

Lesson

1

Word List

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

bewail
bē wā' l'

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 sūō'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 tōr 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 bānd

- 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.