

Lesson 15

Word List

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

accentuate

ak sen' chøə āt'

v. To emphasize or stress.

The tall crown of that hat **accentuates** Becky's height.

aficionado*

ə fish ē ə nād' ō

n. An enthusiastic follower; a supporter or fan.

"Star Trek" **aficionados** eagerly awaited the next episode.

antecedent

an tə sēd' nt

n. A thing or event that precedes another.

Robert Fulton's 1801 submersible craft was the **antecedent** of the modern submarine.

adj. Going before; preceding.

Many years of research were **antecedent** to this drug's being sold without a prescription.

centrifugal

sen trif' yə gəl

adj. Moving or tending away from the center.

If the string snaps on the toy that you are swinging, **centrifugal** force will send it flying away from you.

convoluted

kān' və lœt' əd

adj. 1. Having numerous coils or folds.

That flexible wire can be twisted into **convoluted** shapes.

2. Complicated; intricate.

The jurors had difficulty following the **convoluted** explanation of the witness.

decapitate

dē kap' ə tāt'

v. To kill by cutting off the head.

During the French Revolution those marked for execution were **decapitated** by the guillotine.

disingenuous

dis n jen' yə wəs

adj. Not straightforward; insincere.

"I would be **disingenuous** if I told you there were only a few things wrong with your teeth," the dentist said.

indubitable

in dœ' bi tə bəl

adj. Too evident to be doubted; unquestionable.

Your signature on this paper is **indubitable** proof that you are a co-owner of the cabin.

jaded

jād' əd

adj. Dulled or wearied by excess or overindulgence.

Jaded fans of special effects in movies seem to need ever more spectacular sights in order to be thrilled.

masochistic

mas ə kis' tik

adj. Deriving pleasure from being mistreated mentally or physically.

The Boston bathers who enter the frigid waters annually on New Year's Day denied they were **masochistic**, but claimed instead simply to enjoy the experience.

masochist n.

"Only a **masochist** would choose to live in the wilderness for a week with no equipment," asserted Charlene.

momentum

mō men' təm

n. Force or speed of movement; force or energy that keeps something moving.

Senator Clay's presidential campaign lost **momentum** because she was late entering the New Hampshire primary.

obsolescent

əb sə les' ənt

adj. Going out of use; becoming obsolete.Typewriters are **obsolescent** now that personal computers are so common.**potential**

pō ten' shəl

adj. Having possibility or capability.Light and heat from the sun are **potential** sources of energy that could be a boon to humanity.*n.* The capacity for growth or development.The project directors proposed the abandoned factory building as a **potential** site for the recycling center.**viscera**

vis' ə r ə

n. pl. The internal organs of the body.The **viscera** include the liver, pancreas, and intestines.**visceral** *adj.* Felt strongly, as if in the viscera.When she realized the plant in her hand was covered with slugs, her **visceral** response was to scream.**volition**

vō lish' ən

n. An act of consciously choosing or deciding.Dan, of his own **volition**, helped us clean up the table and wash the dinner dishes.

15A Understanding Meanings

Read the sentences below. If a sentence correctly uses the word in bold, write *C* on the line below it. If a sentence is incorrect, rewrite it so that the vocabulary word in bold is used correctly.

1. **Indubitable** facts are those that are certain.

2. A **disingenuous** statement is one that is extremely insulting.

3. A **masochist** is a person who chews his or her food thoroughly.

4. A **jaded** appetite is one that cannot be satisfied.

5. **Centrifugal** tendencies are those causing movement away from the center.

6. **Volition** is the ability to fly.

7. An **aficionado** is someone who possesses extraordinary skill.

8. A **convoluted** explanation is one that is difficult to follow.

9. An **obsolescent** machine is one that needs to be repaired.

10. **Antecedent** rights are those that existed before ones that came later.

11. **Viscera** are sense organs.

12. A **potential** profit is one that may develop into an actual one.

13. To **accentuate** a word is to put an accent mark in the right place.

14. To **decapitate** someone is to behead him or her.

15. **Momentum** is a single instant of time.

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15B Using Words

If the word (or a form of the word) in bold fits in a sentence in the group below it, write the word in the blank. If the word does not fit, leave the space empty.

1. **jaded**

- (a) Even though she had won the top tennis tournaments several times, she wasn't _____ from all the attention and money she received.
- (b) We felt so _____ after our climb that we had to sit down and rest.
- (c) I was so _____ by the book that I couldn't read beyond the first chapter.

2. disingenuous

- (a) This double-ratcheted widget is a most _____ little device.
- (b) She was being _____ when she let you believe she enjoyed your company.
- (c) My cramped quarters revealed just how _____ the reservations agent had been in describing the room as luxury class.

3. accentuate

- (a) The senator's speeches _____ the plight of the small family farm.
- (b) Depending on which word you _____, you change the meaning slightly.
- (c) We'll _____ the positive and play down the negative aspects of the situation.

4. potential

- (a) The new shortstop for the Blue Jays has the _____ to be a great hitter.
- (b) Here is a list of _____ buyers for the property.
- (c) Six thousand dollars is a _____ sum of money.

5. masochistic

- (a) Pleasure and pain are mingled in a _____ personality.
- (b) The _____ counselor listened carefully to Sean's problem and then gave several practical suggestions.
- (c) Gerald gave my hand a _____ shake and then headed for the door.

6. convoluted

- (a) Kimberly is trying to simplify her _____ writing style.
- (b) The _____ shape in the painting resembled a ram's horn.
- (c) After the car accident, Harry had a two-week _____ period at home.

7. centrifugal

- (a) Raising the necessary funds is _____ to the success of the youth concerts.
- (b) A boulder perched on the edge of a cliff possesses _____ energy.
- (c) The moon orbits the earth because gravity and _____ force are in balance.

8. obsolescent

- (a) As particular jobs become _____, workers need to retrain for others.
- (b) CDs are making other forms of recorded music _____.
- (c) "Prithee" and "methinks" are _____ expressions.

15C 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. ACCENTUATE : SPEECH ::

- (a) divulge : secret
(b) underline : writing
(c) nurture : child
(d) articulate : discuss

2. SUCCINCT : BREVITY ::

- (a) restless : repose
(b) magnanimous : cruelty
(c) indolent : alacrity
(d) stilted : awkwardness

3. SOLACE : SORROW ::

- (a) paucity : abundance
(b) momentum : motion
(c) sustenance : hunger
(d) volition : choice

4. DISTRESSING : HARROWING ::

- (a) costly : gratis
(b) articulated : convoluted
(c) friendly : amorous
(d) actual : potential

5. VISCERAL : ORGANS ::

- (a) mental : mind
(b) disingenuous : ingenuity
(c) solicitous : solace
(d) sylvan : forest

6. CLOWN : ZANY ::

- (a) remark : facetious
(b) despot : military
(c) rift : rudimentary
(d) partner : amorous

7. INDUBITABLE : DOUBT ::

- (a) definitive : definition
(b) inexplicable : reason
(c) pernicious : harm
(d) afraid : trepidation

8. ARTICULATE : CLEAR ::

- (a) overbearing : manner
(b) gregarious : talkative
(c) ubiquitous : space
(d) blurry : vision

9. DEXTERITY : HAND ::

- (a) agility : body
(b) alacrity : speed
(c) fallacy : idea
(d) centrifugal : center

10. DISINGENUOUS : DECEIVE ::

- (a) amusing : entertain
(b) zany : laugh
(c) amorous : offend
(d) voluble : speak

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15D Images of Words

Circle the letter of each sentence that suggests the numbered bold vocabulary word. In each group, you may circle more than one letter or none at all.

1. **indubitable**

- (a) The capital of Montana is Helena.
- (b) The best place to live in Florida is Gainesville.
- (c) There are seven letters in the word "Arizona."

2. **decapitate**

- (a) e. e. cummings wrote all his poems in lowercase letters.
- (b) Surgeons removed the patient's leg at the knee.
- (c) The coach asked the ballplayer to take off his hat.

3. **visceral**

- (a) Rob had a feeling in the pit of his stomach that there was danger ahead.
- (b) The liver, pancreas, and intestines are part of the digestive tract.
- (c) Mr. Vasquez does not allow his heart to rule his head.

4. **aficionado**

- (a) Rosa has never missed a New York Knicks home game in ten years.
- (b) Theresa and her cousin were very fond of each other.
- (c) Jules followed the chess tournament with keen interest.

5. **convoluted**

- (a) The surface of the brain is deeply folded in on itself.
- (b) The square root of forty-nine is seven.
- (c) The inner workings of a computer remain a mystery to me.

6. **volition**

- (a) The boulder became dislodged and rolled down the hill.
- (b) Roger's father didn't force him to enlist in the Navy.
- (c) Criminals should be held responsible for their actions.

7. **potential**

- (a) With this discount, anyone driving an older car might be interested in buying a new one.
- (b) Supervisors can identify workers likely to move into positions of management.
- (c) The business had been poorly run, but Elsa thought it could be made to turn a profit.

8. masochistic

- (a) For years, Cynthia had lived in pain without complaining.
- (b) Jay was always putting things down and forgetting where he'd left them.
- (c) The guests sat down at a table loaded with delicacies of all kinds.

9. antecedent

- (a) My first car, bought many years ago, was very noisy compared to the model I own today.
- (b) After hours of leaden skies, snow fell heavily all night.
- (c) The principal said, "If I let you do it, then everyone will want to do it."

10. momentum

- (a) The speed of a falling object increases with each passing moment.
- (b) There are sixty seconds in a minute, and sixty minutes in an hour.
- (c) The new math program began in one school, and soon many schools throughout the state were using it.

15E Passage

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

The Great American Scream Machine

When it comes to roller coasters, there are two kinds of people—those who cannot wait to get on one and those who wouldn't ride one if they were paid to do so. Ever since the first roller coaster opened for business at Coney Island in 1884, millions of people have lined up for a ride. But the **antecedent** of the roller coaster goes back much further in time. Its origin has been traced to Catherine the Great, who ruled Russia from 1762 to 1796. She had snow packed to form a long slide with a few bumps at the bottom; she then would gather members of her court to ride down with her on a sled. Of course, the ride she offered was much calmer than the three minutes of bone-shaking, terror-filled, stomach-churning fun that roller coaster riders enjoy today.

That thrill-seekers ride these machines of their own **volition**, and pay for the privilege, astonishes those who regard such behavior as clear evidence of a **masochistic** personality. One such enthusiast, a mild-mannered computer operator, holds the record for riding the famous roller coaster of Kings Island, outside Cincinnati, known as the Beast: five thousand times and counting!

The Beast begins with a long, slow, ratchety climb. This serves two purposes. First, it gives the strapped-in occupants plenty of time to anticipate the moment when the cars go over the top. Second, by elevating the cars, which when occupied weigh fifteen tons, to a height of nearly two hundred feet, it stores up enormous **potential** energy to provide the **momentum** for the rest of the ride. Even the most **jaded** riders experience a feeling of mingled terror and excitement as the cars make their first plunge downward, a sensation that has been compared to driving over a hundred-foot cliff. Straight ahead is a tunnel that seems to have no overhead clearance. The riders duck as they hurtle toward it at 65 miles per hour. But they clear it with feet to spare. The Beast has never **decapitated** anyone.

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The force of gravity felt by a person with both feet on the ground is measured at 1 g.* When a person rides the Beast, this is reduced to 0.2 g on the drops and then is instantly increased to 3.5 g on the upswings. This causes the weight of a 150-pound rider to go from thirty pounds to four-hundred pounds in a split second. Making sharp turns at high speed adds to the Beast's excitement. **Centrifugal** force threatens to hurl the cars off into space, but since the track is banked at an angle of sixty-five degrees, all the pull is downward, keeping the riders glued firmly to their seats but doing unpleasant things to their **viscera**.

The Beast has wooden tracks, a type now considered **obsolescent** in the industry. These tracks give the cars a satisfying clackety-clack sound as they go over the joints, while the riders are maintained in a more or less upright position. Modern roller coaster tracks are made of steel, and the relative merits of the two types is a subject endlessly debated by **aficionados**. Some fans argue that steel is preferable for the tracks because of its greater flexibility. It can be twisted into loops, corkscrews, and other **convoluted** shapes the designers dream up in their pursuit of bigger thrills. But because the steel tracks are coated with neoprene, a synthetic form of rubber, the cars run smoothly and silently. This absence of sound is a major drawback, according to those who champion wooden tracks.

The names given to roller coasters—the Beast, the Cyclone, King Cobra, Shock Wave—suggest danger, an aspect of roller coastering that promoters understandably like to **accentuate**. In doing so, however, they are being somewhat **disingenuous**. Despite their names, roller coasters are safer than children's merry-go-rounds, an **indubitable** fact well hidden by the industry but borne out by the relative cost of insuring both rides against accidents. People can act foolishly on merry-go-rounds, jumping on or off when they are in motion, for example. On roller coasters, the riders are restrained and opportunities for reckless behavior are almost nonexistent. The odds against having a fatal accident while riding a roller coaster are about one-hundred million to one. But after all, the whole point of riding the roller coaster is to scare yourself to death while knowing all the time that you are really perfectly safe.

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.

1. Do you consider it **masochistic** to ride on a roller coaster? Explain your answer.

2. In what sense is riding a roller coaster literally a **visceral** experience?

3. Is **jaded** a good word to describe a roller coaster **aficionado**?

4. Why do riders of the Beast duck as they hurtle toward the tunnel?

* g represents the gravitational field of the earth. The force of gravity acting on a person standing on earth is felt as his weight. 2g would mean the person would suddenly feel twice as heavy as he normally does.

5. What increases as the roller coaster plunges earthward?

6. What would happen to the cars on a bend if the track were not banked?

7. What happened when steel roller coaster tracks were introduced?

8. How did steel tracks change the roller coaster ride?

9. Why don't promoters **accentuate** the safety of roller coasters?

10. Explain the origin of the roller coaster.

11. What is one **indubitable** fact you learned from this passage?

12. Why is it **disingenuous** to insist that a roller coaster is an amusement park's most dangerous ride?

13. How do you know the roller coaster is a popular ride?

FUN & FASCINATING FACTS

Antecedent has a grammatical meaning in addition to those given in the word list. It is the term for a word, phrase, or clause to which a pronoun refers. In the sentence, "Sybil has so much energy that she never seems to get tired," the proper noun *Sybil* is the antecedent of the pronoun *she*. In the sentence, "Tom and his brothers will come back when they are ready," the phrase *Tom and his brothers* is the antecedent of the pronoun *they*.

Centrifugal is formed from the Latin *centrum*, "center," and *fugere*, "to flee." *Centrifugal* force tends to make an object in motion fly away from the center of motion. *Centripetal* force, from the Latin *centrum* and *petere*, "to go toward," acts in the

opposite direction. Were it not for gravity's *centripetal* force, which holds the moon in Earth's orbit, a satellite would go flying off into outer space because of the *centrifugal* force of its forward motion.

Sadism means "deriving pleasure from inflicting pain on others." The term comes from the scandalous Marquis de Sade (1740–1814), a French nobleman who wrote novels whose characters took pleasure from inflicting pain on others. **Masochism**, on the other hand, means "deriving pleasure from being physically or emotionally abused oneself." The term comes from the Austrian novelist Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (1836–1895), who describes the condition in one of his novels.