.* efficiency; effectiveness

A cardinal rule of medicine is that the efficacy of a treatment should be measured against the seriousness of its side effects.

The adjective is *efficacious*.

In a situation where some subjects are benefiting while others are not, a researcher is likely to have ambivalent feelings, since he or she is in a "no-win" situation. In such a situation, the experimenter must choose between, on the one hand, getting more conclusive results by continuing the experiment and, on the other hand, stopping it and administering the drug that has proven efficacious to those who have not received it.

effrontery *n.* shameless boldness; presumptuousness

In her essay the student had the effrontery to argue that school is largely a waste of time.

egoism *n.* the tendency to see things in relation to oneself; self-centeredness

The beginning of philosophy has been described as a moving away from egoism to an understanding of the larger world.

egotistical *adj.* excessively self-centered; conceited

The critics accused the writer of being egotistical since she wrote only about herself.

elegy n. poem or song expressing lamentation

*Adonais is a pastoral **elegy** written by Percy Bysshe Shelley in the spring of 1821 after he learned of the death of his friend and fellow poet John Keats.*

elicit v. to provoke; draw out

*The Socratic method is designed to **elicit** responses that guide the student toward understanding.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Socratic method: a method of seeking the truth about a subject through systematic questioning. Often it results in the questioning of assumptions. The Socratic method is attributed to the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates.

elixir n. a substance believed to have the power to cure ills

*The doctor said that her prescription would help to alleviate my condition but that I could not expect it to be an **elixir**.*

Elysian adj. blissful; delightful

*In Book VI of Virgil's Aeneid, the hero Aeneas descends to the Underworld where he meets the soul of his dead father, Anchises, in the **Elysian** fields and learns from him the future of the Roman race.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Elysian fields or Elysium: in Greek and Roman mythology this refers to an otherworld where the spirits of the virtuous and heroic dwell after being transported there without experiencing death

Elysium is described in Homer's *Odyssey* as a place of eternal spring where the souls of heroes and others who are blessed by the gods wander blissfully. Homer placed Elysium at the western edge of the Earth near the stream of Oceanus, while other ancient Greek poets, such as Hesiod and Pindar, placed it in the Isles of the Blessed, or the Fortunate Islands, of the Western Ocean. Later, in the *Aeneid*, Virgil describes it as being located in the realms of the dead under the Earth.

emaciated adj. thin and wasted

*The prisoner was **emaciated** after being fed only bread and water for three months.*

embellish v. to adorn; decorate; enhance; make more attractive by adding details

*The story he had been told was so powerful that the writer felt no need to **embellish** it.*

Unit 27

emollient adj. soothing; mollifying

*The politician's speech is filled with **emollient** phrases to make his message more*

palatable.

Emollient is also a noun that means an agent that soothes or makes more acceptable.

empirical *adj.* derived from observation or experiment

*Some people erroneously cite the theory of relativity as support for ethical relativism, whereas in reality the former is a scientific theory, while the latter is a moral issue, and thus by its nature is not subject to **empirical** verification.*

Empiricism is a noun meaning the view that experience is the only source of knowledge. It can also mean the employment of empirical methods, as in science.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

theory of relativity: the theory of the relative as opposed to the absolute character of motion and mass, and the interdependence of matter, space, and time

emulate *v.* to imitate; copy

*Bionics uses technology to **emulate** nature, but sometimes a similar process occurs in reverse, in which scientists use technology as a heuristic tool to better understand natural processes.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Bionics: the application of biological principles to the design of electrical or engineering systems

heuristic: relating to a speculative formulation guiding the investigation or solution of a problem; educational method in which students learn from their own investigations

encomium *n.* a formal expression of praise

*The prime minister asked her speechwriter to compose an **encomium** for the retiring general*

endemic *adj.* inherent; belonging to an area

*Malaria, once **endemic** to the area, has now been largely eradicated.*

enervate *v.* to weaken

*During World War II Russian commanders counted on the bitter cold to **enervate** German soldiers invading their country.*

engender *v.* to cause; produce

*Freudians believe that the traumatic events of infancy often **engender** repression that creates neuroses.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Freudians: followers of Sigmund Freud, the nineteenth-century physician who pioneered the study of the unconscious mind. Some central ideas of Freudian psychology are given below.

repression: a psychological process by which desires and impulses are kept out of the conscious mind and kept in the subconscious mind

neuroses: a mental disease that causes distress but does not interfere with a person's ability to function in everyday life. In Freudian psychology, a neurosis results from an ineffectual strategy adopted by the *Ego to resolve conflict between the *Id and the *Superego.

*Ego: in Freudian psychology, the part of the mind that tries to match the desires of the Id with what is required by reality

*Id: in Freudian psychology, the part of the mind that is the source of psychic energy that comes from instinctual drives and needs

*Superego: in Freudian psychology, the part of the mind that opposes the desires of the Id. It is based on the childhood process by which a person makes the values of society part of his or her personality.

enhance v. to increase; improve

*Although it is widely believed that the primary objective of the researchers developing the Internet was to secure the American nuclear missile system, in fact their main goal was to foster science by **enhancing** the ability of technology to disseminate information among scientists.*

entomology n. the scientific study of insects

*Considering that there are approximately 925,000 species of insects (more than all other species combined), **entomology** is a vast field of study.*

enunciate v. to pronounce clearly

*In everyday speech the sounds of many words are not **enunciated** clearly.*

UNIT 28

ephemeral adj. short-lived; fleeting

*Impressionist painters such as Claude Monet share with the Romantics an affinity for nature, but the Impressionists took a more scientific interest in it, attempting to accurately depict **ephemeral** phenomena such as the play of light on water.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Impressionist: refers to Impressionism, a movement in art that began in France in the late nineteenth century. Impressionism seeks to portray the visual effects of light reflected on subjects. Claude Monet is one of the most famous Impressionist painters. The term can also be

used to refer to literature that tries to convey a general impression of a subject rather than a detailed one and to musical compositions that create impressions and moods.

epistemology *n.* branch of philosophy that examines the nature of knowledge

A major question in epistemology is whether the mind can ever gain objective knowledge, limited as it is by its narrow range of sense experience.

equable *adj.* steady; unvarying; serene

Throughout the crisis the president remained equable.

Do not confuse *equable* with *equitable*, which means fair, or just, or impartial.

Much of modern economic history can be seen as a dialectic between advocates of laissez-faire policies, who want to leave the market free to create wealth untrammelled by restrictions (believing it will "trickle down" to all members of the society), and exponents of redistribution of wealth, who want to ensure that the fruits of capitalism are shared equitably.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

dialectic: in this context, dialectic refers to the action of opposing forces in society

laissez-faire: in economics and politics, doctrine that an economic system functions best when there is no interference by government. It is based on the belief that the natural economic order tends, when undisturbed by artificial stimulus or regulation, to secure the maximum well-being for the individual and therefore for the community as a whole.

equanimity *n.* composure; calmness

Emergency room doctors and nurses are trained to maintain their equanimity when treating patients.

equivocate *v.* to intentionally use vague language

The businessperson has earned a reputation as someone who never equivocates and can be trusted to do exactly what he promises.

The noun is *equivocation*.

The saying "It's a matter of semantics" is often used to indicate that the real meaning of something is being lost in verbiage, often with the implication that there is obfuscation or equivocation.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

semantics: interpretation of a word, sentence, or other language form

errant *adj.* mistaken; straying from the proper course

The pitcher's errant fastball struck the batter on the shoulder.

erudite *adj.* learned; scholarly

*Frederick Copleston, author of the nine-volume History of Philosophy, was undoubtedly one of the most **erudite** people who ever lived.*

The noun is *erudition*

*Great **erudition** does not necessarily mean that a person is sagacious.*

esoteric *adj.* hard to understand; known only to a few

*Epidemiologists, using **esoteric** statistical analyses, field investigations, and complex laboratory techniques, investigate the cause of a disease, its distribution (geographic, ecological and ethnic), method of spread, and measures for preventing or controlling it*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Epidemiologists: experts in the branch of medicine that deals with the study of the causes, distribution, and control of disease in populations

essay *v.* to make an attempt; subject to a test

*The composer began work on a sonata, a form she had not previously **essayed**.*

Estimable *adj.* admirable; possible to estimate

*Alistair Cooke's book Six Men contains character studies of **estimable** modern figures including H. L. Mencken, Humphrey Bogart, and Adlai Stevenson*

Unit 29

ethnocentric *adj.* based on the attitude that one's group is superior

*The words "primitive" and "savage" reflect an **ethnocentric** bias in Western culture that regards societies that do not have Western science and technology as inferior because they have not achieved as much material success as Western societies.*

The noun is *ethnocentrism*

*During certain periods of Chinese history, foreigners were considered to be "barbarians"; perhaps this **ethnocentrism** made it difficult for the Chinese to accept innovations from other countries.*

etiology *n.* causes or origins

*The **etiology** of mental illness is complex because of the diversity of factors—social, biological, genetic, and psychological—that contribute to many disorders.*

etymology *n.* origin and history of a word

*The origin of the word "barbarian" reflects the ethnocentrism of the ancient Greeks; its **etymology** is that it comes (through Latin and French words) from the Greek word barbaros, meaning non-Greek, foreign.*

eugenics n. study of factors that influence the hereditary qualities of the human race and ways to improve these qualities

*The science fiction novel describes a military **eugenics** program designed to create a race of "super-soldiers" possessing intelligence, strength, and other qualities far in advance of the ordinary person.*

eulogy n. high praise, especially of a person who has recently died

*After the death of Abraham Lincoln, many **eulogies** of him appeared in newspapers throughout America*

euphemism n. use of agreeable or inoffensive language in place of unpleasant or offensive language

*An illustration of the tendency toward **euphemism** is the change (reflecting the political concerns of the day) in the accepted appellation of poor countries from the unambiguous poor, to undeveloped, to underdeveloped, to less developed, to developing.*

euphoria n. a feeling of extreme happiness

*There was **euphoria** in the professor's house after it was learned that she had received the Nobel Prize for Chemistry.*

euthanasia n. mercy killing

*Modern medicine's ability to prolong life has raised ethical questions, such as "Is **euthanasia** ever morally justifiable?"*

evince v. to show plainly; be an indication of

*The student's response to the teacher's question **evinced** his ignorance of the subject.*

evocative adj. tending to call to mind or produce a reaction

*Somerset Maugham's short stories are often **evocative** of exotic places such as Pago-Pago and Gibraltar.*

Evocation is the noun.

*Some literary critics believe that Charles Dickens' use of caricature makes his characters one-dimensional, but others see these characters as **evocations** of universal human types that resonate powerfully with readers' experiences of real people.*

The verb is *evoke*.

*The terms "loaded language" and "charged language" are used to specify language that has so many connotations for most readers that it is difficult for a writer to use it without **evoking** myriad associations, which will distract attention from the topic under discussion.*

UNIT 30

exacerbate v. to aggravate; make worse

*The release of carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels has increased the amount of this gas in the atmosphere, **exacerbating** the naturally occurring "greenhouse effect" that has predominated in Earth's recent past*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

greenhouse effect: the process by which a planet's atmosphere warms the planet

exact v. to force the payment of; demand and obtain by authority

*The conquering rulers **exact**ed a tax of 10% from every adult male in the country.*

The adjective *exacting* means extremely demanding.

*Early in his career the English writer Aldous Huxley made this comment: "What occupation is pleasanter, what less **exacting**, than the absorption of curious literary information?"*

exculpate v. to clear of blame; vindicate

*The report **exculpated** the FBI of any wrongdoing in its handling of the investigation.*

execrable adj. detestable; abhorrent

*When folk artists such as Bob Dylan began to use rock instruments, many folk music traditionalists considered it an **execrable** travesty.*

exhort v. to urge by strong appeals

*In 1943 U.S. General George S. Patton **exhorted** American troops about to invade Hitler's Europe, saying that victory was assured because American soldiers were more virile and courageous than their German counterparts.*

exigency n. crisis; urgent requirements

*Astronauts must be prepared for **exigencies** such as damage to their spacecraft's life support system*

existential adj. having to do with existence; based on experience; having to do with the philosophy of *existentialism*

***Existential** writers such as Jean-Paul Sartre have argued that human beings are free, but that this freedom entails a burden of responsibility that makes them anxious.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Existentialism is a philosophical movement that stresses individual experience in relation to the world. Existential thought is very varied, but often concerns itself with the ideas of freedom, responsibility, and the isolation of the individual self.

exorcise v. to expel evil spirits; free from bad influences

*A modern parallel to the shaman is the psychiatrist, who helps the patient **exorcise** personal demons and guides him toward mental wholeness.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

shaman: a tribal healer who is believed to be able to enter the world of good and evil

spirits. Shamans often enter a trance and practice divination.

expatiate v. to speak or write at length

*Every year the book club invites a famous author to come to **expatiate** on the art of writing.*

expatriate v. to send into exile

The pronunciation is **ek-SPA Y-tree-ayt**.

*People seeking asylum in another country are sometimes **expatriated**.*

Expatriate is also a noun meaning a person living outside his or her own land.

The pronunciation is **ek-SPA Y-tree-it**.

The adjective is also *expatriate*.

Unit 31

expiate v. to atone for

*The pilgrims undertook their long journey to **expiate** their sins. Expiation is the noun.*

explicate v. to explain; interpret; clarify

*The literature exam requires students to **explicate** three poems they studied in class and one they have not studied.*

Explication is the noun.

expository adj. explanatory

*There is no one model of **expository** prose that a student can emulate, since each piece of good writing is unique.*

extant adj. in existence; not lost

*Unfortunately for Bible scholars, there are no **extant** writings of Jesus Christ.*

extemporaneous adj. unrehearsed

*I enjoyed the speaker's **extemporaneous** remarks more than her prepared speech, because they gave me insight into her personality that helped me understand the decisions she made during her time as a federal judge.*

extirpate v. to root up; to destroy

*The new federal prosecutor promised voters that he would **extirpate** corruption in the state.*

extraneous adj. not essential

*The encyclopedia editors worked hard to cut out **extraneous** material so that readers could find information easily on a given subject.*

extrapolation n. the act of estimation by projecting known information

The economist's **extrapolation** suggests that the economy will grow by 4% next year.

The verb is *extrapolate*.

Strict determinists believe that it is possible, at least theoretically, to **extrapolate** the future movement of every atom in the universe based on present conditions.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

determinists: followers of the belief that all events are determined by causes external to the will

extrinsic *adj.* not inherent or essential

*The experiment is designed to exclude factors that are **extrinsic** to the phenomenon.*

facetious *adj.* humorous

*The comedian's **facetious** comments about prominent politicians kept the audience amused.*

Unit 32

facilitate *v.* to make less difficult

*The Internet—together with the availability of relatively inexpensive personal computers—has greatly **facilitated** the ability of ordinary people to conveniently exchange information with one another and with large computer systems.*

factotum *n.* a person who does all sorts of work; a handyman

*In Shakespeare's play Twelfth Night, the character Malvolio aspires to become more than merely a **factotum** in the house of Lady Olivia.*

fallacious *adj.* based on a false idea or fact; misleading

*The belief of the Nazis that they could create a "master race" was based on the **fallacious** premise that some races are inherently superior to others.*

The noun *fallacy* means an incorrect idea.

*Critics of the "strong" anthropic principle argue that its proponents are guilty of a logical **fallacy**: on the basis of one known case of intelligent life, they extrapolate the existence of a multitude of such cases.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

anthropic principle: the theory that only a limited number of possible universes are favorable to the creation of life and that of these only some have intelligent observers. Since humankind exists, it follows that the universe is suited to the evolution of intelligence.

fallow *adj.* plowed but not sowed; uncultivated

*At the beginning of each school year the teacher looks out at the new students and thinks of a **fallow** field, ready to be cultivated.*

fatuous *adj.* foolishly self-satisfied

*The student could not understand why no one took seriously his **fatuous** comments.*

fauna *n.* animals of a period or region

*When humans introduce **fauna** from one habitat into another habitat, the ecological balance is upset*

fawning *adj.* seeking favor by flattering

*The boss has a reputation for hiring **fawning** employees.*

felicitous *adj.* suitably expressed; appropriate; well-chosen

*The Gettysburg Address is full of **felicitous** phrases such as "government of the people, by the people, and for the people."*

feral *adj.* existing in a wild or untamed state

***Feral** dogs returning to an untamed state after domestication sometimes form packs, becoming a threat to humans.*

fervor *n.* warmth and intensity of emotion

*American soldiers were welcomed back to the United States with **fervor** after the end of World War U.*

The adjective *fervent* means full of strong emotion, or impassioned.

*The **fervent** libertarian believed that government is a necessary evil that should be constrained from excessive interference in the affairs of individuals.*

Unit 33

fetid *adj.* having a bad smell

*Many people find the smell of Limburger cheese **fetid**.*

fetter *v.* to bind; confine

*The poet William Blake believed that each person creates "mind-forged manacles, "**fettering** his or her natural instincts and spirit*

The noun *fetter* means something that restricts or restrains.

The adjective *fettered* means bound or confined.

fiat *n.* arbitrary order; authorization

*The dictator rules almost entirely by **fiat**.*

fidelity n. loyalty; exact correspondence

*Monks joining the Franciscan Order pledge **fidelity** to the ideals and rules of the Order.*

filibuster n. use of obstructive tactics in a legislature to block passage of a law

*The senator threatened that his **filibuster** would include a full reading of his eight-volume autobiography.*

finesse u. to handle with a deceptive or evasive strategy; to use finesse, that is, refinement in performance

*Engineers decided that the problem could be **finessed** by using lighter materials.*

fissure n. crevice

*Geologists measure the width of the **fissure** regularly to monitor movement of the Earth's plates in the area.*

flag v. to droop; grow weak

*Noticing that the students' attention was **flagging**, the professor gave them a short break.*

fledgling n. beginner; novice

*The coach said that some of the team's **fledglings** would play in Saturday's game.*

*The adjective **fledgling** means immature or inexperienced.*

flora n. plants of a region or era

*Singapore's Botanical Gardens contain an extensive collection of the **flora** of Southeast Asia.*

Unit 34

florid adj. ruddy; reddish; flowery

*As he grew older, the novelist eschewed the **florid**, ostentatious style of his youth in favor of a more direct and sparse style.*

flourish n. an embellishment or ornamentation

*The Sophists often gave interminable speeches full of rhetorical **flourishes**.*

Flourish is also a verb meaning to grow vigorously, or to thrive.

*Capitalism **flourished** in the eighteenth century in Europe and the United States as the industrial revolution created a prodigious amount of wealth that, for the first time in history, was in the hands of landowners.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Sophists: fifth-century **b.c.** Greek philosophers [*Sophistes* meant expert or deviser] who speculated on theology, science, and metaphysics. Many people came to dislike the Sophists, accusing them of dishonest reasoning. The word *sophistry* means reasoning that is subtle and

seemingly true but is actually incorrect.

flout v. to treat scornfully

*In his book Poetic Meter and Poetic Form the distinguished literary critic Paul Fussel discusses the dangers poets face when they **flout** poetic conventions.*

flux n. flowing; a continuous moving

*In some cultures time is conceptualized as a **flux** moving in one direction.*

foment u. to incite; arouse

*The government accused the newspaper of **fomenting** unrest in the country.*

forbearance n. patience

*The president warned that great courage and **forbearance** would be required to see the war through to a successful conclusion.*

forestall v. to prevent; delay

*The government took steps to **forestall** an economic downturn by increasing government spending.*

formidable adj. menacing; threatening

*By the middle of the nineteenth century the United States had become a **formidable** economic and military power.*

forswear v. renounce; repudiate

*When she became a U.S. citizen, Julia **forswore** allegiance to all other countries and pledged to defend the United States if called upon to do so.*

founder u. to sink; fail; collapse

*Most attempts to create advanced new technology by government fat **founder**, probably because of the difficulty in anticipating changes in fluid world of high technology.*

UNIT 35

fracas n. a loud quarrel; brawl

*The police were called in to break up a **fracas** that had erupted in the bar.*

fractious adj. quarrelsome; unruly; rebellious

*In an effort to unify their divided party, its leaders decided to first placate the party's most **fractious** elements.*

fresco n. a painting done on plaster

*The Italian Renaissance was the greatest period of **fresco** painting, as seen in the work of artists such as Michelangelo, Raphael and Giotto.*

frieze n. ornamental band on a wall

*One of the best-known **friezes**, on the outer wall of the Parthenon in Athens, is a 525-foot depiction of the Panathenaic procession honoring Athena.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Parthenon: the chief temple of the goddess Athena on the Acropolis in Athens

Panathenaic: relating to the Panathenaea, an Athenian festival held in honor of the Greek goddess Athena, the patron goddess of Athens

froward *adj.* stubbornly contrary; obstinately disobedient

*The teacher had no choice but to send the **froward** child to the vice-principal for disciplining.*

frugality *n.* thrift

*In these days of credit card and installment plan buying, **frugality** seems to have become a rarely practiced virtue.*

fulminate *v.* to attack loudly; denounce

*The senator **fulminated** against what he termed "foreign meddling in America's business."*

fulsome *adj.* so excessive as to be disgusting

*The actor was embarrassed by the **fulsome** praise he received after winning the Academy Award for best actor.*

fusion *adj.* union; synthesis

*A hydrogen bomb requires tremendous heat to trigger the **fusion** reaction, which is provided by the detonation of a fission bomb.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

fusion: In physics, nuclear fusion is the process by which multiple nuclei join together to form a heavier nucleus, resulting in the release of energy.

fission: splitting into two parts. In physics, nuclear fission is a process where a large nucleus is split into two smaller nuclei. In biology, binary fission refers to the process whereby a prokaryote (a single-celled organism lacking a membrane-bound nucleus) reproduces by cell division

futile *adj.* ineffective; useless; fruitless

*To some non-philosophers, the discipline seems frivolous and **futile** because it produces no tangible benefits.*

UNIT 36

gainsay v. to deny; dispute; oppose

*No one can **gainsay** the fact that she put great effort into the project.*

gambol v. to frolic; leap playfully

*The children **gamboled** on the lawn while their parents ate lunch.*

The noun *gambol* means frolicking about.

garrulous adj. very talkative; wordy

*The **garrulous** houseguest made it difficult for us to get much work done on the project.*

gauche adj. coarse and uncouth; clumsy

*What is considered **gauche** in one culture might not be considered gauche in another culture; for example, burping is considered rude in America but is acceptable in China.*

geniality n. cheerfulness; kindness; sociability

*Hosts of television talk shows are generally people who possess a great deal of **geniality**.*

The adjective *genial* means having a pleasant or friendly disposition.

gerrymander v. to divide an area into voting districts in a way that favors a political party

*An argument against the practice of **gerrymandering** is that it tends to make it difficult for the party that is out of power to regain power.*

glib adj. fluent in an insincere way; offhand

*Sharon's parents were not satisfied by her **glib** explanation of why*

she had not been able to study for the exam,

goad v. to prod; urge on

***Goaded** by his friends into trying out for the football team as a walk-on, Jeff went on to become an all-American linebacker.*

gossamer adj. sheer; light and delicate, like cobwebs

*Some experts in NASA believe that what they call a gigantic "**gossamer** spacecraft" could be constructed in space using extremely lightweight materials.*

gouge v. to tear out; scoop out; overcharge

*The store is able to **gouge** its customers because it is the only store in the area that carries that particular line of merchandise.*

UNIT 37

grandiloquent adj. pompous; bombastic

*The orator abandoned **grandiloquent** phrases and instead uses simple and direct*

language.

gregarious *adj.* sociable

*A recent anthropological theory is that human beings are **gregarious** creatures that are comfortable living in groups of around 150 individuals.*

grouse *v.* to complain

*Instead of **grouching** about the policy, do something about it: write to your congressional representative.*

Grouse is also a noun.

*The lieutenant told his men "If you have any **grouses**, take them to the captain."*

guileless *adj.* free of cunning or deceit; artless

*One of the charms of the novel is that the **guileless** hero manages to defeat the scheming villain.*

Guile is a noun meaning deception or trickery.

*Playing poker well requires **guile** as well as skill.*

guise *n.* outward appearance; false appearance; pretense

*In Greek mythology, the god Zeus often appeared to mortal women to whom he was attracted in strange **guises**: as a swan, he made love to Leda of Sparta, with other women he took on the form of a shower of gold, or a bull, or thunder and lightning.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Zeus, known to the Romans as Jupiter, was the head of the Olympian pantheon and the god of weather. An amorous god, his liaisons with goddesses, nymphs, and mortal women produced many offspring, including Perseus, Heracles, Hermes, Ares, the Fates, and the Muses.-.

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Leda was the wife of King Tyndareus of Sparta. Her union with Zeus produced Helen and Polydeuces.

gullible *adj.* easily deceived

***Gullible** members of the audience believed the young performer's claim that he had composed "Hey, Jude."*

gustatory *adj.* affecting the sense of taste

*According to scientists, our **gustatory** sense depends to a large extent on our olfactory sense.*

halcyon *adj.* calm and peaceful; happy; golden; prosperous

*The movie evokes the **halcyon** years immediately after World War II when America was at peace and the economy was booming.*

As a noun, *halcyon* is a genus of kingfisher. It also is the name of a mythological bird identified with the kingfisher that symbolizes life and renewal.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

In folklore the *halcyon* (kingfisher) is a bird that brings peace and calm to the ocean waves for several days around the time of winter solstice, when it builds its nest on the sea and lays its eggs there. The expressions *halcyon days* and *halcyon years* describes periods of time that are tranquil and happy.

The origins of the halcyon myth can be traced back to ancient Greece and the story of the queen Alcyone (Halcyone) who threw herself into the sea when she saw the dead body of her husband Ceyx, the King of Thessaly, who had drowned in a shipwreck. Pitying Alcyone, the gods transformed both her and Ceyx into kingfishers (*halcyon*), and they remained in the sea where they mated and had young. While Alcyone laid her eggs and brooded over the nest on the sea, Aeolus, keeper of the sea winds, restrained these winds so that the ocean surface would remain calm and peaceful.

hallowed *adj.* holy; sacred

*The questioning of scientific and religious orthodoxy by scientists such as Charles Lyell and Charles Darwin led to stupendous advances in both geology and biology, as these fields freed themselves from the fetters of **hallowed**, but fallacious, assumptions about the age and development of the Earth and life.*

harangue *n.* long, pompous speech; tirade

*The football team sat silently listening to their coach's half-time **harangue** about poor tackling, dropped passes, and lost opportunities to score.*

UNIT 38

harrowing *adj.* extremely distressing; terrifying

*The journey "inward" to explore the unconscious mind has been described as more **harrowing** than the most dangerous voyage to explore the Earth.*

herbivorous *adj.* relating to a herbivore, an animal that feeds mainly on plants

*Most researchers now believe that the common ancestor of apes and humans was a strongly **herbivorous** animal*

hermetic *adj.* tightly sealed; magical

*Scholars have traced many of the **hermetic** traditions of ancient Greece to Egypt.*

heterodox *adj.* unorthodox; not widely accepted

*The orthodox view among scientists is that the ancestors of the great apes and humans evolved solely in Africa; however, recently a competing, **heterodox** view has arisen theorizing that they also may have evolved in Euroasia.*

hieroglyphics *n.* a system of writing in which pictorial symbols represent meaning or

sounds; writing or symbols that are difficult to decipher; the symbols used in advanced mathematics

*The deciphering of **hieroglyphics** on the Rosetta Stone in 1822 was a great step forward in understanding hieroglyphics.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Rosetta Stone: a granite stone inscribed with the same passage of writing in two Egyptian languages and one in classical Greek. Comparative translation helped scholars to gain a much better understanding of hieroglyphics.

hirsute *adj.* covered with hair

*One of the most obvious differences between humans and closely related species such as chimpanzees is that the latter are **hirsute**, while the former have relatively little hair.*

histrionic *adj.* relating to exaggerated emotional behavior calculated for effect; theatrical arts or performances

*Whenever the star of the movie does not get her way on the set, she flies into a **histrionic** fit.*

The noun *histrionics* means emotional behavior done for effect.

*"Cut the **histrionics** and tell me how you really feel," the woman said to her angry husband.*

homeostasis *n.* automatic maintenance by an organism of normal temperature, chemical balance, etc. within itself

*An example of **homeostasis** in mammals is the regulation of glucose levels in the blood, which is done mainly by the liver and insulin secreted by the pancreas.*

homily *n.* sermon; tedious moralizing lecture; platitude

*The pastor's **homilies** have been published in an anthology.*

homogeneous *adj.* composed of identical parts; uniform in composition

*Pluralists in America argue that the country's institutions can withstand great diversity, and even be strengthened by it, while those who argue for a more **homogeneous** society believe that such a situation results in unhealthy contention and animosity between groups.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Pluralists: followers of pluralism, the belief that it is beneficial to have a variety of distinct ethnic and cultural groups in society

UNIT 39

hyperbole *n.* purposeful exaggeration for effect

*The American tradition of the tall tale uses **hyperbole** to depict a world in which the*

inhabitants and their deeds are larger than life, as befitting a people inhabiting a vast landscape.

iconoclastic *adj.* attacking cherished traditions

*The linguist and political commentator Noam Chomsky has been described as gleefully **iconoclastic** because of the zeal with which he attacks many of the central beliefs of American society.*

An *icon* is an image or representation.

*The internal combustion engine is a ubiquitous feature of modern industrial society, helping the automobile to become an **icon** of the twentieth century, loved by many people but loathed by environmentalists.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

The *icons* of the Eastern Orthodox Church are usually portraits of holy men and women that worshipers use as a help to focus their prayers. A person who smashes such an object is an *iconoclast*, which comes from the Greek word *eikonoklastes* meaning "breaking of an image." *Iconoclastic* has come to be used more generally to refer to an attack on any cherished belief.

idolatry *n.* idol worship; blind or excessive devotion

*During the Protestant Reformation images in churches were felt to be a form of **idolatry** and were banned and destroyed.*

igneous *adj.* produced by fire; volcanic

*The presence of **igneous** rocks on the beach suggests that there was a volcanic eruption in the area millions of years ago.*

imbroglio *n.* complicated situation; an entanglement

*The plot of many of Somerset Maugham's stories consists of an unraveling of an **imbroglio** in which the main character finds himself.*

immutable *adj.* unchangeable

*If humanity colonizes Mars, it will become a tabula rasa on which we will inscribe our **immutable** values and beliefs in a new environment.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

tabula rasa: something that is new and not marked by external influence. *Tabula rasa* is from Latin, meaning "scraped tablet" (a tablet from which the writing has been erased).

The noun is *immutability*.

*The dogma of creation and the **immutability** of species was endorsed virtually*

unanimously by the leading anatomists, botanists, and zoologists of Charles Darwin's day.

impair v. to damage; injure

*Alcohol has been shown to seriously **impair** the functioning of the brain.*

impassive adj. showing no emotion

*The judge sat, **impassive**, listening to the man's emotional account of the crime.*

impecunious adj. poor; having no money

*The businessman's biography tells how he went from being an **impecunious** student in the 1980s to one of the richest people in America.*

impede v. to hinder; block

*The development of the western region of China has been **impeded** by a lack of trained workers.*

UNIT 40

impermeable adj. impossible to penetrate

*The virus protection software is said to be **impermeable** to attacks by malicious software sent over the Internet.*

imperturbable adj. not easily disturbed

*Buddha counseled that one should try to remain **imperturbable** through life's vicissitudes.*

impervious adj. impossible to penetrate; incapable of being affected

*We were amazed how Laura could sit at the noisy party studying organic chemistry, **impervious** to the noise around her.*

impinge v. to strike; encroach

*Scientists have found chimpanzees to be a territorial species; individuals that are not members of a group **impinging** on the territory of that group are normally met with aggression.*

implacable adj. inflexible; incapable of being pleased

*Once an **implacable** foe of capitalism, the People's Republic of China in recent years seems, in practice if not in principle, to have embraced it.*

implausible adj. unlikely; unbelievable

*To say that Napoleon Bonaparte achieved what he did merely because he was compensating for his shortness is simplistic, reductionistic, and **implausible**.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

reductionistic: attempting to explain complex phenomena by simple principles

implicit *adj.* implied; understood but not stated

Implicit in the review is the idea that the writing of serious literature is a moral undertaking.

An *implication* is that which is hinted at or suggested.

*The guiding principle of common law is that decisions of previous courts should be followed unless there are compelling reasons for ruling differently, which by **implication** would invalidate the earlier rulings.*

implode *v.* collapse inward violently

*The building was **imploded** in order to make way for the construction of a new apartment complex.*

The noun is *implosion*.

imprecation *n.* curse

*The convicted man was taken away by court officers, uttering **imprecations** against the jury that had found him guilty.*

impute *v.* to relate to a particular cause or source; attribute the fault to; assign as a characteristic

*Primatologists generally **impute** relatively high intelligence to chimpanzees based on, among other things, the ability of chimpanzees to recognize themselves in a mirror.*

Unit 41

inadvertently *adv.* carelessly; unintentionally

*The songwriter says that it is easy to **inadvertently** use the melody of another song when composing.*

incarnate *adj.* having bodily form

*Christians believe that Jesus Christ was God **incarnate**.*

inchoate *adj.* imperfectly formed or formulated

*In his book, *Chronicles*, Bob Dylan describes the process of how some of his songs went from an **inchoate** state to finished, well-produced songs.*

incongruity *n.* state of not fitting

*There is an **incongruity** between the poem's solemn tone and its light-hearted theme.*

The adjective is *incongruous*.

The assumptions underlying Jonathan Swift's definition of literary style—"The proper words in the proper order"—recognize that there are many effective styles, but that the effectiveness of each is dependent on the context within which it is found: for example, the

*rambling, exuberant style of Walt Whitman's poem "Song of Myself would be **incongruous** in Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*, with its dependence on sustained wit and irony.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

*Jonathan Swift: Anglo-Irish writer (1667-1745) known today mainly for his prose satires such as *Gulliver's Travels**

*Walt Whitman: American poet (1819-1892) widely regarded as one of the nation's greatest writers. His most famous work is *Leaves of Grass**

*Alexander Pope: English poet (1688-1744) known today mainly for his satirical poetry, most notably *The Rape of the Lock**

inconsequential *adj.* insignificant; unimportant

*The meeting of the two women seemed **inconsequential** at the*

time, but in retrospect it led to one of literature's great collaborations.

incorporate *v.* introduce something into another thing already in existence; combine
*According to Bob Dylan in his autobiography, *Chronicles*, he systematically tried to **incorporate** what he learned about life and music into the songs he wrote.*

incursion *n.* sudden invasion

*At first, the Native Americans were not too concerned about the **incursions** of European settlers, but their anxiety grew with the relentless flow of people, until, finally, calamitous wars were fought between the two sides.*

indeterminate *adj.* uncertain; indefinite

*The novel describes the main character as "being of an **indeterminate** age, somewhere between 50 and 60."*

indigence *n.* poverty

*Most economists believe that the best way to prevent **indigence** is to expand employment opportunities.*

The adjective is *indigent*

*For approximately 20% of the world's population, nearly all of whom are **indigent**, malnutrition is the main impediment to achieving good health.*

indolent *adj.* habitually lazy; idle

*An argument against welfare is that it encourages people to be **indolent**.*

UNIT 42

ineluctable *adj.* not to be avoided or escaped; inevitable

*No one can escape the **ineluctable** truth that every creature that is born will one day die.*

inert *adj.* unable to move; sluggish

*The teacher was frustrated by his inability to get an answer to his question from his **inert** class.*

The noun is *inertia*, meaning disinclination to action or change.

*The fact that industrialization occurred in Europe hundreds of years before it did in China, which had reached a similar level of technology, is perhaps attributable to cultural factors such as bureaucratic **inertia** in China and a culture that placed a high value on the status quo.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

status quo: the existing state of affairs (Latin, *state in which*)

ingenuous *adj.* naive and trusting; lacking sophistication

*The conman could not bring himself to take advantage of the **ingenuous** boy.*

inherent *adj.* firmly established by nature or habit

*Some studies of random numbers generated by computers suggest that an **inherent** order exists in nature, since certain patterns appear that one would not expect in a random system, but skeptics dismiss such patterns as either artifacts of imperfectly designed experiments, or as the attempt of the human mind to impose a pattern where there is no intrinsic order.*

innocuous *adj.* harmless

*The bodyguard looked **innocuous** enough, but under his jacket were several weapons that could kill an attacker in seconds.*

insensible *adj.* unconscious; unresponsive

*The gas is intended to render enemy soldiers **insensible**.*

insinuate *v.* to suggest; say indirectly; imply

*If you read his speech carefully you will see that the senator is **insinuating** that his party has taken the wrong path.*

insipid *adj.* lacking in flavor; dull

*Ironically, the book about how to write lively, engaging prose is an **insipid** piece of writing.*

insouciant *adj.* indifferent; lacking concern or care

*Considering the gravity of the situation, Nancy's colleagues could not understand her **insouciant** attitude.*

insularity *n.* narrow-mindedness; isolation

*The **insularity** of many tribes in New Guinea allows anthropologists to study cultures that have been relatively uninfluenced by the modern world.*

UNIT 43

insuperable *adj.* insurmountable; unconquerable

*Attempts by the United States to develop an antiballistic missile system have met with limited success because of the almost **insuperable** difficulties presented by the speed of the approaching warhead that must be intercepted.*

intangible *adj.* not material

*When considering what occupation to pursue it is prudent to consider **intangible** rewards as well as financial ones.*

interdict *v.* to forbid; prohibit; to confront and halt the activities, advance, or entry of
*Under U.S. law, **interdicted** goods can be seized by customs officials.*

internecine *adj.* deadly to both sides

*The U.S. Civil War (1861-1865) was an **internecine** conflict that led to the deaths of 620,000 soldiers out of the 2.4 million who fought in the war.*

interpolate *v.* to insert; change by adding new words or material

*The book The Five Gospels was produced by having leading Bible scholars vote on which sayings of Jesus they believe to be authentic and which they believe to have been **interpolated** by other writers.*

interregnum *n.* interval between reigns; gap in continuity

*Those who believe that Western culture represents the culmination of history are not disheartened by considering the fall of previous dominant civilizations, believing that these were merely **interregnums** in the march of humanity from the cave to a united world founded on Western principles.*

intimate *adj.* marked by close acquaintance

*Intimate is pronounced **IN-tuh-mit**.*

*During the 1990s Bob Dylan and Jerry Garcia became good, though not **intimate**, friends.*

The noun is *intimacy*.

*The American artist Grandma Moses, although considered by art experts to be deficient in technique, achieved an admirable **intimacy** with her subject matter.*

The verb *intimate* means to make known subtly and indirectly. It is pronounced

IN-tuh-mayt.

*The editor **intimated** that substantial changes would have to be made in the book.*

intractable *adj.* not easily managed

*General practitioners are equipped to deal with most psychosomatic disorders, but in **intractable** cases a psychiatrist is consulted.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

psychosomatic disorder: a disease with physical symptoms believed to be caused by emotional or psychological factors

intransigence n. stubbornness; refusal to compromise

*Each side in the negotiations accused the other of **intransigence**, so talks broke down.*

introspective adj. contemplating one's own thoughts and feelings

*In many ways William Wordsworth's great poem The Prelude is an **introspective** work, retrospectively exploring his thoughts and feelings as he matured.*

UNIT 44

inundate v. to cover with water; overwhelm

*Farmers in the arid areas called for the government to build a dam to provide water to irrigate their crops and provide hydroelectric power; however, this plan was opposed by environmentalists, who dislike **inundation** of land because it would have an adverse effect on wildlife.*

inured v. hardened; accustomed; used to

*After 20 years in the army, the chaplain had not become **inured** to the sight of men dying in the battlefield.*

invective n. verbal abuse

*The debate judge cautioned participants not to engage in **invective**, but rather in reasoned and decorous discourse.*

inveigh v. to disapprove; protest vehemently

*The conservative writer **inveighed** against the school board's decision to exclude moral education from the curriculum.*

inveigle v. to win over by flattery or coaxing

*The students **inveigled** their professor into postponing the test for a week.*

inveterate adj. confirmed; long-standing; deeply rooted

*The columnist is an **inveterate** iconoclast who continually questions conventional wisdom.*

invidious adj. likely to provoke ill will; offensive

*Most publications in the United States prohibit their writers from making **invidious***

comparisons between racial groups.

irascible *adj.* easily angered

*The **irascible** old man complains every time someone makes a little noise.*

irresolute *adj.* unsure of how to act; weak

*The president admonished Congress, saying that although it faced difficult choices it must not be **irresolute**.*

itinerant *adj.* wandering from place to place; unsettled

*According to state law, companies hiring **itinerant** workers must provide adequate housing for them.*

Unit 45

itinerary *n.* route of a traveler's journey

*We planned our **itinerary** to be flexible, so that if we especially enjoyed a particular place we could stay there longer.*

jaundiced *adj.* having a yellowish discoloration of the skin; affected by envy, resentment, or hostility

*Norman's experience as an infantryman during the war has given him a **jaundiced** view of human nature.*

The noun *jaundice* refers to a medical condition often due to liver disease and characterized by yellowness of the skin.

jibe *v.* to be in agreement

*The auditor checked the company's account books to make sure that they **jibed** with the tax return it filed.*

jocose *adj.* fond of joking; jocular; playful

*The English words **jocose**, jocular, and joke all come from derivatives of the Latin noun jocus, which means "jest" or "joke," but the etymology of the word jocund is unrelated to these. Jocose (fond of joking; jocular; playful) is from Latin jocosus (humorous, merry, sportive), from jocus. Jocular (fond of joking; playful; speaking in jest) is from Latin jocularis (jocular; laughable), also from jocus. Jocund (mirthful; merry; light-hearted; delightful) is from jocundus (pleasant, agreeable), from juvare (to delight).*

juggernaut *n.* huge force destroying everything in its path

*Some people in Britain regard American English as a **juggernaut** sweeping through the British Isles, destroying British English*

junta *n.* group of people united in political intrigue

*The country's ruling **junta** consists of a general, an admiral, and the mayor of the capital city.*

juxtapose *v.* place side by side

*To illustrate their case, opponents of functionalism **juxtapose** the products of modern architecture and those of classical architecture, such as the Parthenon, or those of medieval architecture, such as the Cathedral of Notre-Dame.*

The noun *juxtaposition* means a side-by-side placement.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

functionalism: twentieth-century aesthetic doctrine in architecture. Functionalists believe that the outward form of a structure should follow its interior function.

kudos *n.* fame; glory; honor

***Kudos** won by Bob Dylan include an honorary doctorate in music from Princeton University.*

labile *adj.* likely to change

*Blood pressure in human beings is, to varying degrees, **labile**.*

laconic *j adj.* using few words

*The **laconic** actor seemed to be a good choice to play the strong, silent hero in the western.*

UNIT 46

lambaste *v.* to thrash verbally or physically

*The critic **lambasted** the movie in her column, coining it "the most insipid, jejune film made in our generation."*

lascivious *adj.* lustful

*The court ruled that the movie could be censored because its sole aim was to promote **lascivious** thoughts.*

lassitude *n.* lethargy; sluggishness

*After the death of his wife, Steven suffered a three-month period of **lassitude** and depression.*

latent *adj.* present but hidden; potential

*Some experts in human psychology believe that we are just beginning to explore the **latent** powers of the human mind.*

laud *v.* to praise

*The literary critic **lauded** Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, calling it a novel that*

"explores the tension between a person's life as a social being and his or her individual consciousness."

lethargic *adj.* inactive

*After the 18-hour flight from New York to Singapore, the passengers were **lethargic**.*

levee *n.* an embankment that prevents a river from overflowing

*An extensive system of **levees** is the only way to prevent the river from flooding the area during periods of heavy rain.*

levity *n.* light manner or attitude

*The comedian has a gift for finding an element of **levity** in the most serious of subjects.*

liberal *adj.* tolerant; broad-minded; generous; lavish

*Bankruptcy laws should not be too stringent, or not enough people will venture their capital; on the other hand, they should not be too **liberal**, or entrepreneurs will take unreasonable risks and waste capital*

libertine *n.* one without moral restraint

*Don Juan is a legendary, archetypal **libertine** whose story has been told by many poets, such as Lord Byron*

UNIT 47

libido *n.* sexual desire

*According to psychologists, the **libido** of human males peaks at around the age of 18.*

Lilliputian *adj.* extremely small

*Microbiologists study **Lilliputian** organisms.*

limn *v.* to draw; describe

*The artist based his painting on a sketch he had **limned** several years earlier.*

limpid *adj.* clear; transparent

*At the bottom of the **limpid** pond we could see hundreds of fish swimming.*

linguistic *adj.* pertaining to language

*Humans are at the acme of their **linguistic** proficiency in the first several years of life, during which they master thousands of complex grammatical operations.*

Linguistics is the scientific study of language.

A *linguist* is someone who studies language.

Linguists such as Noam Chomsky believe that what people come to know and believe depends on experiences that evoke a part of the cognitive system that is latent in the mind.

litany n. lengthy recitation; repetitive chant

The student listened intently to his teacher's **litany** of the grammatical errors committed by the class.

literati n. scholarly or learned persons

"Any test that turns on what is offensive to the community's standards is too loose, too capricious, too destructive of freedom of expression to be squared with the First Amendment. Under that test, juries can censor, suppress, and punish what they don't like, provided the matter relates to 'sexual impurity' or has a tendency 'to excite lustful thoughts.' This is community censorship in one of its worst forms. It creates a regime where in the battle between the **literati** and the Philistines, the Philistines are certain to win."

—U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, dissenting in the case of *Roth v. United States*, 1957.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

First Amendment: a part of the United States Bill of Rights prohibiting the federal legislature from making laws that establish a state religion or prefer a certain religion, prevent free exercise of religion, infringe the freedom of speech; infringe the freedom of the press; limit the right to assemble peaceably; limit the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances

Philistines: people considered to be ignorant of the value of cultures and smug and conventional in their thinking

litigation n. legal proceedings

The radio amateur's neighbor resorted to **litigation** in an attempt to have her neighbor dismantle his 100-foot-high antenna tower.

log n. record of a voyage; record of daily activities

Although no longer required to do so by the Federal Communications Commission, many amateur radio operators nevertheless keep a meticulous record of stations they communicate with, **logging** the details of each contact.

loquacious adj. talkative

Eighty meters is a portion, of the radio spectrum where a shortwave listener can often hear **loquacious** "hams" chatting ("chewing the rag" in amateur radio parlance) for hours.

UNIT 48

lucid *adj.* bright; clear; intelligible

*The eminent surgeon Dr. Christian Barnard, who performed the first human heart-transplant operation in 1967, made his views on euthanasia clear in this **lucid** injunction: "The prime goal is to alleviate suffering, and not to prolong life. And if your treatment does not alleviate suffering, but only prolongs life, that treatment should be stopped.*

lucre *n.* money or profits

*Many religions regard the pursuit of **lucre** for what it can do to help others as laudable.*

luminous *adj.* bright; brilliant; glowing

*The Moon is the most **luminous** object in the night sky.*

*The noun is **luminosity**.*

*A supernova can suddenly increase its **luminosity** to as much as a billion times its normal brightness.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

supernova: a rare astronomical event in which most of the material in a star explodes, resulting in the emission of vast amounts of energy for a short period of time

lustrous *adj.* shining

*On the clear night we gazed up in awe at the **lustrous** stars.*

Machiavellian *adj.* crafty; double-dealing

*One theory of the evolution of high intelligence in primates is that it evolved largely as a result of **Machiavellian** calculations on the part of apes.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

*Machiavel*W Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) was an Italian philosopher known for his writings on how a ruler should govern, notably by favoring expediency over principles.

machinations *n.* plots or schemes

*The mayor resorted to behind-the-scenes **machinations** to try to win his party's nomination for governor.*

maelstrom n. whirlpool; turmoil

*Nearly everyone in Europe was caught up in the **maelstrom** that was World War II.*

magnanimity n. generosity; nobility

*The senator showed his **magnanimity** when he conceded defeat to his opponent in the disputed election, saying that further uncertainty would be harmful to public confidence in the political system*

malign v. to speak evil of

*Lawyers are sometimes **maligned** as greedy and dishonest.*

malingering u. to feign illness to escape duty

*In order to discourage **malingering**, the company decided to require employees taking sick leave to produce a doctor's certification of their illness.*

UNIT49

malleable adj. capable of being shaped by pounding; impressionable

*Behaviorists such as B. F. Skinner believe that human nature is **malleable**, and that people's behavior can be changed by changing their environment*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Behaviorists: followers of behaviorism, the school of psychology that seeks to explain behavior entirely in terms of observable responses to environmental stimuli

maverick n. dissenter

*Bernie Sanders of Vermont has a reputation as a **maverick**; he is one of only two members of the United States Congress who is independent (that is, not a member of the Republican or Democratic Party).*

megalomania n. delusions of power or importance

*In his farewell speech the retiring trial judge warned his colleagues to beware of **megalomania** as they exercise their power in the courtroom.*

menagerie n. a variety of animals kept together

*Linda seems to take home every abandoned pet in the town; she now has an incredible **menagerie** of dogs, cats, turtles, rabbits, and other animals.*

mendacious adj. dishonest

*The judge ruled the testimony inadmissible because he considered it **mendacious**.*

mendicant n. beggar

*In Thailand it is traditional for young men to become monks for a year, a period during which they become **mendicants**.*

meretricious adj. gaudy; plausible but false; specious

*One of the allures of jargon is that it can make a poor idea appear worthwhile, or something **meretricious** easier to accept because it is dressed in fancy language.*

mesmerize v. to hypnotize

*The audience sat, **mesmerized**, listening to the retired soldier's account of hand-to-hand combat against the Japanese in New Guinea during World War U.*

metamorphosis n. change; transformation

*In recent years, many areas of China have been undergoing a **metamorphosis**, transforming themselves from predominantly agricultural areas to industrial ones.*

metaphysics^ n. a branch of philosophy that investigates the ultimate nature of reality

*To skeptics, **metaphysics** is an arbitrary search for a chimerical truth.*

Metaphysical is an adjective meaning pertaining to metaphysics.

*Some critics of evolution object to its implication that human thought is reduced to a peripheral phenomenon; they find it implausible that the ability to conceptualize—to write a sonnet, a symphony, a **metaphysical** treatise—would have evolved in early hominids solely as a secondary effect*

Metaphysician is a noun meaning a person who is an expert in metaphysics.

*Whether we are aware of it or not, we are all **metaphysicians** in the sense that we all have beliefs about what things are the most real; for example, a person who believes in God may believe that God is the "ultimate reality."*

Unit 50

meteorological adj. concerned with the weather

*Some experts believe that reports of UFOs are attributable to natural astronomical or **meteorological** phenomena.*

Meteorology is a science that deals with weather and atmospheric phenomena.

Meteorologists are those who study meteorology or forecast weather conditions.

*The term "butterfly effect" to refer to the process driving chaotic systems was first used in 1979 by **meteorologist** E. M. Lorenz in an address entitled, "Predictability: Does the Flap of a Butterfly's Wings in Brazil Set Off a Tornado in Texas?"*

meticulous adj. very careful; fastidious

*Science is an empirical field of study based on the belief that the laws of nature can best be discovered by **meticulous** observation and experimentation.*

mettle n. courage; endurance

*In many cultures, young men are expected to test their **mettle** by performing difficult and*

dangerous tasks.

mettlesome *adj.* full of courage and fortitude; spirited

The **mettlesome** young officer was well regarded by all the senior officers.

Do not confuse *mettlesome* with *meddlesome*, which means "inclined to interfere."

microcosm *n.* a small system having analogies to a larger system; small world

For many years the atom was seen as a sort of **microcosm** of the larger universe, with electrons—*analogous to the planets of a solar system—orbiting the nucleus, or "sun."*

militate *v.* to work against

The manager asked all of his employees to think of any factors that might **militate** against the project's success.

minatory *adj.* threatening; menacing

Intelligence information suggests **minatory** troop concentrations on the border.

minuscule *adj.* very small

Ancient geological processes are beyond the scope of carbon-14 dating (which is at most 120,000 years) because the amount of carbon-14 in material from such processes that has not decayed is **minuscule**.

minutia *n.* petty details

President Ronald Reagan said that a president should concentrate on the formulation and execution of broad policy and leave the **minutia** of running the country to subordinates.

misanthrope *n.* one who hates humanity

One of the most famous **misanthropes** in literature is the protagonist of the seventeenth century French writer Moliere's play *Le Misanthrope* (The Misanthrope).

UNTT 51

miscellany *n.* mixture of writings on various subjects

The book is a fascinating **miscellany** collected from the writer's life work.

miscreant *n.* villain; criminal

The public execution of **miscreants** was common in Great Britain in the eighteenth century.

misogynist *n.* one who hates women

Some people have called the philosopher Freidrich Nietzsche a **misogynist** because of the numerous negative comments he made about women.

mitigate *v.* to cause to become less harsh, severe, or painful; alleviate

Although the Supreme Court under the leadership of Chief Justice Warren Burger did not rescind any of the fundamental rulings of the Warren Court that preceded it, its decisions did **mitigate** the effects of some of the rulings of the Warren Court.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Warren Court: Earl Warren was named chief justice of the Supreme Court in 1953, and served on the Court until 1969. Under his leadership the Supreme Court tended to interpret the Constitution boldly, frequently with the result that disadvantaged people were helped.

Mitigation is a noun meaning the act of reducing the severity or painfulness of something.

*Before sentencing the woman, the judge asked if she had anything to say in **mitigation**.*

mnemonic *adj.* related to memory; assisting memory

*In the introduction to a collection of poetry, By Heart, the British poet Ted Hughes says that "the more absurd, exaggerated, grotesque" the images used as a **mnemonic** device to help remember a poem, the easier it will be to recall.*

Mnemonics is a system that develops and improves the memory.

*Symbolic languages—the second generation of computer languages— were developed in the early 1950s, making use of **mnemonics** such as "M" for "multiply," which are translated into machine language by a computer program.*

modicum *n.* limited quantity

*The scientist Carl Sagan wrote about astronomy and other scientific subjects in a way that enabled a reader with even a **modicum** of knowledge of science to understand what he was saying.*

mollify *v.* to soothe

*The prime minister tried to **mollify** people protesting the tax increase with a promise that she would order a study of other means to raise revenue.*

monolithic *adj.* solid and uniform; constituting a single, unified whole

*In the fifteenth century, there was a significant movement to revitalize the Church from within; however, it had become so **monolithic** over the centuries and contained so many vested interests that piecemeal reform was difficult and ineffective.*

morose *adj.* ill-humored; sullen

*The assessment of some skeptical critics of existentialism is that it is generally a view of life created by a group of thinkers whose distinguishing characteristic is that they are **morose**.*

motley *adj.* many colored; made up of many parts

*The new political party is made up of a **motley** group of people who are unhappy with the existing parties.*

multifarious *adj.* diverse

Modern technology is so complex and multifarious that it requires thousands of specialists to devise and operate; thus, even a brilliant engineer could not by himself fabricate a sophisticated radio or computer without the help of existing black boxes and expertise.

mundane *adj.* worldly as opposed to spiritual; concerned with the ordinary

Fundamentalists contend that the Bible's account of the creation is literally true, while others believe that it is the retelling of a powerful myth current in the Middle East that sought to explain the mundane in spiritual language.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Fundamentalists: those who stress adherence to a set of basic beliefs, especially in religion. Specifically, fundamentalism refers to the movement in Protestantism stressing a literal interpretation of the Bible.

necromancy *n.* black magic

Television might seem like necromancy to a time traveler from the fifteenth century.

negate *v.* to cancel out; nullify

The soldiers' poor treatment of the prisoners negated any goodwill they had built up among the population.

neologism *n.* new word or expression

The word "anesthesia" was the neologism of the American physician and poet Oliver Wendell Holmes, who used it in 1846 in a letter to Dr. William Morton, who had recently demonstrated the use of ether; the word is derived from the Latin word anaesthesia, meaning "lack of sensation."

neophyte *n.* novice; beginner

The school provides extensive support and guidance for neophyte teachers.

nexus *n.* a means of connection; a connected group or series; a center *Wall Street is the nexus of America's financial system*

nonplussed *adj.* bewildered

The members of the football team were nonplussed by the presence of a female reporter in the locker room

nostalgia *n.* sentimental longing for a past time

The product's marketing is centered on nostalgia for the 1950s.

The adjective is *nostalgic*.

The idea of an extended family existing in nineteenth-century America consisting of

*loving uncles and doting aunts has been shown to be largely a product of a **nostalgic** and romanticized view of the past.*

nostrum n. medicine or remedy of doubtful effectiveness; supposed cure

*Although there are many **nostrums** urged on obese consumers, the only effective remedy for this condition is prosaic but nonetheless valid: eat less and exercise more.*

UNIT 53

nugatory adj. trifling; invalid

*The historian has a knack for focusing on information that appears **nugatory** but that, upon examination, illuminates the central issue.*

obdurate adj. stubborn

*Coach Knight is **obdurate** about one thing: the offensive line is the heart of his football team.*

obsequious adj. overly submissive

*Tom's tendency to submit meekly to any bullying authority is so great that his wife suggested he overcome this **obsequiousness** by taking an assertiveness training course.*

obsequy n. funeral ceremony (often used in the plural, obsequies)

*Solemn **obsequies** were held for President John F. Kennedy following his assassination on November 22, 1963.*

obviate v. to make unnecessary; to anticipate and prevent

*An experienced physician can often discern if a patient's symptoms are psychosomatic, thus **obviating** the need for expensive medical tests.*

occlude v. to shut; block

*One of the primary uses of solar cells is in spacecraft to provide electric power; this is because space is an environment uniquely suited to these devices since it has no weather to **occlude** the Sun and it is not susceptible to interruptions in sunlight caused by the rotation of the Earth.*

occult adj. relating to practices connected with supernatural phenomena

*In his book *Supernature* the biologist Lyell Watson explores what he regards as phenomena on the border between natural and **occult** phenomena*

odyssey n. a long, adventurous voyage; a quest

*Steve's quest for enlightenment took him on a spiritual **odyssey** that helped him to gain an understanding of many philosophers and religions.*

officious adj. too helpful; meddlesome

*Some of us on the tour found the guide **officious**, but others thought she was helpful and*

courteous.

olfactory *adj.* concerning the sense of smell

*Wine connoisseurs say that the **olfactory** senses play as important a part in appreciating good wine as the sense of taste.*

Unit 54

oligarchy *n.* form of government in which power belongs to only a few leaders

*In 411 B.C., democratic government was overthrown in Athens and a conservative **oligarchy** called the Four Hundred came to power.*

onerous *adj.* burdensome

*The duty the judge considers most **onerous** is sentencing convicted-criminals.*

onomatopoeia *a.* formation or use of words that imitate sounds of the actions they refer to

*One theory of the origin of language is that it began as a sort of **onomatopoeia** as early humans imitated sounds they heard.*

opprobrium *n.* disgrace; contempt

*It is difficult to imagine the **opprobrium** heaped on a person who is a traitor to his or her group.*

ornithologist *n.* scientist who studies birds

***Ornithologists** believe that there currently exist only about 20 individuals of a bird called the Balinese sparrow.*

oscillate *v.* to move back and forth

*The teacher **oscillates** between a student-centered approach to teaching and a subject-centered approach.*

ostentatious *adj.* showy; trying to attract attention; pretentious

*A member of the bourgeoisie might purchase a vacation home on Maui or Cape Cod that some would regard as an **ostentatious** display of wealth, but that the person regards as simply a pleasant place to go on vacation.*

overweening *adj.* presumptuous; arrogant; overbearing

*The ancient Greeks believed that **overweening** pride—what they called hubris—would be punished, eventually, by the gods.*

paean *n.* song of joy or triumph; a fervent expression of joy

*Fundamentally, the poem is a **paean** of joy, celebrating the coming of democracy to the country.*

paleontology *n.* study of past geological eras through fossil remains

*Primatology, together with anthropology, **paleontology**, and several other fields, has given scientists a fairly accurate picture of the evolution of homo sapiens.*

A paleontologist is an expert in the field of paleontology.

*The attempts of the Jesuit priest and **paleontologist** Teilhard de Chardin to reconcile*

evolution and the Catholic dogma of original sin were regarded by Church authorities as nearly heretical, and he had to abandon his position in 1926.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Primateology: the branch of zoology that deals with the study of primates (that is, mammals belonging to any of the suborders of primates: Anthropoides (humans, great apes, and several others), Prosimi (lemurs and several others), and Tarsiodea. Primates are characterized by a high level of social interaction, flexible behavior, and use of hands.

UNIT 55

pallid *adj.* lacking color or liveliness

*Archeological evidence indicates that women have been using makeup to give color to a **pallid** face for millennia.*

panegyric *n.* elaborate praise; formal hymn of praise

*Many **panegyrics** were written to Abraham Lincoln in the years after his death, and he has become one of the most revered figures in American history.*

paragon *n.* model of excellence or perfection

*The epic poet Homer was regarded by the ancient Greeks as a **paragon** of literary excellence.*

partisan *adj.* one-sided; committed to a party, group, or cause; prejudiced

*Supporters of constitutional monarchy believe that while in this system, as it is generally practiced today, virtually all power is vested in popularly elected assemblies, the institution of the monarchy continues to serve a purpose as a focus of national unity above the furor of **partisan** politics.*

pathological *adj.* departing from normal condition

*People sometimes confound psychology and psychiatry: the former is the science that studies cognitive and affective functions, both normal and **pathological**, in human beings and other animals, whereas the latter is a branch of medicine that deals with mental disorders.*

Pathology is the noun.

*Some of the most spectacular examples of spin-off in the twentieth century are the advances that have been made in medicine as an unforeseen result of pure biological research; an example of this is diagnostic testing for defective genes that predispose a person to certain **pathologies**.*

*Pathos is a quality that causes a feeling of pity or sorrow. It is pronounced **PAY**-thahs.*

patois *n.* a regional dialect; nonstandard speech; jargon

*In Singapore the lingua franca is increasingly becoming Singapore English, widely regarded as a **patois**.*

paucity *n.* scarcity

*An argument sometimes advanced for euthanasia is that the amount of money spent on prolonging a person's life for several months is exorbitant in relation to the **paucity** of funds available for preventive health programs and child health, both of which are highly cost-effective.*

pedantic *adj.* showing off learning

*The Sophists have acquired a reputation as being learned but rather **pedantic** entertainers who gave didactic talks on every subject under the Sun; the truth however, is that some of the Sophist philosophers (notably Protagoras) were very able thinkers.*

The noun *pedant* means an uninspired, boring academic.

pellucid *adj.* transparent; translucent; easily understood

*Two writers often mentioned as having an admirably **pellucid** style are Bertrand Russell and George Orwell*

penchant *n.* inclination

*Sue has a **penchant** for science, while her brother is more interested in the arts.*

UNIT 56

penury *n.* extreme poverty

*The autobiography tells the story of the billionaire's journey from **penury** to riches beyond his imagining.*

peregrination *n.* a wandering from place to place

*Swami Vivekananda's **peregrinations** took him all over India.*

peremptory *adj.* imperative; leaving no choice

*The general's words were spoken in the **peremptory** tone of a man who is used to having his commands obeyed without question.*

perennial *adj.* present throughout the years; persistent

***Perennial** warfare has left most of the people of the country in poverty.*

perfidious *adj.* faithless; disloyal; untrustworthy

*The novel tells the story of the hero's **perfidious** lover.*

perfunctory *adj.* superficial; not thorough; performed really as a duty

*The **perfunctory** inspection of the airplane failed to reveal structural faults in the Wing.*

perigee *n.* point in an orbit that is closest to the Earth

*The Earth observation satellite reaches a **perigee** of 320 miles above the Earth's surface.*

permeable *adj.* penetrable

*Wetsuits, used by divers in cold water, are **permeable** to water but designed to retain body heat*

perturb *u.* to disturb greatly; make uneasy or anxious; cause a body to deviate from its regular orbit

*The findings that violence is increasing in schools greatly **perturbed** government officials.*

The noun *perturbation* means disturbance.

*Scientists believe that the Earth has undergone alternating periods of relatively cooler and warmer climate, and that this is due largely to fluctuations in the intensity of the greenhouse effect and **perturbations** in the Earth's orbit around the Sun.*

pervasive *adj.* spread throughout every part

*It is a plausible hypothesis that the atheistic and materialistic philosophy of Marxism was readily accepted in China because of its similarities with Confucian views on spiritual matters, which had a **pervasive** influence in China for many centuries.*

The noun is *pervasiveness*.

*An indicator of the **pervasiveness** of psychotropic drugs in American society is the fact that approximately 50% of adults have used tranquilizers at some time in their lives.*

The verb is *pervade*.

Unit 57

petulant *adj.* rude; peevish

*The boy's father worried that his disobedient and **petulant** child would grow up to be a bitter and annoying man.*

phlegmatic *adj.* calm in temperament; sluggish

*"**Phlegmatic** natures can be inspired to enthusiasm only by being made into fanatics."
(Friedrich Nietzsche)*

phoenix *n.* mythical, immortal bird that lives for 500 years, burns itself to death, and rises from its ashes; anything that is restored after suffering great destruction

The captain believed the battalion had been destroyed by the

*enemy and was amazed to see it arise, **phoenix**-like, its men still fighting valiantly.*

physiognomy *n.* facial features

*The art teacher assigned her students to make drawings of people with a wide variety of **physiognomy**.*

piety *n.* devoutness

*Saint Bernard of Clairvaux was a medieval French monk revered for his **piety**.*

piquant *adj.* appealingly stimulating; pleasantly pungent; attractive

*Many of the guests enjoyed the **piquant** barbecue sauce, but others found it too spicy for their taste.*

pique n. fleeting feeling of hurt pride

*Sally left the restaurant in a fit of **pique** after her date called to say he couldn't come because he was working late.*

As a verb, pique means to provoke or arouse.

*The geologist's curiosity was **piqued** by the unusual appearance of the rock formation.*

placate v. to lessen another's anger; to pacify

*After his team's third consecutive winless season, the Big State football coach opened his address to the irate alumni with a barrage of cliches and euphemisms to try to **placate** them: "Gentlemen, it is not my intention today to pull the wool over your eyes. Heaven only knows I have given my all I have truly made the old college try. Unfortunately, however, by any reasonable criteria we have been less than completely successful in our endeavors, but I assure you that hope springs eternal in the human breast and next year we will rise to the occasion, put our noses to the grindstone and emerge triumphant in the face of adversity. I certainly admit that we have had a run of bad luck but that is nothing that can't be cured by true grit and determination."*

placid adj. calm

*We were amazed how the monk was able to remain **placid** despite the fire that was raging through the building^*

plaintive adj. melancholy; mournful

*After the battle all that could be heard was the **plaintive** cries of women who had lost their husbands.*

UNIT58

plasticity n. condition of being able to be shaped or formed; pliability

*The sociologist is continually amazed by the **plasticity** of social institutions.*

platitute n, stale, overused expression

*Though Sarah's marriage didn't seem to be going well, she took comfort in the **platitute** that the first six months of a marriage were always the most difficult.*

platonic adj. spiritual; without sensual desire; theoretical

*Gradually what had been a **platonic** relationship between Tim and Kyoko became a romantic one.*

plethora n. excess; overabundance

*Because it deals with death and grieving, the funeral business has produced a plethora of **euphemisms** such as "slumber room" for the place where the corpse is placed for viewing.*

plumb v. to determine the depth; to examine deeply

*A recurrent theme of mystical experience is "the dark night of the soul" in which a person **plumbs** the depths of despair before finding a transcendent reality that brings the person closer to what he or she regards as God.*

The pronunciation of *plumb* is **PLUM**. Do not confuse *plumb* with the verb *plume*, which means to congratulate oneself in a self-satisfied way.

*John **plumed** himself on his ability to read both Sanskrit and Greek.*

plummet v. to fall; plunge

*The fighter jet, struck by an enemy missile, **plummeted** to earth.*

plutocracy n. society ruled by the wealthy

*It has been argued that modern democracies are **plutocracies** to the extent that wealth allows certain people to have a disproportionately large influence on political decision-making.*

porous adj. full of holes; permeable to liquids

*If you go camping, make sure to spend enough money to buy a tent with a roof that is not **porous**.*

poseur n. person who affects an attitude or identity to impress others

*The critic labeled the writer a **poseur** who was more interested in getting the public's attention than in writing good books.*

pragmatic adj. practical

*The cult of romantic love was a major factor in making a marriage for love, rather than for more **pragmatic** reasons, a ubiquitous phenomenon in the West by the nineteenth century.*

Pragmatism means a practical way of approaching situations or solving problems.

***Pragmatism** is similar to Positivism in rejecting lofty metaphysical conceptions and in asserting that the main role of philosophy is to help clarify phenomena experienced.*

A pragmatist is someone who approaches situations in a practical way.

*The word "**pragmatist**" is often used to refer to someone who is willing to sacrifice his principles to expediency.*

UNIT 59

prate v. to talk idly; chatter

*The "talk radio" program allows people to call in and **prate** about their pet peeves.*

prattle n. meaningless, foolish talk

*The sociologist theorizes that what may seem like **prattle** often has an important social Junction: what might be labeled "gossip" is an important means for people to communicate valuable information about themselves and others.*

preamble n. preliminary statement

Along with the opening words of the Declaration of Independence and the Gettysburg

Address, the **preamble** to the Constitution of the United States contains some of the most memorable language in American history: "We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty, to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

precarious *adj.* uncertain

The prime minister's **precarious** hold on power ended when she lost a vote of confidence in Parliament.

precept *n.* principle; law

A good **precept** to follow in writing is to avoid redundancies such as "track record" (unless the record was set on a racecourse), "revert back," "free gift," and "general consensus."

precipitate *v.* to cause to happen; throw down from a height

Full-scale American entry into World War II remained unpopular with the vast majority of Americans until a declaration of war was **precipitated** by the Japanese attack on the naval base at Pearl Harbor, a day that President Roosevelt predicted, in a memorable phrase, would "live in infamy."

precipitate *adj.* rash; hasty; sudden

The secretary of state advised the president not to take **precipitate**

action.

Precipitous is another adjective meaning hasty; quickly with too little caution.

Precipitation is water droplets or ice particles from atmospheric water vapor that falls to Earth.

*It would be helpful if the atmosphere could be induced to deposit its **precipitation** more evenly over the Earth's surface, so that some land areas are not inundated while others remain arid.*

precursor *n.* forerunner; predecessor

The **precursor** to the theory of plate tectonics was the theory of continental drift.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

plate tectonics: geological theory stating that the outer part of the Earth's interior is composed of two layers, one of which "floats" on the other. According to this theory, which is widely accepted by scientists, ten major plates move in relation to one another, creating such phenomena as earthquakes and mountain building along the boundaries of the plates.

continental drift: the theory that the continents shift their positions over time.

preempt *v.* to supersede; appropriate for oneself

The movie was **preempted** for the president's emergency address to the nation.

prehensile *adj.* capable of grasping

*Many more animals in South America have **prehensile** tails than those in Southeast Asia and Africa, possibly because the greater density of the forest there favored this adaptation over the ability to glide through the trees.*

UNIT60

premonition *n.* forewarning; presentiment

*Shortly after his reelection in 1864, President Abraham Lincoln had a **premonition** of his impending death, and on April 14, 1865, he was shot and died the next day.*

presage *v.* to foretell; indicate in advance

*The English poet William Blake believed his work **presaged** a new age in which people would achieve political, social, psychological and spiritual freedom*

presumptuous *adj.* rude; improperly bold

*The new employee did not offer her advice to her boss because she was afraid he might consider it **presumptuous** for a recent graduate to make a suggestion to someone with 30 years experience in the field.*

The verb is *presume*.

*Proponents of the view **presume** that there exist only two antithetical positions, with no middle ground between their opponent's view and their own (eminently more reasonable) position.*

The noun is *presumption*.

*Anti-Semitism originated in the **presumption** that Jews were responsible for Jesus' crucifixion, and was responsible for periodic persecutions such as the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492.*

preternatural *adj.* beyond the normal course of nature; supernatural

*Most scientists believe that putative **preternatural** phenomena are outside the scope of scientific inquiry.*

prevaricate *v.* to quibble; evade the truth

*Journalists accused government leaders of **prevaricating** about the progress of the war.*

primordial *adj.* original; existing from the beginning

*Scholars are divided as to whether polytheism represents a degeneration from a **primordial** monotheism, or was a precursor to a more sophisticated view, monotheism*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

polytheism: belief in the existence of more than one god

monotheism: belief in the existence of one god

pristine *adj.* untouched; uncorrupted

*The bank's hermetically sealed vault has kept the manuscript in **pristine** condition for 50*

years.

probity *n.* honesty; high-mindedness

*No one questioned the **probity** of the judge being considered for elevation to the U.S. Supreme Court; what was at issue was his controversial views on several important issues.*

problematic *adj.* posing a problem; doubtful; unsettled

*The idea of the universe originating at a certain point in time seems **problematic** to many scientists.*

prodigal *adj.* wasteful; extravagant; lavish

*Betty warned her husband that he must stop his **prodigal** spending on sports cars and expensive clothing.*

Unit 61

profound *adj.* deep; not superficial

*There is an adage in philosophy that everyone is born either a Platonist or an 'Aristotelian, meaning that everyone has a predisposition to believing either that reality is completely "here and now," or that there exists a more **profound**, hidden reality.*

*The noun **profundity** means the quality of being profound.*

prohibitive *adj.* so high as to prevent the purchase or use of; preventing; forbidding

*Most people in poor countries are unable to purchase a computer because of its **prohibitive** price.*

Prohibition is the noun.

*The word taboo was taken from Polynesia (tabu in Tongan) and broadened to mean any culture's **prohibition** of a particular object or activity.*

•Note: Aristotle was Plato's student; in contrast to Plato, he believed that there exist no entities separate from matter.

proliferate *v.* to increase rapidly

*With the pervasive influence of American culture, "fast-food" restaurants are **proliferating** in many countries.*

Proliferation is the noun.

*A problem with the **proliferation** of jargon is that it impedes communication between different fields of knowledge.*

propensity *n.* inclination; tendency

*There is a natural **propensity** to stress the importance of what one is saying by exaggerating it*

propitiate u. to win over; appease

*M.E.W. Sherwood, an author alive at the time of the U.S. Civil War, eloquently expressed the sacrifice made by soldiers on both sides of that great conflict: "But for four years there was a contagion of nobility in the land, and the best blood of North and South poured itself out a libation to **propitiate** the deities of Truth and Justice. The great sin of slavery was washed out, but at what a cost!"*

propriety n. correct conduct; fitness

*Judges are expected to conduct themselves with **propriety**, especially in the courtroom.*

proscribe v. to condemn; forbid; outlaw

*The expert in English believes that since the tendency to use hyperbole is natural and often enriches the language, it should not be **proscribed**.*

The adjective *proscriptive* means relating to prohibition.

*Proponents of the view that dictionaries should be **proscriptive**, dictating what correct usage is, believe that without such guides the standard of language will decline; however, advocates of descriptive dictionaries argue that dictionary makers have no mandate to dictate usage and therefore should merely record language as it is used.*

provident adj. providing for future needs; frugal

*Most people have heard the story of the prodigal grasshopper and the **provident** ant that spends the summer saving food for the winter.*

puissant adj. powerful

*The article analyzes the similarities and differences between the Roman Empire and the British Empire when each was at its most **puissant**.*

The noun is *puissance*.

punctilious adj. careful in observing rules of behavior or ceremony.

*The prime minister reminded his staff that they must be **punctilious** in following protocol during the visit by the foreign head of state.*

Unit 62

pungent adj. strong or sharp in smell or taste; penetrating; caustic; to the point

*Slang frequently expresses an idea succinctly and **pungently**.*

purport v. to profess; suppose; claim

*The United States is generally considered to be a secular society in which church and state are separate; however, religion plays a large role, since nearly everyone **purports** to believe in God and many people are members of churches.*

Purport is also a noun. Its definition is meaning intended or implied.

pusillanimous adj. cowardly

*Traditionally, a ship captain is considered **pusillanimous** if he abandons his ship before everyone else has.*

The noun is *pusillanimity*, which means cowardice.

quagmire n. marsh; difficult situation

The federal government's antitrust suit in the 1990s against Microsoft created a legal

quagmire.

quail v. to cower; lose heart

*The defendant **quailed** when the judge entered the room to announce the sentence.*

*

qualified adj. limited; restricted

*In Indian philosophy a position between monism at one extreme and dualism at the other is **qualified** nondualism, a philosophy in which reality is considered to have attributes of both dualism and monism.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

monism: the belief that reality is a unified whole consisting of one fundamental principle

dualism: the theory that two basic entities constitute reality (e.g. mind and matter or good and evil)

Qualification is a noun meaning limitation or restriction.

So many **qualifications** had been added to the agreement that Sue was now reluctant to sign it.

The verb *qualify* means to modify or limit.

qualm n. sudden feeling of faintness or nausea; uneasy feeling about the rightness of actions

*The judge had no **qualms** about sentencing the thief to five years imprisonment.*

query v. to question

*Until widespread industrialization caused massive pollution in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the ability of the biosphere to dissipate and assimilate waste created by human activity was not **queried**.*

Query is also a noun meaning a question.

*The history professor answered the student's interesting **query** about the influence of Arabic thought on Western civilization.*

quibble v. to argue over insignificant and irrelevant details

*The lawyers spent so much time **quibbling** over details that they made little progress in reaching an agreement on the central issue.*

Quibble is also a noun.

quiescent adj. inactive; still

*Although malignant tumors may remain **quiescent** for a period of time, they never become benign.*

The noun is *quiescence*.

UNIT 63

quorum *n.* number of members necessary to conduct a meeting

*The U.S. Senate's majority leader asked three members of his party to be available to help form a **quorum**.*

raconteur *n.* witty, skillful storyteller

*Former president Bill Clinton is known as an accomplished **raconteur** who can entertain guests with amusing anecdotes about politics all evening.*

rail *v.* to scold with bitter or abusive language

*The critic of globalization **railed** against its effect on the poor people of the world.*

raiment *n.* clothing

*It took two hours for the princess' handmaidens to help her put on her splendid **raiment** for her coronation as queen.*

ramification *n.* implication; outgrowth; consequence

*The full **ramification** of the invention of the laser did not become apparent for many years; now it is used in a great variety of applications, from DVD players to surgery.*

rarefied *adj.* refined

*Many scholars flourish in the **rarefied** intellectual atmosphere of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton, New Jersey.*

The verb *rarefy* means to make thinner, purer, or more refined.

rationale *n.* fundamental reason

*The philosophy of "enlightened self-interest" justifies acting in one's own interest by asserting that this is not selfish or motivated by a "beggar thy neighbor" **rationale**, but is simply the best way to ensure the welfare of the entire community.*

rebus *n.* puzzle in which pictures or symbols represent words

*Egyptian writing uses the principle of the **rebus**, substituting pictures for words.*

recalcitrant *adj.* resisting authority or control

*The officer had no choice but to recommend that the **recalcitrant** soldier be court-martialed.*

recant' *v.* to retract a statement or opinion

*The bishop told the theologian that he must **recant** his heretical teaching or risk*

excommunication..

UNIT 64

recluse *n.* person who lives in seclusion and often in solitude

*The monk spent three years of his life as a **recluse**, praying and meditating.*

The adjective is *reclusive*.

*John is a **reclusive** person who enjoys reading more than anything else.*

recondite *adj.* abstruse; profound

*Many classical and biblical references known to educated nineteenth-century readers are now considered **recondite** by most readers.*

redoubtable *adj.* formidable; arousing fear; worthy of respect

*As a result of winning 95% of her cases, the prosecutor has earned a reputation as a **redoubtable** attorney,*

refractory *adj.* stubborn; unmanageable; resisting ordinary methods of treatment

*The general practitioner called in specialists to help determine the cause of the patient's **refractory** illness.*

The verb *refract* means to deflect sound or light.

*Intermittently the ionosphere **refracts** radio waves of certain frequencies, allowing transmissions between distant points on the Earth*

refulgent *adj.* brightly shining; resplendent

*On the queen's neck was a necklace of jewels, in the middle of which was a large, **refulgent** diamond.*

refute *v.* to contradict; disprove

*The eighteenth-century English author Samuel Johnson claimed to have **refuted** the philosophy of idealism by kicking a large stone.*

The noun is *refutation*.

*Fundamentalism arose in Protestantism as a **refutation** of the liberal theology of the early twentieth century, which interpreted Christianity in terms of contemporary scientific theories.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Idealism: the belief that everything that exists is fundamentally mental in nature

regale *u.* to entertain

*Former U.S. presidents Lyndon Johnson, Ronald Reagan, and Bill Clinton often **regaled** visitors with amusing political anecdotes.*

relegate *v.* to consign to an inferior position

*Idealist philosophers are a common target of satire; however, instead of **relegating** them all to the garbage can, one should reflect that thinkers such as Plato and Kant have given humanity some of its most profound ideas.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Idealist: refers **to** the followers of Idealism

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804): German philosopher who held that the mind shapes the world as **it perceives it** and that this world takes the form of space and time

remonstrate v. to object or protest

*Minority members of the committee **remonstrated** with the majority members, saying that the proposal was unjust; nevertheless, it was approved.*

renege v. to go back on one's word

*Generally, if one party to an agreement **reneges** on its contractual obligations, it must provide appropriate compensation to the other party.*

UNIT 65

reparation n. amends; compensation

*The judge said she would not sentence the man to jail on the condition that he pay full **reparation** to the family hurt by his crime.*

repine v. fret; complain

*The president told the congressional representative he should stop **repining** over the lost opportunity and join the majority in exploring new ones.*

reprise n. repetition, especially of a piece of music

*The standing ovation at the end of the set meant that the band had little choice but to **reprise** a few of their most popular tunes.*

reproach v. to find fault with; blame

*The speaker in Andrew Marvell's poem "To His Coy Mistress" **reproaches** his beloved for ignoring the passing of time and for not being willing to physically express her love for him.*

Reproach is also a noun.

reprobate n. morally unprincipled person

*The social worker refused to give up hope of reforming the criminal who was generally regarded as a **reprobate**.*

repudiate v. to reject as having no authority

*In the 1960s, many black leaders such as Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael **repudiated** integration and nonviolence in favor of black separatism and passive resistance in the fight for*

civil rights.

rescind v. to cancel

*The salesperson said he would **rescind** his offer to sell the goods at a 10% discount unless he received full payment within 24 hours.*

resolution n. determination; resolve

*Fred's **resolution** to succeed is unshaken despite the many setbacks he has suffered*

resolve n. determination; firmness of purpose

*President Abraham Lincoln displayed remarkable **resolve** in preventing the Confederate states from seceding.*

The verb is also *resolve*.

reticent *adj.* not speaking freely; reserved; reluctant

*Many people in the west are **reticent** to criticize science, which in the view of many has become a sacred cow.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

sacred cow: something that is so greatly respected that it is beyond question, e.g. The virtue of free trade is a sacred cow of modern economic theory."

UNIT 66

reverent *adj.* expressing deep respect; worshipful

*The biologist Loren Eisely had what could be described as a **reverent** attitude toward nature.*

The verb is *revere*.

riposte n. a retaliatory action or retort

*The commander decided that the enemy attack must be countered with a quick **riposte**.*

rococo *adj.* excessively ornate; highly decorated; style of architecture in eighteenth-century Europe

*In music, the **Rococo** period (1730-1780) comes between the preceding Baroque period and the subsequent Classical period. The highly ornamented style of the Rococo period created new forms of dissonance that to listeners in previous eras would have sounded cacophonous.*

The noted authors Lawrence Durrell and Vladimir Nabokov often wrote in a rich, almost **rococo** style.

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Rococo: a style of architecture that made use of elaborate curved forms. Examples of the Rococo in architecture are the extremely ornate court and opera buildings of Mannheim and

Stuttgart in Germany

rubric *n.* title or heading; category; established mode of procedure or conduct; protocol

The data from the experiment was so diverse that the scientist decided to design a new rubric to organize it

rue *v.* to regret

The judge told the convicted man that he would come to rue his decision to commit the crime.

ruse *n.* trick; crafty stratagem; subterfuge

In July, 1999, a group of Christians from the United Kingdom traveled to various countries in which Crusaders had massacred people to apologize; however, many of the Moslems spurned this overture, believing it to be another Crusade in the form of a ruse.

sage *adj.* wise

Samuel Johnson gave this sage, albeit hard advice to writers wishing to improve their style: "Read over your compositions, and whenever you meet with a passage that you think is particularly fine, strike it out."

Sage is also a noun meaning a wise older person.

salacious *adj.* lascivious; lustful

The school board decided that the book is too salacious to be in the school library.

salubrious *adj.* healthful

The salubrious effects of exercise on both physical and mental health have been well documented.

Salutary *adj.* expecting an improvement; favorable to health

The system of universal education is in our age the most prominent and salutary feature of the spirit of enlightenment..."

—President Benjamin Harrison, 1892

UNIT 67

sanction *v.* to approve; ratify; permit

The establishment of the state of Israel from Palestinian territory in 1948 was the realization of a hallowed dream for Zionists, but for many Palestinians it meant the sanctioning of continued domination of their land by Europeans.

Sanction is also a noun meaning approval; ratification; permission.

In the West, the institution of marriage is traditionally given formal sanction by both the Church and the State, which has the social function of reinforcing its importance and the seriousness of the duties it entails.

The noun *sanction* can also mean penalization.

The United Nations has the power to compel obedience to international law by **sanctions**

or even war, but there must be unanimity for such action among the five permanent members of the Security Council.

The verb *sanction* can also mean to penalize.

sardonic *adj.* cynical; scornfully mocking

Satire that is too sardonic often loses its effectiveness.

sartorial *adj.* pertaining to tailors

Off-screen, the glamorous actress' sartorial style runs more to jeans and T-shirts than to elaborate gowns.

satiate *v.* to satisfy

The bully satiated his fury by pummeling the helpless little boy.

saturate *v.* to soak thoroughly; imbue throughout

The writer's recollection of her childhood is saturated with sunshine and laughter.

saturnine *adj.* gloomy

When the long list of casualties from the battle were announced, the mood in the room was saturnine.

satyr *n.* a creature that is half-man, half-beast with the horns and legs of a goat; it is a follower of Dionysos; a lecher

One of the best-known satyrs is Pan, the god of the woods in Greek mythology.

savor *v.* to enjoy; have a distinctive flavor or smell

The coach gave his team a day off practice to savor their big victory.

schematic *adj.* relating to or in the form of an outline or diagram

The engineer outlined the workings of the factory in schematic form

secrete *v.* produce and release substance into organism

The pancreas gland secretes a fluid that helps fat, carbohydrates, and protein to be digested in the small intestine.

UNIT 68

sedition *n.* behavior prompting rebellion

The federal prosecutor argued that the journalist's article could be interpreted as an act of sedition since it strongly suggested that the government should be overturned.

sedulous *adj.* diligent

The Nobel Prize-winning scientist attributed his success to what he termed "curiosity, a modicum of intelligence, and sedulous application."

seismic *adj.* relating to earthquakes; earthshaking

*The study of **seismic** waves enables scientists to learn about the Earth's structure.*

sensual *adj.* relating to the senses; gratifying the physical senses, especially sexual appetites

*The yogi teaches his students that attachment to **sensual** pleasure is one of the great hindrances to spiritual advancement.*

sensuous *adj.* relating to the senses; operating through the senses

*The American painter Georgia O'Keeffe is known especially for her **sensuous** paintings of plants and flowers and for her landscapes.*

sentient *adj.* aware; conscious; able to perceive

*Charles Darwin regarded many animals as being **sentient** and as having intelligence.*

The noun is *sentience*.

An analgesic relieves pain but unlike an anesthetic, does not cause loss of sensation or sentience.

servile *adj.* submissive; obedient

None of the dictator's servile citizens dared question his decree.

sextant *n.* navigation tool that determines latitude and longitude

*Because it enabled precise determination of position, the **sextant** quickly became an essential tool in navigation after its invention in 1731.*

shard *n.* a piece of broken glass or pottery

*Archeologists were able to reconstruct the drinking vessel from **shards** found around the ancient campsite.*

sidereal *adj.* relating to the stars

*A **sidereal** year is longer than a solar year by 20 minutes and 23 seconds.*

Unit 69

simian *adj.* apelike; relating to apes

*Many people in the nineteenth century denied the evolutionary significance of the **simian** characteristics of human beings.*

simile *n.* comparison of one thing with another using "like" or "as"

*In his autobiographical book, *Chronicle*, Volume I, Bob Dylan uses two **similes** in succession to try to convey the experience of writing a song: "A song is like a dream, and you try to make it come true. They're like strange countries you have to enter."*

sinecure *n.* well-paying job or office that requires little or no work

*The company established the high-paying position of senior advisor as a **sinecure** for the man who had been instrumental in the company's success for so many years.*

singular *adj.* unique; extraordinary; odd

*The defendant's **singular** appearance made it easy for the witness to identify him as the person at the scene of the crime.*

sinuous *adj.* winding; intricate; complex

*The students had trouble following the philosopher's **sinuous** line of reasoning.*

skeptic *n.* one who doubts

*Like the nihilist, a comprehensive philosophic **skeptic** can be a difficult person to debate: if you tell him you know you exist, he is likely to ask you to prove it—and that can be harder than it first appears.*

The adjective is *skeptical*

*A good scientist is **skeptical** about inferences made from data; however, he must not be dogmatic about the possible implications the data might have.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

nihilist: one who believes that existence and all traditional values are meaningless

sobriety *n.* seriousness

*The student approaches her studies with commendable **sobriety**.*

sodden *adj.* thoroughly soaked; saturated

*The **sodden** field makes it difficult for the soccer players to move effectively.*

solicitous *adj.* concerned; attentive; eager

*The nurse is extremely **solicitous** of the health of every patient in the ward*

soliloquy *n.* literary or dramatic speech by one character, not addressed to others

*The nineteenth-century English poet Robert Browning used the dramatic monologue—which is essentially a **soliloquy** in a poem— successfully in many of his poems.*

UNIT 70

solvent *adj.* able to meet financial obligations

*During the financial crisis several large banks had difficulty remaining **solvent**.*

somatic *adj.* relating to or affecting the body; corporeal

*A psychosomatic disorder is a malady caused by a mental disturbance that adversely affects **somatic** functioning.*

soporific *adj.* sleep producing

*For some people the best **soporific** is reading a boring book.*

sordid *adj.* filthy; contemptible and corrupt

*The Monica Lewinsky scandal which led to President Bill Clinton's impeachment in 1998, must certainly rank as one of the most **sordid** affairs in American history.*

specious *adj.* seeming to be logical and sound, but not really so

*The article systematically rebuts the **specious** argument advanced by the so-called expert in the field.*

spectrum *n.* band of colors produced when sunlight passes through a prism; a broad range of related ideas or objects

*The political science course deals with the whole **spectrum** of political ideologies.*

spendthrift *n.* person who spends money recklessly

*A Chinese proverb describes a paradox: Rich **spendthrifts** never save enough; but the poor always manage to save something.*

The adjective *spendthrift* means wasteful and extravagant.

*Tom's **spendthrift** habits resulted in his accumulating a huge amount of credit card debt.*

sporadic *adj.* irregular

*Despite the ceasefire, there have been **sporadic** outbreaks of violence between the warring factions.*

squalor *n.* filthy, wretched condition

*The family lives in **squalor** in the slums of Mexico City.*

staccato *adj.* marked by abrupt, clear-cut sounds

*We listened to the **staccato** steps of the woman in high heels running down the street*

UNIT 71

stanch *v.* to stop or check the flow of

*The country's government has put controls on currency movement to **stanch** the flow of money out of the country.*

stentorian *adj.* extremely loud

*The **stentorian** speaker prefers not to use a microphone so that the audience can appreciate what he calls "the full effect of my powerful oratory."*

stigma *n.* mark of disgrace or inferiority

*A problem with giving formal psychological treatment to a child who is believed to be poorly adjusted to society is that he may acquire a **stigma** as a result of officially being labeled as deviant, and he may act to corroborate society's expectation.*

The verb is *stigmatize*.

*The civil rights movement helped to **stigmatize** racism, augmenting legal efforts to desegregate American society.*

stint *v.* to be sparing

***Stinting** on funding for education strikes many people as shortsighted.*

Stint is also a noun meaning a period of time spent doing something Isaac Asimov did a

short involuntary **stint** in the army as a conscript during the 1950s.

stipulate v. to specify as an essential condition

*The president's lawyer **stipulated** that he would appear before the investigative committee, but would answer only questions directly relevant to the issue at hand.*

The noun is *stipulation*.

***Stipulations** in a contract should be clear in order to obviate the need for parties to resort to litigation.*

stolid *adj.* having or showing little emotion

*Behind the professor's **stolid** appearance is a fun-loving, gregarious character.*

stratified *adj.* arranged in layers

*One of the implications of an increasingly **stratified** economy for America might be increased social unrest.*

The noun *stratum* means a layer.

*In the English-speaking world many members of the upper classes historically have had a deprecatory attitude toward slang, a form of language they regard as indecorous and thus suitable only for the lowest **stratum** of society.*

The plural of *stratum* is *strata*.

*As it matured as a science, geology began to complement biology, a process that helped it to gain a more comprehensive view of the history of life on Earth by allowing fossils to be dated and identified (paleontology), often using knowledge gained from stratigraphy—the study of the deposition, distribution, and age of rock **strata**.*

The noun *stratification* is used in the sociological term *social stratification*. It refers to the hierarchical arrangement of individuals in a society into classes or castes.

striated *adj.* marked with thin, narrow grooves or channels

*The **striated** surface suggested to the geologist that he was walking over an area in which there once had been a torrent of water.*

Striation is the noun.

*The geologist examined **striations** in the rock to learn about the glacier that had made them 10,000 years ago.*

stricture n. something that restrains; negative criticism

*As professionals, lawyers are expected to abide by a set of ethical **strictures** in their practice of the law.*

strident *adj.* loud; harsh; unpleasantly noisy

*Calls for the prime minister's resignation became more **strident** after it was discovered that he had strong connections to organized crime.*

UNIT 72

strut v. to swagger; display to impress others

*The star quarterback **strutted** around campus the entire week after he led his team to a 42-0 win over the county's top-ranked team.*

stultify u. to impair or reduce to uselessness

*The professor of education believes that overreliance on rote learning **stultifies** students' creativity.*

stupefy v. to dull the senses of; stun; astonish

*After drinking three glasses of wine, Linda was **stupefied**.*

Stygian adj. dark and gloomy; hellish

*Wilfred Owens's famous poem "Dulce Et Decorum Est" describes an unfortunate soldier who was unable to get his gas mask on in time, seen through the **Stygian** gloom of poison gas:
GAS! Gas! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of Jumbling,
Pitting the clumsy helmets just in time:
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling
And floundering like a man in fire or lime.—
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.*

subpoena n. notice ordering someone to appear in court

*The judge issued a **subpoena** for the man but the prosecutor had little hope that he would appear because he was living abroad.*

subside v. to settle down; grow quiet

*Army personnel told the civilians to wait for the violence to **subside** before reentering the town.*

substantiate v. to support with proof or evidence

*The validity of fossil identification is **substantiated** by data from geology and carbon-14 dating.*

substantive adj. essential; pertaining to the substance

*The judge cautioned the attorney to present only information that was **substantive** to the case at hand.*

subsume v. to include; incorporate

*The philosopher described his work as an attempt to arrive at a final generalization that will **subsume** all previous generalizations about the nature of logic.*

subversive adj. intended to undermine or overthrow, especially an established government

Anything that subverts the market mechanism is believed to cause anomalies in prices, making the economy less efficient.

Subversive is also a noun meaning a person intending to undermine something.

UNIT 73

succor *n.* relief; help in time of distress or want

*The woman was accused of providing **succor** to the enemy in the form of food and medical help.*

suffrage *n.* the right to vote

*The pivotal feminist goal of **suffrage** was not obtained in the United States until 1920, and in Britain not until 1928.*

sundry *adj.* various

*The main character in the novel returns home safely after his **sundry** adventures.*

supersede *v.* to replace, especially to displace as inferior or antiquated

*Malay was the lingua franca of the Malay peninsula for centuries, but in many parts of that region it is being **superseded** in that role by a European interloper, English.*

supine *adj.* lying on the back; marked by lethargy

*The captured robbery suspects were held **supine** on the floor.*

supplant *v.* to replace; substitute

*The "Frankenstein monster" fear of some people is that AI machines will eventually **supplant** biological life forms, making such life redundant or even subservient.*

suppliant *adj.* beseeching

*The worshippers raised their **suppliant** voices to God, praying for forgiveness.*

suppliant *n.* one who asks humbly and earnestly

*The mother of the man sentenced to be executed appeared as a **suppliant** before the governor, asking him to grant her son clemency.*

supposition *n.* the act of assuming to be true or real

*Science proceeds on the **supposition** that knowledge is possible.*

syllogism *n.* a form of deductive reasoning that has a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion

*The following **syllogism** is often taught in logic courses: "ARXs are Ys, all Ys are Zs; therefore, all Xs are Zs,"*

UNIT74

sylvan *adj.* related to the woods or forest

*The house's **sylvan** setting provides the family with beauty and tranquility.*

tacit *adj.* silently understood; implied

*During the Cold War, there was a **tacit** assumption on the part of both the Soviet Union and the United States that neither side would launch an unprovoked nuclear attack against the other side.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Cold War: the ideological, geopolitical, and economic conflict between capitalist nations (led by the United States) and communist nations (led by the Soviet Union) from around 1947 to 1991

talisman *n.* charm to bring good luck and avert misfortune

*The soldier's mother gave him a **talisman** to protect him from harm during battle.*

tangential *adj.* peripheral; digressing

*The judge ruled that the evidence had only a **tangential** bearing on the case and directed the lawyer to present only a brief summary of it.*

tautology *n.* unnecessary repetition

*Unless the phrase "repeat again" is being used to refer to something that has occurred more than twice, it is a **tautology**.*

taxonomy *n.* science of classification; in biology, the process of classifying organisms in categories

*In the late seventeenth century and the eighteenth century accurate observation of organisms developed, leading to the development of the sciences of **taxonomy** and morphology (the study of the form and structure of organisms.)*

tenet *n.* belief; doctrine

*In his novel Walden II, the psychologist B. F. Skinner depicts a brave new world based on the **tenets** of a behavioral psychology that frees human beings from the inhibitions and preconceptions of traditional society.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

behavioral psychology: the school of psychology that seeks to explain behavior entirely in terms of observable responses to environmental stimuli

tenuous *adj.* weak; insubstantial

*Study of the historical evidence has shown that there is only a **tenuous** connection*

between the country Plato describes in The Republic and the legendary land of Atlantis.

terrestrial *adj.* earthly; commonplace

*Much of our information about Mars comes from the Mariner 9 spacecraft, which orbited the planet in 1971; Mariner 9, photographing 100% of the planet, uncovered many spectacular geological formations, including a vast Martian canyon that dwarfs the **terrestrial** Grand Canyon.*

theocracy *n.* government by priests representing a god

*All Islamic fundamentalists are opposed to secularism, and some of them support **theocracy**.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

secularism: a political movement that advocates making society less religious

Secularization is a process by which society gradually changes from close identification with the institutions of religion to a greater separation of religion from the rest of social life.

UNIT 75

thespian *n.* an actor or actress

*Every year the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland gives **thespians** from around the world the opportunity to perform before a diverse audience.*

timbre *n.* the characteristic quality of sound produced by a particular instrument or voice; tone color

*The audience was delighted by the rich **timbre** of the singer's*

soprano.

tirade *n.* long, violent speech; verbal assault

The students had no choice but to sit and wait for the principal's tirade about poor discipline to end.

toady *n.* flatterer; hanger-on; yes-man

*The boss had no respect for the employee because he considered him a **toady** who would do anything he said.*

tome *n.* book, usually large and academic

*Despite being an abridged edition of the 20-volume Oxford English Dictionary, the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary consists of two **tom**s that define over half a million words.*

torpor *n.* lethargy; dormancy; sluggishness

*After returning home from his coast-to-coast trip, the truck driver sank into a peaceful **torpor**, watching TV and dozing.*

torque *n.* a turning or twisting force; the moment of a force; the measure of a force's

tendency to produce twisting or turning and rotation around an axis

*Internal combustion engines produce useful **torque** over a rather circumscribed range of rotational speeds (normally from about 1,000 rpm to 6,000 rpm)*

tortuous *adj.* having many twists and turns; highly complex

*Only the world's leading mathematicians are able to follow the **tortuous** line of reasoning used by the English mathematician Andrew Wiles to prove Fermat's Last Theorem via the Taniyama-Shimura conjecture.*

tout *v.* to promote or praise energetically

*The critic **touted** Moby Dick as the greatest book in American literature.*

tractable *adj.* obedient; yielding

*The country's leader found that the people became more **tractable** when he made them believe there was a great threat facing them that only he could overcome.*

UNIT 76

transgression *n.* act of trespassing or violating a law or rule

*The teacher made it clear on the first day of the term that she would not countenance any **transgression** of classroom rules.*

The verb is *transgress*.

*Western medicine **transgressed** Hippocrates' prescriptions for medicine when doctors debilitated patients through the administration of purges and bloodletting.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

Hippocrates: ancient Greek physician who is often called "the father of medicine." He believed that medicine should stress prevention rather than cure of illness and that a regimen of a good diet and a sensible lifestyle is healthy, building a person's ability to withstand disease.

transient *adj.* temporary; short-lived; fleeting

*A hypothesis to explain the fact that American states in which the population is composed of a large number of recently settled people (California, for example) tend to have high rates of crime, suicide, divorce, and other social problems is that anomie is higher in **transient** populations than in more stable populations, resulting in more antisocial behavior.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

anomie: a social condition marked by a breakdown of social norms

translucent *adj.* partially transparent

The architect decided to install a **translucent** door in the room to allow outside light to shine in.

travail *n.* work, especially arduous work; tribulation; anguish
*America's early pioneers endured great **travail**, but persevered and eventually settled much of the vast continent.*

Travail is also a verb meaning to work strenuously.

travesty *n.* parody; exaggerated imitation; caricature
*The playwright complained that the musical comedy version of his play was a **travesty** of his work.*

treatise *n.* article treating a subject systematically and thoroughly
*The thesis of the philosopher's **treatise** is that reality is, ultimately, opaque to human understanding.*

tremulous *adj.* trembling; quivering; frugal; timid
*One of the most famous poems in English literature is Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach" in which the speaker listens to the "**tremulous** cadence slow" of waves on the shore.*

trepidation *n.* fear and anxiety
*John tried to hide his **trepidation** when he proposed to Susie, the girl he loved.*

truculence *n.* aggressiveness; ferocity
*The principal warned the student that his **truculence** might one day land him in jail.*

tryst *n.* agreement between lovers to meet; rendezvous
*In his novel The Mayor of Casterbridge, Thomas Hardy describes an ancient Roman amphitheater where lovers often arranged secret **trysts**.*

UNIT 77

tumid *adj.* swollen; distended
*The prose of writers discussing lofty subjects sometimes becomes **tumid**.*

turbid *adj.* muddy; opaque; in a state of great confusion
*The poem captures the restless and **turbid** state of the soldier's mind the night before the decisive battle was set to begin.*

turgid *adj.* swollen; bloated; pompous
*The professor's editor advised him to change his writing style so that it was less pedantic and **turgid** if he wanted to appeal to a mass audience.*

tutelary *adj.* serving as a guardian or protector

*Most of the people of ancient Rome believed in the existence of **tutelary** spirits.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

tutelary spirits: gods who are guardians of a particular area or person

uncanny *adj.* mysterious; strange

*Some people believe that the psychic has an **uncanny** ability to accurately predict the future.*

undulating *adj.* moving in waves

*The **undulating** terrain of the area has made it difficult for engineers to build roads there.*

unfeigned *adj.* not false; not made up; genuine

*The child smiled in **unfeigned** delight when she opened the Christmas present*

untenable *adj.* indefensible

*Skeptics are inclined to regard arguments for God's existence from design as meaningless, since they rely on a logically **untenable** position that assumes the conclusion of their argument—God's existence.*

Terms from the Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences

design: The argument from design is a philosophical argument for God's existence stating that God must exist because the universe is too complex to have been created any other way.

untoward *adj.* not favorable; troublesome; adverse; unruly

*Police were called in to investigate whether anything **untoward** had happened to the missing man.*

usury *n.* practice of lending money at exorbitant rates

*In the 1980s, Delaware Governor Pierre S. Du Pont succeeded in having the state's **usury** laws liberalized, with the result that many large New York banks set up subsidiaries in Delaware.*

The adjective is *usurious*.

*The consumer advocate's group complained about the bank's **usurious** interest rates.*

UNIT 78

vacillate *v.* to waver; oscillate

*The senator's position keeps **vacillating** between remaining neutral and lending his*

support to the proposal.

vacuous *adj.* empty; void; lacking intelligence; purposeless

*In Jane Austen's novel Pride and Prejudice, the youngest of the five Bennett daughters, Lydia, is portrayed as a **vacuous** young woman with few interests other than having fun.*

valedictory *adj.* pertaining to a farewell

*The 80-year-old actor came out of retirement to give a **valedictory** performance on Broadway.*

vapid *adj.* tasteless; dull

*To relax in the evening the judge likes to watch **vapid** situation comedies on TV.*

variegated *adj.* varied; marked with different colors

*Botanists are still working to catalog the **variegated** species of the tropical rainforest.*

vaunt *v.* to boast; brag

*The head coach warned her players not to **vaunt** their undefeated record.*

Vaunted is an adjective meaning boasted about.

*Since every human activity depends on the integrity and proper functioning of the biological system, its destruction through pollution would cause our **vaunted** technological and economic systems to founder.*

venal *adj.* bribable; mercenary; corruptible

*The depressing though inescapable conclusion the journalist reached is that the mayor went into politics for motives that were almost entirely **venal**.*

vendetta *n.* prolonged feud marked by bitter hostility

*The judge warned both families that the **vendetta** between them had to end at once.*

venerate *v.* to adore; honor; respect

*Mother Theresa is **venerated** for her compassion for the poor people of India.*

Venerable is an adjective meaning respected because of age, character, or position.

*In the plain-language edition of the **venerable** Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy the original definition of a hangnail—"Acute or chronic inflammation of the periungual tissues"—is transmogrified into "An infection around the edge of a fingernail or toenail."*

veracious *adj.* truthful; accurate

*The witness' testimony appeared to be **veracious** at first, but under cross-examination, several inconsistencies appeared.*

UNIT 79

verbose *adj.* wordy

*The skillful editor cut 20% of the words from the **verbose** manuscript without appreciably altering its meaning.*

vertigo n. dizziness

*The physician diagnosed the patient's **vertigo** as being caused by an acute anxiety attack.*

vexation n. irritation; annoyance; confusion; puzzlement

*Some people have the ability to prosper and live happily despite life's inevitable **vexations**.*

viable adj. practicable; capable of developing

*Since the early 1950s, government planners have faced a dilemma: Spend a great deal of money to keep cities **viable** by rebuilding decrepit infrastructure, or allow them to decay.*

The noun is *viability*.

*According to the historian Arnold Toynbee, there is a strong relationship between a society's view of itself relative to other societies and its continued **viability**.*

vindictive adj. spiteful; vengeful; unforgiving

*The Treaty of Versailles, which concluded World War I, was deliberately **vindictive**, imposing tremendous penalties on the defeated nation.*

virtuoso n. someone with masterly skills; expert musician

*The British guitar **virtuoso** John Williams has entertained thousands of people during his long career.*

Virtuoso is also the adjective.

*Raymond is a **virtuoso** pianist.*

visage n. countenance; appearance; aspect

*The infant studied its mother's **visage** intently.*

viscous adj. thick, syrupy, and sticky

*The maple syrup is so **viscous** we had trouble pouring it.*

vitiate v. to impair the quality of; corrupt morally; make inoperative

*Unfortunately, one error in the study's methodology **vitiates** the entire body of work.*

Vituperative_ adj.- using or containing harsh, abusive censure

*The young music critic's **vituperative** comments aroused the wrath of nearly every serious composer.*

The verb is *vituperate*.

UNIT 80

vivisection n. dissection, surgery, or painful experiments performed on a living animal for the purpose of scientific research

*The book *Animal Rights* by the philosopher Tom Regan contains a long discussion of*

vivisection.

vogue n. prevailing fashion or practice

*Although protectionist policies are not in **vogue** today, great capitalist democracies, such as Great Britain and the United States, flourished for long periods of their histories under protectionist trade policies that were nearly mercantilist—policies that imposed high tariffs on many foreign goods to promote domestic production.*

volatile adj. tending to vary frequently; fickle

Volatility is the noun.

*Some contemporary economists believe that advances in the understanding of the business cycle virtually preclude a recurrence of the crash of 1929, because governments can take steps to forestall depression. However, others worry that new factors are developing that are, to a significant extent, beyond the control of governments: notably, the ability of investors to quickly switch capital into and out of markets, a situation that could lead to **volatility** in prices and destabilize markets.*

vortex n. whirlpool; whirlwind; center of turbulence

*Inexorably, the country was drawn into the **vortex** of war.*

warranted adj. justified

*The book argues that a new investigation into Marilyn Monroe's death is **warranted** by new evidence released by the FBI under the Freedom of Information Act.*

Warrant is a verb meaning to attest to the accuracy or quality; justify; grant authorization

*Throughout most of America, procedures in criminal law cases are essentially the same: The government, through a prosecutor, presents its case against a suspect to a grand jury, which decides if there is sufficient evidence to **warrant** a full trial.*

wary adj. careful; cautious

*According to psychologists, human beings are naturally **wary** of strangers.*

welter v. to wallow or roll; toss about; be in turmoil *The pigs **weltered** about happily in the mud.*

whimsical adj. fanciful; unpredictable

*Many children appreciate Dr. Seuss' **whimsical** stories.*

The noun *whimsy* means a playful or fanciful idea.

*Despite its rigorous and systematic methodology, there is still considerable room in science for imagination and even **whimsy**.*

wistful adj. vaguely longing; sadly thoughtful

*The poem casts a **wistful** look back at a way of life that has vanished forever.*

zealot n. one who is fanatically devoted to a cause

*The Crusades of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries were conceived of by Christian **zealots** as a way to drive the Islamic interlopers from the Holy Land.*

Zealotry is a noun meaning fanaticism.

*The fact that the judicial branch is relatively undemocratic compared to the other two branches of government is justified by some theorists of democracy on the grounds that it serves as a check not only on the legislative branch and executive branch, but also on democratic **zealotry**.*

The adjective *zealous* means enthusiastically devoted to a cause.

*It is heretical to suggest to a **zealous** capitalist that free enterprise is not the only conceivable realistic economic system*

