

# Lesson 1

## Word List

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

### avid

av' id

*adj.* 1. Having a strong desire for, to the point of greed.

**Avid** for the attention of their baby sitter, the children shouted and tumbled about on the floor.

2. Eager; enthusiastic.

Marcia is an **avid** skier who spends each weekend on the slopes.

### brusque

brusk

*adj.* Abrupt in manner or speech; gruff.

The lawyer's **brusque** questioning intimidated the witness.

**brusqueness** *n.* The quality or state of being brusque.

With a **brusqueness** unlike her, Melanie ended the phone conversation.

### concise

kən sīs'

*adj.* Short and to the point.

"Speed Kills" is a **concise** way of warning drivers of the danger of going too fast.

### demean

dē mēn'

*v.* To cause a lowering of self-esteem; to lower in reputation or character.

Don't **demean** yourself by denying what everyone knows to be true.

**demeaning** *adj.* Degrading.

June felt that being scolded in front of her friends was **demeaning**.

### despicable

dēs pik' ə bəl

*adj.* Deserving contempt or scorn.

Stealing from the class treasury was a **despicable** thing to do.

### emulate

em' yōō lāt

*v.* To try to equal; to imitate.

Musicians around the world have tried to **emulate** Louis Armstrong's soulful trumpet playing.

### evoke

ē vōk'

*v.* 1. To call forth; to produce.

After the oil spill, the governor's appeal for clean-up volunteers **evoked** a huge response from people in the state.

2. To bring to mind, often by suggestion.

The tinkling notes from the music box **evoked** for me the carefree joys of childhood.

**evocative** *adj.* (ē vāk' ə tiv) Creating something again, especially through the imagination.

The costumes and music of the film were **evocative** of Paris in the 1920s.

### excruciating

eks krōō' shē āt iŋ

*adj.* Very painful.

The ointment soothed the **excruciating** burn on Ronald's arm.

### inaugurate

in ō' gyər āt

*v.* 1. To install in office with a formal ceremony.

Presidents of the United States are **inaugurated** in January following the November election.

2. To begin officially or mark the opening of.

On Tuesday, Mayor Ovalles **inaugurated** a free vaccination program for all children under five living in the city.

**inauguration** *n.* The act of installing in office.

Governor Maitland was at her desk within hours of her **inauguration**.

**pervade**  
pər vād'

*v.* To spread throughout.

Laughter **pervades** the house whenever Aunt Sara visits us.

**pervasive** *adj.* Spreading throughout.

Every Friday afternoon, the **pervasive** odor of disinfectant fills the halls as the cleaning crew mops the floors.

**proprietor**  
prə pri' ə tər

*n.* An owner of a store or other business.

The **proprietors** of the downtown shops planned a sidewalk sale for the first weekend in June.

**pseudonym**  
sūō' də nīm

*n.* A fictitious name used by an author; a pen name.

Female British authors of the nineteenth century often had to use a male **pseudonym** in order to get their books published.

**rebuff**  
rē buf'

*v.* 1. To reject bluntly.

The owners **rebuffed** all attempts to take over their successful computer company.

2. To drive back.

Although the men in the Alamo were determined to **rebuff** Santa Anna's forces, in the end they were defeated.

*n.* 1. A blunt rejection.

Caroline's offer to Fred to patch up their quarrel met with a **rebuff**.

2. An abrupt setback in progress.

After a storm delayed their start, the climbers experienced another **rebuff** when a rock slide shut down one of the trails.

**resilient**  
rē zil' yənt

*adj.* 1. Capable of recovering quickly from misfortune.

After slipping to third place, the Red Sox were **resilient** enough to regain first place.

2. Returning quickly to an original shape or condition.

A wool sweater is more **resilient** after washing than a cotton one.

**resilience** *n.* 1. The ability to recover.

Steven's body showed great **resilience** after the chemotherapy treatment.

2. The ability to spring back.

Tennis balls lose **resilience** after three or four sets of vigorous play.

**turbulent**  
tər' byə lənt

*adj.* 1. Chaotic; unruly.

My brother and I tried our best to stay calm during the **turbulent** period of our parents' divorce.

2. Stormy; tempestuous.

Such a **turbulent** sea prevented all boats from leaving the harbor.

**turbulence** *n.* 1. Great disturbance or agitation.

The **turbulence** of the 1960s included peace marches, civil rights protests, and assassinations.

2. Rapid changes in wind speed and direction in the atmosphere.

The "Fasten Your Seatbelts" sign flashed on when the plane encountered **turbulence**.

## 1A Finding Meanings

Choose two phrases to form a sentence that correctly uses a word from Word List 1. Write each sentence in the space provided.

- |                                     |                                    |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. (a) To inaugurate someone is to  | (c) To rebuff someone is to        |
| (b) try to win that person's favor. | (d) install that person in office. |

2. (a) be unreliable or untrustworthy. (c) To be avid is to  
(b) have a strong desire for something. (d) To be resilient is to

3. (a) is to summon it from memory. (c) To pervade something  
(b) To emulate something (d) is to spread throughout it.

4. (a) one that is ignored. (c) A despicable comment is  
(b) one that deserves contempt. (d) A brusque comment is

5. (a) returns to its original shape. (c) Something that is evocative  
(b) Something that is resilient (d) is easily damaged.

6. (a) one that is favorable. (c) A brusque remark is  
(b) one that is abrupt in manner. (d) A concise remark is

7. (a) A proprietor is (c) a story made up on the spur of the moment.  
(b) a fictitious name. (d) A pseudonym is

8. (a) try to imitate that person. (c) To emulate someone is to  
(b) try to influence that person. (d) To demean someone is to

9. (a) An evocative poem (c) is one that is difficult to understand.  
(b) A concise poem (d) has the ability to bring back feelings.

10. (a) To demean someone is to (c) reject that person.  
(b) To rebuff someone is to (d) praise that person.

## 1B 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 1.

1. The swelling in Denise's ankle was **so painful that she could hardly stand it**.
2. From Ms. Hernandez's **abrupt manner**, the students understood immediately that something was wrong.
3. The 1930s was a **very disturbed and agitated** decade in European history.
4. When the lawyer attempted to **harm the reputation of** the witness by calling her a liar, the judge intervened.
5. Who is the **person with the legal right to the ownership** of the furniture business?
6. Without any explanation, Emi **bluntly rejected** Brandon's offer to help change the tire.
7. Uncle Joshua used to be an **eager and enthusiastic** fan of the Cleveland Browns until they decided to move to Baltimore.
8. A worker needs to be **able to recover quickly from misfortune** in order to survive in these difficult times.
9. The **installation into office** of Ruth Bader Ginsburg as a justice of the Supreme Court occurred in 1993.
10. Ernest Hemingway wrote in a style that was **short and to the point**.

avid  
 brusque  
 concise  
 demean  
 despicable  
 emulate  
 evoke  
 excruciating  
 inaugurate  
 pervade  
 proprietor  
 pseudonym  
 rebuff  
 resilient  
 turbulent

## 1C 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 might employ a **pseudonym**?
 

(a) a writer	(c) a president of a country
(b) a singer	(d) a small business
2. Which of the following can have a **proprietor**?
 

(a) a corner store	(c) a small business
(b) a small child	(d) a government agency
3. Which of the following has **resilience**?
 

(a) a person	(c) a lawn
(b) a doormat	(d) a question

4. Which of the following can be **pervasive**?
- (a) time (c) fear  
(b) silence (d) a smell
5. Which of the following can be **inaugurated**?
- (a) a president (c) a bad habit  
(b) a delivery service (d) a promise
6. Which of the following can be **evoked**?
- (a) a loose tooth (c) a happy memory  
(b) a grudging response (d) a broken ski pole
7. Which of the following might suffer a **rebuff**?
- (a) an announcement (c) a proposal  
(b) an attack (d) a neighbor
8. In which of the following might there be **turbulence**?
- (a) a relationship (c) the ocean  
(b) the air (d) a lawn

## 1D Word Study

Choose from the two words provided and use each word just once when filling in the spaces. One space should be left blank.

### brusque / abrupt

- I was greeted with a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ "no" when I asked if I could help.
- A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ person seems always to be in a hurry.
- The bus came to a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ stop when a dog ran directly in front of it.

### rebuff / reject

- If you like, you can \_\_\_\_\_ a card and take another from the top of the deck.
- The soldiers were able to \_\_\_\_\_ repeated charges by the enemy.
- The agency will \_\_\_\_\_ applications that are not properly signed and dated.

### emulate / imitate

- To walk on the moon is a feat that no one is likely to \_\_\_\_\_ any time soon.
- To \_\_\_\_\_ someone else's answers during a test can get a student in serious trouble.
- To \_\_\_\_\_ the sound of bird calls is quite an accomplishment.

**demeaning / despicable**

10. There is nothing \_\_\_\_\_ about asking for help if you need it.
11. There was a \_\_\_\_\_ expression on his face as he warned us of the danger.
12. It is \_\_\_\_\_ to buy a puppy and mistreat it.

**turbulent / stormy**

13. Everyone screamed as the \_\_\_\_\_ rapids almost overturned the raft.
14. The principal's voice grew \_\_\_\_\_ as he spoke of his concern for the school's future.
15. The forecast of \_\_\_\_\_ weather caused the cancellation of all ferry crossings.

**1E Passage**

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

**A Poet of the People**

Maya Angelou was honored by William Jefferson Clinton when he invited her to read a poem she had written to celebrate his **inauguration** as the forty-second president of the United States. This was a fitting tribute to the woman whose early life had seemed so empty of promise when she was born Marguerite Johnson in St. Louis, Missouri, sixty-four years before. She sums up that life **concisely** in these lines from one of her poems: "... birthing is hard / and dying is mean / and living's a trial in between."

When she was still a small child, her parents divorced; she and her older brother Bailey were raised by their grandmother, Annie Henderson, affectionately known as Momma. Mrs. Henderson was the **proprietor** of the only general store in Stamps, Arkansas, owned by an African-American. In her first book, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, Angelou **evokes** Momma's powerful presence as she lovingly describes the way her grandmother coped with the bigotry and racial hatred that was widespread in the country in the 1930s. It was this **resilience** that most impressed Angelou and which she herself tried to **emulate** throughout her life.

One example of such bigotry involved a visit to the dentist. With Angelou suffering from an **excruciating** toothache, Momma had no choice but to take her granddaughter to the town's only dentist, who was white. When she asked him to treat the little girl's toothache, he **rebuffed** her, using extremely **demeaning** language. He told her that he would rather put his hand in a dog's mouth than treat a black person. Momma reminded him that she had helped him in the past by making him interest-free loans; now she was asking a favor in return. But he **brusquely** asserted that his debts had been paid and ordered her to leave. After taking her grandchild out of the office, Momma returned and stood her ground. She demanded that the dentist pay her a fair rate of interest on the loans she had made him. Finally, he handed over ten dollars, a large sum in those days, and only then did she depart, her dignity intact. She traveled over thirty miles with her granddaughter to Texarkana, where the nearest African-American dentist practiced.

When Angelou was eight years old, she and her brother went to live with their mother in St. Louis. There her mother's boyfriend abused her and threatened to harm Bailey if she told anyone. When Angelou became ill, her mother discovered the **despicable** abuse. The boyfriend was brought to trial and convicted. But the shock of the experience left Angelou unable to speak for a year.

avid  
brusque  
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rebuff  
resilient  
turbulent

In spite of her troubled and **turbulent** childhood, a spirit of optimism **pervades** *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. In it, Angelou pays tribute to those who helped and encouraged her, among them a neighbor named Bertha Flowers, who gave her books and introduced her to the pleasures of reading poetry, drama, and great novels. As a result of Flowers's influence, Angelou became an **avid** reader. This led later to her dream of becoming a writer. Four more volumes of autobiography and many collections of poetry followed *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. All appeared under her **pseudonym**, Maya Angelou, a name she began using in the 1950s.

It was a long and difficult road that she had traveled, but it led to the presidential platform where she read her poem "On the Pulse of Morning" to an audience of millions on that cold January day. Angelou had triumphed over many difficulties, strengthened by the deep faith expressed in these lines from the poem, "Lift up your hearts / Each new hour holds new chances / For a new beginning."

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 it inaccurate to say that Momma was Mrs. Henderson's **pseudonym**?

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2. Why would you not use the word **concise** to describe the title of Angelou's first book?

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3. Why did Angelou compose "On the Pulse of Morning"? -

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4. Why did Mrs. Henderson have to be knowledgeable about business?

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5. Why was Momma desperate to get her granddaughter to a dentist?

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6. How did the dentist let Momma know that she was not welcome?

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7. Why is Angelou's mother's boyfriend someone one would not **emulate**?

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8. In what way did the dentist show **despicable** behavior?

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9. What is the meaning of **evoke** as it is used in the passage?

10. What is one way that Angelou showed **resilience** in her life?

11. What is one example from the passage of Angelou's **turbulent** childhood?

12. What details in the passage suggest that Bertha Flowers's treatment of Angelou was not **brusque**?

13. In the 1930s, why is it likely that most African Americans experienced racial bigotry?

14. How do you know that Angelou did not **rebuff** President Clinton's request for a poem?

15. What is the meaning of **avid** as it is used in the passage?

### FUN & FASCINATING FACTS

The original meaning of the verb **demean**, "to conduct oneself," suggested neither good nor bad behavior. (Jane's young cousins *demeaned* themselves in a proper manner during their stay with her.) Even though this meaning continues, a second meaning, "to act in a way that lowers one's reputation or character," has largely replaced it. (You *demean* yourself by asking favors of someone who has treated you so badly.)

The original meaning of the verb survives in *demeanor*, the noun form, which means "the manner in which one behaves or conducts oneself." (No one could tell from Bill's *demeanor* that he was very angry.)

People sentenced to death in Roman times were often crucified, a form of execution in which the hands and feet of the victim were nailed to a cross until death occurred, usually after a long time. Since the pain suffered by those executed in this way must have been extreme, it is easy to see how **excruciating** came to mean "very painful" or "agonizing." The word is formed from the Latin *crux*, which means "a cross."

**Pseudonym**, a false name used by writers and others in place of their real name, is formed from the Greek roots *pseudo*, "false," and *onuma*, "name."