

exhort
flamboyant
foible
innocuous
magnanimous

masochist
meticulous
rancor
recrimination
repugnant

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 **exhort**
(ĕg-zôrt')
-verb

— *Exhort* means

- The school counselor gave an impassioned speech to the parents, in which she **exhorted** them to make every effort to keep their children off drugs.
- On the eve of the invasion, the general **exhorted** the troops to fight bravely for their homeland.

A. to accuse. B. to praise. C. to urge.

2 **flamboyant**
(flām-boi'ənt)
-adjective

— *Flamboyant* means

- Lily can't resist **flamboyant** clothes. She'd wear a hot-pink dress with gold satin trim to a funeral.
- The **flamboyant** pianist always wore sequined suits and glittering jewelry when he sat down at his silver piano.

A. flashy. B. self-centered. C. concerned with details.

3 **foible**
(foi'bəl)
-noun

— *Foible* means

- Serious character flaws, such as abusiveness, are hard to overlook, but **foibles**—such as drinking soup through a straw—can often be easily tolerated.
- “I accept my husband's **foible** of leaving clothes lying around,” Kia remarked, “because it lets me be messy without feeling guilty.”

A. a serious problem. B. a minor fault. C. a complaint.

4 **innocuous**
(ĭn-nōk'yōō-əs)
-adjective

— *Innocuous* means

- Although most children engage in **innocuous** pranks on Halloween, some get out of control and do serious damage.
- Experts at the Poison Information Center can tell you if a household substance is harmful or **innocuous**.

A. without bad effects. B. expensive. C. satisfying.

5 **magnanimous**
(māg-nān'ə-məs)
-adjective

— *Magnanimous* means

- At age 5, Jonathan is already learning to be **magnanimous**. He hugs his baby sister, even when she hits him on the head with a wooden block.
- Last Thanksgiving, someone at work drew a funny picture of our boss as an enormous turkey. When the boss saw it, he was **magnanimous**—he laughed, said it was terrific, and even hung it up over his desk.

A. forgiving. B. consistent. C. resentful.

6 **masochist**
(mās'ə-kĭst)
-noun

— *Masochist* means

- Psychologists are trying to understand why **masochists** obtain satisfaction from suffering.
- “A **masochist's** idea of a good time,” said the comedian, “is getting hit by a truck on the way home from having all his teeth pulled.”

A. someone filled with hatred. B. someone who enjoys being hurt. C. someone who enjoys hurting others.

7 meticulous
(mə-tīk'yōō-ləs)
-adjective

— *Meticulous* means

- When you proofread your own writing, be **meticulous**—check every detail.
- Marcus is **meticulous** about his appearance. He never has a wrinkle in his clothing or a hair out of place.
 - A. very careful.
 - B. bold.
 - C. unconcerned.

8 rancor
(rān'kər)
-noun

— *Rancor* means

- The **rancor** between my uncles has lasted for twenty years, ever since Uncle Dmitri married the woman to whom Uncle Sergei had proposed.
- When there is long-lasting **rancor** between divorced parents, their children may also start to share this bitterness.
 - A. a minor fault.
 - B. deep hostility.
 - C. secrecy.

9 recrimination
(rī-krīm'ə-nā'shən)
-noun

— *Recrimination* means

- The couple's session with the marriage counselor failed miserably; it began with the husband and wife hurling accusations at each other, and it never progressed beyond these **recriminations**.
- When Lainie's father and her teacher met to discuss Lainie's poor grades, they exchanged **recriminations**—each accused the other of not helping her do better.
 - A. an urgent plea.
 - B. a detailed suggestion.
 - C. an accusation in reply.

10 repugnant
(rī-pūg'nənt)
-adjective

— *Repugnant* means

- My parents find some of my eating habits **repugnant**, but I see nothing offensive about mixing peas and ketchup into mashed potatoes.
- A snake is **repugnant** to many people—"Slimy!" they say, shivering with distaste. However, snakes are not at all slimy, and most are harmless.
 - A. disgusting.
 - B. amusing.
 - C. remarkable.

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.

- _____ Intense hatred or ill will; long-lasting resentment
- _____ Harmless; inoffensive
- _____ Offensive; distasteful; repulsive
- _____ A person who gains satisfaction from suffering physical or psychological pain
- _____ Very showy; strikingly bold
- _____ A minor weakness or character flaw; a minor fault in behavior
- _____ An accusation made in response to an accuser; countercharge
- _____ To urge with argument or strong advice; plead earnestly
- _____ Noble in mind and spirit; especially generous in forgiving
- _____ Extremely careful and exact; showing great attention to details

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 provided, complete each item below with the correct word from the box. Use each word once.

A. exhort
F. masochist

B. flamboyant
G. meticulous

C. foible
H. rancor

D. innocuous
I. recrimination

E. magnanimous
J. repugnant

1. Why is it that bats seem so ____? Do we think a flying mouse-like creature is distasteful, or do we associate bats with vampires?
2. It was ____ of the Greens to forgive the driver who ran over their dog.
3. Battered women who stay with their abusive partners aren't necessarily ____; they don't enjoy being hurt, but often they can't see any way to escape.
4. Although nail-biting is only a ____, it can become maddening to a companion who observes it day after day.
5. Before the football game, the coach gave a fiery pep talk. He ____ (e)d the players to fight for the honor of the team and the school.
6. To an allergic person, foods that are normally ____, such as milk or wheat, can cause discomfort and even serious illness.
7. The long-standing ____ between the two women finally came to an end when one of them fell and the other rushed over to help her.
8. The angry neighbors traded ____s: "Your wild kids trampled all over my flower bed!" "Well, your crazy dog dug up my lawn!"
9. Some jobs needn't be done in a(n) ____ way. For instance, why sweep every speck of dust off a floor that's only going to get dirty again in an hour?
10. On New Year's Day in Philadelphia, string bands called "Mummers" strut their stuff in ____ costumes designed to outshine all other bands in the parade.

NOTE: Now check your answers to these items by turning to page 178. 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 provided, complete each item below with two words from the box. Use each word once.

1-2. My second-grade teacher had stringent^o standards. For one thing, she ____ (e)d us to be ____ about our handwriting. "Dot every *i*," she would say, "and cross every *t*."

3-4. In a small business, it's important never to instigate^o quarrels or let ____ develop. People must learn to be ____ and forgive each other's errors.

5-6. Many people find the thought of a ____ seeking out and enjoying suffering to be as ____ as the idea of causing someone else to suffer.

7-8. Walter is certainly odd. Still, most of his _____s—like wearing bedroom slippers to work and leaving bags of pretzels all over the office—are so _____ that nobody really minds them.

9-10. When Martha put on a bright red beaded dress with huge rhinestone earrings, _____s flew back and forth between her and her sister. "You look preposterous^o in that outfit," her sister said. "It's much too _____." Martha replied, "Well, *your* clothes are the most boring I've ever seen."

Final Check: How Neat Is Neat Enough?

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.

Experts say that the most ordinary matters sometimes create the biggest problems in a marriage. If one spouse is a slob and the other is (1) _____, there is bound to be trouble.

At first, newlyweds tend to be (2) _____ readily forgiving each other's (3) _____s. The wife says it's "sweet" that her husband made the bed while she was still in it and "cute" that he grabbed her plate to wash it when she picked up her sandwich to take a bite. "You're so helpful," she coos. And he manages a smile when she dumps her too-expensive, too-(4) _____ gold sequined dress in the middle of the bedroom floor. "We've sure got a high-priced, flashy rug," he jokes.

But the honeymoon ends, and the idiosyncrasies^o that once seemed (5) _____ start to be seriously annoying. He begins to think, "Since my housekeeping is so impeccable^o, why isn't she picking up my good habits? Why must I wade through dirty pantyhose to reach the closet? Why is there spaghetti sauce on the kitchen ceiling fan again?" He (6) _____s her to have some self-respect and stop living like a pig.

And she begins to wonder about him: Why does he insist on dusting the tops of the door frames when no one can see them? So what if she squeezes the toothpaste from the middle of the tube—why should he find that harmless habit so (7) _____? Maybe he's a (8) _____ why else would he be so happy down on his knees, scrubbing the bathroom floor with a toothbrush (one of the "old" ones that he replaced after using it for a week)?

Soon the accusations and (9) _____s start. She yells, "You're a zealot^o for neatness—that's all you care about. You spend more time holding that vacuum cleaner than you spend holding me!" He responds, "If you weren't so sloppy, I'd hold you more often. As it is, I have to climb over a mountain of junk just to get near you!"

Eventually, as the two of them continue arguing with each other and berating^o each other, their feelings of (10) _____ become so strong that a breakup is imminent^o. It won't be long before another relationship—so to speak—bites the dust.

