

CHAPTER
21

assiduous
caustic
chastise
elucidate
exalt

fallacious
hypocrisy
insurgent
placid
trite

Ten Words in Context

In the space provided, write the letter of the meaning closest to that of each **boldfaced** word. Use the context of the sentences to help you figure out each word's meaning.

1 **assiduous**
(ə-sīj'ōō-əs)
-adjective

Assiduous means

- Our dog is an **assiduous** chewer. If we give him an old leather shoe, he will spend hours gnawing at it until it is reduced to a pile of scraps.
 - Because Rafael has been an **assiduous** student this term, he will probably earn all A's.
- a. uncaring. b. hard-working. c. peaceful.

2 **caustic**
(kô'stik)
-adjective

Caustic means

- The writer Dorothy Parker was famous for her **caustic** wit. When she met a woman who had recently attempted suicide, Parker said, "Better luck next time."
 - Cassie must have had a bad day. When I asked her how she was, her reply was **caustic**: "Oh, I'm just *wonderful*; now, if you'll excuse me, I'm going to lie down in the middle of traffic."
- a. sarcastic. b. careful. c. old-fashioned.

3 **chastise**
(chäs'tīz')
-verb

Chastise means

- The officer did not give Joe a ticket, but he did **chastise** him for driving with a burned-out headlight.
 - The newspaper story **chastised** several city landlords' for renting out filthy, unsafe apartments to poor families.
- a. to admire. b. to criticize. c. to fear.

4 **elucidate**
(ī-lōō'sī-dāt')
-verb

Elucidate means

- To **elucidate** the stages of decision-making, the instructor drew a helpful chart on the chalkboard.
 - "Let me **elucidate** my position," the politician told the reporters. "When I said that I was in favor of raising taxes, I really meant that I am against it."
- a. to understand. b. to remember. c. to make clear.

5 **exalt**
(īg-zôlt')
-verb

Exalt means

- Some high schools **exalt** student athletes, making it seem that winning games is the most important thing in life.
 - Linda loves Siamese cats; in fact, she **exalts** them above all other pets.
- a. to expect. b. to praise. c. to accompany.

6 **fallacious**
(fā-lā'shəs)
-adjective

Fallacious means

- It would be **fallacious** to conclude that Norm and Lou are brothers just because they look alike. In fact, they're not related at all.
 - Jerry's argument sounded good, but it was **fallacious**. He had based it on the wrong statistics.
- a. incorrect. b. careful. c. commonplace.

- 7 **hypocrisy**
(hī-pōk'ri-sē)
-noun
- Hypocrisy* means
- Many people accused the TV preacher of **hypocrisy** when he was discovered to be having an affair with a friend's wife.
 - Everyone is probably guilty of **hypocrisy** from time to time—it's tempting to pretend to be better than we really are.
- a. falseness. b. honesty. c. prejudice.
- 8 **insurgent**
(īn-sūr'jənt)
-noun
- Insurgent* means
- "If I lived under a dictatorship," Mindy confessed, "I think I would just keep quiet and try to stay out of trouble. I don't have the soul of an **insurgent**."
 - As a young man, Uncle Kiril joined a group of **insurgents**. When their plot against the government was discovered, he had to flee for his life, and that's how he came to America.
- a. a rebel. b. an elected official. c. a candidate.
- 9 **placid**
(plās'id)
-adjective
- Placid* means
- Jack and Cindy's first baby was restless and fussy, but their second baby was happy and **placid**.
 - The two women who were waiting to hear if they had passed their driving test were very different. One was a bundle of nerves, while the other seemed quite **placid**.
- a. tense. b. untroubled. c. sad.
- 10 **trite**
(trīt)
-adjective
- Trite* means
- "**Trite** but true—I love you!" was the little rhyme accompanying the bouquet of roses.
 - Sick and tired of the **trite** expression "Have a nice day," Barbara bought a T-shirt that said: "Don't tell me what kind of day to have."
- a. misunderstood. b. original. c. worn-out.

Matching Words with Definitions

Following are definitions of the ten words. Clearly write or print each word next to its definition. The sentences above and on the previous page will help you decide on the meaning of each word.

- _____ To scold sharply
- _____ To explain; clarify
- _____ Based on error; mistaken
- _____ Careful, hardworking, and thorough; diligent
- _____ A person who revolts against established authority
- _____ Peaceful; calm
- _____ Overused and commonplace; stale
- _____ To glorify; honor
- _____ A pretense of having beliefs, feelings, or virtues that one does not actually possess; insincerity
- _____ Sarcastic; biting; stinging

CAUTION: Do not go any further until you are sure the above answers are correct. Then you can use the definitions to help you in the following practices. Your goal is eventually to know the words well enough so that you don't need to check the definitions at all.

> Sentence Check 1

Using the answer line, complete each item below with the correct word from the box. Use each word once.

a. assiduous	b. caustic	c. chastise	d. elucidate	e. exalt
f. fallacious	g. hypocrisy	h. insurgent	i. placid	j. trite

- _____ 1. A good teacher can criticize her students' work without being ____; in other words, she does not attack the students with stinging sarcasm.
- _____ 2. The police officer ____ (e) d the driver for not wearing a seat belt.
- _____ 3. Some ____ s in the history class marched into the professor's office and demanded an end to surprise quizzes. She just laughed and told them to get back to the books.
- _____ 4. The boys who washed the windows did such a(n) ____ job that they didn't leave a single speck of dust.
- _____ 5. ____ expressions weaken a paper. One expert on writing advises that if you have ever seen a phrase in print before, don't use it.
- _____ 6. We assumed that Route 58 connects with Route 59. Unfortunately, our reasoning was ____; the two roads are nowhere near each other.
- _____ 7. As I argued with my roommate about assisted suicide, I found it hard to ____ my opinion. I have a sense that it's wrong, but I couldn't say exactly why.
- _____ 8. It took all my self-control to act ____ during the job interview. Inside I was nervous and excited.
- _____ 9. Shelly's ____ bothers me. She pretends to be very fond of her roommate but makes fun of the poor girl behind her back.
- _____ 10. Because Ralph wants his daughter to go to the state university, he ____ s it above all other schools whenever they discuss colleges.

NOTE: Now check your answers to these questions by turning to page 177. Going over the answers carefully will help you prepare for the next two practices, for which answers are not given.

> Sentence Check 2

Using the answer lines, complete each item below with **two** words from the box. Use each word once.

- _____ 1-2. A careful writer makes ____ efforts to avoid ____, hackneyed^o, overused words and phrases.
- _____ 3-4. Many people tend to admire and even ____ any rebel, believing that he or she must be a hero. But whether a(n) ____ deserves praise depends on what he or she is rebelling against.
- _____ 5-6. It's ____ to assume that someone has no worries just because he or she seems ____ . A calm exterior may conceal anxiety, sadness, and even rage.

- _____ 7-8. The play *Tartuffe* by Molière is about a wicked man who pretends to be very righteous. When people said the play was an attack on religion, the playwright tried to _____ his point: he explained that he was attacking not true religion, but religious _____.
- _____ 9-10. "I don't like to _____ anyone," the boss always says. But her brusque^o remarks about anything that someone has done wrong are often so _____ and wounding that she does seem to take pleasure in scolding people.

➤ Final Check: Helen Keller

Here is a final opportunity for you to strengthen your knowledge of the ten words. First read the following selection carefully. Then fill in each blank with a word from the box at the top of the previous page. (Context clues will help you figure out which word goes in which blank.) Use each word once.

Most American schoolchildren know the story of Helen Keller—or at least they think they do. They know that Keller, who was born in 1880, became blind and deaf as a tiny child. They know she grew up wild and undisciplined, unable to communicate, imprisoned in her dark world. They know she was befriended by a sagacious^o teacher, Anne Sullivan, who taught her to speak, read, and write. For most people, those few facts sum up the Helen Keller story. She is often (1) _____ (e)d as an unfortunate child who succeeded with the help of a dedicated teacher. *The Miracle Worker*, a famous play about Keller that was also made into a movie, (2) _____ s these points.

But compared with Keller's full story, that version of her accomplishments is oversimplified and (3) _____. As an adult, she led a fascinating and controversial life as one of the best-known (4) _____ s of her day. After graduating from college, she joined the American Socialist Party. She supported the communist revolution in Russia. She was a(n) (5) _____ worker for women's rights, leading marches of women demanding the vote. Through visiting slums, sweatshops, and hospitals, she learned that most disabled people did not have the opportunities she had as a child in a well-off family. She (6) _____ (e)d political leaders for supporting a system in which poor people often became blind through industrial accidents and untreated disease. Then, she herself was criticized for her attacks. One newspaper editor was particularly (7) _____: he said that Keller's thinking was (8) _____ because of her disabilities—that she just didn't understand things very well. In her reply, Keller pointed out that she had once met this editor and suggested that he was guilty of (9) _____ or duplicity^o. "At the time [we met], the compliments he paid me were so generous that I blush to remember them," she wrote. "But now that I have come out for socialism he reminds me . . . that I am blind and deaf and especially liable to error. I must have shrunk in intelligence during the years since I met him." It is erroneous^o to think of Keller as a(n) (10) _____, sweet symbol of victory over disability. She was a fiery spokeswoman for those who were as voiceless as she had once been.

Scores	Sentence Check 2 _____%	Final Check _____%
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Enter your scores above and in the vocabulary performance chart on the inside back cover of the book.