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Lesson 17

Word List

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

appoint
ə pɔɪnt

v. 1. To choose for an office or position.

The president **appoints** justices to the Supreme Court.

2. To set or decide upon.

Let's **appoint** a time for our next meeting.

appointment n. 1. The act of appointing or being appointed.

All **appointments** to the Supreme Court must be approved by Congress.

2. An arrangement or agreement to meet.

I made an **appointment** to see the editor on Thursday at 3:00 p.m.

assent
ə sent

v. To give one's consent; to agree.

The members of the union **assented** to the terms of the new contract.

n. An act of agreeing or acceptance.

Congress gave its **assent** to the new welfare reform bill.

concur
kən kʊr

v. To be in agreement.

Dr. Alvarez **concurred** with Dr. Yan's opinion that the patient did not require surgery.

consult
kən sʌlt

v. 1. To seek information or advice.

I **consulted** several reference books to get information about asteroids hitting the earth.

2. To talk things over in order to reach a decision.

While court went into recess, the lawyers **consulted** each other.

consultation n. (kən səl tə' shən) A discussion; a meeting to seek advice.

The first **consultation** with an attorney is often free.

consultant n. One whose advice is sought.

The city manager hired a **consultant** to advise her on care for the elderly.

dissuade
dɪ swād

v. To prevent or discourage someone from doing something.

My friend **dissuaded** me from skiing the trail called White Heat.

flabbergast
flab' ər gəst

v. To surprise so greatly that one is speechless; to amaze.

His preposterous story about being abducted by space aliens **flabbergasted** me.

haggle
hag' əl

v. To argue about, especially about the price of something.

We **haggled** with the dealer for a while before agreeing on a price for the painting.

perturb
pər tɜrb

v. To make uneasy; to upset greatly.

I was **perturbed** when the plane's late departure caused me to miss the business meeting.

procure
prō kyoor

v. To get by making an effort; to obtain.

By foraging in the woods, I was able to **procure** enough kindling to start a fire.

receptive

rē sep' tiv

adj. Ready and able to receive ideas or suggestions.The Senate was **receptive** to the president's plan for more aid to the cities.**repudiate**

rē pyoo' dē āt

v. To refuse to support; to reject.New discoveries often cause scientists to **repudiate** earlier beliefs.**resolve**

rē zōlv'

v. 1. To make a firm promise to oneself.I **resolve** to work even harder at my studies.

2. To solve.

We can **resolve** this little problem very easily.*n.* A fixed purpose or intention.The hard toil and long days weakened Tom's **resolve** to finish the job.**signify**

sig' nə fi

v. 1. To be a sign of; to mean.A nod of the head **signifies** agreement.

2. To make known or clear.

Signify your approval of the proposed change by raising your hand.**significant** *adj.* (sig nif' ə kənt) Full of meaning; important."There was no forced entry. That is very **significant**," said the detective.**significance** *n.* (sig nif' ə kəns) Importance; meaning.What is the **significance** of flying the flag upside down?**sovereign**

sāv' rən

adj. 1. Highest; chief.Clearness of expression is a **sovereign** quality in writing.

2. Not controlled by others.

After winning independence from England, the thirteen colonies formed a **sovereign** country.*n.* A king or queen; a monarch.The **sovereign's** portrait appears on all British postage stamps.**sovereignty** *n.* Freedom from political control by a foreign power.Poland regained its **sovereignty** when the Soviet Union collapsed at the end of the Cold War.**trifling**

trī' flɪŋ

adj. Of little value, importance, or meaning.Their objections to the plan are **trifling** and should be ignored.

17A Finding Meanings

Choose two phrases to form a sentence that correctly uses a word from Word List 17. Write each sentence in the space provided.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. (a) To repudiate something | (c) is to settle it. |
| (b) To resolve something | (d) is to be the cause of it. |
| | |
| 2. (a) To perturb someone is to | (c) To consult someone is to |
| (b) make that person uneasy. | (d) reject that person. |

3. (a) refuse to be bound by it. (c) To procure an agreement is to
(b) sign one's name to it. (d) To repudiate an agreement is to

4. (a) An appointment is (c) a matter of little importance.
(b) A consultation is (d) the naming of a person to a position.

5. (a) is to be a sign of change. (c) To assent to change
(b) is to be unwilling to accept change. (d) To signify change

6. (a) A trifling figure is one (c) A sovereign figure is one
(b) that has no real existence. (d) that stands out above all others.

7. (a) be unable to make up one's mind. (c) be in agreement.
(b) To concur is to (d) To haggle is to

8. (a) To flabbergast someone (c) To dissuade someone
(b) is to welcome that person. (d) is to amaze that person.

9. (a) is to give it up. (c) To procure something
(b) is to obtain it. (d) To assent to something

10. (a) Someone who is dissuaded (c) is ready to accept new ideas.
(b) Someone who is receptive (d) is unwilling to consider new ideas.

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17B 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 17.

- I was able to **obtain through my own efforts** forage for the horses.
- After hearing my parents' objections, my **firm intention** to join the club began to weaken.
- Belize, formerly British Honduras, gained **freedom from political control by another country** in 1981.

4. The **meeting in which I talked things over** with the doctor lasted thirty minutes.
5. I **indicated that I was willing to give my approval** to the proposal.
6. Let's not waste our time on such **completely unimportant** matters.
7. A vote of 9 to 0 **makes it clear** that the decision was unanimous.
8. I paid what the car salesperson asked since I was unwilling to **argue over the price**.
9. I tried to **use my powers of persuasion in order to prevent** them from driving in such icy conditions.
10. All the relatives gathered in the lawyer's office for the **meeting that had been arranged the week before**.

17C Applying Meanings

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

1. Which of the following would result in a country's loss of **sovereignty**?
 - (a) closing off its borders
 - (b) abolishing its army
 - (c) being overrun by a foreign power
 - (d) overthrowing its ruler
2. Which of the following might a person **resolve** to do?
 - (a) drive more carefully
 - (b) catch a cold
 - (c) stop smoking
 - (d) start smoking
3. Which of the following might be **haggled** over?
 - (a) the terms of an agreement
 - (b) the price of an antique
 - (c) the day on which Thanksgiving falls
 - (d) the number of feet in a mile
4. Which of the following might **perturb** a businessperson?
 - (a) increased competition
 - (b) increased taxes
 - (c) increased profits
 - (d) increased expenses
5. Which of the following are ways of **assenting**?
 - (a) nodding one's head
 - (b) saying yes
 - (c) saying no
 - (d) shaking one's head

6. Which of the following could be **appointed**?
- (a) a club president (c) a place to meet
(b) a cabinet member (d) a winter storm
7. Which of the following have **significance**?
- (a) a sudden weight loss (c) a presidential election
(b) lethargy after a large meal (d) the color of one's eyes
8. Which of the following can be **consulted**?
- (a) a dictionary (c) an authority
(b) a mentor (d) an accountant

17D Word Study

Make eight words by combining prefixes with parts, or roots, from Latin words. Use the prefixes and words below. The boldface word or words in each sentence is a direct clue to help you figure out part or all of the word. The numbers in parentheses give the word list from which each word is taken.

Prefixes

com- (together)
in- (not)
inter- (between)
re- (again)
sub- (under)

Latin Words

mergere (to plunge) *vincere* (to conquer)
plenus (full) *placare* (to calm)
proximus (near) *ponere* (to put)
trepidus (afraid) *venire* (to come)

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- Several of these **put together** make a whole. They are _____ (15)
- This is what you do to **calm** hurt feelings. You _____ someone. (9)
- Can't be **conquered**? You are _____! (9)
- Diving **under** the surface? You're going to _____ yourself. (11)
- You're getting **near** the park. You're in _____ to it now! (16)
- You can **fill** your tank **again**. The word is _____. (16)
- Don't want to **come between** friends? Then don't _____. (12)
- Don't be **afraid**! Be _____. (13)

17E Passage

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

“A Noble Bargain”

Throughout history, countries that have extended their borders have done so mainly by military conquest; the United States is one of the few nations that has ever done so by purchase. In one of the greatest bargains ever made, it **procured** almost a million square miles at a cost of just over 15 million dollars.

In 1802, the **sovereignty** of the United States ended at the Mississippi River. France had a legal claim to all the land beyond it as far as the Rocky Mountains. United States shipping on the Mississippi passed through New Orleans, Louisiana, on its way to the sea, and President Thomas Jefferson was **perturbed** by the possibility that France might close off the river. To prevent this, he **resolved** to buy New Orleans, together with western Florida, from the French.

Certain conditions were in Jefferson's favor. France was on the verge of war with Britain and, therefore, needed money. Should the British attack New Orleans, the French would, Jefferson believed, have difficulty defending it. It made sense to conclude that France would prefer the territory go to America rather than to Britain.

To pursue his plan, Jefferson **appointed** two agents to represent the United States. When they met with the French foreign minister in France to discuss the purchase, he proposed that the United States buy all the land from the Mississippi to the Rockies, a total of almost a million square miles. The two Americans were **flabbergasted** but **receptive** to the idea. Congress had approved spending only two million dollars; however, the cost would now greatly exceed that amount. After a considerable amount of **haggling**, a price of fifteen million dollars was finally agreed on. The French foreign minister commented at the time the deal was struck that the United States had made “a noble bargain.”

Members of Congress did not **concur** with this view and wanted to **repudiate** the agreement with France. They thought that fifteen million dollars was an excessive amount to pay, and they were upset that the president's agents had agreed to the French offer without **consulting** them. President Jefferson appeared before Congress in an attempt to **dissuade** its members from voting against the purchase. He pointed out that the United States would be doubled in size by it and that if the United States did not act promptly, the French might withdraw their offer. Somewhat grudgingly, Congress gave its **assent** to the “Louisiana Purchase.” A year later the United States flag was raised in New Orleans, **signifying** the end of France's involvement in North America.

Just how good a bargain was the Louisiana Purchase? Iowa farmland in 2003 sold for about \$2,500 an acre. The six hundred million acres of land the United States bought in 1803 had cost the **trifling** sum of two and a half cents an acre.

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 1803 a **significant** date in French history?

2. How did Jefferson feel about the possibility that France might close off the Mississippi River?

3. Why would it be incorrect to call Florida a **sovereign** state in 1802?

4. What decision did Jefferson make to ensure that the Mississippi River stayed open?

5. Did Jefferson himself deal directly with the French?

6. Why would it have been difficult for the agents to **consult** with Congress?

7. How do you know that the French proposal was unexpected?

8. How did the Americans make sure they paid no more than necessary?

9. Why might the Americans have pretended at first not to be **receptive** to the French offer?

10. How much land did the United States purchase from France?

11. What was the cost per square mile of the “Louisiana Purchase”?
12. Did everyone agree that the two Americans had performed a great service?
13. What was the purpose of Jefferson’s address to the members of Congress?
14. What would have happened if Congress had **repudiated** the agreement?
15. What was Congress’s response to Jefferson’s appeal?

FUN & FASCINATING FACTS

The antonym of **assent** is *dissent*; its homophone is *ascent*, “the act of climbing or ascending.”

The noun formed from the verb **resolve** is *resolution*—one may *resolve* to do something; one may also make a *resolution* to do something. *Resolve* is also a noun, and its meaning overlaps somewhat with *resolution*. *Resolve* is a state of mind and means “firmness of purpose.” (Nothing could shake her *resolve* to be a doctor.) A *resolution* is a statement of purpose, made to oneself or to others, concerning a course of action. (I made a New Year’s *resolution* to exercise every day.) *Resolution* also means “an explanation or a solution.” (The *resolution* of the mystery is withheld until the end of the novel.)

Sovereign is formed from the Latin *super*, which means “over” or “above.” As a noun, *sovereign* is a

synonym for *monarch*, and the fact that a monarch *reigns* influenced the present form and spelling of the word. The noun formed from the adjective is *sovereignty*. (By world agreement, no country may claim *sovereignty* over Antarctica.)

A *sovereign* is also a British gold coin no longer in use; the first ones were struck in 1489 and bore a likeness of the English king Henry VII.

The noun *trifle* is related to the adjective **trifling**. A *trifle* is something of little value or importance; it is also a sum of money so small as to be of no account. *Trifle* is also a verb that means “to talk or deal with in an insincere way.” (Only an unscrupulous person would *trifle* with someone’s affections.)