

# Lesson 10

## Word List

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

### abject

ab' jekt

*adj.* 1. Most miserable; wretched.

King Lear's life changed from one of luxury and power to one of **abject** poverty and helplessness.

### advocate

ad' və kāt

*v.* To plead in favor of; to defend.

This organization **advocates** the release of all people imprisoned for their beliefs.

*n.* (ad' və kət) One who argues for or defends a person, group, or idea.

Former Surgeon General Koop was a strong **advocate** for a ban on cigarette advertising.

### atrocious

ə trās' ə tē

*n.* An act of great cruelty and wickedness.

The war crimes judges in The Hague examined **atrocities** committed during the war in the former Yugoslavia.

**atrocious** *adj.* (ə trō' shəs) 1. Very brutal, wicked, or cruel.

The Nazis carried out **atrocious** medical experiments on their prisoners.

2. Appallingly bad; outrageous.

The owners of the kennel were prosecuted after reporters revealed that the animals lived under **atrocious** conditions.

### commemorate

kə mem' ə rāt

*v.* To serve as a memorial to; to remember in a solemn manner.

The tablet on the front of the house **commemorates** its importance as a station on the Underground Railroad.

### dialect

dī' ə lekt

*n.* A form of a language spoken in a certain geographical region that has its own grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary.

A Spanish-speaking person from Madrid might not completely understand a **dialect** spoken in Cuba.

### dire

dīr

*adj.* Having terrible consequences; urgent or desperate.

Pol Pot's reign in Cambodia, which began in 1975, had a **dire** effect on the lives of most Cambodians.

### elite

e līt'

*n.* A group that enjoys superior status to others.

Many of Edith Wharton's novels are set in the homes of the social **elite** of New York City during the 1890s.

*adj.* Considered superior to others.

In the 1800s, girls working in the textile mills sent their earnings home to help pay for the education of their brothers, who often attended **elite** universities.

### enhance

en hans'

*v.* To make greater or better.

The greenhouse window in our new kitchen **enhances** the room's light, airy feeling.

### flagrant

flā' grənt

*adj.* Clearly offensive or bad; conspicuously acting against what is right.

Trying to conceal the Watergate break-in was a **flagrant** abuse of presidential power.

**languish**

lanj' gwish

v. To lose hope, strength, or vitality because of neglect or bad conditions.

We **languished** on the porch, our tennis rackets at our feet, as the rain soaked everything.**mute**

myōōt

v. To soften or tone down the sound of.

The state legislature has agreed to build walls at the edge of the airport to **mute** the roar of the jet engines for nearby residents.

adj. Not speaking or not able to speak; silent.

Julie remained **mute** when the customs officer asked her name.**raze**

rāz

v. To level to the ground; to destroy completely.

Just as the row of seventeenth-century buildings was about to be **razed**, the preservation society requested a delay.**reprisal**

ri pri' zəl

n. A retaliation for an injury.

The rocket attack came as a swift and deadly **reprisal** for the bombing of the embassy.**turmoil**

tur' moil

n. A state of confusion or agitation; tumult.

With flood waters rising and an order to evacuate our home in an hour, my family was in a **turmoil**, trying to decide what to do first.**wreak**

rēk

v. 1. To bring about or inflict.

The tornado **wreaked** destruction and death along the path it followed through the center of town.

2. To express or vent.

Sidney **wreaked** his anger by pounding on the hood of the ruined car.

## 10A Finding Meanings

Choose two phrases to form a sentence that correctly uses a word from Word List 10. Write each sentence in the space provided.

1. (a) To enhance a building's appearance (c) is to destroy it completely.  
 (b) To raze a building (d) is to have control over it.

2. (a) an act of retaliation for an injury. (c) A dialect is  
 (b) a way of remembering a past event. (d) A reprisal is

3. (a) A mute victim is (c) one whose state is pitiable.  
 (b) An abject victim is (d) one who protests vigorously.

4. (a) A flagrant action is (c) one that matters little.  
 (b) A dire action is (d) one that has serious consequences.

5. (a) a distinct form of a language. (c) An atrocity is  
(b) a celebration to honor a past event. (d) A dialect is
6. (a) A flagrant attack (c) is one made secretly.  
(b) is one made in silence. (d) A mute protest
7. (a) is to be in a weakened state. (c) is to be at peace with oneself.  
(b) To be in turmoil (d) To languish
8. (a) An atrocity is (c) An elite is  
(b) an act of appalling cruelty. (d) a display of agility.
9. (a) To commemorate something is to (c) improve it.  
(b) To enhance something is to (d) cause it to fail.
10. (a) a group considered superior to others. (c) An elite is  
(b) a victim of an unprovoked attack. (d) An advocate is

abject  
 advocate  
 atrocity  
 commemorate  
 dialect  
 dire  
 elite  
 enhance  
 flagrant  
 languish  
 mute  
 raze  
 reprisal  
 turmoil  
 wreak

## 10B 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 10.

- Brutal and wicked** acts were committed by both sides in the civil war.
- The pine forest's thick bed of needles completely **absorbed the sounds of** our footsteps.
- This drought has left all of the crops, but especially the corn, **losing strength and vitality** in the fields.
- The French auto mechanic who towed our rented car to his garage spoke in a **form of the language** that we did not understand.
- Those who died during the fighting at Gettysburg have been **remembered in a fittingly solemn manner** by Lincoln's concise and eloquent speech.

6. Olivia's rudeness to the coach was so **clearly offensive** that her teammates thought she would be dropped from the team.
7. On the morning of my sister's wedding, our house was in a **confused and agitated state**, with food, flowers, and relatives all arriving at once.
8. A bulldozer was brought in to **completely destroy** the abandoned building.
9. Convinced of the devastating effects of cigarette smoking on health, many Americans **argue in favor of** a very high tax on tobacco products.
10. Brought on by a series of unusually heavy snowfalls, the **extremely urgent and desperate** conditions were hardest on North Dakotan farmers with livestock.

## 10C 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 can be **wreaked**?  
(a) audacity (c) anger  
(b) prudence (d) destruction
2. Which of the following might a conscientious **advocate** do?  
(a) organize meetings (c) make speeches  
(b) become reclusive (d) write letters
3. Which of the following would **mute** sounds?  
(a) a loudspeaker (c) a hearing aid  
(b) a thick wall (d) earmuffs
4. Which of the following nouns might correctly be modified by **abject**?  
(a) misery (c) serenity  
(b) poverty (d) despair
5. Which of the following could be **commemorated**?  
(a) a victory (c) a discovery  
(b) a defeat (d) a grimace
6. Which of the following can be **razed**?  
(a) children (c) buildings  
(b) rivers (d) villages

7. Which of the following might describe members of an **elite** law firm?

- (a) unemployed (c) wealthy  
(b) claustrophobic (d) powerful

8. Which of the following would be considered a **flagrant** act?

- (a) threatening someone's life (c) burning the flag  
(b) saving someone's life (d) leading a mutiny

## 10D Word Study

In this exercise, you are going to build ten words. You do this by combining the correct prefix with a root formed from a Latin word. The materials you will use are listed below:

Use these prefixes:

*ab-* (from)

*ad-, ap-, as-* (to; toward)

*com-, con-* (together)

*inter-* (between)

*pre-* (before)

*pro-* (out)

Combine the correct prefixes with roots formed from these Latin words:

*cedere* (to go)

*gregare* (to assemble)

*jacere* (to throw)

*memorare* (to remind)

*prehendere* (to grasp)

*rogare* (to ask)

*similis* (like; similar)

*spirare* (to breathe)

*trahere* (to draw or drag)

*vocare* (to speak)

Use each clue to guide you to the correct answer. Write the word in the space provided. All ten words are taken from this or an earlier lesson. The number in parentheses gives the lesson from which each word is taken.

- When these people meet, they put their heads so close together, they practically breathe each other's air. The word is \_\_\_\_\_ (6)
- The family moved to a new country and learned the customs and traditions. The word is \_\_\_\_\_ (6)
- Who or what goes before the others? The word is \_\_\_\_\_ (8)
- The detective handcuffed the criminal. The word is \_\_\_\_\_ (6)
- People's fortunes sunk during the Great Depression, leaving many in poverty. The word for their misfortune is \_\_\_\_\_ (10)
- Police ask witnesses many questions to reconstruct a crime. The word is \_\_\_\_\_ (6)

abject  
advocate  
atrocious  
commemorate  
dialect  
dire  
elite  
enhance  
flagrant  
languish  
mute  
raze  
reprisal  
turmoil  
wreak

7. During opening and closing arguments, the lawyers speak to the jury about the guilt or innocence of the defendant. The word is \_\_\_\_\_. (10)
8. It may be a long, drawn-out process. If so, the word is \_\_\_\_\_. (7)
9. When people assemble or come together, the word is \_\_\_\_\_. (9)
10. One way of bringing people together is to remind them of someone or some event that seems worth remembering. The word is \_\_\_\_\_. (10)

## 10E Passage

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

### Rigoberta Menchu

The four-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's famous voyage was **commemorated** in 1892 with much fanfare throughout North and South America. The five-hundredth anniversary celebrations, in 1992, were **muted** by comparison, as many people drew attention to how thoroughly the European settlers had **wreaked** devastation upon the original inhabitants of the Americas. In that year, too, the Nobel Committee awarded its Peace Prize to Rigoberta Menchu, a thirty-three-year-old native woman from Guatemala, for her "increasingly prominent part as an **advocate** of native rights." The head of the committee, in announcing the award, stated that it had been deliberately timed to coincide with the five-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's voyage.

Until Menchu was sixteen, she spoke only Quiché, one of some twenty **dialects** of the Guatemalan native peoples. The Quiché are the descendants of the once-proud Mayas, whose civilization flourished in Central America until about A.D. 900. Menchu came to prominence in 1983 with the publication in Spanish of her autobiography *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, which gives an account of the **atrocities** committed by government forces from the 1960s up to the 1980s against the peasant population of Guatemala.

While the country's **elite** lived in heavily guarded, luxurious homes in Guatemala City, the native peoples, who made up more than half of the population, lived in **abject** poverty. Their little plots of land, which provided only a meager living, could be seized without warning by wealthy landowners. To protest was to risk severe punishment by the army, whose methods included the **razing** of entire villages along with the slaughter of their inhabitants. During the thirty-year conflict, an estimated one hundred thousand unarmed native peasants were killed, and tens of thousands fled the **turmoil** in the countryside for the safety of neighboring Mexico. There they **languished** for many years in refugee camps. Others escaped to the mountains to wage a decades-long civil war against the army.

Menchu's own family experienced terrible losses for resisting the army's rigid control of the country. Her father was repeatedly beaten, tortured, and jailed for organizing nonviolent protests. He was part of a group that occupied the Spanish embassy in Guatemala City in order to draw attention to the government's **flagrant** abuses of human rights. During this occupation, the building was deliberately set on fire, killing those trapped inside. Later, Menchu's sixteen-year-old brother, along with twenty others, was abducted and killed by the military. A year later her mother was abducted by army officers and tortured before being tied to a tree until she died. Her body was left unburied and visible as a **dire** warning to other "troublemakers."

Two of Menchu's sisters joined the armed resistance groups fighting within the country. She herself escaped to Mexico in 1981. From there she worked to draw the world's attention to the plight of her people. The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize **enhanced** enormously her ability to tell her story, both

within Guatemala and in the world at large. She used the \$1.2 million prize money to further her campaign for peace in Guatemala and the rights of native people throughout the hemisphere. There was one further benefit of winning the prize: as a world-famous figure, she was free to visit her native land without fear of **reprisal** by government forces.

The thirty years of civil war ended in 1996 with the signing of peace accords between the rebels and the government. Progress toward the goals outlined in the accords was painfully slow, largely because of the mistrust that still existed between the two sides. In February of 2004, President Oscar Berger appointed what he called "a goodwill ambassador" to speed up the process. The person he named to the post was Rigoberta Menchu.

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. How do you know that Menchu's father did not **advocate** violence?

2. How might language have affected the ability of the native peoples of Guatemala to form a united opposition to the army?

3. What **reprisal** did government forces make for the occupation of the Spanish embassy?

4. What **atrocities** was Menchu's father subjected to?

5. What were the **dire** consequences for Menchu's family of the burning of the Spanish embassy?

6. What event will be **commemorated** in 2092?

7. Why would it be inaccurate to describe Rigoberta Menchu as **mute** about the suffering of the Guatemalan people?

8. Do you think that Menchu's family was part of the country's **elite**?

9. What is the meaning of **abject** as it is used in the passage?
10. Give one example from the passage of a **flagrant** abuse of human rights by the Guatemalan military.
11. How might the Guatemalan generals defend the army's treatment of protesters?
12. How do you know that the lives of the Guatemalans who fled to Mexico did not improve much?
13. How do you think Rigoberta Menchu's autobiography **enhanced** people's knowledge of what was happening in Guatemala?
14. What is the meaning of **wreaked** as it is used in the passage?
15. During the war, why were many Guatemalan peasants left homeless?

### FUN & FASCINATING FACTS

The Latin prefix *ab-*, "from" or "away," combines with the root from the Latin verb *jacere*, "to throw," to form the adjective **abject**. When John Milton in *Paradise Lost* refers to the fallen angels in hell as "abject and lost," he was using the word in its original meaning, "cast out" or "rejected." It now means "wretched" or "in a low state."

The Latin *flagrare* means "to burn" and forms the root of the adjective **flagrant**. The original meaning of this word was "flaming" or "blazing," which

changed over time to "outrageous" or "conspicuously bad." A blazing fire is certainly conspicuous, and perhaps it is this connection that led to the change in meaning.

One of the meanings of *raise* is "to build." It is curious then that **raze**, a word with the same pronunciation, has just the opposite meaning, "to destroy completely." (While it can take a team of workers several days to *raise* a barn, a tornado can *raze* it in a matter of minutes.)