Lesson 1

# Word List

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

**bewail**
bē wāl'

*v.* To express deep regret or sorrow over.
Many football fans **bewailed** the replacement of real grass by AstroTurf when the new stadium was built.

**destitute**
des' tə tōōt

*adj.* 1. Without resources or possessions, especially the necessities of life.
Winter is especially painful for **destitute** people in the cities of the Northeast.

2. Lacking; devoid of.
Staring at the blank sheet of paper on which I was supposed to write a poem, I found myself **destitute** of ideas.

**destitution** *n.*
**Destitution** caused by the mid-nineteenth-century potato famine forced many Irish families to seek better lives in the United States.

*Discuss with your partner what our country could do to help families facing destitution.*

**detract**
dē trakt'

*v.* To take away, especially from the value, beauty, or importance of.
The family's loud music **detracts** from the peace and quiet of the beach.

**detractor** *n.*
The plan's **detractors** were especially critical of the expected cost of the new town hall.

*Talk to your partner about something that might detract from a person's reputation.*

**emancipate**
ē man' sə pāt

*v.* To set free from slavery; to liberate.
Some teenagers feel **emancipated** when they get a driver's license.

**emancipation** *n.*
In 1863, Abraham Lincoln's **Emancipation** Proclamation stated that all enslaved people in the Confederacy were, from then on, free.

**extol**
ek stōl'

*v.* To praise highly.
The scout leader **extolled** the virtues of truth and honor.

*Explain to your partner which qualities you extol in a good friend.*

**flamboyant**
flam boi' ənt

*adj.* Excessively showy; unrestrained.
My conservative aunt considered her husband's brightly colored, boldly patterned necktie too **flamboyant** for the governor's reception.

**flamboyance** or **flamboyancy** *n.*
With an air of **flamboyance,** the actor flung out her arm and pointed to the door.

**impetus**
im′ pə təs

*n.* 1. A driving force; anything that causes an action.
Her hope of winning an athletic scholarship provided the **impetus** for years of grueling training on the swim team.

2. Increased activity resulting from a driving force.
Kala's low grades gave **impetus** to her increased focus on studying.

*Tell your partner one impetus for eating healthily.*

**insuperable**
in sōō′ pər ə bəl

*adj.* Incapable of being overcome or defeated.
During my senior year, passing Physics seemed an **insuperable** obstacle to graduation.

**intermittent**
in tər mit′ nt

*adj.* Not continuous; happening at intervals.
Showers were **intermittent** throughout the day, although the forecast had promised sunshine.

**maxim**
maks′ im

*n.* A general truth or rule of conduct; a short saying.
Remember the **maxim** "Actions speak louder than words" when you promise not to be late all the time.

**obligatory**
ə blig′ ə tôr ē

*adj.* Required or demanded.
Physical education is **obligatory** unless you have a medical excuse for skipping gym class.

*Chat with your partner about whether learning a second language should be obligatory for all students.*

**plumb**
plum

*v.* 1. To measure the depth of water.
The lake was too deep for us to **plumb.**

2. To reach the deepest part of.
The bathyscaphe is a vessel designed to **plumb** the oceans of the world.

3. To understand by examining closely; to solve.
Her latest book of poems is a valiant attempt to **plumb** the human soul.

*adj.* Straight up and down; vertical.
The bricklayer keeps checking to make sure that the wall being built is **plumb.**

*With your partner, plumb the depths of your imagination to come up with a creative idea for a superpower.*

**vagabond**
vag′ ə bänd

*n.* A person who wanders from place to place.
He spent a few years as a **vagabond** before settling in a city and getting a job in a factory.

*adj.*
The **vagabond** life of traveling musicians suited the members of the band.

**visage**
viz′ ij

*n.* A face, especially one that expresses feelings.
The smiling **visage** of a young girl looked out from the portrait.

*Stare at your partner with a frightening visage.*

**wheedle**
hwēd′ əl

*v.* 1. To coax by using sly persuasion or insincere praise.
He tried to **wheedle** his father into letting him go to a movie on a school night.

2. To gain by using sly persuasion or insincere praise.
Merritt **wheedled** information about the test from her friend who had taken it earlier in the day.