

Word List

Study the definitions of the words. Then do the exercises that follow.



alleviate
a lè vè àt
v. To relieve or make more bearable.
Gargling with saltwater **alleviates** a sore throat.
.....
Talk with your partner about what you do to alleviate the stress of homework, essays, and tests.



antidote
an' ti dot
n. 1. A remedy that relieves the effects of a poison.
Scientists are looking for a snakebite **antidote** that might save thousands of lives.
2. Anything that offers relief from an undesirable condition.
Her surprise birthday party was an **antidote** to Anzi's losing the tennis match.
.....
Tell your partner what your favorite antidote to boredom is.

bedlam
bed' lam
n. A very confused and noisy scene or situation.
Bedlam broke out in the auditorium among students and parents when it was announced that the school was going to be closed.

cajole
ka jol'
v. To urge with gentle and repeated requests; to coax.
Willa allowed herself to be **cajoled** into acting as class treasurer.

glib
glib
adj. Marked by an ease in speaking or writing that often shows lack of concern or sincerity.
The candidate's **glib** responses to questions made it difficult to understand his opinion.

haggard
hag' ard
adj. Having a tired look; worn out.
The **haggard** faces of the refugees spoke of many fearful days and sleepless nights.



immaculate
i mak' yoo lat
adj. 1. Perfectly clean; spotless.
The dining room's white linen tablecloths were starched and **immaculate** at the beginning of the reception.
2. Without a flaw; faultless.
His **immaculate** report cards since kindergarten mean that Luis will probably be admitted to any college he applies to.
.....
Discuss with your partner the advantages and disadvantages of keeping your home immaculate.



Incessant
in ses' ant
adj. Going on without interruption; continual.
We hardly slept because of the **incessant** noise from the apartment downstairs.
.....
Describe to your partner either an incessant noise that bothers you or an incessant noise you don't really notice.

indulgent
in du' jant
adj. Inclined to give in easily; lenient.

The **indulgent** parents bought their son every video game he asked for.
Indulge v. 1. To give in too easily to the wishes of.
My grandparents loved to **indulge** my brothers and me when they came to visit.
2. To yield to.
I **indulged** my craving for something sweet by having an ice-cream cone.

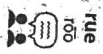
loll
loll
v. 1. To sit back in a relaxed way; to sprawl.
I **loll**ed in the hammock for most of that humid summer afternoon.

pittance
pit' ns
n. A very small amount, especially of money.
Even though the summer job pays only a **pittance**, I decided to take it because I needed the experience.

pungent
pun' jent
adj. 1. Having a sharp taste or smell.
A **pungent** sauce of pineapple and ginger was served over the pork.

2. Sharply critical; painfully direct.
The newspaper editorial contained **pungent** criticism of the committee's proposed cuts in the city's education budget.

Chat with your partner about whether giving a **pungent** criticism is good, because it is honest, or bad, because it might be hurtful.



strident
srid' nt
adj. Harsh and grating; loud and shrill.

The counselor's **strident** voice awakened the campers every morning.



vehement
vé' a ment
adj. Expressing strong feeling; intense.
Their differing beliefs sometimes caused **vehement** arguments between the friends.
.....
Talk with your partner about whether you are comfortable or uncomfortable having a vehement argument with someone.

Using Words in Context

Read the following sentences. If the word in **bold** is used correctly, write C on the line. If the word is used incorrectly, write I on the line.

- (a) Because we fed the squirrels, they became **indulgent** for more. —

(b) I **indulged** my craving for seafood by ordering shrimp. —

(c) I **indulge** my little cousin by giving him my extra change. —

(d) **Indulgent** leaders know exactly what they want and how to get it. —
- (a) Migrant workers received a **pittance** for ten hours toiling in the hot sun. —

(b) I removed the peach **pittance** before cutting the flesh into slices. —

(c) To a millionaire, a fifty-dollar tip was a **pittance**. —

(d) My dad counted out fifty **pittances** and handed them to me. —
- (a) Ice and rest may **alleviate** a minor ankle sprain. —

(b) I managed to **alleviate** my grade from a B to an A-. —

(c) My uncle is trying to **alleviate** his headache with medicine. —

(d) I was glad to be **alleviated** of the stress of my job as a dishwasher. —
- (a) People were barely able to survive in such **glib** conditions. —

(b) Simone's **glib** comments showed she had given the matter little thought. —

(c) Some thought him eloquent, but I considered him merely **glib**. —

(d) Ibrahim looked **glib** when I asked him about his winning touchdown. —
- (a) Wan was known for his **pungent** articles attacking the mayor. —

(b) **Pungent** spices from China and India play a big part in Ada's cooking. —

(c) A **pungent** sauce using tamarind complemented the curry. —

(d) The travelers were **pungent** for home after being away for a month. —
- (a) I **rue** the day I turned down my friend's offer of help. —

(b) I **rued** Zhin an e-mail saying how sorry I was. —

(c) She told me she **rued** giving him advice because he took it poorly. —

(d) I like to **rue** in the morning before I've had breakfast. —
- (a) When crossing the desert, we carried an **antidote** for scorpion bites. —

(b) The villain had developed a poison for which there was no **antidote**. —

(c) For Aunt Agatha, the **antidote** for boredom was reading spy novels. —

(d) The comic told a few amusing **antidotes** about his life in the army. —

alleviate
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incessant
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pungent
rue
strident
vehement

Making Connections

Circle the letter next to each correct answer. There may be more than one correct answer.

- (a) tumult (b) antidote (c) bedlam (d) pittance
- (a) Which word or words go with *poor health*?
 (a) immaculate (b) haggard (c) pungent (d) feeble
- (a) Which word or words go with *hang loosely*?
 (a) dangle (b) loll (c) rue (d) alleviate
- (a) Which word or words go with *give in easily*?
 (a) indulgent (b) incessant (c) placid (d) strident
- (a) Which word or words go with *regret*?
 (a) pittance (b) enigma (c) rue (d) reticent
- (a) Which word or words go with *unending*?
 (a) continuous (b) glib (c) incessant (d) pungent
- (a) The movie star was **immaculate** in a white tuxedo. —

(b) I need fifteen **immaculate** minutes before I'm ready to go. —

(c) My sister keeps her room in **immaculate** condition, but mine is a mess. —

(d) Aziz's hands are so **immaculate**, they need to be washed. —
- (a) We **cajoled** her into staying an extra day. —

(b) The dog was **cajoled** into jumping into the car. —

(c) The teacher **cajoled** the students to study for tomorrow's quiz. —

(d) The party ended early as many people had to **cajole** home. —
- (a) I thought five dollars was an **incessant** amount for a bottle of water. —

(b) The **incessant** rain has been driving people crazy for a month. —

(c) Aunt Dora was **incessant** that we stay the night. —

(d) **Incessant** rumblings gave us an early warning that an earthquake was imminent. —

Determining Meanings

Circle the letter next to each answer choice that correctly completes the sentence. There may be more than one correct answer.

7. Which word or words go with *cure*?
 (a) bedlam (b) pittance (c) haggard (d) antidote
8. Which word or words go with *intense*?
 (a) infallible (b) strident (c) stagnant (d) vehement
9. Which word or words go with *small*?
 (a) artisan (b) pittance (c) morsel (d) legacy
10. Which word or words go with *attention to detail*?
 (a) fastidious (b) enigmatic (c) pungent (d) immaculate

1. The **haggard**

- (a) survivors had been adrift in an open boat for thirty days.
- (b) sunlight was crystal clear and beaming.
- (c) look on his face was full of energy and ambition.
- (d) parents of the newborn wished for just one full night of sleep.

2. We **loll**

- (a) back on the couch and closed our eyes.
- (b) the baby to sleep by singing a lullaby.
- (c) about the apartment until it was time to leave for the parade.
- (d) our opponents into thinking we were losing.

3. **Pungent**

- (a) pillows are recommended for those with back and neck problems.
- (b) criticism from the school board forced the principal to retire.
- (c) aromas came from the kitchen.
- (d) darkness greeted the campers as a cloud covered the moon.

4. His **vehement**

- (a) pillow was soft as he fell onto it.
- (b) cup fell off the table and spilled all over the floor.
- (c) voice could be heard all the way down the hall.
- (d) argument unfortunately didn't get him what he wanted.

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Completing Sentences

Complete the sentences to demonstrate your knowledge of the words in bold.

1. If someone is **cajoled**, that means he or she is _____

2. Talking to a **glib** person about a serious issue might bother me because _____

3. Something I like to keep **immaculate** is _____

4. To **alleviate** a headache, I _____

5. I sometimes **indulge** myself by _____

5. The **antidote**

- (a) to highway deaths may turn out to be driverless cars.
- (b) to tears and sorrow is laughter and joy.
- (c) we just heard reminds me of a similar situation when I was younger.
- (d) for lead poisoning in children does not exist.

6. **Strident**

- (a) demands for better air conditioning were published in the school newspaper.
- (b) glasses of juice are on the counter.
- (c) keyboards can be picked up from the store.
- (d) shouts from the crowd could be heard two blocks down.

7. **Bedlam**

- (a) is spoken in the southern half of the country.
- (b) filled the air as the parents at the meeting began yelling.
- (c) broke out in the library when the students started dancing.
- (d) hit the crowded grocery store when the power went out.

8. I **cajoled**

- (a) the teacher into letting us have a five-minute break.
- (b) the inexperienced actor into thinking he could play the main role.
- (c) my hands with lotion and then stretched my arms.
- (d) my parents into renting a pony for my birthday party.

6. My favorite way to loll is _____

7. If I were paid a **pittance** after I worked hard, I would feel _____

8. A **strident** person sounds _____

9. When someone **rues** something, that means he or she _____

10. I have a **vehement** belief in _____

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Vocabulary in Context

Read the passage.

The Wisdom of Rabbi Rabinowicz

The Jewish people long ago discovered that humor can be an **antidote** for life's hardships, and this fact is reflected in many of their folk tales. The following story, from Russia, tells of Moïshe, a hardworking but poor tailor, and his wife, Sarah. Did I say poor? Truth to tell, Moïshe's business endeavors brought in barely enough money to pay the rent on their small house and put food on their table.

Moïshe's brother Jacob and sister-in-law Martha lived in the adjoining village with their six children. Jacob described his occupation as a roofer, but his earnings never amounted to more than a **pittance**, for—as he never tired of explaining—a roofer can't work in the rain, and when it isn't raining, who needs roof repairs?

One day Jacob came to his brother with a plea for assistance. He and his family had been evicted from their home and were in dire need of a place to stay. Of course, it would be only temporary. Moïshe sympathized with his brother but explained that his house was barely spacious enough for two. How would eight more people fit into it? But Jacob, though an indifferent roofer, was a **glib** talker. In no time at all, he had **cajoled** his brother into offering temporary accommodations.



Moïshe and Sarah felt that a small army had invaded their home. The children were allowed to run wild because Jacob and Martha were the most **indulgent** of parents, never correcting them. Their muddy boots trampled dirt all over the floor, and the house, which had once been **immaculate**, became impossible to keep clean. Jacob spent the entire day **lolling** in Moïshe's favorite armchair, while Martha's **strident** voice never offered any respite.

Sarah **rue**d the day her husband had invited his relatives into their home. As for Moïshe himself, he could scarcely sleep at night. When he grew increasingly **haggard**, Sarah became so anguished that she sent her husband to Rabbi Rabinowicz for guidance. The rabbi's advice was straightforward and uncomplicated. Knowing that Moïshe kept a couple of goats and some hens in the backyard, he told the exhausted man to move the animals into the house. Moïshe was bewildered. He could not imagine how such a preposterous action would **alleviate** the problem, but because the rabbi was renowned for his sage counsel, Moïshe felt it was not his place to raise objections. Sarah, who had no such qualms, argued **vehemently** against the plan. In the end, neither one was willing to disregard completely the rabbi's recommendation, so they brought the goats and the hens into the house.

If things had been atrocious before, they were now ten times worse.

The hens' **incessant** cackling nearly drove Moïshe out of his mind, and the **pungent** odors of the goats were sickening. Poor Moïshe's home was in such **bedlam** that any thought of sleep was impossible. In tears, he returned to the rabbi to ask what to do. The rabbi told him to return the goats and chickens to the backyard.

Moïshe's relief was enormous as he drove the squawking chickens and the stubborn goats out from his house. The rooms suddenly seemed so peaceful that he scarcely noticed the unruly children, his loudmouthed sister-in-law, and his good-for-nothing brother.

"Peace," he murmured contentedly, "It's wonderful! That Rabbi Rabinowicz is a genius."

► Answer each of the following questions with a sentence. If a question does not contain a vocabulary word from the lesson's word list, use one in your answer. Use each word only once.

1. How do you know that Jacob made very little money as a roofer?

alleviate
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loll
pittance
pungent
rue
student
vehement

2. Why was Jacob able to talk his brother into letting him move in?

3. In this Jewish folk tale, why does the humor deal with hardship?

4. Why might it have been unpleasant to listen to Martha?

5. Why was Moishe becoming more and more **haggard**?

6. What is the meaning of **pungent** as it is used in the passage?

7. Why is it inaccurate to say that Sarah was happy to have her brother-in-law's family staying in her home?

8. Why was it impossible to escape the sound of Martha's voice?

9. How do we know that Jacob kept urging Moishe to let him move in?

10. What is the meaning of **immaculate** as it is used in the passage?

11. How did Moishe **indulge** his brother?

Fun & Fascinating FACTS

- The Greek prefix *anti-* (meaning "opposite" or "against") combines with the Greek root *dosis* (meaning "something given") to form **antidote**. Note that *antidote* may be followed by to (a good book is an *antidote to boredom*), by *for* (an *antidote for a snakebite*), and by *against* (friendship as an *antidote against loneliness*). If you confuse this word with *anecdote* (meaning "a short, interesting, or amusing story about someone or something"), you might be called a Mrs. Malaprop.
- Mrs. Malaprop is a character in a play called *The Rivals* by the eighteenth-century playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan. She elicits laughter in the theater by confusing words that are similar in sound but different in meaning. She is the sort of person who says she is going to tell you an amusing *antidote* or offer you what she would call an *anecdote* for a bee sting. Such a misuse of words is called a *malapropism*.
- The Hospital of Saint Mary of Bethlehem in London was for several centuries a kind of prison for the severely mentally ill. In those days there was no effective treatment for such people. As a result, the "hospital" was a very noisy place, filled with confusion and tumult. Over time, its name was shortened to **Bedlam**. The "hospital" is long gone, but the word **bedlam**, meaning "a condition of noise and confusion," remains.

12. What is the meaning of **lolling** as it is used in the passage?

13. What seemed to **alleviate** the confusion and noise in Moishe's home?

14. What was Sarah's response to the rabbi's plan?

15. What are some details from the passage that illustrate that **bedlam** reigned in Moishe's home after the arrival of his brother's family?

