

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.

The Wonder Around Us

Most people today have a far greater appreciation of the preciousness of the land and sea than the general public living just half a century ago. In the 1940s and 1950s, many held the **myopic** view that natural resources were limitless and impervious to pollution. The marine biologist Rachel Carson (1907 – 1964) was one of the first scientists to challenge these widely held assumptions. She did so by writing a series of evocative books about the sea, culminating in the 1951 bestseller, *The Sea Around Us*. To the surprise of many, Carson found an **avid** audience for her unique blend of science and lyricism and became one of the pioneers of the growing ecological movement.

Through her imaginative prose, Carson made the **brackish** waters of the world's oceans come alive for her readers. She helped them see that the ocean was not a deep, dark, and empty abyss, but a living home to a fascinating array of plants and animals.

Carson also dramatized the intricate relationship between wind and water. The rotation of the earth, water, temperature, and wind combine to produce the great ocean currents— giant global **maelstroms** that carry the sea's waters in roughly circular patterns. The wind also whips up the ocean waters into waves that **undulate** across the sea's surface. Carson explained that these waves vary from the smallest ripples to giant mountains of water, called *tsunamis* that travel up to 600 miles per hour— with a sometimes startling **celerity**— and cause great damage when they come ashore. No matter what force of nature Carson evoked, she never failed to make her reader feel a part of the process she was describing, and to respect the earth and seas.

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| 1. The meaning of myopic is | 4. The meaning of maelstroms is |
| a. imaginative c. democratic | a. whirlpools c. motors |
| b. enlightened d. shortsighted | b. explosions d. earthquakes |
| 2. Avid most nearly means | 5. Undulate most nearly means |
| a. enthusiastic c. critical | a. creep c. ripple |
| b. grateful d. varied | b. sing d. reflect |
| 3. Brackish is best defined as | 6. Celerity most nearly means |
| a. frigid c. deep | a. quantity c. speed |
| b. briny d. mysterious | b. cost d. time |