

Lesson 15 OK

Word List

Study the definitions of the words below; then do the exercises for the lesson.

complement
kəm'pləmənt

- n.* 1. Something that completes or makes perfect.
Candles will be the perfect **complement** for an elegant dinner.
2. The number or amount that makes up a whole.
The shelf has a full **complement** of books.
v. To bring to completion or perfection.
These CDs of Joan Baez in concert will **complement** my collection of folk music.

component
kəm'pōnənt

- n.* Any of the more important parts of a whole.
The picture tube is the main **component** of a television set.
adj. Contributing to form a whole.
A tape deck and a CD player are two of the **component** parts of a complete stereo system.

conjure
kən'jər

- v.* 1. To call forth by magic, or as if by magic.
Shakespeare's Hotspur claims that he can **conjure** spirits.
2. (with *up*) To bring to mind; to recall or evoke.
The aroma of baking bread **conjures** up memories of my childhood.

emphasize
em'fəsaɪz

- v.* To give special attention to; to stress.
The teacher **emphasized** that homework must be turned in on time.
emphasis *n.* (em'fəsis) Special attention directed at something to give it importance.
The course covers the period 1845–1860 with **emphasis** on the causes of the Civil War.
emphatic *adj.* (em'fat'ik) Said or done with force.
When asked when she planned to retire, her answer was an **emphatic** "Never!"

homage
hə'mɑːʒ

- n.* Honor or respect shown publicly.
On Veteran's Day, we pay **homage** to those who gave their lives for their country.

impromptu
im'prɒmp'tu

- adj.* Unplanned.
She gave a charming **impromptu** speech when called upon by the host.
adv. Without preparation.
This speech course teaches students to speak **impromptu**.

lush
lʊʃ

- adj.* Marked by richness of growth, especially of vegetation.
Arid volcanic terrain contrasts sharply with **lush** mountains on the island's opposite side.

medley
med'li

- n.* 1. A mixture of often unrelated things.
On the yard sale's bargain table was a **medley** of objects priced at under a dollar.
2. A selection of music from various sources, played as one piece.
The concert ended with a **medley** of patriotic tunes.

oblige
ə'blɪʒ

- v.* 1. To require someone to do something for legal, social, or moral reasons.
Joining the book club **obliges** you to buy four selections over the year.
2. To earn the gratitude of.
You will **oblige** me by saying no more about this matter.
3. To do a favor for.
We begged Miss Streisand to **oblige** us with one final song.

pretentious
prē ten' shəs

adj. Drawing undeserved or inappropriate attention to oneself; showy.

Was it **pretentious** of John Hancock to sign his name so conspicuously to the Declaration of Independence?

prowess
prou' əs

n. Great skill or ability.

The political **prowess** of Golda Meir made her an outstanding world leader.

rustic
rus' tik

adj. 1. Of or relating to country life or people.

The pictures of grazing cows gave a certain **rustic** charm to the room.

2. Lacking elegance or polish.

A **rustic** cabin of rough-hewn logs was our home for the summer.

n. A country person, especially one thought of as simple or crude.

Shakespeare's **rustics** provide much of the humor in his comedies.

subtle
sut' l

adj. 1. So slight as to be not easily seen or understood.

Jeff's **subtle** hints that he wanted a skateboard for his birthday went unnoticed by his parents.

2. Able to understand fine shades of meaning.

Corinne's **subtle** mind immediately saw a way to make the plan work.

subtlety *n.* Something so slight that only a clever or well-educated person can see it; the quality of being subtle.

The professor pointed out the **subtlety** of the poet's message in her later works.

vocation
vō kā' shən

n. A person's employment; occupation.

Carpentry started out as my hobby but soon became my **vocation**.

vocational *adj.* Having to do with a person's career.

I learned my trade at the county **vocational** school.

warble
wōr' bəl

v. To sing in a melodious manner.

Somewhere in the gathering darkness, a nightingale began to **warble**.

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15A Finding Meanings

Choose two phrases to form a sentence that correctly uses a word from Word List 15. Write each sentence in the space provided.

1. (a) To emphasize something is to
(b) To warble something is to

- (c) deny it ever happened.
(d) stress its importance.

2. (a) A subtle element is
(b) A component element is

- (c) one that contributes to making up a whole.
(d) one that can be easily replaced.

3. (a) sing it.
(b) praise it.

- (c) To complement something is to
(d) To warble something is to

4. (a) a state of doubt or uncertainty. (c) Homage is
(b) Prowess is (d) honor paid in public.
5. (a) deals with career planning. (c) A pretentious guide
(b) A vocational guide (d) deals with low-cost travel.
6. (a) that draws undue attention to itself. (c) A rustic sign is one
(b) that is in need of repair. (d) A pretentious sign is one
7. (a) make light of it. (c) To complement something is to
(b) bring it to completion. (d) To conjure up something is to
8. (a) A lush garden is one (c) that is open to the public.
(b) A rustic garden is one (d) with a rich growth of vegetation.
9. (a) to do that person a favor. (c) To conjure up someone is
(b) make that person disappear. (d) To oblige someone is
10. (a) An impromptu change (c) is one that is very slight.
(b) A subtle change (d) is one that is unavoidable.

15B Just the Right Word

Improve each of the following sentences by crossing out the bold phrase and replacing it with a word (or a form of the word) from Word List 15.

- Edith Wharton's novels are noted for their **fine qualities that may not be immediately obvious to the casual reader**.
- This lace tablecloth is a perfect **finishing touch** to your fine china and silverware.
- Pelé's **great skill** with a soccer ball made him a legendary figure.
- Although he may look like a **simple country person**, my neighbor is a very astute businessperson.

5. Your mentioning lobsters **makes me think back and brings** up memories of that summer we spent in Maine.
6. In both our beginners' and advanced SCUBA diving courses, the **most important lesson that is taught** is on safety.
7. If you sign the application, you are **left with no choice and will be forced** to accept the offer.
8. The orchestra opened the concert with a **wide-ranging selection** of Broadway show tunes.
9. Politicians must be able to speak **without any preparation and without notes** on just about any subject.
10. Gardening was both her **chosen profession** and her hobby.

15C Applying Meanings

Circle the letter of each correct answer to the questions below. Questions may have more than one correct answer.

complement
component
conjure
emphasize
homage
impromptu
lush
medley
oblige
pretentious
prowess
rustic
subtle
vocation
warble

1. Which of the following might be a **vocation**?

(a) teaching	(c) napping
(b) nursing	(d) flying
2. Which of the following would be a full **complement**?

(a) twelve eggs in a carton	(c) seven baseball players
(b) twenty-four checkers pieces	(d) fifty-two playing cards
3. Which of the following can be **conjured** up?

(a) a fond memory	(c) a past event
(b) a piece of music	(d) a line of poetry
4. To which of the following might we pay **homage**?

(a) an intrepid war hero	(c) a famous movie star
(b) a great writer	(d) a former president
5. Which of the following is a **rustic** scene?

(a) a Vermont covered bridge	(c) a New Hampshire lake
(b) a Florida citrus grove	(d) a New York skyscraper

6. Which of the following might be **subtle**?
- (a) a suggestion (c) a shift of mood
(b) a line of poetry (d) a circus clown
7. Which of the following might **oblige** a person?
- (a) making a promise (c) borrowing money
(b) accepting an offer (d) repaying a loan
8. Which of the following might be **lush**?
- (a) a meadow (c) a valley
(b) a tropical rain forest (d) a desert

15D Word Study

Complete the analogies by selecting the pair of words whose relationship most resembles the relationship of the pair in capital letters. Circle the letter in front of the pair you choose.

1. SKILL : PROWESS ::
- (a) consternation : fear (c) orbit : planet
(b) fire : smoke (d) journey : destination
2. WARBLE : SONG ::
- (a) applaud : discovery (c) invite : audience
(b) receive : gift (d) recite : poem
3. ZESTFUL : ENTHUSIASM ::
- (a) menial : work (c) negligent : vigilance
(b) acrid : smoke (d) blithe : joy
4. STRAITS : HELP ::
- (a) sphere : shape (c) tedium : excitement
(b) citrus : fruit (d) throng : congestion
5. ENDORSE : DISAPPROVE ::
- (a) initiate : begin (c) placate : gratify
(b) bestow : take (d) smolder : burn
6. ABYSS : DITCH ::
- (a) sea : land (c) mountain : hill
(b) hole : open (d) wound : doctor

7. ENLIGHTENED : IGNORANT ::

- (a) industrious : lazy
 (b) watchful : vigilant
 (c) precise : exact
 (d) irate : angry

8. VOCATIONAL : CAREER ::

- (a) aquatic : water
 (b) commit : crime
 (c) steal : bestow
 (d) borrow : money

9. MENAGERIE : ANIMALS ::

- (a) sky : clouds
 (b) theater : audience
 (c) ocean : ships
 (d) garden : plants

10. PLAUSIBLE : BELIEVABLE ::

- (a) stringent : strict
 (b) pretentious : humble
 (c) scrupulous : lax
 (d) preposterous : laughable

15E Passage

Read the passage below; then complete the exercise that follows.

Bluegrass

To horse lovers, the word *bluegrass* **conjures** up a picture of Kentucky's **lush** blue-green pastures, home of champion racehorses; but to lovers of country music, bluegrass is the lively sound of fiddles, banjos, mandolins, and guitars playing together in rapid foot-stompin', hand-clappin' harmony. Its roots go back many years to the Scottish and Irish immigrants who settled in the Appalachian region and brought their traditional tunes and songs with them. In the days before television, movies, and radio, families were **obliged** to supply their own entertainment, and anyone who could scrape a tune from a fiddle or **warble** a song would be invited to join in.

After the Civil War, newly freed Black slaves found work in Appalachia as coal miners, loggers, and railroad construction workers. They mixed freely with the whites and joined in their music, bringing to it the "banjar," an African four-stringed instrument made from a hollowed gourd with a neck attached. Its twanging sound **complemented** the traditional fiddle so well that over time it was developed into the modern banjo. By the end of the nineteenth century, the guitar had been added, brought to Appalachia by city musicians traveling in bands through the region. All the **components** of bluegrass music were now in place, and its distinctive sound was beginning to emerge, although it did not yet have a name.

At first, the music coming out of Appalachia was ignored by most Americans who criticized its lack of **subtlety** and thought of it as music that would appeal only to **rustics**. This impression was often created by the musicians themselves, who enjoyed combining slapstick comedy with their musical **medleys**. The coming of radio in the 1920s put more **emphasis** on the music itself and brought it a wider audience and more general acceptance. Together with recorded music, radio offered greater commercial opportunities to musicians who were no longer content to play the fiddle or the guitar merely as a hobby. More and more began to make music their **vocation**. Among them was Bill Monroe, who was born in western Kentucky in 1911 and showed his **proWess** with the mandolin at an early age. In 1938, he formed a band and named it after the nickname of his native state—the Blue Grass Boys. Over the years that followed, the name of Monroe's band lent itself to the distinctive sound he had created.

complement
 component
 conjure
 emphasize
 homage
 impromptu
 lush
 medley
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 pretentious
 prowess
 rustic
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 vocation
 warble

A 2003 study showed an astonishing surge of interest in bluegrass. Eight million people had bought a bluegrass recording in the previous year. Bluegrass festivals were held in just about every state in the union and in many foreign countries. These musical events are not at all **pretentious**; in fact, performers mix freely with their fans. Those attending enjoy taking out their own instruments to join in **impromptu** performances held in any open space between campers. Many also come to pay **homage** to Bill Monroe, the father of bluegrass. Monroe and his Blue Grass Boys continued to perform until he was in his eighties, although he reduced the number of festival performances from 150 to 100 per year. On September 9, 1996, four days before his eighty-fifth birthday, Bill Monroe died.

Answer each of the following questions in the form of a sentence. If a question does not contain a vocabulary word from this lesson's word list, use one in your answer. Use each word only once. Questions and answers will then contain all fifteen words (or forms of the words).

1. Why is Kentucky a good place to raise horses?

2. At what stage of his life did Bill Monroe first show his musical ability?

3. Why do many fans take their instruments to bluegrass festivals?

4. Who would be especially welcome at Appalachian get-togethers in the days before radio and television?

5. Why did the banjo become popular in Appalachian music?

6. To lovers of country music, what does the name *bluegrass* suggest?

7. How would you describe a **medley** of Bill Monroe tunes?

8. What is the meaning of **obliged** as it is used in the passage?

9. What instruments are one **component** of bluegrass music?

10. Why are fans able to mix freely with musicians at bluegrass festivals?

11. What mistaken idea did some Americans have about the appeal of bluegrass music?

12. What criticism might some lovers of “fine” music make of bluegrass music?

13. Why do you think the bluegrass musicians ultimately eliminated the slapstick comedy routines?

14. How did Bill Monroe demonstrate his devotion to country music?

15. What special purpose draws bluegrass fans to Bill Monroe’s performances?

FUN & FASCINATING FACTS

Complement is a noun and a verb. *Compliment* (with an i) is also a noun and a verb, but these two words have quite different meanings. A *compliment* is a remark that expresses praise, approval, or admiration. To *compliment* someone is to make such a remark.

We sometimes refer to a person’s profession, occupation, or chosen way of life as a *calling*. (Supreme

Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg has combined the *callings* of motherhood and the law.) *Calling* and **vocation** are synonyms, and this is no surprise because *vocation* comes from the Latin *vocare*, which means “to call.” The prefix *a-* means “away from,” and an *avocation* is a hobby or pastime, something done “away from” one’s work or calling.