



Hear the words for this Unit pronounced, defined, and used in sentences at www.vocabularyworkshop.com.

UNIT 3

Definitions

Note carefully the spelling, pronunciation, part(s) of speech, and definition(s) of each of the following words. Then write the word in the blank space(s) in the illustrative sentence(s) following. Finally, study the lists of synonyms and antonyms given at the end of each entry.

1. abominate
(ə bām' ə nāt)

(v.) to have an intense dislike or hatred for

I _____ cruelty yet do not always notice when I have said something cruel without meaning to.

SYNONYMS: loathe, abhor, despise, detest

ANTONYMS: relish, savor, cherish, esteem

2. acculturation
(ə kəl chə rā' shən)

(n.) the modification of the social patterns, traits, or structures of one group or society by contact with those of another; the resultant blend

Every immigrant group newly arrived in another country goes through a slow process of _____.

SYNONYM: adaptation

3. adventitious
(ad ven tish' əs)

(adj.) resulting from chance rather than from an inherent cause or character; accidental, not essential; (*medicine*) acquired, not congenital

It was no _____ meeting that led to their writing songs together, for in fact they were cousins.

SYNONYMS: extrinsic, incidental, fortuitous

ANTONYMS: essential, intrinsic, inherent, congenital

4. ascribe
(ə skrīb')

(v.) to assign or refer to (as a cause or source), attribute

You may _____ these holes to gophers or elves, but I blame the dog from next door.

SYNONYMS: impute, credit, attribute

5. circuitous
(sər kyū' ə təs)

(adj.) roundabout, not direct

I followed a _____ path through the woods, not because I feared pursuit, but because I was lost.

SYNONYMS: indirect, meandering, winding

ANTONYMS: straight, direct, as the crow flies

6. commiserate
(kə miz' ə rāt)

(v.) to sympathize with, have pity or sorrow for, share a feeling of distress

The family _____ with her after the loss of her old and faithful dog.

SYNONYMS: feel sorry for, empathize

ANTONYM: feel no sympathy for

7. enjoin
(en join')

(v) to direct or order, to prescribe a course of action in an authoritative way, to prohibit

I _____ them to stop spending so much money or to face the consequences.
SYNONYMS: bid, charge, command, adjure
ANTONYMS: allow, permit

8. expeditious
(ek' spid' ius)

(v) to make easy, cause to progress faster

The pleasant background music did not _____ my work but instead, distracted me.
SYNONYMS: accelerate, facilitate, speed up
ANTONYMS: hinder, hamper, impede, obstruct

9. expiate
(ek' spie' at)

(v) to make amends, make up for, to avert

They seemed more than willing to _____ their guilt by whatever means necessary.
SYNONYMS: redeem, make amends for, atone, make reparation

10. ferment
(n, 'far' ment;
v, far' ment')

(n) a state of great excitement, agitation, or turbulence; (v) to be in or work into such a state; to produce alcohol by chemical action

Caught in the _____ of revolution, the young men enlisted with the local militias.
It left for a time, order will eventually _____
SYNONYMS: (n) commotion, turmoil, unrest
ANTONYMS: (n) peace and quiet, tranquility, placidity
(adj.) resulting from or marked by lack of attention, unintentional, accidental

11. inadvertent
(in' ad' var' tent)

The poor fellow was stronger than he realized, and the damage he did was _____
SYNONYMS: accidental, unconsidered
ANTONYMS: deliberate, intentional, premeditated

12. nominal
(nahn' a' na)

(adj.) existing in name only, not real, too small to be considered or taken seriously

Because so many of its patients were having financial troubles, the health clinic charged only _____ fees.
SYNONYMS: titular, token, trifling, inconsequential
ANTONYMS: real, actual, exorbitant, excessive

13. noncommittal
(nahn' ka mit' al)

(adj.) not decisive or definite, unwilling to take a clear position or to say yes or no

We questioned her quietly, carefully, and at length, but her answers remained _____.
SYNONYMS: cagey, uninformative, playing it safe, playing it close to the vest
ANTONYMS: positive, definite, committed

14. peculate
(pek' yu lat)

(v) to steal something that has been given into one's trust, to take improperly for one's own use

Investigators discovered that the clerk came up with a scheme to _____ from the company.
SYNONYMS: embezzle, defraud, misappropriate

15. proclivity
(pro' kliv' a te)

(n) a natural or habitual inclination or tendency (especially of human character or behavior)

Curious, patient, and fond of long walks outdoors, she soon displayed a _____ for nature study.
SYNONYMS: natural bent, penchant, propensity
ANTONYMS: inability or incapacity

16. sangfroid
(sãng' frwã')

(n) composure or coolness, especially in trying circumstances

An experienced actor can perform with what seems like limitless _____, even when he forgets a line.

SYNONYMS: poise, self-assurance, equanimity
ANTONYMS: excitability, hysteria, flappability

17. seditious
(sã' dist' as)

(adj.) resistant to lawful authority, having the purpose of overthrowing an established government

Dictators usually begin their reigns by searching out and silencing _____ opinion.
SYNONYMS: mutinous, rebellious, subversive
ANTONYMS: supportive, loyal, faithful, allegiant

18. tenuous
(ten' yu as)

(adj.) thin, slender, not dense, lacking clarity or sharpness, of slight importance or significance, lacking a sound basis, poorly supported

My grasp of trigonometry was _____ until I attended the extra-help sessions.
SYNONYMS: flimsy, insubstantial, vague, hazy
ANTONYMS: strong, solid, substantial, valid

19. vitriolic
(vi' tre' al' ik)

(adj.) bitter, sarcastic, highly caustic or biting (like a strong acid)

Though hurt by his _____ language, I had to admit that some of his points were valid.
SYNONYMS: withering, acerbic, mordant
ANTONYMS: bland, saccharine, honeyed, sugary

20. wheedle
(whed' al)

(v) to use coaxing or flattery to gain some desired end

The spy used charm and flattery in order to _____ the information from the diplomat.
SYNONYMS: cajole, inveigle, soft-soap, sweet-talk
ANTONYMS: coerce, browbeat, intimidate, strong-arm

Completing the Sentence

From the words for this unit, choose the one that best completes each of the following sentences. Write the word in the space provided.

1. He _____ the crime committed during his youth by a lifetime of service to humanity.
2. Since she seems to have a strong _____ both for science and for service to others, I think that she should plan to study medicine.
3. We Americans do not believe that honest criticism of our public officials, no matter how severe, should be regarded as _____ the labor union from applying it against the employing firm.
4. Declaring the boycott to be illegal, the judge _____ the juice of the luscious grapes that grow on the hillsides.
5. No matter what their other likes or dislikes are, all Americans thoroughly _____ slavery in all its forms.
6. Certain languages such as Afrikaans are the product of _____ and were created when two societies merged.
7. Some people say that they cannot understand her defeat in the election, but I _____ it to her failure to discuss the issues in simple, down-to-earth terms.
8. While he remained the _____ leader of the group, the real power passed into the hands of his wily aide.
9. His line of questioning was so _____ that I began to suspect that he was not sure of what he was trying to prove.
10. He claims to be a close friend of the Senator, but I believe that the connection between them is extremely _____.
11. The new computerized referral system will greatly _____ the processing of complaints by customers.
12. Only someone who has suffered from bursitis can fully _____ with me when I am in the throes of an acute attack.
13. Who in the world can hope to match the unshakable _____ of the indestructible James Bond in moments of great peril?
14. We must distinguish between the truly basic policies of our political party and those that are _____ and have little connection with the essential program.
15. Much of the money that the "robber barons" _____ from the public trust was never recovered—or even missed!
16. You could have indicated frankly what you thought was wrong without embittering them with such _____ criticism.

18. As charming, clever, and persuasive as you may be, you will certainly not _____ me into lending you my tennis racquet.
19. We had hoped to learn his opinion of the new energy program, but he remained completely _____ during the interview.
20. If, as you say, your slamming of the door on the way out was completely _____, you should be more careful in the future.

Synonyms

Choose the word from this unit that is **the same or most nearly the same in meaning as the boldface word or expression in the given phrase**. Write the word on the line provided.

1. **charge** both sides to negotiate _____
2. **speed up** the registration procedure _____
3. a motive **attributed** to me _____
4. **embezzle** from the treasury _____
5. was **cajoled** into agreeing _____
6. an **acerbic** tone of voice _____
7. the **adaptation** of American students in Spain _____
8. to **atone** for her unkindness _____
9. only **trifling** objections raised _____
10. **empathize** with your disappointment _____
11. the **turmoil** of opening night _____
12. arguing a **poorly supported** point _____
13. their leader's **self-assurance** _____
14. a nasty **pendant** for lying _____
15. a **fortuitous** sequence of events _____

Antonyms

Choose the word from this unit that is **most nearly opposite in meaning to the boldface word or expression in the given phrase**. Write the word on the line provided.

16. **cherish** everything about her _____
17. a **deliberate** misuse of the money _____
18. a **definite** statement of intentions _____
19. a kingdom filled with **loyal** subjects _____
20. a **direct** way home _____

Choosing the Right Word

Circle the **boldface** word that more satisfactorily completes each of the following sentences.

- I was simply unable to follow the (**circuitous, adventitious**) reasoning by which she "proved" that a straight line is not necessarily the shortest distance between two points.
- Our military is prepared to deal with external aggression, but our best defense against (**sedition, peculation**) at home is the loyalty of the American people.
- (**Commiseration, Proclivity**) is a noble human emotion, but in itself it is no substitute for vigorous efforts to help other people.
- Since he has been able to (**expiate, wheedle**) almost anything he wants out of his parents, he is quite unprepared now to face the harsh realities of life.
- An experienced politician always tries to avoid making (**fermented, inadvertent**) remarks that may offend some voters.
- Although the Queen is the (**nominal, adventitious**) head of state, the Prime Minister is the real leader of the British government.
- (**Peculation, Sedition**) was such a common offense among Roman provincial governors that, when asked how they made their fortunes, most simply replied, "In the provinces."
- His investments proved to be profitable, but they were (**adventitious, nominal**) rather than the result of knowledge and planning.
- The Biblical prophets (**abominated, acculturated**) idol worship of any kind and railed vehemently against such practices.
- You are following an all too familiar pattern in (**ascribing, expediting**) your failures to anyone and everyone - except yourself.
- Although that critic is feared for (**noncommittal, vitriolic**) reviews, I have learned that there is usually a sound basis for her unfavorable judgments.
- I learned that I would have to make a choice between my strong aversion to hard work and my equally strong (**proclivity, wheedle**) for eating movie heroes who are "as cool as a cucumber."
- After he had seen the error of his ways, the villain attempted to (**expiate, enjoin**) the dark deeds of his past by acts of kindness and mercy.
- Experienced lawyers know that the line between literal truth and slight but significant distortion of the facts is often a (**seditious, tenuous**) one.
- With the deadline fast approaching, the local newspaper office was in a (**ferment, sedition**) of last-minute activity and preparation.
- They are conscientious objectors to military service because they are (**enjoined, ascribed**) by a deep religious conviction not to take a human life.
- When I spoke to Mother about going on the Easter trip to Washington, her only reply was a (**nominal, noncommittal**) "We'll see."
- Modern American society can justly be said to be the end point of the (**commiseration, acculturation**) of diverse groups of immigrants.
- The worst way I can think of to (**expedite, ascribe**) this program would be to set up a new Committee on (**Expediting, Ascribing**) Programs.

Vocabulary in Context

Read the following passage, in which some of the words you have studied in this unit appear in **boldface** type. Then complete each statement given below the passage by circling the letter of the item that is the same or almost the same in meaning as the highlighted word.

Building in Place

(Line) Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959) is widely considered the greatest American architect in history. Few had a greater vision for how Americans should live or a harder time, despite handling professional obstacles with **sangfroid**, in getting others to further that vision by erecting the buildings he had designed. After college, where he studied engineering, he worked in Chicago for Louis Sullivan, a great architect who shared Wright's belief that American structures should suit the splendid and varied American landscape in which they were built. Wright **abominated** and eschewed the classical European designs that formed only a **tenuous** connection to the actual lives his clients lived. He loved nature in general and was inspired by the American plains in particular. He designed Midwestern "prairie houses" that were long and low. Their shapes and surfaces showed that they were a part of the land on which they stood, and this style became known as "organic architecture." Later, when he was asked to design larger buildings such as churches and offices, he used concrete for its thriftiness and glass ceilings for their natural and brilliant sunshine.

Branching out to Nevada, California, Pennsylvania, and elsewhere, he designed hundreds of buildings, and about 500 of them were built. A man of strong opinions, he stuck by his designs and could be **vitriolic** about preserving their integrity. Wright later went on to design the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo. Determined to match the building to its place, he made it resistant to the **adventitious** menace of earthquakes, a common danger in Japan. Sure enough, a terrible quake destroyed much of Tokyo, but the Imperial Hotel remained standing.

Toward the end of his career, Wright built a school for architects, and though its **nominal** purpose was design, its real impetus was his vision of life. Of his work he once said, "The mother of art is architecture. Without an architecture of our own we have no soul of our own civilization."

Country club designed by Wright in Maui



Country club designed by Wright in Maui

- The meaning of **sangfroid** (line 3) is
 - menace
 - bank account
 - composure
 - tricky
- Abominated** (line 10) most nearly means
 - loathed
 - destroyed
 - made fun of
 - tried out
- Tenuous** (line 11) is best defined as
 - permanent
 - vague
 - expensive
 - pretty
- The meaning of **vitriolic** (line 24) is
 - acerbic
 - confusing
 - loud
 - tricky
- Adventitious** (line 26) most nearly means
 - frequent
 - destructive
 - accidental
 - massive
- Nominal** (line 30) is best defined as
 - popular
 - easy
 - freshman
 - token