

UNIT 1

Read the following selection, taking note of the **boldface** words and their contexts. These words are among those you will be studying in Unit 1. As you complete the exercises in this unit, it may help to refer to the way the words are used below.

Across the Pond

<Letters>

January 27, 1891

My Dear Cora,

Accept my congratulations on the establishment of the National American Women's Suffrage Association. Am I too bold to presume this new unity in the American suffrage movement marks the end of the **invidious** divisions in your ranks? English appetite for American news is **insatiable** of late, with much talk of means by which we might **emulate** your recent achievements. Just yesterday, at a small gathering of friends of our League, I heard Mrs. Pankhurst break off into a rousing **encomium** on the entry of the state of Wyoming into your union. The opinion here is that with one state now granting universal suffrage, it's only a matter of time before the dam breaks.

In England we persuade ourselves to **eschew** hope for such grand achievements till the times make them more **tenable**. There's plenty of work to be done to prepare for the event. The Pankhursts have inspired many of us to push for the women's vote in local elections. This would be no small thing in itself, and should help our effort to reform the conservative spirit of our country. I fear the climate in America is more favorable to the endeavor, while opposition here remains **intransigent**. At tea not long ago, I heard one Mr. Evans produce the most **banal** argument against the women's vote you could

imagine. I won't trouble you with details of his **carping** rhetoric, but note that he took pains to demonstrate that women are "unfit for the public duties of citizenship," and greatly feared the prospect that women's votes might "swamp the votes of men." Imagine my delight when, pressed by objections from several present, the good Mr. Evans grew suddenly **taciturn**, and at a loss for any other means of **temporizing**, complimented his hostess and bid us good day!

Charles and I often recall your kindness during our last visit, and look forward to seeing you again this summer.

Affectionately,

Millicent

March 20, 1891

Dearest Millie,

We have many like your Mr. Evans here, which puts our own work ahead of us. I can, however, **substantiate** your optimism where Wyoming is concerned. Other Western states and territories will surely follow suit, with energy already in the project in Idaho, Colorado, and elsewhere. Women's suffrage has firmer roots in the West, and we expect more progress there.

Germane to the topic, I had the privilege of meeting Jane Addams in Chicago, where she has founded the Hull House, devoted to the education of local women of the working class. Miss Addams is a remarkable woman, and strikes me as the very type to carry our movement forward. Initial renovations of the Hull

Mansion were funded primarily through her own **largesse**, and she has become an advocate for local suffrage in Chicago and for other progressive causes.

Our new Association might show the extent to which the old arguments that divided us have passed into history, but new excuses for dissent emerge as old ones fade. The new tendency to portray women as "domestic" spirits, superior in moral virtue to men, strikes some of us as misguided. I'll not **belabor** the point here, hoping instead to present a **coherent** argument for you in person when you arrive in New York.

Until then, I keep you in my thoughts. Your friend always,

Cora



American women fought for the right to vote in each state, until the Nineteenth Amendment was passed in 1920.

Definitions

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

- 1. acquisitive**
(ə kwiz' ə tiv)

(*adj.*) able to get and retain ideas or information; concerned with acquiring wealth or property

In an _____ society, there is a great deal of emphasis on buying and selling.

SYNONYMS: greedy, avaricious, retentive
ANTONYM: altruistic
- 2. arrogate**
(a' rə gāt)

(*v.*) to claim or take without right

The ambitious noblemen will put the young king under house arrest and _____ royal privileges to themselves.

SYNONYMS: expropriate, commandeer
ANTONYMS: renounce, abdicate, abandon
- 3. banal**
(bə nal')

(*adj.*) hackneyed, trite, commonplace

The new play's _____ dialogue made it seem more like a soap opera than a serious drama.

SYNONYMS: stale, insipid
ANTONYMS: fresh, original, new
- 4. belabor**
(bi lā' bər)

(*v.*) to work on excessively; to thrash soundly

His tendency to _____ the small points often made him miss the big picture.

SYNONYM: overwork
- 5. carping**
(kär' pin)

(*adj.*) tending to find fault, especially in a petty, nasty, or hairsplitting way; (*n.*) petty, nagging criticism

The trainee resigned after a week rather than put up with the _____ complaints of the sales manager.

Most artists choose to ignore the _____ of critics and simply go on with their work.

SYNONYMS: (*adj.*) nit-picking, caviling
ANTONYMS: (*adj.*) approving, uncritical
- 6. coherent**
(kō hēr' ənt)

(*adj.*) holding or sticking together; making a logical whole; comprehensible, meaningful

The physics teacher gave a surprisingly _____ description of quantum mechanics.

SYNONYMS: connected, unified, consistent, cohesive
ANTONYMS: muddled, chaotic, disjointed

- 7. congeal**
(kən jēl')

(*v.*) to change from liquid to solid, thicken; to make inflexible or rigid

If you do not wash your dishes right away, the food on them will _____.

SYNONYMS: harden, jell, solidify
ANTONYM: liquefy
- 8. emulate**
(em' yə lāt)

(*v.*) to imitate with the intent of equaling or surpassing the model

Most beginning writers try to _____ a great writer and later develop their own individual styles.

SYNONYMS: copy, mimic, rival, match, measure up to
- 9. encomium**
(en kō' mē əm)

(*n.*) a formal expression of praise, a lavish tribute

On Veterans Day, the President delivered a heartfelt _____ to those who died for their country.

SYNONYMS: panegyric, eulogy
ANTONYMS: condemnation, castigation, criticism
- 10. eschew**
(es chū')

(*v.*) to avoid, shun, keep away from

The young athletes promised the coach that they would train vigorously and _____ bad habits.

SYNONYMS: abstain from, steer clear of, forgo
ANTONYMS: embrace, adopt
- 11. germane**
(jər mən')

(*adj.*) relevant, appropriate, apropos, fitting

Bringing up examples from the past is not _____ to the present discussion.

SYNONYM: pertinent
ANTONYMS: irrelevant, extraneous, inappropriate
- 12. insatiable**
(in sā' shə bəl)

(*adj.*) so great or demanding as not to be satisfied

People with an _____ appetite for gossip often do not have compelling stories of their own.

SYNONYMS: unquenchable, ravenous
- 13. intransigent**
(in tran' sə jənt)

(*adj.*) refusing to compromise, irreconcilable

Little will get accomplished if the legislators of both parties maintain their _____ attitudes.

SYNONYMS: uncompromising, unyielding, obdurate
ANTONYMS: lukewarm, halfhearted, yielding

14. **invidious**
(in vid' ē əs)

(*adj.*) offensive, hateful; tending to cause bitterness and resentment

Bosses should avoid making _____ comparisons between their employees.

SYNONYMS: malicious, spiteful, prejudicial, pejorative
ANTONYMS: flattering, ameliorative

15. **largesse**
(lār jes')

(*n.*) generosity in giving; lavish or bountiful contributions

The university was the fortunate beneficiary of the _____ of many of its graduates.

SYNONYMS: liberality, bounty
ANTONYMS: stinginess, miserliness, niggardliness

16. **reconnaissance**
(ri kən' ə səns)

(*n.*) a survey made for military purposes; any kind of preliminary inspection or examination

The field officer required a thorough _____ before ordering any troop movements.

SYNONYM: exploration

17. **substantiate**
(səb stan' shē ət)

(*v.*) to establish by evidence, prove; to give concrete or substantial form to

The prospector was unable to _____ his claim to the land where the gold was found.

SYNONYMS: confirm, validate, authenticate
ANTONYMS: refute, disprove, invalidate

18. **taciturn**
(tas' ə tərn)

(*adj.*) habitually silent or quiet, inclined to talk very little

Woodrow Wilson has the reputation of having a dour and _____ personality.

SYNONYMS: tight-lipped, uncommunicative, laconic
ANTONYMS: garrulous, loquacious, prolix, verbose

19. **temporize**
(tem' pə rīz)

(*v.*) to stall or act evasively in order to gain time, avoid a confrontation, or postpone a decision; to compromise

For most of Shakespeare's great tragedy, the protagonist Hamlet chooses to _____ rather than act.

SYNONYMS: dillydally, procrastinate

20. **tenable**
(ten' ə bəl)

(*adj.*) capable of being held or defended

The researchers put forth a _____ theory, but their conclusions would be reviewed carefully by others.

SYNONYMS: defensible, justifiable, maintainable
ANTONYMS: indefensible, unjustifiable

Choosing the Right Word

Select the **boldface** word that better completes each sentence. You might refer to the selection on pages 12–13 to see how most of these words are used in context.

- Famous for his monosyllabic replies to questions and a somber and (**taciturn, germane**) nature, President Coolidge had the nickname "Silent Cal."
- In that moment of grief, the conventional expressions of sympathy I had always considered (**tenable, banal**) were surprisingly comforting.
- I am proud to have it said of me that I am stubborn and (**invidious, intransigent**) when genuine moral issues are involved.
- Ethelred the Unready was so reluctant to face the Vikings who invaded his kingdom that in effect he (**arrogated, temporized**) himself off the throne.
- What evidence can you offer to (**substantiate, eschew**) the assertion that capital punishment does not deter potential murderers?
- Suddenly a band of ruffians set upon us and began to (**congeal, belabor**) us with blows and curses.
- Even a very imperfect human being may sometimes have virtues of mind or character that are worthy of (**carping, emulation**).
- Aristotle had such a(n) (**tenable, acquisitive**) mind that his writings are a veritable gold mine of odd and interesting information.
- The mood of easy cordiality with which we began the meeting soon (**congealed, temporized**) into icy politeness.
- The poor woman was in such a state of shock after the accident that she couldn't give a (**coherent, taciturn**) account of what had happened.
- The new batting champion in our softball league is a(n) (**insatiable, taciturn**) young man who prefers to let his bat do his talking for him.
- The speech was so filled with (**encomiums, reconnaissance**) that I found it hard to believe that the subject of all this acclaim was plain old me.
- "That word has such (**invidious, germane**) connotations in modern American parlance," I said, "that I would hesitate to use it, even in jest."
- His figure bears witness to his (**acquisitive, insatiable**) appetite for the pleasures of the table.
- In our attempt to improve the quality of life in America, we should not be too quick to (**eschew, cohere**) old ideas simply because they are old.



Stamp issued in 1938 to honor Calvin Coolidge, the thirtieth President of the United States.

- 16. When the evidence of his misconduct became irrefutable, he saw that his position was not (**banal, tenable**) and resigned.
- 17. After the editor read the story, he returned it to the author with only a few (**carping, coherent**) criticisms of minor faults penciled in the margin.
- 18. The Constitution is uniquely designed to provide protection against those who might seek to (**substantiate, arrogate**) undue power to themselves.
- 19. Aerial (**reconnaissance, encomium**) of the enemy's positions provided the general with the information he needed to plan his attack.
- 20. After I mowed the lawn for an hour, he gave me a whole dollar with the air of a feudal lord bestowing (**largesse, intransigence**) on a grateful serf.
- 21. Your critical comments about my "lack of social background" may be true, but they are not (**coherent, germane**) to my qualifications for office.
- 22. Because this committee has (**belabored, emulated**) the issue of zoning laws for months, we will not invite public comments on it again in tonight's meeting.
- 23. The historian needed to scrutinize additional handwriting samples before he could (**eschew, substantiate**) the signature on the document.
- 24. Instead of opening voters' minds to new ideas, the debate actually (**arrogated, congealed**) their previous objections to the proposed legislation.
- 25. The (**carping, largesse**) of grateful patients made the clinic's expansion possible.

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 phrase. Write that word on the line. Use a dictionary if necessary.

- 1. **harp on** the same point again and again _____
- 2. the **grasping** real estate developer _____
- 3. tried to **usurp** control of the finances _____
- 4. tends to **hedge** when confronted by direct questions _____
- 5. the puppy's **voracious** hunger _____
- 6. led the **scouting expedition** into the jungle _____
- 7. was thanked for her **munificence** _____
- 8. could not **verify** the alibi _____
- 9. received a well-deserved **commendation** _____
- 10. blood that does not **coagulate** _____

Antonyms

Choose the word from this unit that is most nearly opposite in meaning to the **boldface** word or expression in the phrase. Write that word on the line. Use a dictionary if necessary.

- 1. made a very **magnanimous** remark _____
- 2. an **unretentive** mind that cannot remember details _____
- 3. the **inspired** lyrics to that song _____
- 4. mayor who tries to **relinquish** power _____
- 5. butter that does not **soften** _____

Completing the Sentence

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

- 1. Some of the episodes in the series were wonderfully fresh and original; others were just plain _____.
- 2. I don't object to the inclusion of anecdotes in a serious lecture, but they should at the very least be _____ to the subject.
- 3. There is nothing wrong with _____ the great singers of the past as long as you eventually develop a style that is all your own.
- 4. When the temperature outside dropped suddenly, the muddy water in the ditch _____ into a mass of icy sludge.
- 5. The purpose of military _____ remains the same whether cavalry or helicopters are used: to learn as much as possible about the enemy.
- 6. In any crisis, the longer a person _____, the greater the danger is likely to become.
- 7. In spite of his size, he was so _____ that we tended to forget that he was even in the room.
- 8. The novel contains an interesting study of a miser's _____ lust for gold and its evil effects on those around him.
- 9. By whose authority did you _____ to yourself the right to decide how the club's money would be spent?
- 10. She received housing vouchers and food stamps as a result of the government's _____.

11. Students who seek high grades must learn to _____ the joys of that one-eyed monster, the television.
12. "There is no need for you to _____ the point," I replied, "when I already understand clearly what your criticism is."
13. As a result of recent research, earlier theories about the origin of the universe are no longer _____.
14. I doubt very much that he can _____ his assertion that he won two gold medals in the 1956 Olympics.
15. In my opinion, there is absolutely no justification for making such _____ distinctions between the two types of product.
16. Your essay would be a great deal tighter and more _____ if you removed all the extraneous information it now contains.
17. How can we "meet them halfway" when they are so _____ in their opposition to what we propose to do?
18. Even the most severe critics showered _____ on the young writer for the remarkable narrative power of her first novel.
19. Never having any money in one's pockets can be a real trial for someone born with the _____ instincts of a pack rat.
20. Despite the _____ and nit-picking of a few petty minds, I feel we have substantially improved our local school system of late.

Writing: Words in Action

1. Look back at "Across the Pond" (pages 12–13). Suppose you are Cora's friend and a fellow member of the National American Women's Suffrage Association. You want to persuade men in the Western states that women should have the right to vote. Write a persuasive essay, using at least two details from the passage and three unit words to support your argument.
2. "A long habit of not thinking a thing wrong gives it a superficial appearance of being right." —Thomas Paine
Do you agree with Paine's statement? In a brief essay, explain your opinion with specific examples from your studies, reading (refer to pages 12–13), personal observations and experience, or current events. Write at least three paragraphs, and use three or more words from this unit.

Vocabulary in Context

Literary Text

The following excerpts are from Charlotte Brontë's novels *The Professor* and *Shirley*. Some of the words you have studied in this unit appear in **boldface** type. Complete each statement below the excerpt by circling the letter of the correct answer.

1. I had the conviction that he could only regard me as a poor-spirited slave, wherefore I now went about to shun his presence and **eschew** his conversation. (*The Professor*)
To **eschew** is to
 a. repudiate c. ridicule
 b. clarify d. avoid
2. In the course of my next lesson, I made a report of the other devoirs, dealing out praise and blame in very small retail parcels, according to my custom, for there was no use in blaming severely, and high **encomiums** were rarely merited. (*The Professor*)
Encomiums are
 a. expectations c. successes
 b. tributes d. condemnations
3. For a day or two Mr. Sympson continued as bland as oil, but also he seemed to sit on pins, and his gait, when he walked, **emulated** that of a hen treading a hot girdle. (*Shirley*)
Something that is **emulated** is
 a. foreshadowed c. spurned
 b. fabricated d. imitated
4. "The faults of my manner are, I think, only negative. I am not proud. What has a man in my position to be proud of? I am only **taciturn**, phlegmatic, and joyless." (*Shirley*)
Someone who is **taciturn** is NOT
 a. loquacious c. serious
 b. quiet d. ironic
5. But what has been said in the last page or two is not **germane** to Caroline Helstone's feelings, or to the state of things between her and Robert Moore. (*Shirley*)
If something is **germane**, it is
 a. sympathetic c. worthwhile
 b. relevant d. reassuring



Charlotte Brontë published several novels under the male pen name Currer Bell.

Interactive Quiz



Snap the code, or go to vocabularyworkshop.com