



SCHOLAR COACH, INC.

AP ENGLISH LITERATURE · FREE RESOURCE

Academic Vocabulary from Literature Passages - 300 Words

Three hundred high-value words that recur in 17th-through 20th-century literary passages and in the answer choices of AP English Literature multiple-choice questions, arranged in fifteen weekly lists of twenty. Each word has a part of speech, a plain definition, and an original example sentence. Each week ends with a matching self-quiz; the answer key is at the end. Work one list a week and the whole set fits comfortably into a semester.

Why These Words

AP Literature passages are drawn largely from the 16th through 21st centuries and are mostly works originally written in English. Footnotes gloss the rarest archaic words, but the passage and the answer choices still lean on a literary register: the vocabulary of faces and feelings in Austen and Dickens, of landscapes in the Brontes and Hardy, of manners and morals in James and Wharton, of states of mind in Woolf and Joyce. Words such as *countenance*, *languor*, *reproach*, *disquiet*, *sanguine*, *supplication*, *importunate*, *ineffable*, and *pallor* turn up again and again, and a reader who does not know them loses speed and, often, the point.

Vocabulary matters in three specific ways on the exam:

1. **Vocabulary in context.** Stems such as “The word ‘X’ (line 14) most nearly means...” are common. The familiar meaning is often a distractor and the contextual one is the key.
2. **Tone and characterization choices.** Answer sets are built from words like *taciturn*, *sanguine*, *austere*, and *obsequious*. If you cannot tell *wry* from *sardonic* or *reticent* from *taciturn*, the choices blur.
3. **Your own commentary.** Precise words (*equivocation*, *transience*, *complacency*) let you name exactly what a passage is doing. Row B rewards commentary that explains how language creates meaning, and precision helps.

The Course and Exam Description names word choice, connotation, and diction as central to Skill Category 5, so vocabulary is directly tied to a tested skill.

How to Use This Document

Weekly routine (about 15 minutes a day).

- **Day 1:** Read the list aloud. Cover the definition column and say what you think each word means, then check.

- **Day 2:** Write your own original sentence for each of the first ten words. Avoid sentences like "He was very *taciturn*." Make the sentence show the meaning.
- **Day 3:** Write sentences for the second ten words.
- **Day 4:** Find three of the week's words in a poem, story, or novel you are reading. Words in the wild stick.
- **Day 5:** Take the matching quiz without notes, then check the key. Re-study only the words you missed.

Three study tips.

- Learn each word's **connotation** (warm, cold, comic, grave), not only its definition. Many of these words carry a tone of their own, and tone is what the exam tests.
- Notice **word families**: *reticent* / *reticence*, *austere* / *austerity*, *obsequious* / *obsequiousness*. Knowing one form helps you with the others.
- Use the words in your essays only when they fit. Vocabulary inflation does not earn the sophistication point; the rubric explicitly excludes "ornate language that does not advance the argument."

A note on the examples. All 300 example sentences are original. They are written to show the word in a context like the ones you will meet on the exam, not to quote real texts.

Part-of-speech key. noun, verb, adjective. A word with another common form is listed in its most common literary use.

Week 1: Faces, Bearing, and Manner

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
countenance	noun	a person's face or facial expression; composure	Her countenance did not change, though the letter trembled in her hand.
pallor	noun	an unhealthy paleness of the skin	A grey pallor spread across his cheeks as he read the telegram.
languor	noun	a pleasant or heavy lack of energy	A summer languor settled over the household after lunch.
demeanor	noun	outward behavior or manner	His grave demeanor made the children quiet at once.
mien	noun	a person's look or bearing, suggesting character or mood	She carried herself with the mien of a woman long used to being obeyed.
visage	noun	a person's face, especially when stern or striking	The stern visage in the portrait seemed to watch the room.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
gaunt	adjective	lean and haggard, as from hunger or illness	The gaunt traveler leaned on the gate as if it were the only thing holding him up.
haggard	adjective	looking exhausted and unwell, often from worry	He came down haggard after a night of pacing.
wan	adjective	pale and sickly looking	A wan smile crossed her face when the doctor left.
ruddy	adjective	healthily red in complexion	The farmer's ruddy cheeks made him look younger than he was.
sallow	adjective	of a sickly yellowish color	The lamplight made his sallow skin look waxen.
stoic	adjective	enduring pain or hardship without complaint	The stoic old sailor said nothing as the storm tore the sail.
taciturn	adjective	habitually silent or uncommunicative	The taciturn host answered every question with a single word.
affable	adjective	friendly, easy to talk to	The affable shopkeeper greeted every child by name.
gregarious	adjective	fond of company; sociable	A gregarious man, he could not eat a meal alone.
reticent	adjective	unwilling to share thoughts or feelings	She was reticent about her past and changed the subject whenever it arose.
austere	adjective	severe in manner; plain and strict	The austere schoolmistress allowed no ornament in her classroom.
dour	adjective	gloomy, stern, and unfriendly	A dour clerk looked up from his ledger and sighed.
placid	adjective	calm, not easily disturbed	The placid lake reflected the unmoving sky.
phlegmatic	adjective	calm and unemotional by temperament	His phlegmatic reply to the news surprised everyone.

Week 1 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

1. countenance (noun) _____
2. pallor (noun) _____
3. languor (noun) _____
4. demeanor (noun) _____
5. mien (noun) _____
6. visage (noun) _____
7. gaunt (adjective) _____
8. haggard (adjective) _____
9. wan (adjective) _____
10. ruddy (adjective) _____
11. sallow (adjective) _____
12. stoic (adjective) _____
13. taciturn (adjective) _____
14. affable (adjective) _____
15. gregarious (adjective) _____
16. reticent (adjective) _____
17. austere (adjective) _____
18. dour (adjective) _____
19. placid (adjective) _____
20. phlegmatic (adjective) _____

Definitions

- **A.** a person's look or bearing, suggesting character or mood
- **B.** friendly, easy to talk to
- **C.** gloomy, stern, and unfriendly
- **D.** calm and unemotional by temperament
- **E.** pale and sickly looking
- **F.** severe in manner; plain and strict
- **G.** looking exhausted and unwell, often from worry
- **H.** a person's face or facial expression; composure
- **I.** outward behavior or manner
- **J.** fond of company; sociable
- **K.** of a sickly yellowish color
- **L.** healthily red in complexion
- **M.** unwilling to share thoughts or feelings
- **N.** enduring pain or hardship without complaint
- **O.** calm, not easily disturbed
- **P.** a person's face, especially when stern or striking
- **Q.** habitually silent or uncommunicative
- **R.** a pleasant or heavy lack of energy

- **S.** lean and haggard, as from hunger or illness
- **T.** an unhealthy paleness of the skin

Week 2: Feeling and Distress

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
disquiet	noun	a feeling of anxiety or unease	A vague disquiet kept her from sleeping.
reproach	noun	an expression of disapproval or disappointment	There was no anger in his reproach, only sorrow.
dismay	noun	sudden distress caused by something unexpected	She stared in dismay at the empty drawer.
chagrin	noun	distress or embarrassment from disappointment	To his chagrin, the audience had already left.
anguish	noun	severe mental or physical suffering	Her anguish was plain in the way she gripped the rail.
melancholy	noun	a pensive, long-lasting sadness	A gentle melancholy followed him through the autumn.
remorse	noun	deep regret for a wrong one has done	Remorse kept him awake long after the quarrel.
solace	noun	comfort in distress or sadness	She found solace in the quiet garden.
despondency	noun	loss of hope or courage	His despondency deepened with each rejected letter.
foreboding	noun	a fearful sense that something bad will happen	A foreboding settled over the village as the sky darkened.
trepidation	noun	fear or anxiety about something that may happen	He opened the door with trepidation.
apprehension	noun	anxiety about the future	Her apprehension grew as the carriage neared the house.
vexation	noun	the state of being annoyed or worried	She tapped the table in vexation.
mortification	noun	deep embarrassment or shame	His mortification was complete when the whole room laughed.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
contrition	noun	the feeling of remorse for having done wrong	He bowed his head in contrition.
rancor	noun	bitter, long-lasting resentment	Years of rancor lay behind their polite greetings.
wistful	adjective	full of vague, yearning sadness	A wistful look crossed his face as he looked at the old house.
forlorn	adjective	pitifully sad and abandoned	The forlorn dog waited by the station.
disconsolate	adjective	without comfort; hopelessly sad	The disconsolate widow wandered through the empty rooms.
doleful	adjective	expressing sorrow; mournful	A doleful bell tolled from the church tower.

Week 2 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

1. disquiet (noun) _____
2. reproach (noun) _____
3. dismay (noun) _____
4. chagrin (noun) _____
5. anguish (noun) _____
6. melancholy (noun) _____
7. remorse (noun) _____
8. solace (noun) _____
9. despondency (noun) _____
10. foreboding (noun) _____
11. trepidation (noun) _____
12. apprehension (noun) _____
13. vexation (noun) _____
14. mortification (noun) _____
15. contrition (noun) _____
16. rancor (noun) _____
17. wistful (adjective) _____
18. forlorn (adjective) _____
19. disconsolate (adjective) _____
20. doleful (adjective) _____

Definitions

- **A.** the state of being annoyed or worried
- **B.** distress or embarrassment from disappointment
- **C.** a pensive, long-lasting sadness
- **D.** without comfort; hopelessly sad
- **E.** loss of hope or courage
- **F.** a feeling of anxiety or unease
- **G.** the feeling of remorse for having done wrong
- **H.** deep regret for a wrong one has done
- **I.** an expression of disapproval or disappointment
- **J.** anxiety about the future
- **K.** a fearful sense that something bad will happen
- **L.** fear or anxiety about something that may happen
- **M.** sudden distress caused by something unexpected
- **N.** pitifully sad and abandoned
- **O.** bitter, long-lasting resentment
- **P.** expressing sorrow; mournful
- **Q.** severe mental or physical suffering
- **R.** comfort in distress or sadness
- **S.** deep embarrassment or shame
- **T.** full of vague, yearning sadness

Week 3: Speech, Argument, and Persuasion

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
supplication	noun	a humble, earnest request or prayer	Her supplication was met with silence.
entreaty	noun	an earnest or humble request	Despite his entreaties, the gate stayed locked.
rebuke	noun	a sharp expression of disapproval	The captain's rebuke silenced the whole deck.
remonstrance	noun	a forcible protest or complaint	His remonstrance fell on deaf ears.
rhetoric	noun	language designed to persuade, sometimes lacking sincerity	The mayor's rhetoric thrilled the crowd but promised nothing.
discourse	noun	extended written or spoken communication on a subject	Their discourse on honesty lasted until dawn.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
eloquence	noun	fluent, forceful, and persuasive speaking	The eloquence of her plea moved even the judge.
sophistry	noun	clever but misleading reasoning	Behind his polished sophistry lay a plain wish to avoid blame.
equivocation	noun	the use of ambiguous language to conceal the truth	His equivocation made it impossible to hold him to any promise.
candor	noun	the quality of being open and honest	She spoke with a candor that startled her hosts.
importunate	adjective	persistent to the point of annoyance	The importunate beggar followed them down the street.
loquacious	adjective	tending to talk a great deal	The loquacious barber knew everyone's business.
garrulous	adjective	excessively talkative, especially about trivial matters	A garrulous aunt filled the silence at dinner.
laconic	adjective	using very few words	His laconic reply was a single nod.
voluble	adjective	speaking easily and at length	Once started, he was voluble on the subject of trains.
sententious	adjective	given to moralizing in a pompous way	The sententious vicar quoted proverbs at every meal.
didactic	adjective	intended to instruct, often in a preachy way	The didactic poem ended with an unmistakable moral.
cogent	adjective	clear, logical, and convincing	Her cogent argument won over the committee.
peremptory	adjective	insisting on immediate attention or obedience	A peremptory knock sent everyone to the door.
cajole	verb	to persuade with flattery or gentle urging	She tried to cajole her father into lending the carriage.

Week 3 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

1. supplication (noun) _____
2. entreaty (noun) _____
3. rebuke (noun) _____
4. remonstrance (noun) _____
5. rhetoric (noun) _____
6. discourse (noun) _____
7. eloquence (noun) _____
8. sophistry (noun) _____
9. equivocation (noun) _____
10. candor (noun) _____
11. importunate (adjective) _____
12. loquacious (adjective) _____
13. garrulous (adjective) _____
14. laconic (adjective) _____
15. voluble (adjective) _____
16. sententious (adjective) _____
17. didactic (adjective) _____
18. cogent (adjective) _____
19. peremptory (adjective) _____
20. cajole (verb) _____

Definitions

- **A.** the quality of being open and honest
- **B.** a sharp expression of disapproval
- **C.** using very few words
- **D.** persistent to the point of annoyance
- **E.** insisting on immediate attention or obedience
- **F.** a forcible protest or complaint
- **G.** language designed to persuade, sometimes lacking sincerity
- **H.** excessively talkative, especially about trivial matters
- **I.** an earnest or humble request
- **J.** extended written or spoken communication on a subject
- **K.** a humble, earnest request or prayer
- **L.** fluent, forceful, and persuasive speaking
- **M.** to persuade with flattery or gentle urging
- **N.** the use of ambiguous language to conceal the truth
- **O.** intended to instruct, often in a preachy way
- **P.** speaking easily and at length
- **Q.** clever but misleading reasoning
- **R.** tending to talk a great deal
- **S.** clear, logical, and convincing

- T. given to moralizing in a pompous way

Week 4: Manner, Pride, and Pretension

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
hauteur	noun	haughty pride	She received them with chilly hauteur.
arrogance	noun	an exaggerated sense of one's own importance	His arrogance made him deaf to advice.
pomposity	noun	self-important behavior or speech	The pomposity of the speech embarrassed even his friends.
ostentation	noun	showy display meant to impress	The ostentation of the dinner left the guests uneasy.
affectation	noun	behavior or speech put on to impress	His French accent was a transparent affectation.
vanity	noun	excessive pride in one's appearance or achievements	Vanity kept her from admitting the mistake.
complacency	noun	smug satisfaction with oneself, unaware of danger	Their complacency vanished when the river rose.
condescension	noun	an attitude of patronizing superiority	She endured his condescension with a tight smile.
disdain	noun	a feeling that something is beneath one's consideration	He looked on the common folk with disdain.
hubris	noun	excessive pride, often leading to downfall	The king's hubris blinded him to the warnings.
imperious	adjective	assuming power or authority without justification	An imperious wave of the hand dismissed the servant.
supercilious	adjective	behaving as though one is superior to others	A supercilious glance swept the room.
pretentious	adjective	claiming importance or talent one does not have	The pretentious menu offended the plain-spoken cook.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
officious	adjective	assertive in offering unwanted help or advice	An officious clerk redirected them to the wrong desk.
obsequious	adjective	obedient or attentive to an excessive degree	The obsequious waiter bowed at every request.
sycophantic	adjective	praising powerful people in order to gain favor	The sycophantic courtiers laughed at every joke.
fastidious	adjective	very attentive to detail; hard to please	The fastidious tailor rejected three bolts of cloth.
ingratiating	adjective	intended to win favor	He gave the landlord an ingratiating grin.
sanctimonious	adjective	making a show of being morally superior	Her sanctimonious sigh irritated her sister.
punctilious	adjective	showing great attention to correct behavior	The punctilious host seated every guest by rank.

Week 4 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

1. hauteur (noun) _____
2. arrogance (noun) _____
3. pomposity (noun) _____
4. ostentation (noun) _____
5. affectation (noun) _____
6. vanity (noun) _____
7. complacency (noun) _____
8. condescension (noun) _____
9. disdain (noun) _____
10. hubris (noun) _____
11. imperious (adjective) _____
12. supercilious (adjective) _____
13. pretentious (adjective) _____
14. officious (adjective) _____
15. obsequious (adjective) _____
16. sycophantic (adjective) _____
17. fastidious (adjective) _____
18. ingratiating (adjective) _____
19. sanctimonious (adjective) _____
20. punctilious (adjective) _____

Definitions

- **A.** an attitude of patronizing superiority
- **B.** a feeling that something is beneath one's consideration
- **C.** behaving as though one is superior to others
- **D.** praising powerful people in order to gain favor
- **E.** an exaggerated sense of one's own importance
- **F.** behavior or speech put on to impress
- **G.** excessive pride, often leading to downfall
- **H.** assuming power or authority without justification
- **I.** self-important behavior or speech
- **J.** haughty pride
- **K.** excessive pride in one's appearance or achievements
- **L.** making a show of being morally superior
- **M.** obedient or attentive to an excessive degree
- **N.** showing great attention to correct behavior
- **O.** claiming importance or talent one does not have
- **P.** smug satisfaction with oneself, unaware of danger
- **Q.** very attentive to detail; hard to please
- **R.** intended to win favor
- **S.** showy display meant to impress
- **T.** assertive in offering unwanted help or advice

Week 5: Virtue, Vice, and Morality

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
rectitude	noun	morally correct behavior	Everyone admired his rectitude.
probity	noun	strong moral principles; honesty	The probity of the judge was beyond question.
magnanimity	noun	generosity toward a rival or someone less powerful	The victor showed magnanimity in defeat's aftermath.
benevolence	noun	the quality of being kind and well-meaning	Her benevolence extended to every stray in the parish.
avarice	noun	extreme greed for wealth	Avarice turned the old man against his own sons.
profligacy	noun	reckless extravagance or immorality	His profligacy emptied the family estate within a decade.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
depravity	noun	moral corruption	The novel recoils from the depravity of the court.
iniquity	noun	gross injustice or wickedness	The preacher denounced the iniquity of the age.
transgression	noun	an act that goes against a law or moral code	Even a small transgression filled her with guilt.
penitence	noun	sorrow and regret for wrongdoing	He knelt in penitence at the altar.
absolution	noun	formal release from guilt or punishment	She longed for absolution she did not dare request.
scrupulous	adjective	careful about doing what is right	A scrupulous clerk, he returned every extra penny.
virtuous	adjective	having high moral standards	The virtuous heroine refused the bribe.
culpable	adjective	deserving blame	The captain was held culpable for the wreck.
pious	adjective	devoutly religious, sometimes ostentatiously so	The pious household said grace twice.
dissolute	adjective	lacking moral restraint; indulging in vice	The dissolute heir wasted his youth in taverns.
nefarious	adjective	wicked or criminal	The nefarious plot was discovered in time.
venal	adjective	open to bribery; corrupt	A venal official sold his signature for a price.
exemplary	adjective	serving as a desirable model	Her exemplary patience calmed the entire class.
upright	adjective	strictly honorable or honest	The upright magistrate would not be swayed.

Week 5 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

1. rectitude (noun) _____
2. probity (noun) _____
3. magnanimity (noun) _____
4. benevolence (noun) _____
5. avarice (noun) _____

6. profligacy (noun) _____
7. depravity (noun) _____
8. iniquity (noun) _____
9. transgression (noun) _____
10. penitence (noun) _____
11. absolution (noun) _____
12. scrupulous (adjective) _____
13. virtuous (adjective) _____
14. culpable (adjective) _____
15. pious (adjective) _____
16. dissolute (adjective) _____
17. nefarious (adjective) _____
18. venal (adjective) _____
19. exemplary (adjective) _____
20. upright (adjective) _____

Definitions

- **A.** careful about doing what is right
- **B.** the quality of being kind and well-meaning
- **C.** serving as a desirable model
- **D.** extreme greed for wealth
- **E.** morally correct behavior
- **F.** strictly honorable or honest
- **G.** moral corruption
- **H.** wicked or criminal
- **I.** devoutly religious, sometimes ostentatiously so
- **J.** strong moral principles; honesty
- **K.** gross injustice or wickedness
- **L.** generosity toward a rival or someone less powerful
- **M.** formal release from guilt or punishment
- **N.** an act that goes against a law or moral code
- **O.** reckless extravagance or immorality
- **P.** sorrow and regret for wrongdoing
- **Q.** deserving blame
- **R.** open to bribery; corrupt
- **S.** having high moral standards
- **T.** lacking moral restraint; indulging in vice

Week 6: Setting, Landscape, and Atmosphere

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
desolation	noun	a state of complete emptiness or ruin	The desolation of the moor oppressed him.
solitude	noun	the state of being alone	The old woman cherished her solitude.
verdure	noun	lush green vegetation	The valley was clothed in spring verdure.
dell	noun	a small wooded valley	They picnicked in a shady dell.
glade	noun	an open space in a forest	Sunlight filled the quiet glade.
thicket	noun	a dense group of bushes or trees	Something rustled in the thicket.
crag	noun	a steep or rugged cliff	A hawk circled the high crag.
precipice	noun	a very steep rock face or cliff	He stood at the precipice and could not look down.
mire	noun	a stretch of swampy or muddy ground	The cart sank in the mire.
bleak	adjective	lacking vegetation and exposed to the elements; dreary	A bleak wind swept the headland.
verdant	adjective	green with grass or vegetation	The verdant slopes shone after the rain.
sylvan	adjective	relating to woods or forests	A sylvan path led down to the stream.
pastoral	adjective	relating to the countryside or rural life	The pastoral scene was painted in soft colors.
rustic	adjective	rural and simple in style	They stayed in a rustic cottage by the lake.
desolate	adjective	deserted and bleak	A desolate road wound through the hills.
forbidding	adjective	unfriendly or threatening in appearance	The forbidding gate was shut with chains.
sequestered	adjective	isolated and hidden away	A sequestered garden lay behind the wall.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
dilapidated	adjective	in a state of disrepair	The dilapidated barn leaned toward the wind.
stagnant	adjective	not flowing; motionless and foul	The stagnant pond smelled of rot.
sepulchral	adjective	gloomy and dismal like a tomb	A sepulchral hush lay over the house.

Week 6 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

1. desolation (noun) _____
2. solitude (noun) _____
3. verdure (noun) _____
4. dell (noun) _____
5. glade (noun) _____
6. thicket (noun) _____
7. crag (noun) _____
8. precipice (noun) _____
9. mire (noun) _____
10. bleak (adjective) _____
11. verdant (adjective) _____
12. sylvan (adjective) _____
13. pastoral (adjective) _____
14. rustic (adjective) _____
15. desolate (adjective) _____
16. forbidding (adjective) _____
17. sequestered (adjective) _____
18. dilapidated (adjective) _____
19. stagnant (adjective) _____
20. sepulchral (adjective) _____

Definitions

- **A.** lush green vegetation
- **B.** rural and simple in style
- **C.** a steep or rugged cliff
- **D.** gloomy and dismal like a tomb
- **E.** in a state of disrepair
- **F.** not flowing; motionless and foul
- **G.** relating to the countryside or rural life

- **H.** an open space in a forest
- **I.** a stretch of swampy or muddy ground
- **J.** isolated and hidden away
- **K.** unfriendly or threatening in appearance
- **L.** green with grass or vegetation
- **M.** a dense group of bushes or trees
- **N.** lacking vegetation and exposed to the elements; dreary
- **O.** a small wooded valley
- **P.** a state of complete emptiness or ruin
- **Q.** deserted and bleak
- **R.** a very steep rock face or cliff
- **S.** the state of being alone
- **T.** relating to woods or forests

Week 7: Movement, Gesture, and Action

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
languish	verb	to lose or lack vitality; to grow weak	She began to languish in the confinement of the house.
loiter	verb	to stand or wait around idly	Boys loitered by the gate until dusk.
saunter	verb	to walk in a slow, relaxed way	He sauntered down the lane as if he owned it.
falter	verb	to lose strength or momentum; to speak hesitantly	Her voice faltered at the final line.
lurch	verb	to move suddenly and unsteadily	The wagon lurched into the ditch.
dart	verb	to move suddenly and quickly	A bird darted from the hedge.
cower	verb	to crouch in fear	The child cowered behind the door.
recoil	verb	to spring back in fear or disgust	She recoiled at the touch.
brandish	verb	to wave or flourish, as a threat	He brandished a stick at the crows.
beckon	verb	to summon with a gesture	The old woman beckoned them inside.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
gesticulate	verb	to use dramatic gestures to emphasize speech	He gesticulated wildly while arguing.
linger	verb	to stay longer than needed	She lingered at the window long after the carriage had gone.
hasten	verb	to move or act quickly	They hastened to catch the last train.
stagger	verb	to walk unsteadily	He staggered toward the door.
pace	verb	to walk back and forth restlessly	She paced the hall until dawn.
tremble	verb	to shake slightly from fear or emotion	Her hands trembled as she opened the letter.
flounder	verb	to struggle clumsily	He floundered through the explanation.
retreat	verb	to withdraw, especially from danger	The speaker retreated into silence.
brood	verb	to think deeply and unhappily about something	He brooded on the insult for days.
fidget	verb	to make small restless movements	The children fidgeted through the sermon.

Week 7 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

1. languish (verb) _____
2. loiter (verb) _____
3. saunter (verb) _____
4. falter (verb) _____
5. lurch (verb) _____
6. dart (verb) _____
7. cower (verb) _____
8. recoil (verb) _____
9. brandish (verb) _____
10. beckon (verb) _____
11. gesticulate (verb) _____
12. linger (verb) _____

13. hasten (verb) _____
14. stagger (verb) _____
15. pace (verb) _____
16. tremble (verb) _____
17. flounder (verb) _____
18. retreat (verb) _____
19. brood (verb) _____
20. fidget (verb) _____

Definitions

- **A.** to walk in a slow, relaxed way
- **B.** to stay longer than needed
- **C.** to make small restless movements
- **D.** to crouch in fear
- **E.** to withdraw, especially from danger
- **F.** to move or act quickly
- **G.** to struggle clumsily
- **H.** to move suddenly and unsteadily
- **I.** to shake slightly from fear or emotion
- **J.** to walk unsteadily
- **K.** to walk back and forth restlessly
- **L.** to lose strength or momentum; to speak hesitantly
- **M.** to use dramatic gestures to emphasize speech
- **N.** to lose or lack vitality; to grow weak
- **O.** to wave or flourish, as a threat
- **P.** to spring back in fear or disgust
- **Q.** to think deeply and unhappily about something
- **R.** to summon with a gesture
- **S.** to move suddenly and quickly
- **T.** to stand or wait around idly

Week 8: Perception, Mind, and Thought

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
reverie	noun	a state of being pleasantly lost in thought	A sudden noise broke her reverie.
contemplation	noun	deep, reflective thought	The old man sat in quiet contemplation.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
introspection	noun	examination of one's own thoughts and feelings	Long hours of introspection made him a poor conversationalist.
epiphany	noun	a sudden and striking realization	The epiphany came as she watched the snow.
conjecture	noun	an opinion formed on incomplete information	It was only conjecture, but it seemed likely.
premonition	noun	a strong feeling that something is about to happen	A premonition of loss clouded the morning.
delusion	noun	a false belief held despite evidence	He clung to the delusion that the firm would recover.
fancy	noun	a capricious idea or imagination	It was a mere fancy, but it haunted her.
scruple	noun	a moral qualm that restrains action	He had no scruples about lying.
perplexity	noun	the state of being completely baffled	She looked at the map in perplexity.
oblivious	adjective	unaware of what is happening around one	Oblivious to the stares, he went on singing.
cognizant	adjective	having knowledge or awareness	She was cognizant of the risks.
discerning	adjective	having or showing good judgment	A discerning reader will notice the irony.
perspicacious	adjective	having a ready insight into things	The perspicacious detective noticed the missing clock.
sagacious	adjective	having sound judgment; wise	The sagacious old judge saw through the lie.
obtuse	adjective	slow to understand	He was too obtuse to catch the hint.
credulous	adjective	too ready to believe	A credulous traveler, he believed every rumor.
inscrutable	adjective	impossible to understand or interpret	His inscrutable smile gave nothing away.
pensive	adjective	engaged in deep or serious thought	A pensive silence filled the carriage.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
ruminate	verb	to think deeply about something	She ruminated over the offer all night.

Week 8 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

1. reverie (noun) _____
2. contemplation (noun) _____
3. introspection (noun) _____
4. epiphany (noun) _____
5. conjecture (noun) _____
6. premonition (noun) _____
7. delusion (noun) _____
8. fancy (noun) _____
9. scruple (noun) _____
10. perplexity (noun) _____
11. oblivious (adjective) _____
12. cognizant (adjective) _____
13. discerning (adjective) _____
14. perspicacious (adjective) _____
15. sagacious (adjective) _____
16. obtuse (adjective) _____
17. credulous (adjective) _____
18. inscrutable (adjective) _____
19. pensive (adjective) _____
20. ruminate (verb) _____

Definitions

- **A.** slow to understand
- **B.** a false belief held despite evidence
- **C.** a moral qualm that restrains action
- **D.** having or showing good judgment
- **E.** an opinion formed on incomplete information
- **F.** engaged in deep or serious thought
- **G.** a capricious idea or imagination
- **H.** a strong feeling that something is about to happen
- **I.** deep, reflective thought
- **J.** the state of being completely baffled
- **K.** having a ready insight into things

- **L.** to think deeply about something
- **M.** having knowledge or awareness
- **N.** impossible to understand or interpret
- **O.** a state of being pleasantly lost in thought
- **P.** a sudden and striking realization
- **Q.** examination of one's own thoughts and feelings
- **R.** unaware of what is happening around one
- **S.** having sound judgment; wise
- **T.** too ready to believe

Week 9: Ambiguity, Hidden Meaning, and Indirection

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
ambivalence	noun	mixed or contradictory feelings	His ambivalence about leaving was obvious.
enigma	noun	a person or thing that is mysterious	The silent stranger remained an enigma.
innuendo	noun	an indirect, often insulting suggestion	The letter was full of innuendo.
euphemism	noun	a mild word for something harsh	"Passed away" is a common euphemism.
subterfuge	noun	deceit used to achieve a goal	They gained entry by subterfuge.
duplicity	noun	deceitfulness; double dealing	His duplicity was discovered at last.
guile	noun	cunning intelligence used to deceive	She won by guile, not strength.
pretext	noun	a false reason given to hide the real one	He used the errand as a pretext to call on her.
facade	noun	a deceptive outward appearance	The cheerful facade hid real despair.
veneer	noun	a thin, deceptive surface of polish	A veneer of courtesy covered his contempt.
allusive	adjective	suggesting something indirectly	His allusive reply left her guessing.
oblique	adjective	not direct; indirect in expression	She made an oblique reference to the debt.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
cryptic	adjective	having a hidden or puzzling meaning	He left a cryptic note on the table.
ambiguous	adjective	open to more than one interpretation	Her ambiguous smile could mean anything.
equivocal	adjective	open to two interpretations, deliberately unclear	The reply was equivocal.
tacit	adjective	understood without being stated	There was a tacit agreement not to mention the loss.
feigned	adjective	pretended	Her feigned surprise fooled no one.
disingenuous	adjective	not candid; pretending ignorance	It was disingenuous of him to claim he had not known.
insidious	adjective	proceeding gradually and harmfully	An insidious doubt crept into her mind.
specious	adjective	superficially plausible but wrong	He made a specious argument that convinced the crowd.

Week 9 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

- ambivalence (noun) _____
- enigma (noun) _____
- innuendo (noun) _____
- euphemism (noun) _____
- subterfuge (noun) _____
- duplicity (noun) _____
- guile (noun) _____
- pretext (noun) _____
- facade (noun) _____
- veneer (noun) _____
- allusive (adjective) _____
- oblique (adjective) _____
- cryptic (adjective) _____
- ambiguous (adjective) _____
- equivocal (adjective) _____
- tacit (adjective) _____
- feigned (adjective) _____

18. disingenuous (adjective) _____

19. insidious (adjective) _____

20. specious (adjective) _____

Definitions

- **A.** a thin, deceptive surface of polish
- **B.** not direct; indirect in expression
- **C.** having a hidden or puzzling meaning
- **D.** cunning intelligence used to deceive
- **E.** superficially plausible but wrong
- **F.** a false reason given to hide the real one
- **G.** proceeding gradually and harmfully
- **H.** a person or thing that is mysterious
- **I.** deceit used to achieve a goal
- **J.** suggesting something indirectly
- **K.** a mild word for something harsh
- **L.** a deceptive outward appearance
- **M.** pretended
- **N.** open to more than one interpretation
- **O.** open to two interpretations, deliberately unclear
- **P.** not candid; pretending ignorance
- **Q.** an indirect, often insulting suggestion
- **R.** understood without being stated
- **S.** mixed or contradictory feelings
- **T.** deceitfulness; double dealing

Week 10: Ineffable and Sublime Experience

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
ineffable	adjective	too great to be expressed in words	An ineffable calm settled over the valley.
sublime	adjective	of such excellence or beauty as to inspire awe	The sublime peaks rose above the clouds.
ethereal	adjective	extremely delicate and light; heavenly	Ethereal music drifted from the window.
transcendent	adjective	beyond ordinary experience	It was a transcendent moment of peace.
luminous	adjective	full of light; bright	A luminous moon lit the path.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
resplendent	adjective	attractive and impressive through richness of color	The garden was resplendent in autumn.
radiant	adjective	sending out light; glowing with joy	She was radiant on her wedding day.
exquisite	adjective	extremely beautiful and delicate	The exquisite lace had been woven by hand.
languid	adjective	displaying slow, graceful, relaxed movement	A languid breeze stirred the curtains.
tranquil	adjective	free from disturbance; calm	The tranquil evening promised no trouble.
serene	adjective	calm, peaceful, untroubled	The serene face of the sleeper reassured her.
rapturous	adjective	filled with intense joy	A rapturous crowd greeted the singer.
awe	noun	a feeling of reverential respect mixed with wonder	He gazed at the cathedral in awe.
transport	noun	a state of overwhelming emotion	She listened in a transport of delight.
ecstasy	noun	an overwhelming feeling of great happiness	The poet wrote in ecstasy of the spring.
grandeur	noun	splendor and impressiveness	The grandeur of the mountains silenced them.
majesty	noun	impressive stateliness and dignity	The majesty of the river humbled the travelers.
reverence	noun	deep respect	He spoke of his teacher with reverence.
exalt	verb	to hold in very high regard; to raise up	The hymn exalted the morning.
rhapsodize	verb	to speak with extravagant enthusiasm	She rhapsodized over the sunset.

Week 10 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

- ineffable (adjective) _____
- sublime (adjective) _____

3. ethereal (adjective) _____
4. transcendent (adjective) _____
5. luminous (adjective) _____
6. resplendent (adjective) _____
7. radiant (adjective) _____
8. exquisite (adjective) _____
9. languid (adjective) _____
10. tranquil (adjective) _____
11. serene (adjective) _____
12. rapturous (adjective) _____
13. awe (noun) _____
14. transport (noun) _____
15. ecstasy (noun) _____
16. grandeur (noun) _____
17. majesty (noun) _____
18. reverence (noun) _____
19. exalt (verb) _____
20. rhapsodize (verb) _____

Definitions

- **A.** too great to be expressed in words
- **B.** calm, peaceful, untroubled
- **C.** to hold in very high regard; to raise up
- **D.** free from disturbance; calm
- **E.** displaying slow, graceful, relaxed movement
- **F.** full of light; bright
- **G.** filled with intense joy
- **H.** attractive and impressive through richness of color
- **I.** of such excellence or beauty as to inspire awe
- **J.** beyond ordinary experience
- **K.** splendor and impressiveness
- **L.** a feeling of reverential respect mixed with wonder
- **M.** impressive stateliness and dignity
- **N.** an overwhelming feeling of great happiness
- **O.** sending out light; glowing with joy
- **P.** a state of overwhelming emotion
- **Q.** extremely delicate and light; heavenly
- **R.** deep respect
- **S.** extremely beautiful and delicate
- **T.** to speak with extravagant enthusiasm

Week 11: Social Order, Class, and Convention

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
decorum	noun	behavior in keeping with good taste and propriety	The decorum of the dinner table was strictly enforced.
propriety	noun	conformity to accepted standards of behavior	She worried about propriety above all else.
gentility	noun	the quality of being polite and refined	Their gentility hid their poverty.
breeding	noun	good manners as a result of upbringing	His breeding showed in the smallest courtesy.
convention	noun	a way in which something is usually done	She flouted convention by walking alone.
etiquette	noun	accepted rules of polite behavior	Etiquette demanded a written reply.
patronage	noun	support given by a wealthy person	The poet depended on the earl's patronage.
pedigree	noun	a record of a family's descent	The family prized its pedigree.
inheritance	noun	money or property received on someone's death	Her inheritance was spent within a year.
vocation	noun	a strong feeling of suitability for a career	He felt no vocation for the church.
solvent	adjective	having assets in excess of liabilities	The firm was barely solvent.
destitute	adjective	without the basic necessities of life	The destitute family slept in the barn.
impoverished	adjective	made poor	The impoverished gentleman still dressed with care.
affluent	adjective	having plenty of money	The affluent neighbors rarely called.
genteel	adjective	polite and refined, often artificially	The genteel tea party was full of quiet cruelty.
plebeian	adjective	belonging to the common people	His plebeian manners shocked the hostess.
aristocratic	adjective	belonging to a hereditary upper class	An aristocratic tilt of the head marked her.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
ignoble	adjective	not honorable in character or purpose	It was an ignoble end for a great house.
subservient	adjective	prepared to obey others unquestioningly	The subservient maid never raised her eyes.
patrician	adjective	belonging to the aristocracy	A patrician coldness marked her manner.

Week 11 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

1. decorum (noun) _____
2. propriety (noun) _____
3. gentility (noun) _____
4. breeding (noun) _____
5. convention (noun) _____
6. etiquette (noun) _____
7. patronage (noun) _____
8. pedigree (noun) _____
9. inheritance (noun) _____
10. vocation (noun) _____
11. solvent (adjective) _____
12. destitute (adjective) _____
13. impoverished (adjective) _____
14. affluent (adjective) _____
15. genteel (adjective) _____
16. plebeian (adjective) _____
17. aristocratic (adjective) _____
18. ignoble (adjective) _____
19. subservient (adjective) _____
20. patrician (adjective) _____

Definitions

- **A.** conformity to accepted standards of behavior
- **B.** made poor
- **C.** a strong feeling of suitability for a career
- **D.** belonging to the common people
- **E.** belonging to the aristocracy
- **F.** good manners as a result of upbringing
- **G.** not honorable in character or purpose

- **H.** the quality of being polite and refined
- **I.** a way in which something is usually done
- **J.** prepared to obey others unquestioningly
- **K.** belonging to a hereditary upper class
- **L.** polite and refined, often artificially
- **M.** support given by a wealthy person
- **N.** a record of a family's descent
- **O.** having assets in excess of liabilities
- **P.** accepted rules of polite behavior
- **Q.** having plenty of money
- **R.** behavior in keeping with good taste and propriety
- **S.** money or property received on someone's death
- **T.** without the basic necessities of life

Week 12: Time, Memory, and Loss

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
elegy	noun	a poem or lament for the dead	The poet composed an elegy for his friend.
nostalgia	noun	a sentimental longing for the past	Nostalgia colored every story he told.
transience	noun	the state of lasting only a short time	The poem meditates on the transience of beauty.
mortality	noun	the state of being subject to death	The illness reminded him of his mortality.
oblivion	noun	the state of being unaware or forgotten	The old customs faded into oblivion.
vestige	noun	a trace of something that no longer exists	Not a vestige of the garden remained.
relic	noun	an object surviving from an earlier time	The clock was a relic of a happier age.
heirloom	noun	a valuable object passed down in a family	The watch was her only heirloom.
remembrance	noun	the act of remembering	She wore the ring in remembrance of her mother.
requiem	noun	a Mass or hymn for the dead	The choir sang a requiem at dusk.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
epitaph	noun	words inscribed on a tomb	The epitaph was already worn smooth.
fleeting	adjective	lasting for a very short time	A fleeting smile crossed his lips.
ephemeral	adjective	lasting for a very short time	The ephemeral beauty of the blossoms moved her.
perennial	adjective	lasting for a long time; recurring	Hope is a perennial theme in her poems.
bygone	adjective	belonging to an earlier time	She dreamed of bygone summers.
immemorial	adjective	originating in the distant past	The custom was immemorial.
moribund	adjective	at the point of death; in terminal decline	The moribund firm closed within a year.
decrepit	adjective	worn out or ruined by age	A decrepit gate hung on one hinge.
elapse	verb	to pass, as time	Years elapsed before they met again.
wane	verb	to decrease gradually	The light began to wane.

Week 12 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

- elegy (noun) _____
- nostalgia (noun) _____
- transience (noun) _____
- mortality (noun) _____
- oblivion (noun) _____
- vestige (noun) _____
- relic (noun) _____
- heirloom (noun) _____
- remembrance (noun) _____
- requiem (noun) _____
- epitaph (noun) _____
- fleeting (adjective) _____
- ephemeral (adjective) _____
- perennial (adjective) _____

15. bygone (adjective) _____
16. immemorial (adjective) _____
17. moribund (adjective) _____
18. decrepit (adjective) _____
19. elapse (verb) _____
20. wane (verb) _____

Definitions

- **A.** the state of lasting only a short time
- **B.** belonging to an earlier time
- **C.** lasting for a long time; recurring
- **D.** lasting for a very short time
- **E.** a valuable object passed down in a family
- **F.** a sentimental longing for the past
- **G.** at the point of death; in terminal decline
- **H.** the state of being subject to death
- **I.** the act of remembering
- **J.** originating in the distant past
- **K.** to decrease gradually
- **L.** worn out or ruined by age
- **M.** to pass, as time
- **N.** a poem or lament for the dead
- **O.** a Mass or hymn for the dead
- **P.** an object surviving from an earlier time
- **Q.** lasting for a very short time
- **R.** the state of being unaware or forgotten
- **S.** a trace of something that no longer exists
- **T.** words inscribed on a tomb

Week 13: Conflict, Power, and Resistance

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
tyranny	noun	cruel and oppressive government or rule	The people rose against the tyranny of the regent.
subjugation	noun	the act of bringing under control	The subjugation of the village was swift.
dominion	noun	sovereignty or control	The king held dominion over three provinces.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
servitude	noun	the state of being a slave or completely subject	He escaped servitude by night.
defiance	noun	open resistance	Her defiance surprised the council.
insurrection	noun	a violent uprising against authority	The insurrection began at dawn.
reprisal	noun	an act of retaliation	He feared a reprisal for his silence.
animosity	noun	strong hostility	Years of animosity divided the families.
enmity	noun	the state of being actively opposed	An old enmity kept them apart.
retribution	noun	punishment inflicted as vengeance	He feared retribution for his silence.
vengeance	noun	punishment inflicted in return for a wrong	She swore vengeance on the thief.
schism	noun	a split between strongly opposed groups	A schism divided the congregation.
adversary	noun	one's opponent in a contest or conflict	The adversary was closer than he thought.
tenacious	adjective	holding firm; persistent	A tenacious opponent, she would not yield.
obstinate	adjective	stubbornly refusing to change	The obstinate old man ignored the doctor.
intransigent	adjective	unwilling to change one's views	The intransigent council would not compromise.
implacable	adjective	unable to be appeased	His implacable anger outlasted the war.
inexorable	adjective	impossible to stop or prevent	The inexorable tide rose against the wall.
vindictive	adjective	having a strong desire for revenge	A vindictive streak ran through the family.
belligerent	adjective	hostile and aggressive	The belligerent guest picked a quarrel.

Week 13 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

1. tyranny (noun) _____
2. subjugation (noun) _____
3. dominion (noun) _____
4. servitude (noun) _____
5. defiance (noun) _____
6. insurrection (noun) _____
7. reprisal (noun) _____
8. animosity (noun) _____
9. enmity (noun) _____
10. retribution (noun) _____
11. vengeance (noun) _____
12. schism (noun) _____
13. adversary (noun) _____
14. tenacious (adjective) _____
15. obstinate (adjective) _____
16. intransigent (adjective) _____
17. implacable (adjective) _____
18. inexorable (adjective) _____
19. vindictive (adjective) _____
20. belligerent (adjective) _____

Definitions

- **A.** hostile and aggressive
- **B.** strong hostility
- **C.** having a strong desire for revenge
- **D.** punishment inflicted as vengeance
- **E.** sovereignty or control
- **F.** a split between strongly opposed groups
- **G.** punishment inflicted in return for a wrong
- **H.** the act of bringing under control
- **I.** impossible to stop or prevent
- **J.** stubbornly refusing to change
- **K.** open resistance
- **L.** the state of being a slave or completely subject
- **M.** an act of retaliation
- **N.** unable to be appeased
- **O.** holding firm; persistent
- **P.** one's opponent in a contest or conflict
- **Q.** cruel and oppressive government or rule
- **R.** a violent uprising against authority

- **S.** the state of being actively opposed
- **T.** unwilling to change one's views

Week 14: Intellect, Wit, and Satire

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
wit	noun	quick and inventive verbal humor	Her wit was her only weapon.
irony	noun	expression of meaning using language that signifies the opposite	The irony in his praise was unmistakable.
satire	noun	the use of humor to expose folly	Swift's satire targeted the whole government.
caricature	noun	a description exaggerating certain features for comic effect	The novel gives a cruel caricature of the squire.
buffoon	noun	a ridiculous but amusing person	The buffoon tripped over his own sword.
pedant	noun	a person excessively concerned with minor details of learning	The pedant corrected every grammatical slip.
erudition	noun	great knowledge gained from books	His erudition awed the village.
folly	noun	lack of good sense; a foolish act	It was folly to sail in such weather.
whimsy	noun	playfully quaint behavior or humor	A touch of whimsy marks her stories.
levity	noun	humor or lack of seriousness	The sudden levity broke the tension.
jocular	adjective	fond of joking	The jocular host kept the table laughing.
facetious	adjective	treating serious issues with deliberately inappropriate humor	His facetious remark offended the widow.
droll	adjective	curious or unusual in a way that provokes dry amusement	A droll look passed between them.
sardonic	adjective	grimly mocking	He gave a sardonic laugh.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
caustic	adjective	sarcastic in a scathing and bitter way	Her caustic remarks kept the company at a distance.
acerbic	adjective	sharp and forthright	An acerbic critic, he spared no one.
trenchant	adjective	vigorous or incisive in expression	Her trenchant analysis cut to the heart.
banal	adjective	so lacking in originality as to be obvious	The banal speech bored the room.
laudable	adjective	deserving praise	It was a laudable if foolish aim.
puerile	adjective	childishly silly and trivial	He sulked in a puerile fashion.

Week 14 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

1. wit (noun) _____
2. irony (noun) _____
3. satire (noun) _____
4. caricature (noun) _____
5. buffoon (noun) _____
6. pedant (noun) _____
7. erudition (noun) _____
8. folly (noun) _____
9. whimsy (noun) _____
10. levity (noun) _____
11. jocular (adjective) _____
12. facetious (adjective) _____
13. droll (adjective) _____
14. sardonic (adjective) _____
15. caustic (adjective) _____
16. acerbic (adjective) _____
17. trenchant (adjective) _____
18. banal (adjective) _____
19. laudable (adjective) _____
20. puerile (adjective) _____

Definitions

- **A.** sharp and forthright
- **B.** grimly mocking
- **C.** deserving praise
- **D.** a ridiculous but amusing person
- **E.** a description exaggerating certain features for comic effect
- **F.** a person excessively concerned with minor details of learning
- **G.** curious or unusual in a way that provokes dry amusement
- **H.** childishly silly and trivial
- **I.** so lacking in originality as to be obvious
- **J.** the use of humor to expose folly
- **K.** treating serious issues with deliberately inappropriate humor
- **L.** humor or lack of seriousness
- **M.** fond of joking
- **N.** sarcastic in a scathing and bitter way
- **O.** great knowledge gained from books
- **P.** expression of meaning using language that signifies the opposite
- **Q.** playfully quaint behavior or humor
- **R.** lack of good sense; a foolish act
- **S.** quick and inventive verbal humor
- **T.** vigorous or incisive in expression

Week 15: Argument and Analysis (for your essays)

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
assertion	noun	a confident statement of fact or belief	The assertion needs evidence from the text.
inference	noun	a conclusion reached on the basis of evidence	Her inference was supported by the diction.
nuance	noun	a subtle difference in meaning or expression	Few readers noticed the nuance in the final line.
paradox	noun	a seemingly contradictory statement that may be true	The paradox of “living death” runs through the poem.
juxtaposition	noun	the placing of two things side by side for contrast	The juxtaposition of feast and famine unsettles the reader.
dichotomy	noun	a division into two sharply contrasting parts	The poem sets up a dichotomy between city and field.

WORD	PART OF SPEECH	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
synthesis	noun	the combination of ideas to form a whole	The final stanza achieves a synthesis of the two views.
corroborate	verb	to confirm or give support to	A second image corroborates the claim.
substantiate	verb	to provide evidence to support	She substantiated her reading with three quotations.
elucidate	verb	to make clear; explain	The footnote elucidates the allusion.
illuminate	verb	to help clarify or explain	The detail illuminates the speaker's fear.
accentuate	verb	to make more noticeable	The dash accentuates the pause.
subvert	verb	to undermine established expectations	The ending subverts the convention.
exacerbate	verb	to make worse	The silence exacerbates the tension.
mitigate	verb	to make less severe	Humor mitigates the grief.
manifest	verb	to display or show clearly	His doubt manifests in the broken syntax.
connote	verb	to suggest an idea beyond the literal meaning	The word "dust" connotes decay.
ostensible	adjective	apparent but not necessarily real	The ostensible reason hid a deeper one.
pervasive	adjective	spreading widely through a text or area	A pervasive irony colors the narration.
cumulative	adjective	increasing by successive additions	The cumulative effect of the list is overwhelming.

Week 15 Self-Quiz: Matching

Write the letter of the best definition next to each word. Each letter is used once.

Words

1. assertion (noun) _____
2. inference (noun) _____
3. nuance (noun) _____
4. paradox (noun) _____
5. juxtaposition (noun) _____

6. dichotomy (noun) _____
7. synthesis (noun) _____
8. corroborate (verb) _____
9. substantiate (verb) _____
10. elucidate (verb) _____
11. illuminate (verb) _____
12. accentuate (verb) _____
13. subvert (verb) _____
14. exacerbate (verb) _____
15. mitigate (verb) _____
16. manifest (verb) _____
17. connote (verb) _____
18. ostensible (adjective) _____
19. pervasive (adjective) _____
20. cumulative (adjective) _____

Definitions

- **A.** to provide evidence to support
- **B.** apparent but not necessarily real
- **C.** a subtle difference in meaning or expression
- **D.** to make more noticeable
- **E.** a division into two sharply contrasting parts
- **F.** increasing by successive additions
- **G.** to make worse
- **H.** a conclusion reached on the basis of evidence
- **I.** a confident statement of fact or belief
- **J.** to confirm or give support to
- **K.** to make less severe
- **L.** to help clarify or explain
- **M.** spreading widely through a text or area
- **N.** the combination of ideas to form a whole
- **O.** the placing of two things side by side for contrast
- **P.** to undermine established expectations
- **Q.** to suggest an idea beyond the literal meaning
- **R.** to display or show clearly
- **S.** to make clear; explain
- **T.** a seemingly contradictory statement that may be true

Cumulative Review: Mixed Matching (Weeks 1-5)

After Week 5, test yourself with ten mixed words. Match each word to its best definition.

1. vexation _____
2. entreaty _____
3. melancholy _____
4. trepidation _____
5. anguish _____
6. gregarious _____
7. forlorn _____
8. hauteur _____
9. supercilious _____
10. sanctimonious _____

- **A.** an earnest or humble request
- **B.** fond of company; sociable
- **C.** severe mental or physical suffering
- **D.** making a show of being morally superior
- **E.** haughty pride
- **F.** behaving as though one is superior to others
- **G.** pitifully sad and abandoned
- **H.** the state of being annoyed or worried
- **I.** a pensive, long-lasting sadness
- **J.** fear or anxiety about something that may happen

Strategies for Unknown Words on the Exam

You will meet words that are not on any list. Use these tactics in order.

1. **Read the sentence before and after.** Authors often restate an unfamiliar word nearby ("a taciturn man, silent through the whole meal").
 2. **Look for the valence.** Is the word positive, negative, or neutral in the context? Even that is enough to eliminate two choices.
 3. **Check the roots.** *Benevolence* (bene, good; volent, wish), *malevolent* (mal, bad), *perspicacious* (spec, look), *loquacious* (loqu, speak), *credulous* (cred, believe).
 4. **Substitute each answer choice into the sentence.** The wrong ones will sound odd or change the tone.
 5. **Beware the familiar meaning.** Words like *conceit*, *station*, *establishment*, and *advantages* have older senses than the ones you know. If the familiar meaning does not fit, the older one is probably being tested.
 6. **Do not leave a blank.** There is no penalty for guessing, and an informed guess beats a blank.
-

Answer Key

Week 1: 1-H, 2-T, 3-R, 4-I, 5-A, 6-P, 7-S, 8-G, 9-E, 10-L, 11-K, 12-N, 13-Q, 14-B, 15-J, 16-M, 17-F, 18-C, 19-O, 20-D

Week 2: 1-F, 2-I, 3-M, 4-B, 5-Q, 6-C, 7-H, 8-R, 9-E, 10-K, 11-L, 12-J, 13-A, 14-S, 15-G, 16-O, 17-T, 18-N, 19-D, 20-P

Week 3: 1-K, 2-I, 3-B, 4-F, 5-G, 6-J, 7-L, 8-Q, 9-N, 10-A, 11-D, 12-R, 13-H, 14-C, 15-P, 16-T, 17-O, 18-S, 19-E, 20-M

Week 4: 1-J, 2-E, 3-I, 4-S, 5-F, 6-K, 7-P, 8-A, 9-B, 10-G, 11-H, 12-C, 13-O, 14-T, 15-M, 16-D, 17-Q, 18-R, 19-L, 20-N

Week 5: 1-E, 2-J, 3-L, 4-B, 5-D, 6-O, 7-G, 8-K, 9-N, 10-P, 11-M, 12-A, 13-S, 14-Q, 15-I, 16-T, 17-H, 18-R, 19-C, 20-F

Week 6: 1-P, 2-S, 3-A, 4-O, 5-H, 6-M, 7-C, 8-R, 9-I, 10-N, 11-L, 12-T, 13-G, 14-B, 15-Q, 16-K, 17-J, 18-E, 19-F, 20-D

Week 7: 1-N, 2-T, 3-A, 4-L, 5-H, 6-S, 7-D, 8-P, 9-O, 10-R, 11-M, 12-B, 13-F, 14-J, 15-K, 16-I, 17-G, 18-E, 19-Q, 20-C

Week 8: 1-O, 2-I, 3-Q, 4-P, 5-E, 6-H, 7-B, 8-G, 9-C, 10-J, 11-R, 12-M, 13-D, 14-K, 15-S, 16-A, 17-T, 18-N, 19-F, 20-L

Week 9: 1-S, 2-H, 3-Q, 4-K, 5-I, 6-T, 7-D, 8-F, 9-L, 10-A, 11-J, 12-B, 13-C, 14-N, 15-O, 16-R, 17-M, 18-P, 19-G, 20-E

Week 10: 1-A, 2-I, 3-Q, 4-J, 5-F, 6-H, 7-O, 8-S, 9-E, 10-D, 11-B, 12-G, 13-L, 14-P, 15-N, 16-K, 17-M, 18-R, 19-C, 20-T

Week 11: 1-R, 2-A, 3-H, 4-F, 5-I, 6-P, 7-M, 8-N, 9-S, 10-C, 11-O, 12-T, 13-B, 14-Q, 15-L, 16-D, 17-K, 18-G, 19-J, 20-E

Week 12: 1-N, 2-F, 3-A, 4-H, 5-R, 6-S, 7-P, 8-E, 9-I, 10-O, 11-T, 12-D, 13-Q, 14-C, 15-B, 16-J, 17-G, 18-L, 19-M, 20-K

Week 13: 1-Q, 2-H, 3-E, 4-L, 5-K, 6-R, 7-M, 8-B, 9-S, 10-D, 11-G, 12-F, 13-P, 14-O, 15-J, 16-T, 17-N, 18-I, 19-C, 20-A

Week 14: 1-S, 2-P, 3-J, 4-E, 5-D, 6-F, 7-O, 8-R, 9-Q, 10-L, 11-M, 12-K, 13-G, 14-B, 15-N, 16-A, 17-T, 18-I, 19-C, 20-H

Week 15: 1-I, 2-H, 3-C, 4-T, 5-O, 6-E, 7-N, 8-J, 9-A, 10-S, 11-L, 12-D, 13-P, 14-G, 15-K, 16-R, 17-Q, 18-B, 19-M, 20-F

Cumulative Review (Weeks 1-5): 1-H, 2-A, 3-I, 4-J, 5-C, 6-B, 7-G, 8-E, 9-F, 10-D

Self-grading tip: score of 18 or higher out of 20 means the list is solid; 14 to 17 means re-study the misses and retake in two days; below 14 means repeat Days 2 and 3 of the routine before retesting.

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