


**Definitions**

Note carefully the spelling, pronunciation, part(s) of speech, and definition(s) of each of the following words. Then write the word in the blank space(s) in the illustrative sentence(s) following. Finally, study the lists of synonyms and antonyms given at the end of each entry.

**1. adept**

(*adj.*, ə dept';  
*n.*, a' dept)

(*adj.*) thoroughly skilled; (*n.*) an expert

Not only is the soloist an accomplished singer, but he is also \_\_\_\_\_ at playing the saxophone.

An \_\_\_\_\_ at chess, she hopes to compete in tournaments against top-rated players.

SYNONYMS: (*adj.*) masterful, accomplished, proficient

ANTONYMS: (*adj.*) clumsy, unskilled, maladroit; (*n.*) novice

**2. aspire**

(ə spīr')

(*v.*) to have ambitious hopes or plans, strive toward a higher goal, desire earnestly; to ascend

An early fascination with ants led the young naturalist to \_\_\_\_\_ to a career as an entomologist.

SYNONYMS: seek, yearn, aim for, soar

**3. bleak**

(blēk)

(*adj.*) bare, dreary, dismal

Urban renewal can turn a run-down city with \_\_\_\_\_ economic prospects into a flourishing metropolis.

SYNONYMS: grim, cheerless, gloomy, desolate, barren

ANTONYMS: rosy, cheerful, sunny, promising, encouraging

**4. chide**

(chīd)

(*v.*) to blame; scold

The teacher \_\_\_\_\_ the student for truancy and tardiness.

SYNONYMS: upbraid, reprimand, rebuke, chastise

ANTONYMS: approve, praise, compliment, pat on the back

**5. despicable**

(dī spik' ə bəl)

(*adj.*) worthy of scorn, contemptible

Whatever the provocation, there is no justification for such \_\_\_\_\_ behavior.

SYNONYMS: low, vile, cheap, sordid, detestable

ANTONYMS: praiseworthy, commendable, meritorious

**6. diminutive**

(də min' yə tiv)

(*adj.*) small, smaller than most others of the same type

The \_\_\_\_\_ lapdog was so small that it actually fit in its owner's purse.

SYNONYMS: undersized, miniature, tiny, compact

ANTONYMS: oversized, gigantic, huge, enormous

**7. emancipate**  
(ē man' sə pāt)

(v.) to free from slavery; to release or liberate

Scientific knowledge can \_\_\_\_\_  
humanity from blind superstition.

SYNONYMS: set loose, unchain, unshackle, unfetter  
ANTONYMS: enslave, snare, chain, shackle

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**8. erroneous**  
(e rō' nē əs)

(adj.) incorrect, containing mistakes

An \_\_\_\_\_ first impression is not  
easily corrected.

SYNONYMS: mistaken, fallacious, all wrong  
ANTONYMS: accurate, correct, exact, unerring

15.

**9. exploit**  
(v., ek sploit';  
n., ek' sploit)

(v.) to make use of, develop; to make improper use of for  
personal profit; (n.) a feat, deed

A good debater knows how to \_\_\_\_\_  
weaknesses in an opponent's argument.

The \_\_\_\_\_ of Robin Hood and his  
Merry Men are so well known that they have become a part  
of Western culture.

SYNONYMS: (v.) utilize, turn to advantage, misuse

16.

17.

**10. extemporaneous**  
(ek stem pə rā' nē əs)

(adj.) made or delivered on the spur of the moment

The stand-up comedian's outrageous act included about  
twenty minutes of completely \_\_\_\_\_  
banter.

SYNONYMS: spontaneous, impromptu, off-the-cuff  
ANTONYMS: planned, rehearsed, prepared

18.

**11. impair**  
(im pâr')

(v.) to make imperfect, damage, harm

I am fortunate that the scratch on my eye will not  
permanently \_\_\_\_\_ my vision.

SYNONYMS: injure, mar, disable, cripple, enervate  
ANTONYMS: improve, strengthen, promote, advance

19.

**12. invincible**  
(in vin' sə bəl)

(adj.) not able to be defeated, unbeatable

Napoleon I, emperor of France, was \_\_\_\_\_  
until he launched a disastrous invasion of Russia.

SYNONYMS: unconquerable, indomitable, insuperable  
ANTONYMS: vulnerable, conquerable, surmountable

20.

**13. languid**  
(lan' gwid)

(adj.) drooping; without energy, sluggish

A big lunch makes me feel \_\_\_\_\_  
for the rest of the day.

SYNONYMS: lazy, sluggish, listless, slack, lethargic  
ANTONYMS: lively, energetic, vigorous, enlivening

**14. mire**  
(mīr)

(*n.*) mud; wet, swampy ground; a tough situation; (*v.*) to get stuck

The once verdant expanse of the soccer field has become a rectangle of muck and \_\_\_\_\_.

Congress will never ratify that bill \_\_\_\_\_ in controversy.

SYNONYMS: (*n.*) marsh, swamp, bog, slough

**15. obtrusive**  
(əb trü' siv)

(*adj.*) forward; undesirably prominent; thrust out

I don't blame you for being put off by his \_\_\_\_\_ attempt to dominate the conversation.

SYNONYMS: brash, impudent, conspicuous, protruding

ANTONYMS: meek, reserved, deferential, recessed

**16. preamble**  
(prē' am bəl)

(*n.*) an introduction to a speech or piece of writing

The \_\_\_\_\_ to the Constitution describes the purpose of our national government.

SYNONYMS: opening, preface, prologue, preliminary

ANTONYMS: conclusion, ending, closing, epilogue

**17. render**  
(ren' dər)

(*v.*) to cause to become; to perform; to deliver officially; to process, extract

The freelance writer presented the managing editor with a bill for services \_\_\_\_\_.

SYNONYMS: present, furnish, submit, make, effect

**18. rugged**  
(rəg' əd)

(*adj.*) rough, irregular; severe, stern; strong; stormy

Settlers had a rough time crossing the \_\_\_\_\_ Appalachian Mountains.

SYNONYMS: rocky, craggy, blunt, harsh, hardy, tough

ANTONYMS: smooth, flat, soft, mild, tender, delicate

**19. skeptical**  
(skep' tə kəl)

(*adj.*) inclined to doubt; slow to accept something as true

I am \_\_\_\_\_ of promises made by politicians when they are running for office.

SYNONYMS: dubious, suspicious, incredulous

ANTONYMS: believing, credulous, gullible, ingenuous

**20. slipshod**  
(slip' shəd)

(*adj.*) untidy in dress, personal habits, etc.; careless, sloppy

The commission attributed the unfortunate collapse of the apartment building to its \_\_\_\_\_ construction.

SYNONYMS: messy, untidy, slovenly, slapdash, cursory

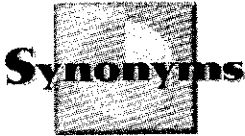
ANTONYMS: tidy, neat, orderly, careful, painstaking

# Completing the Sentence

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

1. I understand math very well, but, according to my teacher, my performance in class is, at best, \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Why do you take it on yourself to \_\_\_\_\_ me whenever I say or do anything even slightly out of line?
3. The many inconsistencies in the suspect's story made the police highly \_\_\_\_\_ of his alibi.
4. The Welsh mining village, with its rows of drab cottages, seemed terribly \_\_\_\_\_ and uninviting in the cold autumn rain.
5. It is better to openly admit ignorance than to give \_\_\_\_\_ information.
6. The warmth of the June sun made me feel so \_\_\_\_\_ that I scarcely had the energy to brush away the flies.
7. To improve their standard of living, the people of an underdeveloped country must learn to \_\_\_\_\_ the resources of their land.
8. The \_\_\_\_\_ but powerful halfback from Syracuse was one of the lightest men ever to play professional football.
9. How can you \_\_\_\_\_ to work in the space program when you haven't even been able to pass your science and math courses?
10. Since it had rained heavily all night, the newly plowed fields were by now an almost impassable \_\_\_\_\_.
11. We learned that the matchless discipline and superior leadership of the Roman legions made them all but \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Poor diet, lack of exercise, and insufficient rest have done a great deal to \_\_\_\_\_ my health.
13. Marching over the \_\_\_\_\_ terrain under a broiling sun, we were soon on the verge of exhaustion.
14. The honoree's after-dinner speech was so polished and sure that we never guessed it was \_\_\_\_\_.
15. The master silversmith was extraordinarily \_\_\_\_\_ in the use of simple hand tools.
16. The fiddler \_\_\_\_\_ the fast-paced Virginia reel in a very lively fashion.
17. Against the solemn hush of the memorial service, the boisterous laughter we heard was singularly \_\_\_\_\_.

18. Before we get into the specific details of our proposal, we should write a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ that will explain in general terms what we want to do.
19. The social worker said with great emphasis that anyone who would take advantage of an elderly person is utterly \_\_\_\_\_.
20. There are many millions of people throughout the world still waiting to be \_\_\_\_\_ from the bonds of grinding poverty.



Choose the word from this unit that is **the same** or **most nearly the same** in meaning as the **boldface** word or expression in the given phrase. Write the word on the line provided.

1. a **vile** and cowardly act \_\_\_\_\_
2. wallow like a pig in the **mud** \_\_\_\_\_
3. **dubious** about the chances of winning \_\_\_\_\_
4. **mar** relations between nations \_\_\_\_\_
5. **liberate** a slave from bondage \_\_\_\_\_
6. **seek** higher education \_\_\_\_\_
7. an **accomplished** musician \_\_\_\_\_
8. not just assertive, but **impudent** \_\_\_\_\_
9. **utilize** natural resources \_\_\_\_\_
10. a **slapdash** piece of work \_\_\_\_\_
11. the opening remarks, or **preface** \_\_\_\_\_
12. a **gloomy**, overcast November morning \_\_\_\_\_
13. **reprimand** for misbehavior \_\_\_\_\_
14. **submit** a verdict of not guilty \_\_\_\_\_
15. **harsh** living conditions \_\_\_\_\_



Choose the word from this unit that is **most nearly opposite** in meaning to the **boldface** word or expression in the given phrase. Write the word on the line provided.

16. make an **accurate** assumption \_\_\_\_\_
17. in a **vulnerable** position \_\_\_\_\_
18. **gigantic** in proportion \_\_\_\_\_
19. an **energetic** wave of the hand \_\_\_\_\_
20. deliver a **rehearsed** series of comments \_\_\_\_\_

# Choosing the Right Word

Circle the **boldface** word that more satisfactorily completes each of the following sentences.

1. That monologue about the young accountant on her very first day on the job (**rendered**, **emancipated**) me helpless with laughter.
2. A good scientist will always be (**skeptical**, **despicable**) about any theory that is not backed up by convincing evidence.
3. The goalie's reflexes were as sharp as ever, but the knee injury had plainly (**impaired**, **aspired**) his ability to maneuver.
4. It is worse than useless to (**render**, **chide**) children for misbehaving without giving them an opportunity to behave better.
5. I am not accusing anyone of deliberately lying, but I can prove beyond doubt that the charges are (**rugged**, **erroneous**).
6. When I asked the student why he wasn't going to the Senior Prom, he answered only with a(n) (**bleak**, **obtrusive**) smile.
7. After four years as the President's press secretary, I have become a noted (**adept**, **exploit**) in the art of fielding questions.
8. In Jonathan Swift's fictional country of Lilliput, everyone and everything is pint-sized, or (**diminutive**, **erroneous**).
9. The visitor's huge bulk, combined with his (**extemporaneous**, **languid**) manner, made me think of a tired whale.
10. Passengers could not exit the bus without tripping over the (**invincible**, **obtrusive**) package in the aisle.
11. When we tried to straighten out the mess, we found ourselves (**mired**, **chided**) in a mass of inaccurate, incomplete, and mixed-up records.
12. In the (**slipshod**, **extemporaneous**) give-and-take of a televised debate, it is easy for a nervous nominee to make a slip of the tongue.
13. I could see that the merchant's long, sad story about bad luck was only the (**adept**, **preamble**) to a request for a loan.
14. I would never trust my funds to anyone who is so (**bleak**, **slipshod**) in managing his own affairs.
15. When Emerson said "Hitch your wagon to a star," he meant that we should (**aspire**, **mire**) to reach the very highest levels of which we are capable.
16. Sergeant Alvin York was awarded this nation's highest honor for his many daring (**preambles**, **exploits**) during World War I.
17. The sculptor has done a superb job of representing the strong, rough planes of Lincoln's (**languid**, **rugged**) features.
18. It is up to all of us to (**impair**, **emancipate**) ourselves from prejudices and false ideas acquired early in life.
19. Our basketball team, with its well-planned attack, tight defense, and seven-foot center, proved all but (**invincible**, **skeptical**).
20. Far from admiring the way they got those letters of recommendation, I consider their deception utterly (**diminutive**, **despicable**).

## Vocabulary in Context

Read the following passage, in which some of the words you have studied in this unit appear in **boldface** type. Then complete each statement given below the passage by circling the letter of the item that is **the same** or **almost the same** in meaning as the highlighted word.

### Racing with the Sun

(Line)

Australian Hans Tholstrup once read an article about using a solar-powered, ultralight flying machine to successfully cross the English Channel. This **exploit** inspired the adventurer and solar-energy advocate to build a solar car for himself and to see how far it might take him. In 1982 he drove from west to east across the

- (5) **bleak**, sun-baked Australian outback on solar power alone.

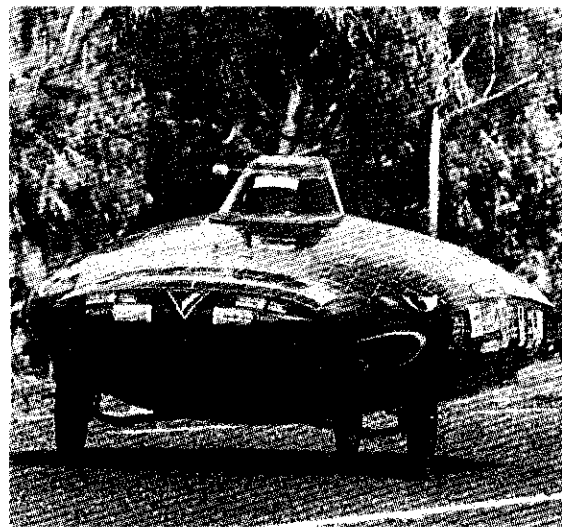
In 1987 Tholstrup instituted the World Solar Challenge (WSC), a race for solar-powered cars. The WSC covers a distance of 1,864 miles (3,000 km) from Darwin in the far north of Australia to Adelaide in the south. The Challenge is "to design a car

- (10) capable of crossing the vast Australian continent, but with only daylight as fuel." The ultimate purpose is to interest highly **adept** engineers and designers into harnessing solar energy.

- (15) Each solar-powered car in the WSC has its own solar panel, not larger than 1.6 square meters. Batteries store the generated electricity. With a charge little more than that required to run a hair dryer, the beautifully
- (20) streamlined cars glide across **rugged** terrain for four or five pressure-packed days, stopping each evening to camp by the roadside in the Australian desert.

The participants in the WSC are diverse.

- (25) Team members come from universities and corporations all over the world, each **aspiring** to win the prize. Large, well-funded motor corporations, once **skeptical** of solar power, are now formidable foes. In scrambling to keep up, smaller school teams and individuals often display great ingenuity in building light, efficient cars. Everyone's contribution counts in the larger race to develop
- (30) cheap and effective ways to use the sun's power.



An odd-looking car tools along an Australian highway in the World Solar Challenge race.

- |                                              |                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 1. The meaning of <b>exploit</b> (line 2) is | 4. The meaning of <b>rugged</b> (line 20) is     |
| a. tactic                                    | a. smooth                                        |
| b. misuse                                    | b. rough                                         |
| c. deed                                      | c. unconquerable                                 |
| d. contract                                  | d. masterful                                     |
| 2. <b>Bleak</b> (line 5) most nearly means   | 5. <b>Aspiring</b> (line 26) most nearly means   |
| a. grimy                                     | a. pondering                                     |
| b. lush                                      | b. striving                                      |
| c. desolate                                  | c. needing                                       |
| d. rosy                                      | d. flying                                        |
| 3. <b>Adept</b> (line 12) is best defined as | 6. <b>Skeptical</b> (line 27) is best defined as |
| a. proficient                                | a. complimentary                                 |
| b. bright                                    | b. logical                                       |
| c. maladroit                                 | c. opposed                                       |
| d. energetic                                 | d. suspicious                                    |