LEARNERS

LEARNING WITH A DIFFERENCE

Vocabulary Building 3

A workbook specially designed to improve the vocabulary and writing skills of students

Betty Kirkpatrick MA

Made with ScanKromsator

Vocabulary Building 3

A workbook specially designed to improve the vocabulary and writing skills of students

Betty Kirkpatrick MA

LEARNERS PUBLISHING

Contents

Preface v

1 **A protest meeting** **1**
More about Language: Homophones 5

2 **Some bad news** **7**
More about Language: Apostrophe 11

3 **A disastrous production** **13**
More about Language: Similes 17

4 **Memo to staff** **18**
More about Language: Indefinite article 22

5 **Missing you** **24**
More about Language: Confusables 28

6 **A near tragedy** **30**
More about Language: Acronyms 34

7 **Vacation jobs** **35**
More about Language: Homographs and homophones 39

8 **Dad in a bad mood** **41**
More about Language: Doubling of consonants 45

9 **A weird experience** **47**
More about Language: Past participle and past tense 51

10 **An angry customer** **53**
More about Language: Foreign borrowings 57

11 **Cleaning up** **59**
More about Language: "less" and "fewer" 63

12 **Bullying** **65**
More about Language: "-ize" and "-lse" 69

13 **Welcome to the company** **71**
More about Language: "-ese" 74

14 **Kenwood Park attack** **76**
More about Language: "-able" or "-ible" 80

15 **Young suicides** **81**
More about Language: "deca-" and "deci-" 84

16 **Easy money** **86**
More about Language: "female", "feminine" and "feminist" 89

17 **A gruesome discovery** **92**
More about Language: The plural form of nouns ending in "-y" 95

18 **A terrifying challenge** **97**
More about Language: Eponyms 101

19 **Was it a monster?** **102**
More about Language: "-oes" or "-os" 106

20 **Different points of view** **107**
More about Language: Idioms 111

21 **A book review** **112**
More about Language: Antonyms 116

22 **Flat rows** **117**
More about Language: "eco-" 121

23 **Farewell to John** **123**
More about Language: "their", "there" and "they're" 126

24 **A folk hero** **128**
More about Language: Trade names 132

25 **An expensive design** **133**
More about Language: Nouns and adjectives 137

Preface

The purpose of ***Vocabulary Building Workbooks*** *3* and *4* is to increase students' knowledge of English words and expressions and so encourage them to extend the range of their own vocabulary. English has a rich and varied vocabulary and students should be urged to make use of this by introducing some variety into their own speech and writing. Of course, students must proceed with caution at first and learn how to use more unusual items in the correct context. These books will help them greatly in this learning process.

Each book contains 25 passages which demonstrate such features of English as euphemisms, the use of softer, less direct words for things that people do not wish to refer to bluntly; words which are only appropriate in informal contexts; difficult words which are only appropriate in formal contexts, and which should sometimes be replaced by simpler words in the interest of clarity; clichés, which are a major part of English, but which should be used sparingly, and so on. Each book also contains a **Vocabulary Study** section which explains selected words and expressions in the passages.

Each book also has two sets of exercises. **Exercise 1** consists of questions based on the aspects of English which are covered by the various passages. Thus, students are asked, for example, to replace a difficult word or expression with a simpler one; to say which of two confusable words is the correct one in context; to replace an informal word with a word from mainstream language; to remove a redundant word and so on. Answers are given so that students can check the accuracy of their responses.

Exercise 2 is based on the series of short statements about selected aspects of English presented in the section **More about Language**. These statements deal with plural forms; words liable to be confused; spelling problems; idioms; proverbs; words of foreign origin; acronyms and so on. Each statement is followed by a series of questions on this information for students to work on. Again, answers are given.

These information-packed books, if used conscientiously, will be of invaluable assistance in the important process of vocabulary development.

Unit 1

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

A protest meeting

Dear James

I am writing to tell you what happened at last night's protest meeting. It was a pity that you were unable to go to it, but it was very well attended. I was pleased to see so many of our protest groups there.

Councillor Jones was the member of the council most in favour of the building of the new office block. His **opening gambit** was that such a development would encourage firms to move to the centre of the town and so bring new life to the city centre. He said that this was just one of a **raft** of measures that the council were considering in order to achieve this. He was optimistic that the building would be complete by the following winter.

Harry Jackson said that a consideration of **past history** indicated that Councillor Jones was wrong about the necessity of building more office blocks in the centre of the town. He pointed out that there were already several empty office blocks near the centre of the town with "to let" or "for sale" boards outside them. **Basically**, there was far more office accommodation in the town than was required.

Councillor Black said that the building of any new office block was **contingent upon** the developers receiving planning permission and that he would oppose the giving of this. He said that he had received a great many letters on the subject and was **cognizant of** the strength of feeling against the building development in the town.

The meeting became very noisy. You **literally** had to shout your head off to be heard and some speakers had to be told to stop **using strong language**.

Jane Miller accused some of the councillors of **being economical with the truth** when they gave their reasons for being in favour of the development. She said they concentrated too much on the demands of the construction companies who were only interested in making profits. The people who really mattered were those who lived in the town. Councillors should remember that, **at the end of the day**, they were the ones who were responsible for electing councillors.

The meeting ended at 10.30, but there is going to be another one on Friday. I hope you can be there. Let us hope that more progress can be made this time.

Regards

John

Vocabulary Study

basically

Literally, **basically** means "referring to a base or basis" or "fundamentally":

- *The suggested scheme is **basically** a good one, but it needs a few minor adjustments.*

It is frequently used meaninglessly at the beginning of a sentence, as in the passage above, as a sentence filler. This use should be avoided. The word can very often be omitted without changing the meaning of the sentence:

- ***Basically**, we must do something about the present situation.*
- *We must do something about the present situation.*

cognizant, cognizant of

This is a formal expression meaning to be aware of. A rather difficult expression, it is often used in the mistaken belief that it will make what the speaker says sound more impressive, although it often just sounds pompous. It is much better to use a less formal, more easily understood expression:

- *We were **not cognizant of** the manager's reason for leaving.*
- *We were **not aware of** the manager's reason for leaving.*

contingent, contingent upon

This is a formal expression meaning to depend on or to be dependent on. You can use a less formal, more easily understood expression to replace it:

- *The firm's plans for expansion are **contingent upon** a marked increase in profits this year.*
- *The firm's plans for expansion are **dependent on** a marked increase in profits this year.*

end, at the end of the day

This phrase means "when everything has been considered". It is much overused and is often used virtually meaninglessly, as in the passage above, as a sentence filler. In the passage above, you can quite easily omit the expression without altering the meaning of the sentence:

- ***At the end of the day**, you are the only person who can decide which job would suit you best.*
- *You are the only person who can decide which job would suit you best.*

gambit, opening gambit

This phrase means an opening remark in a discussion or conversation. The word **opening** is redundant since the word **gambit** means an opening, specifically in chess, where it refers to an opening designed to gain an advantage over one's opponent. The phrase **opening gambit** has become over-used and is better avoided:

- *Her **opening gambit** was that she would resign if the committee did not agree to her proposal.*
- *Her **opening remark** was that she would resign if the committee did not agree to her proposal.*
- *She **began** her statement by saying that she would resign if the committee did not agree to her proposal.*
- *Her **first** remark was she would resign if the committee did not agree to her proposal.*

history, past history

The word **past** in this expression is redundant as the word **history** on its own already refers to the past:

- *Those who have studied the **past history** of the political party know that there has been much in-fighting throughout the decades.*
- *Those who have studied the **history** of the political party know that there has been much in-fighting throughout the decades.*

literally

This word can be used to mean in a literal, rather than figurative way:

- *Obviously he did not eat **literally** his hat, but he had to admit that he had been wrong.*

It is more frequently used, and overused, to add emphasis to an idea or figurative expression, where there is no suggestion of literalness:

- *She was **literally** playing with fire.*

This means that she was doing something very risky or dangerous, not that she was playing with flames. The word **literally** can be deleted without

any loss of meaning and overuse of it in this sense should be avoided.

raft

In this context, **raft** means a series or set of things, and is often overused, especially with reference to plans, proposals, measures, etc. A raft is a kind of simple boat made by tying pieces of wood together and the idea behind the modern meaning is that a raft of, say, proposals is a number of proposals that form a set. The modern sense of raft is a piece of jargon which should be avoided:

- *Schools are faced with a **raft** of changes to the curriculum.*
- *Schools are faced with a **series** of changes to the curriculum.*

strong, use strong language

This expression is a euphemism for "swear". **Euphemisms** are used to avoid referring directly to something that may cause embarrassment or offence. There is a modern tendency for people to say what they mean and so people are now more likely to refer to such subjects as death, sex, and parts of the body, etc, directly rather than to use euphemisms. Euphemisms can sound coy and sometimes cause confusion. It is often better to avoid them and say plainly what you mean.

truth, be economical with the truth

This expression means not to tell the absolute truth. It is a euphemism often used by someone to suggest that a person is not telling the truth. They often do so when they do not want openly to accuse the person of lying, which is considered a serious accusation. The expression has become a cliché which is best avoided. If you want to suggest that someone is lying without actually calling them a liar, you can say that you think that they are not telling the truth. See **use strong language** *above.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the expression in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *His **opening gambit** was that such a development would encourage firms to move to the centre of the town and so bring new life to the city centre.*

_____

_____

2. *He said that this was just one of a **raft** of measures that the council were considering in order to achieve this.*

_____

_____

3. *Harry Jackson said that a consideration of **past history** indicated that Councillor Jones was wrong about the necessity of building more office blocks in the centre of the town.*

_____

_____

4. *You **literally** had to shout your head off to be heard and some speakers had to be told to stop **using strong language**.*

_____

_____

5. *Councillors should remember that,* ***at the end of the day,*** *they were the ones who were responsible for electing councillors.*

_____

_____

B Replace the euphemisms in bold in the following sentences with simpler words or expressions.

1. *I went round to visit an old friend of my grandfather and was met by his wife, who burst into tears and said that he had recently* ***gone to a better place.***

_____

_____

2. *The king had three sons by the queen, but he is also said to have had several more children who were* ***born on the wrong side of the blanket.***

_____

_____

3. *Jim and Sara are looking for a larger house because they are expecting* ***a happy event*** *later this year.*

_____

_____

C Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *He is one of the country's most important industrial (* ***magnates / magnets*** *).*
2. *Mary served (* ***muscles / mussels*** *) as a starter at her dinner party.*
3. *We decided not to rent the flat as it was dark and (* ***dingy / dinghy*** *).*
4. *He decided to (* ***secret / secrete*** *) the money under a floorboard.*

D Rewrite the following sentences, omitting any redundant words.

1. *The soldier died from the mortal blow which he received in battle.*

_____

2. *She helped and assisted her husband to commit the crime.*

_____

3. *Harry is suffering from a rare cardiac condition that has affected his heart.*

_____

Homophones

Homophones are words which sound alike because they are pronounced in the same way. However, they frequently do not look alike since they have different spellings, and they usually have different meanings.

For example, the verb **cite** and the nouns **sight** and **site** are homophones since they are pronounced in the same way, despite the obvious difference in spelling. **Cite** means to mention or quote, as in *The judge **cited** three other crimes committed by the accused.* **Sight** means the act of seeing, as in *The old lady's **sight** is not very good.* **Site** means a place or location, as in *The council plan to build a new school, but they have not yet found a suitable **site**.*

Similarly, the adjective **right**, the noun **rite** and the verb **write** are homophones since they are pronounced in the same way, although they are obviously spelt differently. **Right** means correct or good, as in *That is not the **right** answer*, or the opposite of left, as in *The shop is on the **right** side of the road.* **Rite** means a ceremonial act, as in *They performed several religious **rites** in the course of the festival.* **Write** means to form letters or numbers on a surface so that they can be read, as in *The child is too young to be able to **write**,* or to produce something in written form, as in *She **writes** books for children.*

Homophones can cause confusion and people often use the wrong one in error. It is important to be able to distinguish between them.

Exercise 2

Rewrite each of the following sentences, using the correct word from the words given in brackets.

1. *He was unable to (**cite / sight / site**) one convincing reason for his behaviour.*

   _____

   _____

2. *The children had toast and (**cereal / serial**) for breakfast.*

   _____

3. *The dish was made with wild (**boar / bore**).*

4. *I'm going to have to (**altar / alter**) my holiday plans.*

5. *The sky was a glorious (**hue / hew**) of pink as the sun set.*

6. *They could hear the (**peal / peel**) of church bells as they drove towards the town.*

7. *His latest novel got a very bad (**review / revue**) in the local evening paper.*

8. *Jack is recovering from a bout of (**flu / flue**).*

9. *The aeroplane is still in the (**hangar / hanger**).*

10. *The bride went slowly down the (**aisle / isle**) of the church.*

Unit 2

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Some bad news

I felt that **it was incumbent upon me** to call you together this morning to **impart** a very sad piece of news which affects us all. I have just heard that our managing director has been involved in a terrible, **unforeseen accident**. He was sailing with his wife and two of their sons when a sudden storm arose and the boat overturned.

When the coast guards went to the rescue they found that Mr Brown was already dead and that Mrs Brown was **at death's door**. Their sons, Frank and Martin, were both badly injured and in shock. Doctors at the local hospital say that, **at this moment in time**, Frank is doing well but that Martin, who **sustained** internal injuries, **is not out of the woods yet**. Mrs Brown has been taken to the city hospital where she is in the intensive care unit. Let us hope and pray that they all make a **full and complete** recovery.

I can see that **each and every one of you** is as shocked by the news of Mr Brown's death as I am. He took a personal interest in the welfare of all of his employees. We all mattered to him as individuals as well as employees and we will all miss him greatly.

However, he would expect us to try to go on working as usual. The success of the firm was particularly important to him, as he was not only managing director but also part-owner. He would want this success to continue and he would want you all to contribute to it.

It is far too soon to speculate what changes are likely to occur following Mr Brown's tragic death. **Personally**, I think that, **in the light of the fact that** Mr Brown's eldest son, James, is deputy managing director, there are unlikely to be any major changes in the near future.

I know that you will join me in sending condolences to Mrs Brown and her family. **In the event that** the funeral is a public one, rather than a private one, you will all be given time off to attend it. Meanwhile we are closing the firm for the rest of the day as a mark of respect.

Vocabulary Study

death, at death's door

This is a euphemism which means to be very seriously ill. Euphemisms can sound coy and sometimes cause confusion. It is often better to avoid them and say plainly what you mean. (See **use strong language**, *p 3*.)

each, each and every one of you

This overused expression simply means "all of you". It is sometimes used for emphasis:

- ***Each and every one of you*** *will be punished if the guilty student does not confess.*

However, it is most often used in an attempt to sound impressive, although it often just sounds rather pompous. It is better to use **all of you** or **all**:

- ***Each and every one of you*** *is invited to the party.*
- ***You are all*** *invited to the party.*

event, in the event that

This is a formal expression meaning "if". A rather difficult expression, it is often used in the mistaken belief that it will make what the speaker says sound more impressive. It is much better to use a less formal, more easily understood expression:

- ***In the event that*** *it rains, the children's games will be held indoors.*
- ***If*** *it rains, the children's games will be held indoors.*

full, full and complete

There is no need to use these two words together because they mean the same. People sometimes use them together because they think this use adds emphasis to what they are saying or because they think that it makes what they are saying sound more impressive. However, one of the words is redundant and you should choose just one of them to get your meaning across:

- *This is a* ***full and complete*** *account of what happened.*
- *This is a* ***full*** *report of what happened.*
- *This is a* ***complete*** *report of what happened.*

impart

It is a more difficult word meaning the same as "tell", "pass on" or "make known". In most situations, you should choose a simpler word so that you are clearly understood:

- *It was left to me to* ***impart*** *the news of their father's death to the children.*
- *It was left to me to* ***make known*** *the news of their father's death to the children.*
- *It was left to me to* ***tell*** *the news of their father's death to the children.*

incumbent, it is incumbent upon me

This is a formal expression which indicates that the person speaking is doing something because they ought to do it, or because it is their duty or responsibility to do it:

- *In the circumstances* ***it is incumbent on all of us*** *to work as hard as possible.*
- *In the circumstances* ***it is our duty*** *to work as hard as possible.*
- *In the circumstances* ***we ought*** *to work as hard as possible.*

light, in the light of the fact that

This is a formal, more difficult way of saying "since" or "because". It is better to use the simpler word in order to make yourself clearly understood:

- ***In the light of the fact that*** *it was raining heavily, we had to cancel the children's trip to the seaside.*
- ***Since*** *it was raining heavily, we had to cancel the children's trip to the seaside.*

Language Help

In the light of something means after considering something:

- *In the light of Jim's serious injuries, doctors decided to operate right away.*

moment, at this moment in time

This phrase, meaning "now" or "just now", is much overused and is often used virtually meaninglessly, as in the passage above, as a sentence filler:

- ***At this moment in time** I do not have enough information to comment on your remarks.*
- *I don't have enough information **just now** to comment on your remarks.*

personally

This word is often used meaninglessly and so is redundant, as in the passage above. When you say **I think, I believe**, etc, you are obviously giving your opinion about something, rather than someone else's and there is no need to add the word **personally**.

It is occasionally appropriate to use **personally** if you are, for example, distinguishing between a private and a professional opinion:

- ***Personally**, I think you should accept the offer the firm has made in compensation for your injuries, but, as your lawyer, I must advise you to continue with the negotiations.*

sustain

This word means, in the context of the passage, to experience something bad. It is often used in technical contexts, for example, by doctors or the police:

- *In his report the police inspector said that the victim of the road accident **sustained** fatal injuries.*
- *The accountant said that the firm had **sustained** so many financial losses recently that it might have to close down.*

In an ordinary, non-technical piece of writing it is best to use a simpler word, appropriate to the context, such as **suffer** or **experience**.

unforeseen, an unforeseen accident

The word **unforeseen**, meaning "happening unexpectedly", is redundant in this expression since an accident, by definition, is something that happens unexpectedly. Use one of them, but not both together:

- *The building had been well maintained and the damage to it was the result of an **unforeseen accident**.*
- *The building had been well maintained and the damage to it was the result of an accident.*
- *The building was well maintained and the damage to it was **unforeseen**.*

wood, someone is not out of the woods yet

If you say that **someone is not out of the woods yet**, you mean that they are still in danger or in serious trouble or difficulty of some kind. The expression is an idiom which has become so overused that it has become a cliché. It should be used sparingly.

Language Help

In origin, the word **woods** is used as a metaphor for danger or trouble since a wood or forest is full of obstacles, unlike clear, unwooded ground.

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *I have just heard that our managing director has been involved in a terrible, **unforeseen accident**.*

_____

_____

2. *Doctors at the local hospital say that, **at this moment in time**, Frank is doing well but that Martin, who **sustained** internal injuries, **is not out of the woods yet**.*

_____

_____

_____

3. *I can see that* ***each and every one of you*** *is as shocked by the news of Mr Brown's death as I am.*

4. *I think that,* ***in the light of the fact that*** *Mr Brown's eldest son, James, is deputy managing director, there are unlikely to be any major changes in the near future.*

5. ***In the event that*** *the funeral is a public one, rather than a private one, you will all be given time off to attend it.*

B Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *Turn right at the next (* ***junction / juncture*** *).*
2. *The (* ***cannon / canon*** *) failed to fire and the battle was lost.*
3. *The soloist has damaged her vocal (* ***chords / cords*** *) and will not be able to sing for some time.*
4. *I did not understand the speaker's (* ***allusion / illusion*** *) to black magic.*

C Rewrite the following sentences, omitting any redundant words.

1. *We were surprised to discover that tourists were treated with such overt open hostility.*

2. *Let me reiterate again that we will do all in our power to help.*

3. *Our MP is making his debut maiden speech to parliament.*

4. *Members of the government are concerned about the number of illiterate students who are leaving school without being able to read.*

D Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *We must* ***apprise*** *everyone of the seriousness of the situation at once.*

2. ***Subsequent to*** *her marriage break-up, Mary lived at home with her parents.*

Apostrophe

The **apostrophe** (') is a form of punctuation that is mainly used to indicate possession. The positioning of the apostrophe may cause confusion and putting it in the wrong place is a common error.

The possessive case is usually indicated by adding 's to the singular noun, as in *the **boy's** bike, the **child's** father, **John's** house*; by adding an apostrophe to plural nouns that already end in s, as in *all the **doctors'** cars, several **dogs'** kennels, **customers'** rights;* by adding 's to irregular plural nouns that do not end in s, as in ***women's** rights, **men's** clothes, **children's** parents.*

In the possessive form of a name or singular noun that ends in s, x or z, the apostrophe may or may not be followed by s. In words of one syllable, the final s is usually added, as in ***James's** career, the **fox's** slyness, **Liz's** bad mood.*

There is a growing tendency, especially among people working in advertising and design, to omit the apostrophe. Thus, we find advertisements referring to *childrens portions, womens fashions, this seasons best buys.* This has added to the confusion of where to place an apostrophe. Now it is quite common to see, on shop windows, notices, etc, apostrophes included where there should be no apostrophe at all, for example, *"juicy apricot's for sale"*.

It is important to remember that the possessive personal pronoun **its** does not have an apostrophe, as in *The dog has broken **its** leg.* **It's** is short for **it is**, as in ***It's** getting late.*

Exercise 2

Add an apostrophe to the word in bold, if appropriate, in each sentence.

1. *The **girls** dress was filthy.*

   _____

2. *All the **students** lockers had been broken into.*

   _____

3. *The **childrens** department is on the first floor.*

_____

4. *Jack is **Peters** father and **Rozs** stepfather.*

_____

5. *The **pianos** pedals are loose.*

_____

6. *We are selling the stock at last **years** prices.*

_____

7. *That is **Tuesdays** newspaper.*

_____

8. *Most of the **teachers** desks have been replaced by new ones.*

_____

9. *New **potatoes** for sale in the store today.*

_____

10. ***Mens** shoes are over there.*

_____

Unit 3

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

A disastrous production

I have been to see the production of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, performed by the Thorby Strolling Players, at the Alhambra and I have a piece of advice for you. **Avoid it like the plague.** It is quite one of the worst productions I have ever seen and I've been a theatre critic for a very long time.

The Thorby Strolling Players are a local amateur group and I hadn't seen any of their productions before. I may never see anything of theirs again!

I think their first mistake was the choice of play. Oscar Wilde's play is a very famous play and a very popular one, but it has been **done to death** over the decades. **To be honest,** however well it is done, I now find it rather a **drag.**

And this wasn't well done. **Quite the reverse.** I saw the play on the opening night and it looked as though it was the first rehearsal. Several of the actors forgot their lines and some of them seemed to be completely unfamiliar with the play. The result was an embarrassment.

Usually, even in the worst productions, there are some actors who shine, some who make the rest look poor by comparison. Not so in this play. Not one of them in this production was even competent.

Even the set and the costumes **left a lot to be desired.** Both looked as though they were the result of a raid on the attics of the cast. The costumes were a strange mixture of periods and Lady Bracknell looked like a **bag lady.** Oscar Wilde's wit can shine through most things, but it struggled here.

Some of you who haven't seen the play may think that I am being unduly harsh. I don't like to be totally critical of any production, but it is extremely difficult to find anything good to say about this one. The only thing I can think of to say is that they need to get a completely new cast. I'm quite sure it's going to **bomb.**

Judging from the reactions of many members of the audience, they agreed with my assessment. Several of them **voted with their feet** and didn't come back for the second half of the performance. If I were a **punter** who had paid for my ticket, I might very well ask for my money back.

Vocabulary Study

bomb

If you say that something has **bombed** in a similar context as the passage, you mean that it has failed badly. It is an informal word which is usually used in relation to a theatrical or other artistic production, or to a scheme or a plan. Instead of the colloquialism you can use a standard expression which relates to failure:

- *Jim has been called one of the best young artists working today, but his last exhibition* ***bombed.***
- *Jim has been called one of the best young artists working today, but his last exhibition was* ***extremely unsuccessful.***

death, done to death

If you say that something has been **done to death**, you mean that it has been done or performed so many times that it has lost its freshness and people are tired of it. The expression has become a cliché, but you can avoid it by rephrasing the sentence mentioning that something has been overdone:

- *When I first saw Fred's impersonation of the prime minister I thought it was very funny, but it's been* ***done to death*** *now. He should extend his range.*
- *When I first saw Fred's impersonation of the prime minister I thought it was very funny, but* ***he's done it too many times and it's boring*** *now. He should extend his range.*

desire, leave a lot to be desired

If you say that something **leaves a lot to be desired**, you are using a cliché which means that something is not good enough. (The word "much" or "something" may be substituted for "a lot"). Instead of the cliché, you can use a standard expression with a similar meaning:

- *Jane is very good at English, but her French* ***leaves a lot to be desired.***
- *Jane is very good at English, but her French* ***is not of an acceptable standard.***

drag, a drag

If you say that someone or something is **a drag** you mean that they are boring or annoying. It is used only in informal contexts. You can avoid the colloquialism by using an expression from standard language which relates to boredom:

- *I thought the lectures on Roman history would be fascinating, but they turned out to be* ***a drag.***
- *I thought the lectures on Roman history would be fascinating, but they turned out to be* ***very dull.***

feet, vote with your feet

This is an expression which has become a cliché. It is used to mean that you show your dislike of something by leaving it. The cliché can be avoided in various ways relating to departure:

- *The new president of the club is so unpopular that members are* ***voting with their feet.***
- *The new president of the club is so unpopular that many members are* ***walking out.***

honest, to be honest

This is a cliché which is often used as an introduction to a statement. It is frequently used meaninglessly, there being no reason for the speaker or writer to emphasize their honesty since there has been no suggestion that they are likely to be untruthful. In most cases the phrase can be omitted without changing the meaning of the statement:

- *I don't know where to go.* ***To be honest,*** *I've never been here before.*
- *I don't know where to go. I've never been here before.*

Sometimes it is used to emphasize how frank the writer or speaker is being:

- *I told you I didn't enjoy the party.* ***To be honest,*** *I hated it.*

lady, bag lady

The expression **bag lady** is used in informal contexts to mean a female tramp or homeless person. Such a person is so called because she often carries all her possessions with her in bags:

- *It was a freezing night and we saw a poor old* ***bag lady*** *trying to make a shelter from cardboard boxes.*
- *It was a freezing night and we saw a poor old* ***homeless woman*** *trying to make a shelter from cardboard boxes.*

plague, avoid something like the plague

This is a cliché which is used to emphasize how important it is to stay away from someone or something. The expression is much overused:

- *Several people have been attacked in that area of the city recently. You should **avoid it like the plague**.*
- *Several people have been attacked in that area. You had better **stay away from it**.*

punter

In the context of the passage, the word **punter**, which is used informally, refers to someone who has purchased goods or services. The colloquialism can be avoided by the use of the word **customer** or **client**:

- *There is a sale in the store today and the **punters** have been queuing outside for hours.*
- *There is a sale in the store today and the **customers** have been queuing outside for hours.*

Punter can also mean an ordinary person in the street and this is also used in an informal context:

- *The government should remember that the **punters** might not vote for them in the next election.*

reverse, quite the reverse

You use the cliché **quite the reverse** when you want to say that the opposite of what has just been said is true. You can sometimes omit the expression because the rest of the context makes it clear what you mean:

- *Charles is not dishonest. **Quite the reverse**. He's one of the most truthful people I know.*
- *Charles is not dishonest. He's one of the most truthful people I know.*

Alternatively, you can add a word or phrase for emphasis:

- *Charles is not **at all** dishonest. He's one of the most truthful people I know.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *You should **avoid it like the plague**.*

_____

2. *Oscar Wilde's play is a very famous play and a very popular one, but it has been **done to death** over the decades.*

_____

_____

3. ***To be honest**, however well it is done, I now find it rather **a drag**.*

_____

4. *Even the set and the costumes **left a lot to be desired**.*

_____

5. *Several of them **voted with their feet** and didn't come back for the second half of the performance.*

_____

_____

B Replace the expressions in bold in the following sentences with simpler words or expressions.

1. *Bill thinks that he* ***knows all the answers*** *in relation to immigration, but he has very little knowledge of the subject.*

_____

_____

2. *The family were very poor and treats for the children were* ***few and far between.***

_____

_____

3. *It was* ***as plain as a pikestaff*** *that Sue was in love with Joe.*

_____

4. *Tom was* ***as sick as a parrot*** *when he lost the tennis match.*

_____

5. *Jill was hoping to be promoted, but her supervisor thought that her work was not* ***up to scratch.***

_____

_____

C Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *It seems* ***axiomatic*** *that the people who earn most money should pay most in taxes.*

_____

_____

2. *Peter was my friend and* ***mentor*** *and I am grateful to him for encouraging me to become a writer.*

_____

_____

3. *Jack treated his wife and children very badly, but never* ***evinced*** *any regret for his behaviour.*

_____

_____

4. *I hope to receive an* ***expeditious*** *reply to my letter of complaint.*

_____

5. *John always* ***inveighs against*** *whichever government is in power, but he never bothers to vote in elections.*

_____

_____

More about Language

Similes

The word **simile** comes from the Latin word *similis*, meaning **like**. A simile is a figure of speech in which a thing or person is said to be like another and is used for emphasis. The word "as", which has the same meaning as "like" in this context, usually appears in the simile, as in *The fashion model was **thin as a rake**,* and sometimes also appears before the adjective, as in *The child was **as brown as a berry** after her summer holiday.*

Exercise 2

Insert the missing word in the simile in each sentence.

1. *The cake was **light as a** _____ .*
2. *The girl's hair was _____ **as silk.***
3. *There was hardly any wind and the sea was **calm as a** _____ .*
4. *It was a frightening situation but James was **as cool as a** _____ .*
5. *The children were **as** _____ **as gold** while their parents were away.*
6. *It hasn't rained for a long time and the earth is **as dry as a** _____ .*
7. *Without her contact lenses Jill is **blind as a** _____ .*
8. *Jane was **as** _____ **as a picture** in her new dress.*
9. *The old man must be **as deaf as a** _____ . I was shouting very loudly, but he paid no attention.*
10. *You won't persuade Jack to change his mind. He's **as** _____ **as a mule.***

Unit 4

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Memo to staff

I am sending this memo to all members of the sales, marketing, publicity and design departments to emphasize how concerned I am about our current sales record. Sales this year were markedly down on last year's and even more markedly down on the previous year's.

This situation cannot be allowed to continue. If an improvement does not take place **in the immediate future**, I will **have no choice but to** take drastic action and dismiss some of the workforce. It is likely that I will have to **dispense with the services of** some of the departmental managers.

Let us hope that this does not happen. In order to avoid the need for such drastic action, we must increase our sales and we must all work towards this goal. The attached document sets out the targets which we have to meet this year if we are to **keep our heads above water.** Some of you may feel that they are a little ambitious, but I assure you that this is not the case. This is what must be achieved if the company is to stay **in the black.**

All of you were appointed to your present jobs on the understanding that you are **team players.** It is now time for you to prove this. It is also essential that we **stay focused** at all times.

You may think that sales figures are the concern of the sales department, but this is not so. They are the responsibility of us all and we must all be **proactive.** The marketing and publicity departments bear a particular responsibility because they are best placed to assist the sales team in a direct way. Marketing help by identifying possible new markets and by creating innovative ways of reaching these. **By the same token,** the design department can create eye-catching new designs for our packaging and publicity can make sure that our name is **to the fore** in the media.

It sounds **simplistic** and I know that it is not. It all calls for a great deal of hard work and some of you may find yourselves working longer hours for no extra **remuneration.** This may not be a very welcome prospect. However, the alternative presents an even more dismal prospect—job losses. I want to avoid this if at all possible. I am sure that all of you do, too. Let us see an increase in those sales figures soon!

black, in the black

This is an expression used in informal contexts to indicate that someone or a company has money and is not in debt:

- *My bank account's **in the black** at the moment, but I've got a lot of bills to pay this month.*
- *My bank account's **in credit** at the moment, but I've got a lot of bills to pay this month.*

choice, have no choice but to do something

This is a cliché which you use when you think that a particular course is the only possible one in the circumstances and so you absolutely have to take it:

- *The man was bending over the dead body with a bloody knife in his hand. The police **had no choice but to** arrest him.*
- *The man was bending over the dead body with a bloody knife in his hand. The police **were forced to** arrest him.*

focus, stay focused

This expression, which has the alternative **remain focused**, is a trendy phrase meaning to keep concentrating on something. It is overused and you can easily find a different way of saying it:

- *The launch of our new product is one of the most important campaigns that we have ever mounted and it is important that we all **stay focused** throughout the campaign.*
- *The launch of our new product is one of the most important campaigns that we have ever mounted and it is important that we all **concentrate all our attention on it** throughout the campaign.*

fore, to the fore

If you say **to the fore**, you mean that something or someone is in an important or prominent position so that they are noticed. You can also say **keep** something **to the fore** and **come to the fore**:

- *You can employ a PR company to try and ensure that your products are **to the fore**.*
- *You can employ a PR company to try and ensure that your products are **noticed**.*

future, in the immediate future

This expression simply means soon or very soon. You can substitute a simpler word or expression for it, such as **soon** or **shortly**:

- *If we do not get rain **in the immediate future**, the crops will fail and we will have a famine.*
- *If we do not get rain **shortly**, the crops will fail and we will have a famine.*

head, keep your head above water

This is an expression meaning to cope with a problematic financial situation, although with difficulty:

- *During the recession the company was lucky enough to **keep its head above water** and now, a few years later, the company is showing quite a large profit.*
- *During the recession the company was lucky enough to **deal with the difficult financial situation** and now, a few years later, the company is showing quite a large profit.*

proactive

This is a word often used in contexts relating to employment. It means quick to take action, rather than waiting for things to happen, and to act in response to a situation:

- *We have spent too much time discussing this project without getting any results; it is now time to take a **proactive** approach.*

However, it is often used pretentiously when a simpler word would do. Sometimes you can use the word **active**. Alternatively, you can use a synonym for it:

- *You should take some exercise for your health's sake. You need to do something more **proactive** than just walking to work.*
- *You should take some exercise for your health's sake. You need to do something more **energetic** than just walking to work.*

remuneration

This is a formal word meaning the amount of money which you pay someone to do something. It is commonly used in recruitment advertisements:

- ***Remuneration** will be dependent on qualifications and experience.*

In ordinary contexts it is rather pretentious and you can easily substitute a simpler word for it:

- *I think he could do the job, but we haven't discussed* ***remuneration*** *yet. He may want too much money.*
- *I think he could do the job, but we haven't discussed* ***payment*** *yet. He may want too much money.*

service, dispense with the services of

This expression is often used as a euphemism for dismissing or sacking someone. Employers are often reluctant to admit openly that they are actually getting rid of workers and they often turn to euphemisms instead. These include **let someone go** and **release someone**. Even **lay someone off** and **declare someone redundant** avoid admitting openly that you are dismissing someone:

- *The boss said that he's had to* ***dispense with*** *his new secretary's* ***services*** *because her work is not up to standard.*
- *The boss said that he's had to* ***dismiss*** *his new secretary because her work is not up to standard.*

simplistic

The word **simplistic** means making something seem less complicated than it really is:

- *He holds a very* ***simplistic*** *view of the problem because he has not studied the various aspects of it in detail.*

It is often used, as in the passage above, wrongly and pretentiously as an emphatic form of **simple**. Always use **simple** and not **simplistic** in such situations.

team, team player

This expression is a cliché, often used in a context relating to employment, meaning someone who is good at cooperating with other people to form a successful team, rather than being determined to follow their own ideas, ambitions, etc. It is much overused, for example, in recruitment advertisements:

- *All of you have the right academic qualifications for the job, but we demand several other attributes, including the ability to be a* ***team player****.*
- *All of you have the right academic qualifications for the job, but we demand several other attributes, including the ability to* ***work with others as part of a team****.*

token, by the same token

This is a expression which is very much overused and is sometimes used meaninglessly. It is often used to mean **in the same way**, **similarly** or **for the same reason**:

- *Many young people admire celebrities, such as pop singers and football players who achieve easy, and sometimes short-lived, public success and,* ***by the same token****, they have little regard for establishment people like lawyers, doctors and accountants who work hard to be successful but are not in the public eye.*
- *Many young people admire celebrities, such as pop singers and football players who achieve easy, and often short-lived, public success and,* ***for the same reason****, they have little regard for establishment people like lawyers, doctors and accountants who work hard to be successful but are not in the public eye.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *If an improvement does not take place* ***in the immediate future****, I will* ***have no choice but to*** *take drastic action and dismiss some of the workforce.*

_____

_____

2. *It is also essential that we* ***stay focused*** *at all times.*

_____

3. ***By the same token,*** *the design department can create eye-catching new designs for our packaging.*

_____

_____

4. *It sounds* ***simplistic*** *and I know that it is not.*

_____

5. *It all calls for a great deal of hard work and some of you may find yourselves working longer hours for no extra* ***remuneration.***

_____

_____

B Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *Jim is having an operation which requires a general (* ***anaesthetic / analgesic*** *).*
2. *Lucy has been interested in words since she was a child and she now works on dictionaries, specializing in (* ***entomology / etymology*** *).*
3. *The doctor said that I had a (* ***bacterial / viral*** *) infection and that there was no point in prescribing antibiotics for it.*
4. *Jill is very confident and very little seems to (* ***faze / phase*** *) her.*
5. *The subtle décor of the room (* ***complemented / complimented*** *) the elegance of the furniture.*

C Rewrite the following sentences, omitting any redundant words or expressions.

1. *The dress was made of satin and was dark blue in colour.*

_____

2. *My final and concluding point is that the proposed changes will benefit the whole community.*

_____

_____

3. *We are anticipating in advance that a large number of people will want to hear the MP speak and so we are holding the meeting in the town hall.*

_____

_____

D Replace the euphemisms in bold in the following sentences with simpler words or expressions.

1. *John said that he needed some* ***Dutch courage*** *before he asked Lucy to go out with him.*

_____

_____

2. *I'm not going to buy any of the goods that Jack is selling, even though they are so cheap. Jack is not very honest and the things* ***have*** *very probably* ***fallen off the back of a lorry.***

_____

_____

_____

Indefinite article

There are two forms of the **indefinite article**. These are **a** and **an**.

The form **a** is used before words that begin with a consonant sound, as in ***a*** *dog,* ***a*** *gate,* ***a*** *light,* ***a*** *picture,* ***a*** *road,* ***a*** *wall.*

The form **an** is used before words that begin with a vowel sound, as in ***an*** *apple,* ***an*** *eagle,* ***an*** *idiot,* ***an*** *orange,* ***an*** *uncle.*

It is the *sound* of the initial letter that matters and not the *spelling.* Thus, **a** is used before words beginning with a **u** when they are pronounced with a **y** sound as though it were a consonant, as in ***a*** *unit,* ***a*** *usual occurrence.* Similarly, **an** is used, for example, before words beginning with the letter **h** where this is not pronounced, as in ***an*** *heir,* ***an*** *hour,* ***an*** *honest man.*

Formerly, it was quite common to use **an** before words that begin with an **h** sound and also begin with an unstressed syllable, as in ***an*** *hotel,* ***an*** *historic occasion,* but nowadays it is more usual to use **a** in such cases.

Exercise 2

Fill in each blank with either *a* or *an*.

1. *Mike wore _____ yellow shirt.*
2. *The king is worried that the queen has not yet produced _____ heir to the throne.*
3. *Pat boiled _____ egg for tea.*
4. *Trespassing is _____ illegal act and you will be punished.*
5. *_____ ewe had escaped from the field on to the road.*
6. *It was not _____ easy decision.*
7. *The old man lives in _____ hostel for the homeless.*
8. *Liz has not yet decided on _____ university course.*
9. *It wasn't exactly _____ everyday occurrence, but it happened fairly often.*
10. *Pete claims to have seen _____ UFO in the sky.*

Unit 5

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Missing you

Dear Jo

It was good to see you last week. I really miss you. I wish your parents hadn't moved away. I don't have anybody to **hang out with** now and I don't have anyone to go shopping with.

This weekend we're going to visit my Aunt Liz. Her daughter, my cousin Lucy, is getting married and she wants me to be a bridesmaid. I'm so excited—**not**! I tried to get out of it but Mum says they'll be very offended if I refuse.

At the weekend we're going to discuss dresses, although the wedding's not for **ages** yet. Apparently, Aunt Liz wants to have Lucy in a big formal white dress like a meringue and the bridesmaids—there's to be three of us—all in matching satin dresses in a bright colour. Can you see me in something like that? I've told Mum that **there's no way** that I'm wearing a dress like that.

Luckily, Lucy has better dress sense. I just know that she's not going to want dresses like that and she'll say so. She might not win the argument, though. Aunt Liz is a very determined lady. **Watch this space!**

Fortunately, Lucy is being married in her local church and they live **at the back of beyond**. So no one from school will see me. There's the problem of the photographs, though. Mum's bound to show them to **all and sundry**. I'm cringing at the thought!

The people who have moved into your old house seem quite **nice** and they have a son who's quite good-looking. In fact, he's a **hunk**. I think he's quite interested in me, because he's taken to waiting for me after school—he's in the sixth form—and walking home with me. I'm very interested in him, although I've decided to **play it cool** for the moment. I need to get to know him better.

We're getting more and more homework as the exams get nearer. I suppose it's the same at your new school. I hope you're settling in there a bit better. I'd hate to change schools and have to get to know new people. Still, I know your parents had to move because of your father's job.

You're really missed on the hockey team. They haven't found anyone who is nearly as good as you to replace you and they haven't won a game since you left.

I must go now. Dinner's ready.

Love

Amy

ages

This is an informal way of saying a long time or a very long time:

- *I've known John for **ages**. We were at school together.*
- *I've known John for **many years**. We were at school together.*
- *How is Anne? I haven't seen her for **ages**.*
- *How is Anne? I haven't seen her for **such a long time**.*

all, all and sundry

This is a cliché meaning everyone, not just a few special people, and it is often used in a derogatory way:

- *We should restrict membership of the club in some way. We don't want **all and sundry** joining it.*

It is much overused but you can find a substitute for it:

- *We should send out invitation cards to the party. We don't want to let **all and sundry** in.*
- *We should send out invitation cards to the party. We don't want to let **just anyone** in.*

Language Help

The cliché **Tom, Dick and Harry** means much the same as **all and sundry** and is used in a similar way:

- *We want to make this an exclusive club. We don't want every **Tom, Dick and Harry** joining it.*

beyond, at the back of beyond

This expression is used to refer to somewhere remote and difficult to get to, or which seems that way to the user. It is often used in a derogatory way:

- *We live in one of the suburbs of the city, but Jane has always lived in the city centre and thinks our place is **at the back of beyond**.*

The expression is much overused but you can find a substitute for it:

- *Jim's holiday cottage is charming, but it's **at the back of beyond** with no public transport to it.*
- *Jim's holiday cottage is charming, but it's **out of the way** with no public transport to it.*

cool, play it cool

If you **play it cool**, you remain calm and relaxed however worrying or exciting the situation is. The expression is used in informal contexts:

- *I could tell that the company wanted to buy my firm and I was thrilled about this, but I decided to **play it cool** and said that I was considering a few other options.*
- *I could tell that the company wanted to buy my firm and I was thrilled about this, but I decided to **remain composed** and said that I was considering a few other options.*

hang, hang out with

If you **hang out with** someone, you spend a lot of time with them and do things with them. It is used in informal contexts:

- *Jim's parents are afraid that he's **hanging out with** some violent youths.*
- *Jim's parents are afraid that he's **keeping company** with some violent youths.*

hunk

This is used in informal contexts to refer to a man who is sexually attractive and is big and muscular. In order to avoid it, or a similar colloquial expression, it is often easier to substitute a phrase:

- *Jill's brother is a **hunk** and several of her friends are in love with him.*
- *Jill's brother is **very sexy** and several of her friends are in love with him.*

nice

This is a word which has several meanings and is much overused. It is easy to find a substitute for it, depending on the context:

- *The children had a **nice** time at the zoo and want to go back there.*
- *The children had an **enjoyable** time at the zoo and want to go back there.*

no, there's no way

You say **there's no way** in an informal context to emphasize that you will definitely not do

something or allow something to happen. There are various ways of avoiding the colloquialism, for example, using **certainly not** or **definitely not**:

- ***There's no way*** *I'm going to ask Sam to my party. He always gets drunk and causes trouble.*
- *I am* ***certainly not*** *going to ask Sam to my party. He always gets drunk and causes trouble.*

—not

In informal contexts this is a trendy way of expressing an emphatic negative by stating the positive and then adding **—not**:

- *I'm so looking forward to going back to school—**not**.*

This is rather a contrived colloquialism and there are many other ways of adding emphasis to a negative statement:

- *I really want to spend the weekend writing a geography assignment—**not**.*
- *I* ***definitely do not*** *want to spend the weekend writing a geography assignment.*

space, watch this space!

This is a cliché used in informal contexts to indicate that there is likely to be more news about what is being talked about:

- *Joe says that he's finally going to get round to asking Pam out on a date.* ***Watch this space!***

The phrase can be substituted in several ways although these are not so concise or so punchy:

- *Joe says that he's finally going to get round to asking Pam out on a date.* ***Watch this space!***
- *Joe says that he's finally going to get round to asking Pam out an a date.* ***Look out for further developments!***

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *I don't have anybody to* ***hang out with*** *now and I don't have anyone to go shopping with.*

_____

_____

2. *I've told Mum that* ***there's no way*** *that I'm wearing a dress like that.*

_____

_____

3. *Fortunately, Lucy is being married in her local church and they live* ***at the back of beyond****.*

_____

_____

4. *Mum's bound to show them to* ***all and sundry****.*

_____

5. *I'm very interested in him, although I've decided to* ***play it cool*** *for the moment.*

_____

_____

B Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *Liz claimed that Mike had stolen her purse, but Mike declared that he was not* ***culpable.***

2. *Jill has been suffering from a feeling of* ***lassitude*** *since her illness.*

3. *These matters are not at all* ***consequential*** *and it is just a waste of time to discuss them.*

4. Bob is too **pusillanimous** to take part in such a daring and dangerous expedition.

C Replace the expressions in bold in the following sentences with simpler words or expressions.

1. *Amy is always saying critical things about Jane's appearance and we all think that she is motivated by* ***the green-eyed monster.***

2. *Frank and Ben quarrelled last week and are now not speaking to each other. I wish that they would* ***bury the hatchet,*** *because both of them are my friends.*

3. *It was Fred who broke the window, but his brother was made to* ***carry the can*** *for it.*

D Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *The enemy leader began to (* ***marshal / martial*** *) his troops early on the eve of the battle.*
2. *The doctor's (* ***diagnosis / prognosis*** *) is that the child has measles.*
3. *Sara (* ***purposely / purposefully*** *) left her briefcase behind in Dan's office to give her an excuse to return there.*

Confusables

Some words with different meanings are often confused and the wrong word is used instead of the correct one. The reason for the confusion varies.

Often the two words, such as **beach** and **beech**, are pronounced in the same way or in a similar way:

> *The little girls were building sandcastles on the **beach**.*
> *There were beautiful **beech** trees growing along the driveway.*

Sometimes the words, such as **bare** and **bear**, are spelt in the same way or in a similar way:

> *The children were running along in **bare** feet.*
> *Looking after her young children and her elderly parents was a heavy burden to **bear**.*

Sometimes the words likely to be confused, such as **luxuriant** and **luxurious**, belong to the same word family, being derived from the same root:

> *They are very wealthy and lead a **luxurious** lifestyle.*
> *We stopped to admire the **luxuriant** vegetation in the gardens.*

Sometimes the confusable words, such as **libel** and **slander**, are from the same area of specialist language:

> *The journalist was accused of **libel** because of some of the things he wrote about the general.*
> *In her speech she made some serious allegations about the conduct of her opponent and might be found guilty of **slander**.*

Exercise 2

Choose the correct word in brackets to complete each sentence.

1. *The failure of the crops led to widespread _____ from the country.* (***emigration / immigration***)
2. *A thick fog began to _____ the countryside.* (***envelop / envelope***)
3. *Mike fell to the ground when he was hit and lay _____.* (***prostate / prostrate***)
4. *Beth's father refused to give his _____ to her marriage.* (***ascent / assent***)
5. *A new _____ has been passed to try to control illegal immigration.* (***statue / statute***)
6. *Anne felt seasick and began to _____.* (***retch / wretch***)
7. *Before he had a stall in the market, he used to _____ his goods from door to door.* (***pedal / peddle***)
8. *The restaurant was decorated with a _____ of vine leaves.* (***motif / motive***)
9. *Sue has become interested in _____ and always looks at the horoscope section of the newspaper.* (***astrology / astronomy***)
10. *The police were unable to _____ any more information from the murdered woman's husband.* (***elicit / illicit***)

Unit 6

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

A near tragedy

There was a serious fire in James Street last night. It is believed that the **conflagration** started in an empty shop and spread to the neighbouring block of flats. Firemen **risked life and limb** to bring the **blazing inferno** under control and fortunately no one was killed or seriously injured. A few people were taken to hospital suffering from the effects of smoke inhalation, but they were released almost immediately.

The fire caused remarkably little damage to the flats, although the rescue effort has resulted in a good deal of water damage. Residents are grateful that the fire was brought under control so quickly and that there were no fatalities or serious injuries. However, they are angry that the accident happened at all.

Jack Simpson, who lives in the block of flats, said early this morning, "This was **an accident waiting to happen**. We've been complaining about the state of that shop for months. It's been lying empty for months and it's in a very bad state of repair. The windows are broken and haven't been boarded up. We've seen people sleeping in there. One of them probably started a fire to keep warm and it got out of control."

"It's not fair to blame the homeless. We don't yet know what caused the fire," said Jane Black, another resident of the block of flats. "But I agree that something should have been done about that broken-down empty shop long ago. It was **a blot on the landscape**. We've complained to the council, to the owner and to the owner's lawyers, but we **got nowhere**. It was really frustrating and now this has happened."

"I hope that the owner is going to **make reparation** for the damage which has been done," said Peter Shaw, "but I also **hold** the council **accountable**. They should not allow property to fall into such a state of disrepair. They are guilty of **dereliction of duty** and the residents of this block of flats have suffered as a result. I intend to write to my MP about this."

No one from the council was prepared to comment on the situation. The owner of the shop, John Blair, also refused to talk to us, following instructions, he said, from his lawyer.

The cause of the fire has not been established. We understand that an investigation will begin later today.

ıccident, an accident waiting to happen

'his is a cliché meaning a situation which is very kely to cause danger or trouble. It is very much ıverused:

- *I'm not surprised that some of that old scaffolding fell during the high winds. It was* ***an accident waiting to happen.***
- *I'm not surprised that some of that old scaffolding fell during the high winds. It was* ***potentially a dangerous situation.***

ıccountable, hold someone accountable

This expression is a formal way of saying that ɣou blame someone for something. There are several less formal ways of saying the same thing using the word **blame** or a synonym for it:

- *It was a mechanical fault which caused the accident but the victim's parents* ***held*** *the driver* ***responsible.***
- *It was a mechanical fault which caused the accident but the victim's parents* ***put the blame on*** *the driver.*
- *It was a mechanical fault which caused the accident but the victim's parents* ***claimed it was the driver's fault.***

blot, a blot on the landscape

This expression refers to something ugly which spoils the appearance of a place. It is often overused to refer to an ugly building or to what someone regards as an ugly building:

- *That modern office block cost a huge amount of money to build and yet it is* ***a blot on the landscape.***
- *That modern office block cost a huge amount of money to build and yet it is* ***so unsightly.***

conflagration

Conflagration is a formal word for a large fire. It is often used in a very exaggerated way for a relatively small fire, especially by journalists. It can be replaced simply by the word **fire** or **blaze**:

- *The fire services have rushed to a* ***conflagration*** *at the old factory on the edge of the town.*
- *The fire services have rushed to a* ***fire*** *at the old factory on the edge of the town.*

The cliché **a blazing inferno** is used in a similar, but even more exaggerated, way. See **inferno**.

duty, dereliction of duty

This is a formal way of referring to carelessness or failure of someone to do their duty properly. There are various simpler ways of saying the same thing:

- *The night watchman who allowed the thieves to go into the warehouse was accused of* ***dereliction of duty.***
- *The night watchman who allowed the thieves to go into the warehouse was accused of* ***negligence.***

inferno, a blazing inferno

A **blazing inferno** is literally a brightly burning dangerous fire:

- *Firemen rescued several people from* ***a blazing inferno*** *at a chemical factory last night, but it is understood that there have been at least two fatalities.*

However, it is mostly used as a cliché. In this sense it is often used in a very exaggerated way for a relatively small fire, especially by journalists. It can often be replaced simply by the word **fire** or **blaze**:

- *The* ***blazing inferno*** *at a local restaurant last night appears to have been the result of a chip pan catching fire.*
- *The* ***fire*** *at a local restaurant last night appears to have been the result of a chip pan catching fire.*

The word **conflagration** is used in a similar exaggerated way.

life, risk life and limb

This expression means to run the risk of death or serious injury, but it is often used in an exaggerated way, sometimes humorously or ironically:

- *The members of the mountain rescue team* ***risked life and limb*** *to bring the injured climbers down to safety.*
- *The members of the mountain rescue team* ***risked their lives*** *to bring the injured climbers down to safety.*
- ***I risked life and limb*** *to climb up those old steps to the attic to get these books down and now you don't even want them.*
- ***I risked injury*** *to climb up those old steps to the attic to get these books down and now you don't even want them.*

nowhere, get nowhere

This expression is used to indicate that no progress is being made. There are various ways of replacing it, perhaps by referring to a lack of success:

- *Jane searched for several years to find her father but she* ***got nowhere*** *and finally gave up the search.*
- *Jane searched for several years to find her father but she was* ***unsuccessful*** *and finally gave up the search.*

reparation, make reparation

This expression is a formal way of saying one gives payment or something else to someone for damage or injury of some kind that one has caused. There are several simpler ways of saying the same thing:

- *The boys had done a lot of damage to the old woman's garden and the police suggested that their parents* ***make reparation*** *to her in some way.*
- *The boys had done a lot of damage to the old woman's garden and the police suggested that their parents* ***make it up*** *to her in some way.*
- *The Simpson family claimed that their holiday had been ruined and asked the travel company to* ***make reparation*** *for this.*
- *The Simpson family claimed that their holiday had been ruined and asked the travel company to* ***pay compensation*** *for this.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *Firemen* ***risked life and limb*** *to bring the* ***blazing inferno*** *under control.*

_____

2. *This was* ***an accident waiting to happen.***

_____

3. *It was* ***a blot on the landscape.***

_____

4. *We've complained to the council, to the owner and to the owner's lawyers, but we* ***got nowhere.***

_____

_____

5. *They are guilty of* ***dereliction of duty*** *and the residents of this block of flats have suffered as a result.*

_____

_____

B Rewrite the following sentences, replacing the colloquial or slang words or expressions with standard words or expressions.

1. *Jim thought that he had done very badly in the exam and was* ***gobsmacked*** *to hear that he had passed.*

_____

_____

2. *Mary's not yet ready to go to the party. She's putting on her* ***slap****.*

3. *I know you can't tell me exactly what the project is going to cost, but can you give me a* ***ballpark*** *figure?*

C Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *You really should not take any (* ***precipitate / precipitous*** *) action. Take time to consider the matter carefully.*
2. *When Sara heard that she had won, she gave a (* ***triumphal / triumphant*** *) smile as she went to collect her prize.*
3. *The horses had been upset by the storm and remained (* ***restful / restive*** *) for the rest of the night.*
4. *I would like to know more about the history of archaeology of the area. Can you recommend an (* ***authoritative / authoritarian*** *) book on the subject?*
5. *I am surprised that Jane, who is an experienced teacher, was so (* ***ingenious / ingenuous*** *) as to believe the student's excuse.*

D Replace the expressions in bold in the following sentences with simpler words or expressions.

1. *We'll have to leave* ***at the crack of dawn*** *if we want to catch the first train to the city.*

2. *Sara has shown me acts of kindness* ***too numerous to mention*** *over the years and I am very grateful to her.*

Acronyms

An **acronym** is formed from the initial letters of several other words. Unlike an abbreviation formed in this way, such as **USA**, an acronym is pronounced as a word rather than as a series of letters. Acronyms do not have full stops between the letters and they are often written in capital letters, as **OPEC** (the Organization of Petroleum Producing Countries).

Some acronyms which have become very commonly used in the language are spelt with just an initial capital letter, the rest of the word being in lower case, as **Aids** (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). Some acronyms can be spelt either with capital letters or with just an initial capital, as **NATO** or **Nato**.

Acronyms which are not formed from the name of an organization, but from that of a piece of scientific or technical equipment, for example, **radar**, are written in lower case like ordinary words. Because such words do not look like acronyms, many people do not realize that they are acronyms.

Exercise 2

A The full form of the acronym OPEC is the Organization of Petroleum Producing Countries. What is the full form of each of these acronyms?

1. *UNESCO*
2. *NATO*
3. *FIFA*
4. *radar*

B Which of the following are acronyms? Give the full form of those that are acronyms.

1. *sonar*
2. *DOA*
3. *bungee*
4. *HIV*
5. *scuba*
6. *nimby*
7. *BBC*
8. *laser*
9. *NASA*
10. *Naafi*

Unit 7

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Vacation jobs

"Hi, Amy! **How're things?**" said Anne when she met her friend on the way to work.

"Fine, thanks, Anne," replied Amy, "except that **I'm rushed off my feet** at work just now."

Amy was studying law at the local university, but it was the summer vacation and she was helping her uncle run his hotel. The hotel overlooked the sea and it was always very busy in the summer.

"One of the waiters has gone off sick and I'm replacing him temporarily. I'm not very good at it because I have such a bad memory. I keep taking plates to the wrong table. And I'm not used to rushing around like that all day. **My feet are killing me.** I much prefer being at the reception desk. I just have to smile at the guests and answer the phone."

"But don't you get any **aggro** from the guests when you're at the reception desk?" asked Anne. "My cousin's a hotel receptionist at a large **posh** hotel on the front and she says she spends most of her time dealing with their **whingeing** and **griping**. She says that some of them are quite unreasonable."

"That's the hotel where all the **glitterati** stay when they're in town," said Amy. "**Celebs** always complain more than **the man in the street**. The guests in my uncle's hotel are well behaved on the whole and don't complain much. What are you doing in the holidays?"

"I've jot a job in the **greasy spoon** down by the amusement arcade," replied Anne. "I'm supposed to be the manager, but I do everything. I serve at the counter, take food to the tables, clear the tables, count up the money in the evening and even mop the floor. About the only thing I don't do is wash the dishes. I took the job because it's quite well paid compared with most things and I really need the money. I'm saving up for a trip to India."

"That's exciting," said Amy. "How're your savings coming on?"

"Not very well," replied Anne. "I keep spending more money than I intend to. I'm seriously thinking of getting an evening job as well. I've been offered one in a coffee bar, but they want me to work seven nights a week. I know I'd get absolutely **shattered**. I'm not sure that India's worth it!"

Vocabulary Study

aggro

This is an informal shortened form of **aggression** and it is used to refer to violent aggressive behaviour. The easiest way of avoiding this colloquialism is to use the longer form:

- *Parking wardens have to take a lot of **aggro** from motorists.*
- *Parking wardens have to take a lot of **aggression** from motorists.*

celeb

This is an informal shortened form of **celebrity**. Both the word "celeb" and the word "celebrity" are overworked today. You can use various words instead of these, including **famous person** and **star**, although not everyone who is called a celebrity nowadays is either a famous person or a star:

- *The premiere of the film was being held that night and many **celebs** were expected to attend.*
- *The premiere of the film was being held that night and many **stars** were expected to attend.*

feet, my feet are killing me

If you say **my feet are killing me**, you mean that your feet are hurting very much, often because you have been standing or walking a lot. This is an idiom which has become a cliché, but it is easily avoided:

- *I missed the bus and had to walk home. **My feet are killing me!***
- *I missed the bus and had to walk home. **My feet are so sore!***

feet, be rushed off your feet

If you say **I'm rushed off my feet**, you mean that you are very busy, especially when working at a job that involves walking about. It can be replaced by a reference to being **busy**:

- *It was the week before Christmas and I **was rushed off my feet** at the gift shop.*
- *It was the week before Christmas and I **was extremely busy** at the gift shop.*

glitterati

The **glitterati** are fashionable, famous, rich people when thought of as a group. The word is often used in a derogatory way:

- *He has photographed many of the **glitterati** in the course of his career.*
- *He has photographed many of the **rich and famous** in the course of his career.*

Language Help

The word **glitterati** is formed from the word **glitter**, meaning a bright light made up of many little flashes, and **literati**, meaning educated and intelligent people who are knowledgeable about literature.

greasy spoon

This is a name given to a small, cheap restaurant or café, often one that sells breakfast food and other fried foods, there being a suggestion that the place is not very clean. The word is used in an informal context. In a more formal context you can substitute **café**, possibly accompanied by an adjective, such as **cheap**:

- *I'm starving. Let's go and have some breakfast in that **greasy spoon** over there.*
- *I'm starving. Let's go and have some breakfast in that **café** over there.*

how, how're things?

This is an informal way of asking someone how they are. There are a number of standard ways of asking the same question:

- ***How're things?** I haven't seen you for a long time.*
- ***How are you?** I haven't seen you for a long time.*

Language Help

A formal way of asking the same thing is How do you do?

man, the man in the street

This cliché is used to refer to an ordinary person, "man" being used to refer to a person of either sex. It is much overused and can usually be

replaced by **ordinary person, average person** or **normal person:**

- *Politicians should pay more attention to the views of* ***the man in the street.***
- *Politicians should pay more attention to the views of* ***the ordinary person.***

Language Help

Another common colloquialism for the man in the street is Joe Public:

- *Many people feel that the government doesn't pay enough attention to Joe Public.*

posh

The word **posh** in the context of the passage means elegant, fashionable or expensive. It is used in informal contexts. There are various alternatives for it in standard language:

- *We can't afford* ***posh*** *restaurants like that. We'll just find a pizza place.*
- *We can't afford* ***fancy*** *restaurants like that. We'll just find a pizza place.*

shattered

This is one of several words used in informal contexts which mean very tired. Other words include **pooped, whacked** and **knackered.** The use of **shattered** and the other colloquialisms can be avoided by using an expression from standard language relating to **tiredness** or a synonym for it:

- *I've had to work overtime all this week and I'm* ***shattered.***
- *I've had to work overtime all this week and I'm* ***exhausted.***

whingeing and griping

One of these words is redundant because they both mean the same. **Whingeing** is a noun from the verb **whinge**, meaning to complain, and **griping** is a noun from the verb **gripe**, which also means to complain. You can omit either **whingeing** or **griping** without altering the sense.

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *"Fine, thanks, Anne," replied Amy, "except that* ***I'm rushed off my feet*** *at work just now."*

_____

_____

2. ***My feet are killing me.*** *I much prefer being at the reception desk.*

_____

3. *She says she spends most of her time dealing with their* ***whingeing*** *and* ***griping.***

_____

_____

4. ***Celebs*** *always complain more than* ***the man in the street.***

_____

5. *I know I'd get absolutely* ***shattered.***

_____

B Replace the euphemisms in bold in the following sentences with more direct words or expressions.

1. *I am sorry to have to tell you that the police think that Ben* ***did away with himself****.*

_____

2. *Can we stop at the next service station? I need to* ***powder my nose****.*

_____

3. *Sue's boss has just told her that he's going to have to* ***let*** *her* ***go*** *because the company is not doing well.*

_____

_____

C Rewrite the following sentences, replacing the colloquial or slang words or expressions with standard words or expressions.

1. *I'm not going away on holiday. I'm just going to spend a few days* ***chilling out****.*

_____

2. *I'm really glad I went to the concert. The music was* ***awesome****.*

_____

3. *We're having a* ***do*** *next Saturday night to celebrate Dad's retirement. Would you like to come?*

_____

_____

D Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *I won't have any more food, thank you. I'm quite* ***replete****.*

_____

2. *Anne has offered to make a birthday cake for Jim, but baking is not really her* ***métier****.*

_____

_____

3. *The lecturer will* ***explicate*** *some of the more difficult passages in the text.*

_____

4. *Harry never recovered from the* ***ignominy*** *of being labelled a thief and left the town soon after the incident.*

_____

_____

Homographs and homophones

A **homograph** is a word that is spelt the same as another word but has a different meaning and a different pronunciation. For example, the following words are homographs.

bow, pronounced to rhyme with "how", is a verb meaning to bend the head or body as a sign of respect or in greeting, etc:

*The visitors were asked to **bow** to the king.*

bow, pronounced to rhyme with "low", is a noun meaning a looped knot, a ribbon tied in this way:

*She wears blue **bows** in her hair.*

A **homophone** is a word which is spelt in the same way as another word and has the same pronunciation, but has a different meaning. For example, the following words are homonyms.

bill, a noun meaning a written statement of money owed:

*The man left the hotel suddenly without paying his **bill**.*

bill, a noun meaning a bird's beak:

*The eagle had a small animal in its **bill**.*

Exercise 2

A Write down the homographs which are defined below and use each of them in a sentence.

1. (a) *a greyish metal* _____

_____

(b) *to show the way* _____

_____

2. (a) to propel a boat by means of oars _____

(b) a quarrel _____

3. (a) a female pig _____

(b) to scatter seeds in the earth _____

4. (a) an injury _____

(b) the past tense of the verb "wind" _____

5. (a) to cast off (skin) _____

(b) a swamp _____

6. (a) directed to go by a particular route _____

(b) heavily defeated _____

B Insert the homophones missing from the following sentences.

1. There were several stalls and rides at the village _____.
   The little girl had blue eyes and _____ hair.
2. The doctor is concerned because the patient has a weak _____.
   Beans are a form of _____.
3. There was a _____ of pillars at the entrance to the gallery.
   Jack tried to _____ across the lake, but he lost the oars.
4. The explorer travelled to the North _____.
   The flag was flying from a _____ on the roof of the building.

Unit 8

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Dad in a bad mood

"What's wrong with Dad this morning?" Jim asked his sister, Sara. "He got **narked** at me just because I had borrowed his razor. That's not like him."

"I don't know what's wrong, but I noticed it as well. I asked him if he would give me a lift to college and he **hit the roof** and started going on about laziness. It's strange, because he quite often offers to give me a lift. Let's ask Mum **what's up**."

Their mother, however, was unable to **shed any light on** their father's strange behaviour. She was as puzzled as her son and daughter and was concerned for her husband.

"He's been **like a bear with a sore head** since he came home last night. I think it's something connected with work, but I'm not sure what. He's in such a bad mood that I'm almost afraid to ask. Doubtless he'll tell us **what's bugging him in his own good time**."

Mrs Sharpe was quite wrong about the cause of her husband's bad temper. He had problems, but they were not work-related. He was worried about his health. The company for whom he worked had sent him for a routine health check-up and the doctor had said that his blood pressure was much too high. Mr Sharpe had been advised to consult his own doctor and have it checked again.

The day of his bad temper was the day that he was to visit his doctor. He had **kept mum** about this because he did not want to worry his family and he was feeling very nervous.

But he was worrying over nothing. His general practitioner, Dr Mason, checked his blood pressure and it was normal.

"Why did that other **medico** say that it was too high?" asked Mr Sharpe. "Did he make a mistake?"

"Almost certainly not," replied Dr Mason. "I think this is a case of what we sometimes call the white coat syndrome. You were so nervous about the official health check-up that your blood pressure **went through the ceiling** as a result. Admittedly, you were nervous today, too, but not to the same extent, because you know me very well. The doctor you saw before may or may not have been wearing a white coat, but you were scared by the situation."

Mr Sharpe thanked the doctor and went back to his family very much relieved. They were also relieved because he was in a much better mood.

Vocabulary Study

bear, like a bear with a sore head

This is an expression used to mean that someone is in a very bad, angry mood. There are several words, such as **angry** or a synonym for it, that you can use to avoid the cliché:

- *Dan's **like a bear with a sore head** this morning. He's got a hangover after going to a party last night.*
- *Dan's very **irritable** this morning. He's got a hangover after going to a party last night.*

bug, what's bugging you

This expression is used, in informal contexts, to ask someone what is making them angry or irritable. It often takes the form of a direct question, but not necessarily so, as in the passage:

- *John, **what's bugging you?***
- *I asked John **what was bugging him.***

To avoid the colloquialism, you can use several other expressions such as **what's wrong with you?, what's the matter with you?** or **what's annoying you?**:

- ***What's bugging you?** You've been so cross with everyone.*
- ***What's the matter with you?** You've been so cross with everyone.*

ceiling, go through the ceiling

This is an idiom used to indicate, in rather an exaggerated way, that something has risen to a very high level or has increased a lot. It is often used with reference to financial matters such as prices. You can replace the cliché with an expression such as **rise very high** or **soar**:

- *You might not be able to afford a house in the area. Prices have **gone through the ceiling** recently.*
- *You might not be able to afford a house in the area. Prices have **climbed rapidly** recently.*

Language Help

An alternative form of this is go through the roof.

light, shed light on

If you **shed light on** something, you provide information about it so that it is easier to understand:

- *How the vase got broken is a bit of a mystery. Can you **shed any light on** it?*
- *How the vase got broken is a bit of a mystery. Can you **explain** it?*
- *How the vase got broken is a bit of a mystery. **Do you know anything about** it?*

medico

This is an informal word, derived from the word **medicine**, meaning a doctor or medical student. The colloquialism can obviously be replaced by the word **doctor**.

Language Help

Quack is an informal derogatory word for doctor:

- *I usually try to stay away from **quacks**, but I'm going to have to make an appointment to see mine. I've hurt my ankle badly.*

mum, keep mum

This expression is used in informal contexts, meaning to stay silent about something. There are many ways of replacing it by referring in some way to not saying anything:

- *I've just heard that Jim and Mary are getting married but **keep mum** about it. They haven't had a chance to tell their parents yet.*
- *I've just heard that Jim and Mary are getting married but **don't say anything** about it. They haven't had a chance to tell their parents yet.*
- *I've just heard that Jim and Mary are getting married but **keep quiet** about it. They haven't had a chance to tell their parents yet.*

narked

This is used in an informal context and it means annoyed. There are many ways of saying that someone is annoyed and so it is easy to avoid the colloquialism:

- *Jill was really **narked** when she discovered that Pam hadn't asked her to her dinner party.*
- *Jill was really **angry** when she discovered that Pam hadn't asked her to her dinner party.*

roof, hit the roof

If you **hit the roof**, you become very angry. This is an idiom which has become a cliché and you can easily avoid it since there are several words for being angry:

- *Dad will **hit the roof** when he sees that you've damaged his bike.*
- *Dad will **get furious** when he sees that you've damaged his bike.*

time, in your own good time

This expression indicates that someone will do something when they feel like doing it or when it suits them:

- *Don't try to force the boy to tell you what happened. He'll tell you **in his own good time**.*
- *Don't try to force the boy to tell you what happened. He'll tell you **when he's ready**.*

up, what's up

This expression is used, in informal contexts, to ask someone what is wrong with them. You may think that they are upset, ill, worried or angry about something. It can take the form of a direct question, but not necessarily so, as in the passage:

- *John, you look worried. **What's up?***
- *I asked John **what was up** because he looked a bit worried.*

To avoid the colloquialism, you can use several other expressions such as **what's wrong with you?**, **what's the matter with you?** or **what is it?**:

- ***What's up?** You look terrified.*
- ***What is it?** You look terrified.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *I asked him if he would give me a lift to college and he **hit the roof** and started going on about laziness.*

_____

_____

2. *Their mother, however, was unable to **shed any light on** their father's strange behaviour.*

_____

_____

3. *Doubtless he'll tell us **what's bugging him in his own good time**.*

_____

_____

4. *He had **kept mum** about this because he did not want to worry his family and he was feeling very nervous.*

_____

_____

5. *You were so nervous about the official health check-up that your blood pressure* ***went through the ceiling*** *as a result.*

_____

_____

B Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *You should not (* ***deprecate / depreciate*** *) Meg's attempts at sewing. She's trying very hard.*
2. *Mike bought a beautiful (* ***antiquated / antique*** *) table at the auction.*
3. *Liz owns a hairdressing (* ***salon / saloon*** *) in the town centre.*
4. *The meat was served with a selection of (* ***seasonable / seasonal*** *) vegetables.*
5. *Few students would have had the (* ***temerity / timidity*** *) to question the actions of the principal, but Sue did.*

C Rewrite the following sentences, replacing the colloquial or slang words or expressions with standard words or expressions.

1. *We were planning to go on holiday at the end of the month, but our plans have* ***gone pear-shaped*** *because my husband has just discovered that he has to attend an important sales conference.*

_____

_____

_____

2. *Whoever sold you that bag really* ***ripped*** *you* ***off.*** *I saw one in the market yesterday for $15 cheaper.*

_____

_____

3. *Sue's in big trouble because she* ***swiped*** *some money from her mother's purse.*

_____

_____

4. *Bert was* ***slagging off*** *Lucy to Jack, not realizing that Lucy is Jack's sister.*

_____

_____

5. *Ben says that Jill's new boyfriend is a* ***dork,*** *but you must remember that Jill once refused to go out with Ben and he could be jealous.*

_____

_____

Doubling of consonants

It is often difficult to decide whether or not you should double a consonant when you add an ending to a word, for example, when you want to form the past tense or present participle of a verb. There are a few rules that can help you make the correct decision.

In words of one syllable which end in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel, the consonant is doubled when an ending starting with a vowel is added. Thus:

drop → dropped **pat → patted**
plan → planning **rub → rubbed**

In words of more than one syllable which end in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel, the consonant is doubled if the stress is on the last syllable when an ending starting with a vowel is added. Thus:

commit → committed **occur → occurring** **prefer → preferred**

In similar words where the stress is not on the last syllable, the consonant usually does **not** double. Thus:

button → buttoned **develop → developing** **matter → mattered**

However, there is an exception to this rule. This involves words ending in "l". In British English, the "l" doubles even in cases where the last syllable containing it is unstressed, although this does not happen in American English. Thus:

parcel → parcelled **revel → revelling**
travel → travelled (But **travel → traveled** in American English)

Other exceptions to the rule that the consonant usually does **not** double when the last syllable is unstressed are **worship, kidnap** and **handicap**. Although the stress is on the first syllable, we have **worshipped, kidnapped** and **handicapped.**

Final letter "c" does not double but changes to "ck" when an ending is added, as *in picnicking.*

Exercise 2

Fill in each blank with the correct spelling of the verb in brackets.

1. *Jack _____ to remarks made by the previous speaker. (* **refer** *)*
2. *I didn't know that Sara had _____ the party. (* **cancel** *)*
3. *Meg was _____ the plants in the back garden. (* **water** *)*
4. *The sea water was _____ against the rocks. (* **lap** *)*
5. *We had not _____ for an increase in rent. (* **budget** *)*
6. *The audience _____ at the skill of the acrobats in the circus ring. (* **marvel** *)*
7. *It was a long time before John's salary _____ that of his elder brother. (* **equal** *)*
8. *The company's new marketing strategy _____ older people. (* **target** *)*
9. *The flowers were _____ in the heat. (* **droop** *)*
10. *Ben knows very little about business and was _____ by Peter into investing in his firm. (* **con** *)*

Unit 9

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

A weird experience

It was a **dark and moonless** night and I had taken a short cut across the moors because I was anxious to get home as quickly as possible. My wife was having a dinner party and I was already late. I **put my foot down** and **accelerated** while trying to stay within the legal limit. **The Old Bill** were unlikely to make an appearance up here, but I didn't want to risk getting a fine for speeding.

The moor is lonely at night and, I must admit, rather **creepy**. Usually, I try to avoid it and take the longer route home. I was beginning to regret not having done so that night.

I'd had a very long and difficult day at the office and was feeling very tired. Indeed, I felt that I might well **nod off at any minute**. I put a Beethoven tape on to keep me awake and laughed at how **uncool** my daughter Kim would think this. Then something happened to keep me awake **with a vengeance**.

A man, dressed in rather strange **garb**, suddenly stepped out in front of the car and I had to brake sharply to avoid hitting him. He held up his right hand as if in warning and pointed behind him. He didn't seem to be saying anything and I got out of the car to find out what was happening. The man seemed to have vanished, but I was not immediately aware of this. I was too busy looking at the hole in the road that my car and I might have fallen into, for the road immediately in front of me had subsided!

I looked around to thank the man, for he had, undoubtedly, saved me from injury, or even death. He was nowhere to be seen. I looked everywhere in the area and called out as loudly as possible. There was no sign of him. I thought this was very peculiar, but I was in a hurry to finish my journey.

A few days later, I was telling the story in my local pub when an old farmer told me something which **made my flesh creep**. Apparently, about 60 years ago, a farmer was driving over the moor late at night when the road subsided before him and he fell to his death. The story is that his ghost has, ever since, warned drivers of similar disasters.

Vocabulary Study

bill, the Old Bill

This expression, meaning the police, is a common informal expression in British English. There are several other informal terms for the police, such as **the fuzz** or **the cops** or **the rozzers**, but in standard language **the police** is about the only possibility:

- ***The Old Bill*** *seem to be making very little progress with the murder investigation.*
- ***The police*** *seem to be making very little progress with the murder investigation.*

creep, make your flesh creep

If something **makes your flesh creep**, it fills you with fear, horror or disgust. It is a cliché and it can be replaced by using an expression such as **fill you with horror** or **terrify**, depending on the context:

- *The sight of the maggots eating the corpse's flesh* ***made my flesh creep.***
- *The sight of the maggots eating the corpse's flesh* ***filled me with disgust.***

creepy

This word is used in informal contexts and means causing feelings of fear or nervousness. You can replace the colloquialism with one of various expressions from standard language relating to fear:

- *The cave was dark and* ***creepy*** *and I wanted to get out of there immediately.*
- *The cave was dark and* ***frightening*** *and I wanted to get out of there immediately.*

dark, dark and moonless

In this phrase, the word "dark" is redundant and so can be omitted without altering the sense. If there was no moon, the night would obviously be dark.

foot, put your foot down and accelerate

The expression **put your foot down** means to drive faster. To **accelerate** also has this meaning and so one of them is redundant and can be omitted without the sense being altered.

garb

This word is usually used in formal or literary contexts and means clothes. You can replace it with one of various expressions from standard language relating to dress:

- *The man was wearing military* ***garb*** *when he appeared at the funeral.*
- *The mon was wearing military* ***dress*** *when he appeared at the funeral.*

minute, at any minute

This expression means very soon:

- *Dr Brown has been delayed, but he should be here* ***at any minute.***
- *Dr Brown has been delayed, but he should be here* ***very shortly.***

Language Help

An alternative form of this expression is **at any moment**.

nod, nod off

This is used in informal contexts to mean to fall asleep for a short time, for example, in a chair, without intending to. You can substitute **fall asleep**:

- *The nurse was supposed to be observing the patient all night, but she* ***nodded off*** *and didn't notice that he had died.*
- *The nurse was supposed to be observing the patient all night, but she* ***fell asleep*** *and didn't notice that he had died.*

Language Help

The expressions **nap** and **take a nap** suggest that someone has fallen asleep for a short time deliberately.

uncool

Uncool is a trendy word used in informal contexts to mean unfashionable or unacceptable. The colloquialism is mainly used by young people.

It is easy to find an expression in standard language which conveys the same meaning:

- *The new girl is wearing a knee-length skirt. How* ***uncool!***
- *The new girl is wearing a knee-length skirt. How* ***old-fashioned!***

vengeance, with a vengeance

This is a cliché which means to a very great degree. It is much overused, but you can find replacements, according to the context:

- *It was raining* ***with a vengeance*** *in the morning, but the sun came out in the afternoon in time for the wedding.*
- *It was raining* ***extremely heavily*** *in the morning, but the sun came out in the afternoon in time for the wedding.*
- *Mike lost the tennis match* ***with a vengeance.*** *He won only two games.*
- *Mike lost the tennis match* ***very badly.*** *He won only two games.*
- *Pam dislikes Mike* ***with a vengeance.*** *He once destroyed her brother's career.*
- *Pam dislikes Mike* ***very much.*** *He once destroyed her brother's career.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *It was a* ***dark*** *and* ***moonless*** *night and I had taken a short cut across the moors.*

_____

2. *The moor is lonely at night and, I must admit, rather* ***creepy.***

_____

3. *Indeed, I felt that I might well* ***nod off at any minute.***

_____

4. *Then something happened to keep me awake* ***with a vengeance.***

_____

5. *A few days later, I was telling the story in my local pub when an old farmer told me something which* ***made my flesh creep.***

_____

_____

B Replace the clichés in bold in the following sentences with standard words or expressions.

1. *The state of the wall which separates their properties has been* ***a bone of contention*** *between Jim and Bill for many years.*

_____

_____

2. *Jack often arrives late but he got to the meeting last night at seven o'clock* ***on the dot.***

3. *The police are still trying to contact the dead man's son, but he seems to* ***have vanished into thin air.***

4. *We looked everywhere for the lost ring, but the search was* ***to no avail.***

5. *There's apparently an aircraft museum in the area which John wants to visit. He* ***has a bee in his bonnet*** *about old aircraft.*

C Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *I don't think the accused will be found guilty. The defence team has pointed out to the jury the* ***paucity of*** *the evidence against him.*

2. *Harry had to* ***surmount*** *many difficulties in order to start his own business.*

3. *Jane trusted Mary absolutely and was very upset to learn of her friend's* ***duplicity.***

4. *The victim's description of her attacker indicates that the backs of his hands were very* ***hirsute.***

5. *The army* ***was debilitated*** *by the long march and lack of food, and was easily defeated by the enemy.*

Past participle and past tense

With many verbs the past tense and the past participle have the same form:

*She **loved** him then. She has **loved** him for years.*
*His remarks **hurt** her badly. His remarks have **hurt** her badly.*
*They **tried** hard to win. They have **tried** hard to win.*

However, with some irregular verbs the past tense and past participle are different in form and from the infinitive. For example:

Infinitive	Past tense	Past participle
arise	arose	arisen
begin	began	begun
bite	bit	bitten
drink	drank	drunk
drive	drove	driven
forget	forgot	forgotten
forgive	forgave	forgiven
give	gave	given
hide	hid	hidden
know	knew	known
ride	rode	ridden
ring	rang	rung
rise	rose	risen
see	saw	seen
shrink	shrank	shrunk
sing	sang	sung
sink	sank	sunk
spring	sprang	sprung
swim	swam	swum
wear	wore	worn
write	wrote	written

Exercise 2

Complete each of the following sentences, using either the past tense or the past participle of the verb given in brackets.

1. *Pat _____ to me last week and I replied today. (* ***write*** *)*
2. *The children have _____ so quickly. (* ***grow*** *)*
3. *Sally had _____ the ring from her mother the previous year. (* ***steal*** *)*
4. *The child _____ the ball in the air and laughed. (* ***throw*** *)*
5. *Jane was annoyed with Sara because she had _____ the baby. (* ***wake*** *)*
6. *The women _____ the cloth from which they made their clothes. (* ***weave*** *)*
7. *The dog has _____ a child before. (* ***bite*** *)*
8. *Flocks of geese had _____ overhead. (* ***fly*** *)*
9. *The strong winds had _____ the tree down. (* ***blow*** *)*
10. *The cat _____ from the tree and killed the bird. (* ***spring*** *)*

Unit 10

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

An angry customer

Mrs Brown entered her local branch of John Smart in a very angry mood. "Where can I find the complaints department?" she asked the first sales assistant whom she met in the department store.

"It's on the fourth floor, madam, beside accounts," replied the sales assistant.

"How very inconvenient!" said Mrs Brown. "That means I'll have to go up all those elevators and I hate them."

"There are lifts at the back of the store, madam, if you prefer them," said the sales assistant.

"I'm not so **long in the tooth** that I need to take the lift, thank you," replied Mrs Brown. "My point is that the complaints department should be more accessible."

Mrs Brown's mood did not improve as she **ascended** the escalators on what was the shop's busiest day of the week. When she eventually **located** the complaints department, which **was** actually **styled** Customer Services, her **anger knew no bounds**. There was a long queue that would take a very long time to deal with.

When she eventually got to the front of the queue, she was still extremely angry and said rudely to the assistant behind the counter, "I want to speak to the manager, thank you, not one of his **underlings**."

"I'm afraid the Customer Services manager is **away from her desk** just now," replied the assistant. "I'm sure I can help if you tell me what the problem is."

"I very much doubt that," snapped Mrs Brown. "I want to speak to the general manager of the store."

"I'll see if he's available, but I'll have to be able to tell him the nature of the problem," said the assistant.

"This is **monstrous**," replied Mrs Brown. "I've already spent the morning on the phone telling people in this store the nature of the problem. I ordered two sofas from this firm more than two months ago, paid for them in advance—and I **paid through the nose** for them, too—and was promised that they would be delivered

within six months. They have not yet arrived. I want them now or I want my money back."

"I'm afraid we can't help you in this store, madam. You have to get in touch with our warehouse or our main London store. Would you like the phone number?"

"No, I would not," snapped Mrs Brown. "You're **barking up the wrong tree** if you think I'm going to accept this, young lady. I want the address of your managing director."

Vocabulary Study

anger, someone's anger knows no bounds

If you say that someone's **anger knew no bounds**, you are emphasizing how extremely angry someone was. The expression is a cliché and you can replace it by using one of several expressions relating to anger:

- *Amy's **anger knew no bounds** when Lucy got the job that she wanted.*
- *Amy was **absolutely furious** when Lucy got the job that she wanted.*

ascend

The verb **ascend** is used in formal contexts to mean climb. You can replace it with a less formal expression such as **climb** or **go up**:

- *We watched him **ascend** the ladder and looked on in horror as he missed the last rung and fell on the concrete below.*
- *We watched him **go up** the ladder and looked on in horror as he missed the last rung and fell on the concrete below.*

desk, away from your desk

This modern expression indicating that someone is not at their place of work is usually used in a business context. It is often used as a euphemism by someone's secretary or colleague to indicate that the person who is supposedly away from his or her desk does not wish to see someone or to speak to someone on the telephone:

- *I know that you are anxious to speak to Mr Simpson, but I'm afraid he's **away from his desk** just now. Can I take a message?*
- *I know that you are anxious to speak to Mr Simpson, but I'm afraid he's **not available** just now. Can I take a message?*
- *I know that you are anxious to speak to Mr Simpson, but I'm afraid he's **busy** just now. Can I take a message?*

locate

This word is used in formal contexts to mean find. It is easy to replace it with a less formal word:

- *We didn't know exactly where Pat's cottage was, but we eventually **located** it.*
- *We didn't know exactly where Pat's cottage was, but we eventually **found** it.*

monstrous

This word, used in formal contexts, means shocking:

- *It was a **monstrous** failure of the justice system.*

However, it is often used in an exaggerated way by people who want to indicate that something is unacceptable, inconvenient, etc:

- *This is **monstrous**! The postman delivered my letter to the wrong address.*
- *This is quite **unacceptable**! The postman delivered my letter to the wrong address.*

nose, pay through the nose

If you **pay though the nose** for something, you pay a great deal of money or too much money for something. It is used in informal contexts. You can easily substitute an expression relating to handing over a lot of money for something:

- *You'll **pay through the nose** for a house in this area. It's one of the most popular parts of the city.*

- *You'll **pay a great deal** for a house in this area. It's one of the most popular parts of the city.*

style, be styled

This is an expression which is used in more formal contexts to indicate what someone or something is called. It can be replaced by less formal words such as **be called** or **be named** or **be labelled**, according to the context:

- *The department **will be styled** the Department of Leisure and Arts.*
- *The department **will be named** the Department of Leisure and Arts.*

tooth, long in the tooth

This expression, used in informal contexts, means that someone is either old or too old for something. You can replace it by using an alternative word such as **old** or **elderly**:

- *Aren't you a bit **long in the tooth** to be going dancing in night clubs?*
- *Aren't you a bit **old** to be going dancing in night clubs?*

Language Help

Other alternative colloquial expressions with a similar meaning are **past it** and **over the hill**.

tree, barking up the wrong tree

If you say that someone is **barking up the wrong tree**, you mean that they are quite wrong about something. You can replace it in various ways relating to be wrong or making a mistake:

- *The police arrested the dead woman's husband on a charge of murder, but they were **barking up the wrong tree**.*
- *The police arrested the dead woman's husband on a charge of murder, but they were **making a mistake**.*

underling

This is a formal expression, used in a derogatory way, for someone who is lower in rank or status than someone else. You can replace it with an expression such as **subordinate** or **assistant**:

- *The government minister was not involved in the project himself, although he took all the credit. He left all the planning to his **underlings**.*
- *The government minister was not involved in the project himself, although he took all the credit. He left all the planning to his **assistants**.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *I'm not so **long in the tooth** that I need to take the lift.*

_____

2. *When she eventually **located** the complaints department, which **was** actually **styled** Customer Services, her **anger knew no bounds**.*

_____

_____

3. *I'm afraid the Customer Services manager is **away from her desk** just now.*

_____

4. *I **paid through the nose** for the sofas.*

_____

5. *You're* ***barking up the wrong tree*** *if you think I'm going to accept this.*

_____

_____

B Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *The tree was struck by (* ***lightening / lightning*** *) and fell on the car below.*
2. *Bill is the only one in his family who is employed and so he has several (* ***dependants / dependents*** *).*
3. *A (* ***troop / troupe*** *) of acrobats entertained the children.*
4. *The wonderful cooking smells coming from the kitchen will (* ***wet / whet*** *) the guests' appetites.*
5. *Lucy and Jim have sold their country cottage and moved back to the town because they prefer (* ***urban / urbane*** *) life.*

C Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *The scar on Jane's forehead was* ***imperceptible*** *when she applied make-up.*

_____

_____

2. *Ben is the most* ***pertinacious*** *person I know and he won't give up until he gets what he wants.*

_____

_____

3. *Mary was noted for her* ***indefatigable*** *efforts to prevent cruelty to animals.*

_____

_____

D Replace the clichés in bold in the following sentences with standard words or expressions.

1. ***It beats me*** *why Sam married Amy. They have nothing in common.*

_____

2. *I took the children to the fair yesterday and they really* ***had a ball****.*

_____

More about Language

Foreign borrowings

For centuries, English has borrowed words and phrases from other languages. These borrowings have come from the classical languages, Latin and Greek, the other European languages, including French, German, the Scandinavian languages, and the Celtic languages. Several have come from the countries of the former British empire, particularly from the Indian languages, and some have come from the South American languages, and from Japanese, Malay and Chinese.

Many of these foreign expressions have been completely assimilated into the English language and have acquired English pronunciations and even English spellings. Others retain their original spelling and, more or less, their original pronunciation. These include the French expression **faux pas**, an embarrassing social error; the German word **Schadenfreude**, meaning finding pleasure in another person's misfortune; the Italian word **paparazzi**, which refers to press photographers who follow celebrities around; the Yiddish word **chutzpah**, meaning boldness or audacity.

Exercise 2

From what language does each word or phrase in bold come?

1. ***karaoke**, a form of entertainment in which someone sings a popular song while it is played by a prerecorded tape.*

   _____

2. ***fait accompli**, something which has already been done.*

   _____

3. ***status quo**, the existing state of affairs.*

   _____

4. ***paella**, a dish made with rice, chicken, shellfish and vegetables.*

   _____

5. ***sotto voce***, *under your breath, very softly.*

6. ***persona non grata***, *a person who is not acceptable or not welcome.*

7. ***carte blanche***, *complete freedom or authority to act as you think best.*

8. ***kung fu***, *a form of martial art.*

9. ***alfresco***, *out of doors, often used with reference to eating out of doors.*

10. ***putsch***, *a sudden attempt to overthrow a government by force.*

Unit 11

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Cleaning up

Tom and Jenny had just bought their first flat and were going round to their lawyer's office to collect the keys. They planned to go and have a look at the flat to see what needed done before they moved in. They were both very excited.

However, their excitement turned to disappointment when they saw the flat. It wasn't at all as they remembered it.

"Why did we buy such a **grotty** place?" cried Jenny. "We must **have been off our heads**. Do you think we could get our money back?"

"**No chance!**" said Tom. "We've signed the contract. But don't worry! Flats always look a lot worse when people have moved their stuff out of them. It'll look a lot better when we've moved our stuff in. Shall we move in tomorrow? I can borrow my brother's van."

"**No fear!**" said Jenny. "We're not putting our good stuff in there when it's in that state."

"Well, we'll clean it and redecorate it this weekend and move in early next week," suggested Tom.

"We'll never do all that in one weekend. It'll take **yonks**!" replied Jenny. "Just look at all that **grunge** on the kitchen wall behind where the cooker has been!"

"We'll get people to help. We'll buy some drinks and snacks and invite people to a decorating party. I went to one of those once. They can be fun."

Jenny began to feel slightly better. "Who can we ask?" she said.

"Oh, **the usual suspects**," Tom said. "Mike, Frank, Bob, Dan, Lucy, Anne, Mary and anyone else I can think of."

Tom rang round all their friends who he thought might help and was very pleased with the result. Eight of them were coming to assist with the cleaning and decorating.

"We're aiming for an instant **make-over**," he told them all when they appeared early on Saturday morning. "We want to move in on Monday and so we're not going to wallpaper anywhere. We're just going to clean everywhere and slap some paint on the walls and ceilings. If we **put our backs into it** we should finish by Sunday evening."

Everyone worked really hard, stopping only occasionally for a beer and a sandwich. The flat was **a hive of activity** for most of the weekend and they finished the work by late Sunday afternoon.

"What a transformation!" said Jenny when she saw the finished flat. "Thanks a lot for your help, everyone," added Tom.

Vocabulary Study

activity, a hive of activity

This expression refers to somewhere in which there is a great deal of activity. You can replace it with some reference to **busy** that suits the context:

- *The seaside hotel was **a hive of activity** during the summer tourist season.*
- *The seaside hotel was **a very busy place** during the summer tourist season.*

Language Help

The **hive** in which bees live is regarded as a symbol of great activity because bees are often described as busy.

back, put your back into it

If you **put your back into it**, you work as hard as possible. You can replace it with words which emphasize working hard:

- *If you **put your back into it**, you should finish this job by the end of the day.*
- *If you **put a lot of effort into it**, you should finish this job by the end of the day.*

chance, no chance!

This expression, which is used in informal contexts, emphasizes that you are definitely not going to do something or that something will definitely not happen. It can easily be replaced by an expression such as **certainly not** or **definitely not**:

- *"Do you think you've done well in the exam?" **"No chance!** I didn't answer three of the questions."*
- *"Do you think you've done well in the exam?" **"Definitely not!** I didn't answer three of the questions."*

Language Help

The expression is similar in meaning to **no fear!**

fear, no fear!

You say **no fear!** to indicate that you are definitely not going to do something or allow something to happen. This is used in informal contexts but you can replace the colloquialism using various expressions from standard language, such as **certainly not** or **definitely not**:

- *"Are you going to ask Jill to share the flat with you?" **"No fear!** She's so incredibly untidy!"*
- *"Are you going to ask Jill to share the flat with you?" **"Certainly not!** She's so incredibly untidy!"*

Language Help

The expression is similar in meaning to **no chance!**

grotty

This is a word used in informal contexts to mean unpleasant, dirty, or of poor quality. You can replace it with various words relating to these meanings:

- *I thought that you were taking me to a restaurant for dinner, not this* ***grotty*** *little café.*
- *I thought that you were taking me to a restaurant for dinner, not this* ***nasty*** *little café.*

grunge

This word, used in informal contexts, means dirt. You can replace it with various words from standard language relating to dirt:

- *I'm going to shampoo this carpet to see if I can get the* ***grunge*** *off it.*
- *I'm going to shampoo this carpet to see if I can get the* ***grime*** *off it.*

head, be off your head

This expression, which is used in informal contexts, means to be mad or foolish. It is often used as an exaggeration and can easily be replaced by an expression from standard language:

- *You're* ***off your head*** *if you think that you can persuade Dad to lend you the car.*
- *You're* ***insane*** *if you think that you can persuade Dad to lend you the car.*

Language Help

There are many colloquial expressions which have the same meaning as this, including **off your rocker**, **off your trolley** and **out of your tree**.

make-over

This is a trendy word, used in informal contexts, meaning something that improves the appearance of someone or something. It can be replaced by various expressions from standard language suggesting improvement, depending on the context:

- *It'll cost a lot of money to give this house a* ***make-over.***
- *It'll cost a lot of money to* ***renovate*** *this house.*

usual, the usual suspects

This is an expression meaning the people who are usually involved in or associated with something:

- *"Did you meet any new people at Jack's party?" "No, only* ***the usual suspects*** *were there."*
- *"Did you meet any new people at Jack's party?" "No, only* ***the people who usually go*** *were there."*

yonks

This word, which is used in informal contexts, means a very long time, although this is often exaggerated. You can replace it with an expression from standard language, especially by being more specific:

- *It is* ***yonks*** *since I was last here. I haven't been back since I was a child.*
- *It is* ***many years*** *since I was last here. I haven't been back since I was a child.*
- *I'm saving up for a car, but it'll be* ***yonks*** *before I can afford one.*
- *I'm saving up for a car, but it'll be* ***a very long time*** *before I can afford one.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *We must* ***have been off our heads.***

_____

2. ***"No fear!"*** *said Jenny.*

_____

3. *"We're aiming for an instant **make-over**," he told them all when they appeared early on Saturday morning.*

4. *If we **put our backs into it**, we should finish by Sunday evening.*

5. *The flat was **a hive of activity** for most of the weekend and they finished the work by late Sunday afternoon.*

B Replace the expressions in bold in the following sentences with standard words or expressions.

1. *You should keep out of Dad's way. He's **on the warpath** because you borrowed his car without asking his permission.*

2. *Mary could not afford to buy any new clothes, but she **threw caution to the winds** and bought a very expensive designer suit to wear to Jill's wedding.*

3. *We hope that some more members of the **fair sex** will join the golf club.*

C Rewrite the following sentences, omitting any redundant words or expressions.

1. *Lucy has just been told that her father is dying of a terminal disease of the lungs.*

2. *Mother and daughter hugged and embraced each other when they met after a long separation.*

3. *The village nestled at the foot of tall, lofty, snowy peaks.*

D Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *Bob eats so much at dinner that he has been called a (**gourmand / gourmet**) on more than one occasion.*
2. *Treating animals in such a cruel way is (**contemptible / contemptuous**).*
3. *Young people who have a criminal record find that this (**militates / mitigates**) against their chances of getting good jobs in later life.*
4. *The dentist told Ben that he should pay more attention to his (**aural / oral**) hygiene.*

"less" and "fewer"

The word **less** is often used in a way that is not grammatically correct. It is the comparative form of **little** and means smaller amount or quantity of something. **Less** should refer to things that cannot be counted and so should be used with uncountable nouns, as in ***less** milk, **less** noise, **less** space.* It is often used wrongly where **fewer** is the correct word.

Fewer, which is the comparative form of **few**, means a smaller number of. It should refer to things that can be counted and so should be used with plural nouns, as in ***fewer** apples, **fewer** houses, **fewer** opportunities, **fewer** students.*

English usage is subject to change and it is becoming increasingly common in informal English for people to refer to *less cups, less rooms, less players* but this use of **less** is ungrammatical and should be avoided in formal contexts.

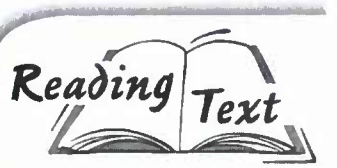
Exercise 2

Complete the following sentences, using either *fewer* or *less*, whichever is grammatically correct in the context.

1. *There were _____ girls than boys present.*
2. *The police are hoping that there will be _____ trouble at the football match this year.*

3. *The children were disappointed at receiving _____ presents than they got last Christmas.*
4. *There are _____ flats to rent in this area.*
5. *I noticed that there is _____ hostility between the two families now.*
6. *The company needs to employ _____ workers if it is to make a profit.*
7. *There is _____ accommodation in the town than the organizers of the conference thought there would be.*
8. *A young man with _____ ambition would not have achieved so much success as John has.*
9. *They now play football for _____ weeks in the year.*
10. *Mr Brown is retiring soon and would like _____ management responsibility than he has at present.*

Unit 12



Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Bullying

First of all, I want to thank you all for coming. The meeting was called at very short notice and the number of you in attendance is **indicative of** the importance of the subject we are about to discuss—bullying.

As chairperson of the Parents' Association, I have received many letters on the subject recently. Because of this and **after due consideration**, I decided to call this meeting. If we all **put our heads together**, we may come up with some ideas that will **ameliorate** the situation. This issue potentially affects all parents and the meeting is not restricted to those who are members of the association. We **welcome aboard** any non-members.

It is not the policy of the Parents' Association to become involved in matters which involve the day-to-day running of the school, but these are exceptional circumstances. The number of reported cases of bullying has **escalated** alarmingly and we believe that many cases are going unreported. We need to take action now. If we **bury our heads in the sand**, the situation will get completely out of control.

We mean no disrespect to the teachers by holding this meeting. Indeed, we invited them all to attend and I am glad to say that several of them have accepted our invitation.

I am sure that teachers do their very best to deal with the bullying problem and there is a bullying strategy in place in the school. However, obviously the present attempts to **extirpate** bullying from the school are not **efficacious**.

Some parents have written to me expressing their concern that the present bullying strategy seems to concentrate on the needs of the bully rather than the bullied. Educational psychologists have been called in to talk to the bullies and to try to find out why they feel it necessary to bully other students. Research has shown that some bullies are suffering from low self-esteem while it is thought that others are the victims of child abuse.

Understanding the psychology of the bully is clearly **of great import** but we must not forget those who have their lives destroyed by being bullied. As yet, no student in this school has taken their own life as a result of bullying, but, regrettably, suicide has taken place in other schools.

Let us hope we can come up with some solutions to this very serious problem. I now declare the meeting open.

Vocabulary Study

ameliorate

This word, which is used in formal contexts, means to make something better. It can be replaced by various less formal words with this meaning according to the context:

- *We're giving her this drug to **ameliorate** the symptoms, but we cannot cure the condition.*
- *We're giving her this drug to **relieve** the symptoms, but we cannot cure the condition.*
- *The children are living in terrible poverty-stricken conditions and something must be done to **ameliorate** these.*
- *The children are living in terrible poverty-stricken conditions and something must be done to **improve** these.*

consideration, after due consideration

This is an expression which is found in formal contexts. Literally, it indicates that the user has given a great deal of thought to something. However, it is often used in the belief that it will make a statement sound more impressive. It is often meaningless and sounds rather pompous. The phrase can often be removed without altering the sense or else a simpler phrase can be substituted:

- *We have received many applications for this job and, **after due consideration**, we are writing to tell you that your application has been unsuccessful on this occasion.*
- *We have received many applications for this job and we are writing to tell you that your application has been unsuccessful on this occasion.*
- *At one point, we felt that it would be a good idea to move to the city, but, **after due consideration**, we decided that living in the country had more advantages.*
- *At one point, we felt that it would be a good idea to move to the city, but, **after a great deal of thought**, we decided that living in the country had more advantages.*

efficacious

This word, used in formal contexts, means producing the desired or intended result. It can be replaced by various less formal words:

- *The medicine has been found to be **efficacious** and the patient is feeling much better.*
- *The medicine has been found to be **effective** and the patient is feeling much better.*

escalate

This started out as a formal word meaning to become or make greater, worse, more serious, etc. It then became a trendy cliché and it is much overused:

- *The feuding between the tribes has **escalated** and a full-scale war now seems inevitable.*
- *The feuding between the tribes has **intensified** and a full-scale war now seems inevitable.*
- *The number of flu cases has **escalated** and doctors are alarmed.*
- *The number of flu cases has **increased greatly** and doctors are alarmed.*

extirpate

This word, which is used in formal contexts, means to get rid of something or to destroy something that is not wanted. It can be replaced by various less formal words with similar meanings:

- *The MP said that the police should do more to **extirpate** the violent element from our society.*
- *The MP said that the police should do more to **root out** the violent element from our society.*

head, bury your head in the sand

This is an idiom which means to try to avoid having to deal with a problem by ignoring or trying to forget about it. It can be replaced by using various alternative expressions with similar meanings:

- *Jack knew that the lump on his leg might be serious, but he insisted on **burying his head in the sand** and refused to go to the doctor.*
- *Jack knew that the lump on his leg might be serious, but he insisted on **ignoring the fact** and refused to go to the doctor.*

head, put your heads together

This expression means to think about and discuss something together as a couple or group:

- *There's not much time left to find a venue for the wedding reception, but, if we all **put our heads together**, I'm sure we'll come up with a few ideas.*
- *There's not much time left to find a venue for the wedding reception, but, if **we all talk it over**, I'm sure we'll come up with a few ideas.*

import, of great import

This expression, which is used in formal contexts, means extremely important. It can easily be replaced by less formal expressions with similar meanings:

- *The meeting is likely to be a long one because ministers have several matters **of great import** to discuss.*
- *The meeting is likely to be a long one because ministers have several matters **of great importance** to discuss.*

indicative, indicative of

This expression, which is used in formal contexts, means a sign of. It can easily be replaced by less formal expressions with similar meanings:

- *Jack's bad mood is **indicative of** his deep unhappiness.*
- *Jack's bad mood is **a sign of** his deep unhappiness.*
- *The fact that parents are anxious to get their children into good schools is simply **indicative of** their wish to do their best for their children.*
- *The fact that parents are anxious to get their children into good schools simply **shows that** they wish to do their best for their children.*

welcome, welcome aboard

This expression, which is a cliché, is used to welcome someone when they join a club, company, etc. You can simply omit the word "aboard":

- *We say "**welcome aboard**" to all new recruits.*
- *We say "**welcome**" to all new recruits.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *Because of this and **after due consideration**, I decided to call this meeting.*

_____

2. *If we all **put our heads together**, we may come up with some ideas that will **ameliorate** the situation.*

_____

_____

3. *We **welcome aboard** any non-members.*

_____

4. *If we **bury our heads in the sand**, the situation will get completely out of control.*

_____

_____

5. *Understanding the psychology of the bully is clearly **of great import**.*

_____

B Rewrite the following sentences, omitting any redundant words or expressions.

1. *Mike is a rude, disobedient child who refuses to do what his parents and teachers tell him to.*

_____

_____

2. *Harry wasn't sure whether to move to the city or not, but Liz was adamant and unwavering in her refusal to go.*

_____

_____

C Replace the clichés in bold in the following sentences with standard words or expressions.

1. *Only those young athletes who train hard and are determined to succeed will have any chance of success on the track. The others will* ***fall by the wayside****.*

_____

_____

2. *We didn't think that we would get planning permission to build an extension to the house, but we've just been* ***given the green light****.*

_____

_____

3. *Jack's father is* ***getting on a bit****, but he still goes mountaineering every weekend.*

_____

D Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *The chess match was due to take place that evening and Peter was determined to defeat his* ***adversary****.*

_____

_____

2. *Sara's parents worked in many parts of the world when she was a child and she has grown up* ***multilingual****.*

_____

_____

3. *Lucy's grandfather was a competent artist, but he certainly does not deserve the* ***epithet*** *"great".*

_____

4. *That dress is much too casual for this evening's dance. Evening dress is* ***de rigueur****.*

_____

5. *We have been able to* ***garner*** *quite a lot of information about the town's history from talking to older residents.*

_____

_____

More about Language

"-ize" and "-ise"

In British English, the sound at the end of many verbs may be spelt either **-ize** or **-ise**, for example, **organize** or **organise**, **realize** or **realise**, **recognize** or **recognise**, **stabilize** or **stabilise**.

In American English, the preferred spelling is **-ize**, and, partly because of this American influence, many British dictionaries also use **-ize** as the first spelling, giving **-ise** as an alternative spelling.

In British English, you can use either spelling, where relevant, so long as you are consistent in your choice of spelling within any single piece of writing. In a similar way, you have a choice of spellings when using any derivatives of the verbs, for example, **organization**, **stabilization**.

However, not all verbs have interchangeable endings. The verb **capsize**, used of a boat meaning to turn over in the water, cannot be spelt **capsise**. Likewise, an **-ize** option is **not** possible for such verbs as **advertise**, **exercise** and **improvise**.

Exercise 2

Rewrite the following sentences, substituting the *-ize* spelling where this alternative is allowable.

1. *The members of the **organising** committee have been elected.*

   _____

2. *John **surprised** us all by getting married suddenly.*

   _____

3. *The building is going to cost more than we thought and we are going to have to **revise** our estimates.*

   _____

   _____

4. *The **stabilisation** of the economy is one of the most important challenges facing the new government.*

_____

_____

5. *Pupils who play truant will be **chastised**.*

_____

6. *The football match is to be **televised**.*

_____

7. *We expected government help for our project, but, unfortunately, this did not **materialise**.*

_____

_____

8. *We have enough factory workers just now, but we need someone to **supervise** them.*

_____

_____

9. *Lucy's baby is to be **baptised** at this morning's church service.*

_____

10. *You have many a great task to complete and you must **prioritise** them.*

_____

_____

Unit 13

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Welcome to the company

It is my **habitual custom** to give a talk to all our new recruits to the firm on their first day of work. Most recruits welcome this and find that it **facilitates** their entry into the firm. I have some routine information about hours of working, holiday entitlement, pension scheme and so on, but I will give this after the talk.

The first thing I'd like to say is that if you are a nine-to-five clock-watcher who follows the rules and never uses your initiative, then you are in the wrong firm. Go now and I'll be asking our human resources department why our screening process failed. I'm glad to see that all of you are still here!

We have put you all through a rigorous selection process and we have chosen you to work here because we **deem** you to have the right **mindset** for the job. We also feel that you all have talent and potential, but it is up to you to make the most of these. This is a firm for **aggressive** and **forceful** people. We reward such people handsomely, but, and I'll **give** you this **straight from the shoulder**, we're ruthless if you don't perform well. If this happens, you're out! Performance is **the name of the game**.

This is not to say that we are not sympathetic to the problems of our employees. If you experience any health problems, whether physical or mental, or experience any domestic or other problems that are likely to affect your work, then go and talk to someone. Talk to your line manager or to someone in human resources, but don't ignore it. Otherwise your work will suffer. We need you to be well, happy and able to cope with anything.

We require **110%** commitment from you and, in return, we will treat you very well. In the early months of your contract, you will not have time for much of a social life, but we have excellent facilities here in the building. We have two coffee bars and a restaurant, all of high quality. Forget any resemblance to your average firm's canteen!

We also have on site a leisure centre with swimming pool and gym and three resident personal trainers. Use it. The most effective employees are the healthiest employees.

That about **wraps up** my preliminary talk. Now for the **bread-and-butter** employment information.

Vocabulary Study

aggressive, aggressive and forceful

The words **aggressive** and **forceful** in this context have much the same meaning and so one of them is redundant. You can omit either of them without altering the sense.

bread-and-butter

This adjective is used as a cliché in this context to refer to something basic or important. You can use one of several other expressions with such meanings:

- *The electors are more interested in **bread-and-butter** issues such as the health service.*
- *The electors are more interested in **fundamental** issues such as the health service.*

custom, habitual custom

In the context of the passage, **custom** means something that you habitually do and so one of these words is redundant. You can omit either of them without altering the sense.

deem

This word, used in formal contexts, means to think of someone or something in a particular way. You can replace it with one of several less formal words with a similar meaning:

- *Sara's parents **deemed** Harry a most unsuitable husband for their daughter and forbade her to marry him.*
- *Sara's parents **considered** Harry a most unsuitable husband for their daughter and forbade her to marry him.*

facilitate

This word, used in formal contexts, means to make something easier or more possible. You can replace it with one of several less formal expressions which convey this meaning, such as **ease** or **help**:

- *We hope that the talks will **facilitate** the formation of better relations between the two ethnic groups.*
- *We hope that the talks will **assist** in the formation of better relations between the two ethnic groups.*

hundred, 110%

This expression seems like nonsense since 100% is the maximum amount you can have. It is used as an exaggeration to emphasize how much has been done, is needed, etc. It is often used in employment situations to emphasize how much effort is expected. The expression can be replaced by a word such as **maximum** or **utmost**:

- *We expect **110%** effort from all of our workers. If you are looking for a nine-to-five job, then don't work here.*
- *We expect a **supreme** effort from all of our workers. If you are looking for a nine-to-five job, then don't work here.*

mindset

This expression, which has become a cliché, means a way of thinking or set of attitudes. Increasingly, it is being used as rather a pretentious word for **mind**. You can replace it by using one of several words which refer to someone's way of thinking or beliefs:

- *He doesn't have the right **mindset** to be a manager.*
- *He doesn't have the right **outlook** to be a manager.*

name, the name of the game

This expression refers to the thing that is most important in something, although it is often used in rather a vague or meaningless way. When it is used in a meaningful way, it can be replaced by several alternative expressions:

- *This company exists to make money. Profit is **the name of the game**.*
- *This company exists to make money. Profit is **what matters**.*

shoulder, give someone something straight from the shoulder

If you **give someone something straight from the shoulder**, you say something in a very frank, direct way:

- *I'll **give** it to you **straight from the shoulder**. The firm is having financial problems and none of your jobs is safe.*

- *I'll give it to you **bluntly**. The firm is having financial problems and none of your jobs is safe.*

wrap up

To **wrap up** in the sense used in the passage means to bring something to an end. It is used in informal contexts and the colloquialism can easily be avoided by using one of several alternative expressions from standard language which have a similar meaning:

- *The meeting should have finished half an hour ago. We're going to have to **wrap it up** for this evening.*
- *The meeting should have finished half an hour ago. We're going to have to **finish** it for this evening.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *It is my **habitual custom** to give a talk to all our new recruits to the firm on their first day of work.*

_____

_____

2. *This is a firm for **aggressive** and **forceful** people.*

_____

3. *We reward such people handsomely, but, and I'll **give** you this **straight from the shoulder**, we're ruthless if you don't perform well.*

_____

_____

4. *That about **wraps up** my preliminary talk.*

_____

5. *Now for the **bread-and-butter** employment information.*

_____

B Rewrite the following sentences, replacing the colloquial or slang words or expressions with standard words or expressions.

1. *This cake is **yummy**. Could you give me the recipe for it?*

_____

2. *She was accused of hiring someone to **do in** her husband.*

_____

3. *It's **scorching** today and a great many people are driving to the coast.*

_____

_____

4. *Our new next-door neighbour says that her husband is working abroad, but he's* ***inside.***

_____

_____

5. *The night watchman was having a* ***kip*** *on duty and failed to notice the thieves.*

_____

_____

C Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *As part of our biology course we have to (* ***bisect / dissect*** *) a rat in the lab.*
2. *See what the temperature is. There's a (* ***barometer / thermometer*** *) at the front of the house.*
3. *Local residents (* ***decried / descried*** *) the council's attempts to improve the traffic problems as pathetic.*
4. *She wore a 24-(* ***carat / caret*** *) gold ring.*
5. *Sue's part as Lady Macbeth was the (* ***zenith / nadir*** *) of her acting career, and thereafter she was offered only minor roles.*

"-ese"

The suffix **-ese** is used to form adjectives and nouns and is often used with reference to people, languages, etc, to indicate what country or city they have come from, as in *There are several* ***Japanese*** *students on the course. John is travelling to Japan, but speaks no* ***Japanese.***

The suffix is also used in a derogatory way to indicate a style of language that is difficult to understand, possibly because it contains too much jargon or too many technical words, as in *Do not use tabloid* ***journalese*** *in your essay.*

Exercise 2

Replace the words in brackets in each sentence with the relevant word ending in -ese.

1. *Jane already speaks Spanish and is now studying (**the language of Portugal**).*
2. *Peter is extremely interested in cooking and he particularly enjoys making (**from Lebanon**) dishes.*
3. *The tourists found the (**people from Malta**) very friendly when they visited one of the islands.*
4. *Johann Strauss, the (**from Vienna**) composer, is noted for his waltz music.*
5. *Jack plans to visit the (**of Taiwan**) city of Taipei.*
6. *The (**of Nepal**) unit of currency is the rupee.*
7. *There are many (**from Vietnam**) immigrants in that area.*
8. *Mary had an accident at work and is suing the company, but she finds it difficult to understand the (**language of the law**) in the letters from her lawyer.*
9. *The application forms are written in (**official language**) and many people applying for welfare benefits do not understand it.*
10. *The manual was written in (**language related to computers**) and it was incomprehensible to me.*

Unit 14

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Kenwood Park attack

A young woman was subjected to a horrific attack in the town last night. She had attended a concert at the Brunton Hall with some friends and had then taken a short cut to her house through Kenwood Park. About halfway through the park her attacker struck.

Matters might have been much worse for the young woman, whose name has not yet been released by police, but for the quick thinking of two teenagers, whose names are not known. They had been at a dance at the local youth club and were returning home through a different part of the park when they heard a scream.

"At first we thought it was someone fooling around," said one of the teenagers. "We hesitated for a bit and then we heard another scream. We thought of going for help but, just in case it was someone playing tricks, we cycled over to see what was happening. When we arrived, we saw a man running away and a woman in a terrible state. Her dress was torn and she was screaming. I tried to comfort her while my friend phoned the police on his mobile, but that only made her worse. The man had obviously **scared the living daylights out of** her."

"We didn't get much of a look at the man," said the other teenager. "He was dressed in black and had a balaclava over his face. He was of medium height and build and **scarpered like a bat out of hell** as soon as we arrived. We thought of running after him, but we knew we'd never catch him and we didn't know if he was **tooled up**."

Police have **gone over** the area around where the attack took place **with a fine tooth comb** in the hope of finding some evidence. It is a **plus** for the police search that the attack took place in an open area of the park. They are also hoping that the young woman may have scratched her attacker and that she may have some of his skin containing his DNA under her fingernails. DNA fingerprinting has **completely revolutionized** detective work.

There have been several attacks on young women in the town recently and some women are afraid to go out. Police are **taking a lot of flak** for their lack of success in identifying the attacker and there is a general feeling that they are **dragging their feet** and that they must **raise their game.** Our young women have a right to be able to walk unharmed in our streets. The attacker must be found, and found quickly.

bat, like a bat out of hell

This expression is used in informal contexts, and means extremely quickly. There are several common expressions which indicate this and so it is easy to replace the colloquial cliché:

- *The taxi driver will have to go **like a bat out of hell** if we're going to catch the last train.*
- *The taxi driver will have to go **very fast** if we're going to catch the last train.*

comb, go over or through something with a fine tooth comb

If you **go over** or **through something with a fine tooth comb**, you search it very carefully. This is a much overused expression:

- *We **went through** my aunt's piles of papers **with a fine tooth comb**, but we didn't find a will.*
- *We **examined** my aunt's piles of papers **extremely carefully**, but we didn't find a will.*

feet, drag your feet

This is an idiom which means to take a long time to do something. It can be replaced by using one of various expressions which refer to slow activity:

- *The company are **dragging their feet** about replying to my letter of complaint. It's over a month since I sent it.*
- *The company are **being very slow** to reply to my letter of complaint. It's over a month since I sent it.*

flak, take a lot of flak

This expression, which is used in Informal contexts, means to be criticized severely. The colloquialism can easily be replaced by an expression from standard language with a similar meaning:

- *Bus drivers often **take a lot of flak** when buses are late, but it's frequently not their fault.*
- *Bus drivers often **receive a great deal of criticism** when buses are late, but it's frequently not their fault.*

Language Help

Flak originally referred to anti-aircraft fire.

game, raise your game

This expression means to improve your performance. You can replace it with the expression **improve your performance** or a similar expression:

- *If you don't **raise your game**, you're going to fail the end-of-term exams.*
- *If you don't **do better**, you're going to fail the end-of-term exams.*

plus

This word, which is used in informal contexts, means an advantage:

- *Some experience of the travel industry would be a **plus** in this job.*
- *Some experience of the travel industry would be an **asset** in this job.*

revolutionize, completely revolutionize

The verb **revolutionize** means to completely change the way something is done and so the word **completely** is redundant. You can omit it without altering the sense.

scare, scare the living daylights out of someone

This expression means to frighten someone very much. It can be replaced by one of several expressions which refer to causing fear:

- *Jack pretended to be a ghost by dressing up in a white sheet and **scared the living daylights out of** his friends waiting in the dark hall.*
- *Jack pretended to be a ghost by dressing up in a white sheet and **terrified** his friends waiting in the dark hall.*

scarper

This word, used in informal contexts, means to run away. There are many ways of expressing this in standard language:

- *A prisoner has **scarpered** from the local prison and police say that he is dangerous.*
- *A prisoner has **escaped** from the local prison and police say that he is dangerous.*

tool, tooled up
This expression, which is used in informal contexts, indicates that someone has a weapon, especially a gun. You can avoid it with another expression referring to this, such as **armed** or **carrying a weapon**:

- *The robber said, "I only shot at the policeman because I thought he was **tooled up**. I thought it was self-defence."*
- *The robber said, "I only shot at the policeman because I thought he was **armed**. I thought it was self-defence."*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *The man had obviously **scared the living daylights out of** her.*

_____

2. *He was of medium height and build and **scarpered like a bat out of hell** as soon as we arrived.*

_____

_____

3. *DNA fingerprinting has **completely revolutionized** detective work.*

_____

4. *Police are **taking a lot of flak** for their lack of success in identifying the attacker.*

_____

_____

5. *There is a general feeling that they are **dragging their feet**.*

_____

B Replace the euphemisms in bold in the following sentences with more direct words or expressions.

1. *We've been told that if we **grease the palm** of an official at the embassy, we can get our visas today.*

_____

_____

2. *Sam says that his boss is leaving because she **has a bun in the oven**, but I've heard that she's going to work for a rival firm.*

_____

_____

3. *When Fred applied for the job he didn't mention the fact that he had spent some time* ***behind bars.***

_____

_____

C Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *Alan did not have many friends and there were very few people present at his* ***interment.***

_____

_____

2. *This does not lie within the* ***ambit*** *of the school board's authority.*

_____

D Replace the expressions in bold in the following sentences with standard words or expressions.

1. *All the students are* ***up in arms*** *because of the changes to the school uniform.*

_____

_____

2. *Tom is going to be* ***under a cloud*** *until the real thief has been identified.*

_____

_____

3. *Doctors have told Dan that he will have to stop smoking and go* ***on the wagon*** *for the sake of his health.*

_____

_____

4. *Amy was paying very little attention to what her mother was saying, but she* ***pricked up her ears*** *when she realized that she was talking about going shopping.*

_____

_____

5. *Jim was* ***a tower of strength*** *when his fiancée's mother was ill.*

_____

_____

"-able" or "-ible"

The endings **-able** and **-ible** are both used to form adjectives in English and this is the cause of many spelling errors. There is a general rule stating that words of English or French origin take **-able** as their ending while words of Latin origin take **-ible**. However, there are several exceptions to this rule and, in any case, most people do not know enough about word origins to be able to apply this rule. It is better to learn them or to look them up in a dictionary if you are unsure.

The ending **-able** is the one usually used in the formation of modern words. For example:

> *They did not really want to give Mike the job and so they set him a task which was not really* ***doable.***

Exercise 2

Complete the following sentences, finishing the words in bold with either *-able* or *-ible*.

1. *We all found Anne's account of the accident* ***incred*** _____ .
2. *Our team is playing a much stronger team, but our coach thinks that the match is* ***win*** _____ .
3. *The food in the restaurant was scarcely* ***ed*** _____ .
4. *I try to buy clothes that are* ***wash*** _____ *and don't have to be dry-cleaned.*
5. *A good map of the countryside is* ***indispens*** _____ *when you go walking.*
6. *Babies need food that is soft and* ***digest*** _____ .
7. *The musician's performance was* ***unforget*** _____ .
8. *Is this water* ***drink*** _____ *?*
9. *The speaker spoke very rapidly and some of the audience found her* ***unintellig*** _____ .
10. *The general thought that his army was* ***invinc*** _____ .

Unit 15

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Young suicides

There is deep concern about the number of young men who are **taking their own lives** nowadays. Statistics vary across the country, but **the general consensus** is that there has been a sharp increase in suicide among young males in the last decade.

Why should this be? No one reason has been identified, but it is thought that one **factor** is the fact that young men are less likely than young women to seek help with their problems. Young women may not seek professional help, but they often seek **a shoulder to cry on** in the form of a best friend or a family member. Young men tend to keep their feelings to themselves.

The reason for this can be **laid at the door of** our culture. Young men may well have been told in their youth that "boys don't cry". When they **grow up to manhood**, they tend to retain the message of their youth and **keep a stiff upper lip** and **show no emotion** whatever happens. Society's attitude is changing and men are now being encouraged to "get in touch with their feminine side". But it is too late for this generation of young men.

Young people experience many stresses. **In this day and age**, the stress of exams alone can be enough to cause some young people to have difficulty in coping. **Add to this, in addition**, other personal causes of stress and the young person can become very distressed indeed. If we then **factor in** the lack of someone to confide in, they can easily become desperate.

There is another difference between men and women when the **trials and tribulations** of life get too much for them. If suicide is contemplated, women may attempt it, but often in some non-violent way and often in such a way that allows for some chance of rescue from their suicide attempt. They may, for example, take an overdose of pills. Their attempt, thus, may become what is known as "a cry for help".

Men, however, often take some violent way such as shooting themselves, jumping from high places or hanging themselves when they plan their suicides. Such actions make it much less likely that the person attempting suicide will be saved in time.

We should all take note of the disturbing increase in young male suicides. Families and friends of young men should be particularly aware of it in case they can do something to prevent the numbers rising even further.

Vocabulary Study

add to this and **in addition**

The expressions **add to this** and **in addition** both suggest the same meaning. You can omit **in addition** without changing the sense.

consensus, the general consensus

The word **consensus** means an opinion that all the members of a group hold. In other words, it is the general opinion. Therefore, the word **general** is redundant and so can be omitted without altering the sense.

day, in this day and age

This expression is a cliché which is much over-used. It means simply **now**:

- *It is appalling that children are living in such poverty in* ***this day and age.***
- *It is appalling that children are living in such poverty* ***nowadays.***

door, lay something at the door of someone

If you **lay something at the door of someone**, you blame someone for something. You can replace the expression using another expression which refers to blame and perhaps by rephrasing the sentence:

- *Some people claim that the children's violent behaviour can be* ***laid at the door of*** *their poor living conditions.*
- *Some people claim that the blame for the children's violent behaviour can be* ***placed on*** *their poor living conditions.*

factor

This word means one of several things which cause something or influence the result of something. It has become much overused:

- *There is no doubt that Paul's heavy drinking was a* ***factor*** *in his death.*
- *There is no doubt that Paul's heavy drinking was* ***one of the causes*** *of his death.*
- *There is no doubt that Paul's heavy drinking* ***contributed*** *to his death.*

factor, factor in

This expression means to include or consider something when planning something or deciding something:

- *You will have to* ***factor in*** *the agent's fee when you are working out the cost of the property.*
- *You will have to* ***take into consideration*** *the agent's fee when you are working out the cost of the property.*

life, take your own life

This is a euphemism for to commit suicide. You can replace the euphemism by being blunt and substituting **commit suicide** or **kill yourself**:

- *Police have found a note indicating that the dead man* ***took his own life.***
- *Police have found a note indicating that the dead man* ***killed himself.***

lip, keep a stiff upper lip and show no emotion

The expression **keep a stiff upper lip** means not to show your feelings. The expression **show no emotion** also means not to show your feelings. Therefore, one of these expressions is redundant. You can omit either of them without altering the sense.

manhood, grow up to manhood

When boys grow up, they become men. Therefore, you can either omit the word **up** or the expression **to manhood** without altering the sense.

shoulder, a shoulder to cry on

This is an idiom meaning someone that you can talk about your troubles to. You can substitute an alternative expression such as **sympathetic listener**.

- *Lucy is very upset about the break-up of her relationship with Peter and Pam is acting as* ***a shoulder to cry on.***
- *Lucy is very upset about the break-up of her relationship with Peter and Pam is acting as* ***a sympathetic listener.***

trial, trials and tribulations
This expression means troubles. It can easily be replaced by using a simple expression from standard language which has a similar meaning:

- *You will find that the **trials and tribulations** of being the parent of a teenager will leave you exhausted and frustrated.*
- *You will find that the **difficulties** of being the parent of a teenager will leave you exhausted and frustrated.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *The reason for this can be **laid at the door of** our culture.*

_____

2. *When they **grow up to manhood**, they tend to retain the message of their youth.*

_____

_____

3. ***In this day and age**, the stress of exams alone can be enough to cause some young people to have difficulty in coping.*

_____

_____

4. *If we then **factor in** the lack of someone to confide in, they can easily become desperate.*

_____

_____

5. *There is another difference between men and women when the **trials and tribulations** of life get too much for them.*

_____

_____

B Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *Bob received a (**swingeing / swinging**) blow to the head and is unconscious.*
2. *I'm not surprised that Jim upset the student's parents. Tact is not his (**fort / forte**).*
3. *Jill is training to be a bereavement (**councillor / counsellor**).*
4. *The election is next week and we are looking for people to help to (**canvas / canvass**) for votes for our candidate.*
5. *The police conducted an (**exhausting / exhaustive**) search of the building, but found nothing.*

C Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *She was a nobleman's wife and always dressed in* ***apparel*** *of rich material.*

_____

_____

2. *Through an* ***aperture*** *in the thick curtains, we could see that there was a light in the room.*

_____

_____

3. *We were not familiar with the area and the taxi driver took us on a very* ***circuitous*** *route to our hotel.*

_____

_____

4. *Meg believed that Sara was trying to help and protect her, but we suspected that her intentions towards Sara were* ***malevolent.***

_____

_____

5. *I am sure that we can rely on Jane to handle the customer's complaint with* ***finesse.***

_____

_____

"deca-" and "deci-"

There are two prefixes which relate to the number **ten.** One is **deca-**, which means ten and is derived from the Greek word *deca*, meaning **ten.** This is found in such words as **decade**, a period of ten years:

The school has changed quite a lot in the last ***decade.***

The other is **deci-**, which means one tenth and is derived from the Latin word *decimus*, meaning **tenth**. This is found in such words as **decimal**, using the number ten as a base and counted or ordered in units of ten:

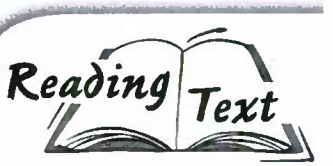
*Most countries now use a **decimal** currency.*

Exercise 2

Complete the following sentences, filling in each blank with a word beginning with either *deca-* or *deci-*.

1. *An athletic contest consisting of ten events is known as a* _____.
2. *A person who takes part in an athletic contest consisting of ten events is known as a* _____.
3. *A* _____ *is a unit used to measure the loudness of sound.*
4. *A shrimp or a lobster is known as a* _____ *because it has five pairs of legs.*
5. *A unit of length equal to ten metres is called a* _____.
6. *A* _____ *is a plane figure with ten straight sides and ten angles.*
7. *If something is a* _____ *in length, it measures 0.1 metre.*
8. *A unit of volume equal to ten litres is known as a* _____.
9. *A* _____ *is equal in volume to 0.1 litre.*
10. *The verb* _____ *originally meant to kill or destroy one in ten, but it is now used to mean to kill or destroy a large proportion.*

Unit 16



Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Easy money

Christmas is near and everyone has gone shopping mad. This is all very well providing you have plenty of money. But so many people can't afford this kind of extravagance and should really be very careful with their money. Christmas spending can leave them in serious debt in January.

The problem is that getting credit is just far too easy these days. It is **a piece of cake.** Indeed, you have to be very strong-minded sometimes not to get credit.

Take the department stores, for example. You select what you want to buy, you take the articles to the sales desk and the assistant offers you a store card, usually promising a significant discount on your purchases. You should say no, because **the bottom line** is that store cards often charge very high interest rates and are not a sensible way to borrow money. However, sales assistants can be very persuasive on the subject of store cards and many people cannot resist the offer. They get into debt in this way and may go on to have several store cards.

There are other seemingly easy ways to get credit. Banks and credit card companies regularly send out offers of credit cards. Indeed, a great amount of **junk mail** consists of such offers. The result is that many people who are not in a position to pay back the money borrowed are tempted and get into overwhelming debt. Worse, they often take out other cards in order to get money to pay back the original debts. Worse still, they turn to loan sharks and pay rates of interest that are **way over the odds.**

The situation is particularly bad at the moment in countries like the United Kingdom where the interest rate is exceptionally low. People forget that interest rates can go up as well as down and **put** a great many of their purchases **on the plastic.** They spend, spend and spend without any thought for the consequences.

The spectre of increasing interest rates is **on the horizon** and, when they do, even the **well-heeled** will have to **tighten their belts.** Those who were **impecunious** before **will be in dire straits.** It is easy to say that they have brought their financial problems on themselves, but society is at least partly to blame. The culture of easy credit must be changed.

belt, tighten your belt

When you say that you have to **tighten your belt**, it means that you have to spend less money:

- *My new job is less well paid than my last one and so I'm going to have to* ***tighten my belt****.*
- *My new job is less well paid than my last one and so I'm going to have to* ***economize****.*

bottom, the bottom line

This is a cliché which, in the context of the passage, means the most important thing:

- *The job calls for a range of talents, but* ***the bottom line*** *is that you must be prepared to work hard.*
- *The job calls for a range of talents, but* ***the most important point*** *is that you must be prepared to work hard.*
- *I know you're trying to decide which of the flats to buy, but* ***the bottom line*** *is that you can only afford the cheapest one.*
- *I know you're trying to decide which of the flats to buy, but* ***the essential thing to remember*** *is that you can only afford the cheapest one.*

cake, a piece of cake

This is an idiom which refers to something that is easy to do:

- *I thought the test was going to be very hard, but it was* ***a piece of cake****.*
- *I thought the test was going to be very hard, but it was* ***not at all difficult****.*

horizon, on the horizon

If something is **on the horizon**, it means that it is likely to happen soon. You can replace it with **soon** or one of the expressions which are synonyms for it:

- *Jack and Beth seem to be getting on very well. I think there may be a wedding* ***on the horizon****.*
- *Jack and Beth seem to be getting on very well. I think there may be a wedding* ***very soon****.*

impecunious

This word, used in formal contexts, means having very little money. There are several less formal words which have the same meaning:

- *The students were so* ***impecunious*** *that they could scarcely afford to pay the rent of their flat.*
- *The students were so* ***poverty-stricken*** *that they could scarcely afford to pay the rent of their flat.*

junk, junk mail

This expression, used in informal contexts, refers to mail which has not been asked for and usually contains advertising material. You can substitute **unsolicited mail**:

- *This is all* ***junk mail****. Throw it in the wastepaper basket.*
- *This is all* ***unsolicited mail****. Throw it in the wastepaper basket.*

odds, way over the odds

This expression, which is used in informal contexts, refers to a payment which is far too much in the circumstances. The colloquialism can be avoided by using one of several expressions with a similar meaning:

- *We paid* ***way over the odds*** *for this house, but it was just what we were looking for and we wanted to be sure of getting it.*
- *We paid* ***an excessive amount*** *for this house, but it was just what we were looking for and we wanted to be sure of getting it.*

plastic, put something on the plastic

If you **put something on the plastic**, you charge it to a credit card, rather than paying for it in cash or by cheque, the origin being that credit cards are made of plastic. The expression is used in informal contexts and can be replaced by less informal expressions such as **pay by credit card**:

- *I can't really afford this dress, but it's lovely and I can* ***put it on the plastic****.*
- *I can't really afford this dress, but it's lovely and I can* ***put it on my credit card****.*

strait, be in dire straits

This expression means to be in a very difficult situation, especially with reference to lack of money. You can replace it with another expression relating to financial difficulty:

- *Jim's company* ***is in dire straits*** *and it is quite likely that he will become bankrupt.*
- *Jim's company* ***is in great financial trouble*** *and it is quite likely that he will become bankrupt.*
- *The football club* ***was in dire straits****, but a local businessman has made a substantial investment in it.*
- *The football club* ***was experiencing financial difficulties****, but a local businessman has made a substantial investment in it.*

well-heeled

This expression, which is used in informal contexts, refers to people who have a great deal of money. You can easily avoid the colloquialism by using the word **rich** or one of the several synonyms for this:

- *Peter and Amy can easily afford to go on a world cruise because they are* ***well-heeled****.*
- *Peter and Amy can easily afford to go on a world cruise because they are* ***wealthy****.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *This project is* ***a piece of cake****.*

_____

2. *You should say no, because* ***the bottom line*** *is that store cards often charge very high interest rates and are not a sensible way to borrow money.*

_____

_____

3. *Indeed, a great amount of* ***junk mail*** *consists of such offers.*

_____

4. *Worse still, they turn to loan sharks and pay rates of interest that are* ***way over the odds****.*

_____

_____

5. *The spectre of increasing interest rates is* ***on the horizon****.*

_____

B Replace the euphemisms in bold in the following sentences with more direct words or expressions.

1. *Amy said that she needed to* ***visit the little girls' room*** *before the meeting started.*

_____

_____

2. *The students went for a midnight swim* ***in the altogether****.*

_____

3. *The children's parents were rather embarrassed when they were telling them about* ***the birds and the bees.***

_____

_____

C Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *We carried out a temporary repair to the door using some wooden (* ***batons / battens*** *).*
2. *The judge (* ***censored / censured*** *) the witness for arriving late.*
3. *They sheltered from the storm under the (* ***boughs / bows*** *) of a large tree.*
4. *We were all amazed at the (* ***veracity / voracity*** *) of the young man's appetite.*

D Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *They said that their leader would never* ***capitulate*** *to the enemy.*

_____

2. *The speaker's lack of confidence was* ***manifest*** *to everyone in the audience.*

_____

_____

3. *I meant to stay at the party only for a short time, but, as I was leaving, a very* ***loquacious*** *young woman came to talk to me and I couldn't get away.*

_____

_____

"female", "feminine" and "feminist"

The words **female**, **feminine** and **feminist** all relate to women but they are not used in the same context.

The word **female** is used to refer to the childbearing sex and contrasts with the

word **male**. It can be either a noun or an adjective and indicates the sex of a person, animal or plant:

*The **female** students have done better in the examination than their male counterparts.*

*The wolf was a **female** and she was protecting her cubs.*

As a noun, **female** can be used in a derogatory way instead of **girl** or **woman**:

*I really don't like that **female** who has just joined our group.*

The word **feminine**, which is the opposite of **masculine**, means having qualities that are considered typical of women or are traditionally associated with women:

*Meg liked to wear silk dresses and other **feminine** clothes.*

*Sue's father thinks that she should go in for a traditionally **feminine** career, such as nursing, teaching or secretarial work, but she wants to be a car mechanic.*

*Tom finds it difficult to express his feelings and Jill says that he is not in touch with his **feminine** side.*

Feminine also applies to the gender of words:

*"Lioness" is the **feminine** form of "lion".*

Feminine can be used of men as well as women, but this use is sometimes rather derogatory, suggesting that a man shows in an excessive way a quality or qualities usually thought of as being associated with women:

*I didn't, at first, realize that I was speaking to a man on the phone, because the caller had a very high-pitched **feminine** voice.*

The word **effeminate** suggests this even more strongly:

*Liz has a very strong personality, but she married a weak, rather **effeminate** man.*

The word **feminist** is used to refer to **feminism**, a movement based on the belief that women should have the same rights, etc, as men. It can be either a noun or an adjective:

***Feminists**, such as Amy, have fought for women to be paid the same as men if they are doing the same job.*

*As a young woman, Anne held very strong **feminist** ideals, but she married a man who didn't want her to work outside the home.*

Exercise 2

Fill in the blanks with *female, feminine, feminist* or *effeminate*, whichever is the relevant word in the context.

1. *When they bought the rabbit, they did not realize that it was a _____ and they were amazed when she gave birth a few days later.*
2. *Mary always wears jeans and a sweater and her mother is trying to persuade her to buy some more _____ clothes.*
3. *Sam has six _____ siblings whom he loves very much, but he regrets not having had a brother.*
4. *The results of the questionnaire show that most women would prefer to be treated by a _____ doctor when they are pregnant.*
5. *Bill was bullied at school when he was a teenager because some of his fellow students thought that he behaved in a very _____ way.*
6. *The _____ form of the word "tiger" is "tigress".*
7. *Amy's hair has been very short for years, but she has decided to grow it because her new boyfriend thinks that she would look better with a more _____ style.*
8. *More _____ children than male have been born in the maternity unit this year.*
9. *Jill is a _____ and has promised to ask the boss to give the women employees the same rates as men.*
10. *Five of Mrs Black's six sons are very strong and masculine looking, but children laugh at John, her youngest, because he is very weak and _____ looking.*

Unit 17

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

A gruesome discovery

It was difficult to believe that I was leaving the old house in Somerset. **It seemed like only yesterday** that I had moved into it with my wife and children. Yet now my wife had **passed away**, my children were grown up, with **establishments** of their own, and I was moving into a retirement flat.

The removal men had moved all the furniture, some to my children's homes, some to storage and much to the auction. It was a large house and we had **accumulated** and **amassed** a great deal of stuff in the course of our stay.

My son was coming to collect me in a few hours and I was spending the time **reminiscing about the past**. There were so many memories, but some were sharper than others.

A particularly clear memory involves the moving in process. We had no children at the time and my wife and I had been borrowing her brother's flat in London while he was working in **foreign climes**. The idea was that I would go on ahead and have everything **shipshape and Bristol fashion** before she arrived. However, this was not to be.

I had arranged to meet a builder at the house to get an estimate for flooring the attic and creating a study for me there. I'm a writer and the idea of writing in a quiet room far from the bustle of family life appealed to me. My wife and I had long wished for **the patter of tiny feet** and our wishes were about to be fulfilled. We were having twins in two months' time.

The builder, whose name was Mr Mason, and I duly climbed to the attic, which, it turned out, was partly floored. The previous owner had not got round to moving the junk from the attic and, as we moved some sacking in the corner, we made **a gruesome, grisly discovery**—a tiny skeleton. I was hoping that it was the **relics** of some small animal.

When my wife, who was a doctor, arrived, she confirmed my worst fears. It was the skeleton of a young child. Then began a police enquiry that was to take several months and end in the arrest of a poor old half-demented woman in the village.

accumulate, accumulate and amass

The words **accumulate** and **amass** both mean to get a large amount of something by collecting it over a period of time. Therefore, one of them is redundant and you can omit either of them without altering the sense.

clime, foreign climes

The word **clime** is a literary word meaning a country or region with a particular kind of climate and, by extension, a country. The expression **foreign climes** means a foreign country. You can replace it using an expression such as **abroad** or **overseas**:

- *Jim is tired of his present job and is seriously thinking of moving to **foreign climes** for a while.*
- *Jim is tired of his present job and is seriously thinking of moving **abroad** for a while.*

establishment

This word, in the context of the passage, is a formal word meaning house or household. It can sound rather pompous and can easily be replaced by one of several less formal expressions:

- *This is the **establishment** of Dr Wilson.*
- *This is the **home** of Dr Wilson.*

feet, the patter of tiny feet

This expression is a euphemism which refers to children, especially babies. The euphemism is usually preceded by a word indicating that they are expected or wanted. Nowadays, people are not so unwilling to refer to the arrival of babies directly as they formerly were and so you can just use a more direct term:

- *Jim and Mary are very excited because they are expecting **the patter of tiny feet**.*
- *Jim and Mary are very excited because they are expecting **a baby**.*

a gruesome, grisly discovery

The words **gruesome** and **grisly** both mean unpleasant and filling you with horror and both usually refer in some way to death. One of them is, therefore, redundant. You can omit either of them without altering the sense.

pass, pass away

This is a euphemism for to die. Nowadays, people are not so unwilling to refer to death directly as they formerly were:

- *Mrs Simpson **passed away** last night and the funeral is on Friday.*
- *Mrs Simpson **died** last night and the funeral is on Friday.*

past, reminisce about the past

The word **reminisce** means to think, talk or write about events which you remember from the past, usually with pleasure. Thus, the phrase **about the past** is redundant and can be omitted without altering the sense.

relics

This a word, used in formal contexts, which refers to a dead body. It can easily be avoided by using a less formal expression:

- *In a shallow grave, police found the **relics** of a long-dead young woman.*
- *In a shallow grave, police found the **remains** of a long-dead young woman.*

ship, shipshape and Bristol fashion

This expression means in good order. There are other expressions which convey this meaning:

- *I must make sure that our spare bedroom is **shipshape and Bristol fashion**. My mother-in-law is coming to stay.*
- *I must make sure that our spare bedroom is **neat and tidy**. My mother-in-law is coming to stay.*

yesterday, it seems like only yesterday

This expression indicates that, although something happened quite a long time ago, it seems very recent:

- *It **seems like only yesterday** that my daughter was born and now she and I are about to walk down the aisle on her wedding day.*
- *It **seems a very short time ago** that my daughter was born and now she and I are about to walk down the aisle on her wedding day.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. ***It seemed like only yesterday*** *that I had moved into the flat with my wife and children.*

_____

_____

2. *It was a large house and we had* ***accumulated*** *and* ***amassed*** *a great deal of stuff in the course of our stay.*

_____

_____

3. *My son was coming to collect me in a few hours and I was spending the time* ***reminiscing about the past.***

_____

_____

4. *My wife and I had long wished for* ***the patter of tiny feet*** *and our wishes were about to be fulfilled.*

_____

_____

5. *We made* ***a gruesome, grisly discovery****—a tiny skeleton.*

_____

B Replace the expressions in bold in the following sentences with standard words or expressions.

1. *Sue is not at work today. She's feeling* ***under the weather.***

_____

2. *Bob says that his country cottage is an* ***oasis of calm*** *where he can recover from the stress of work.*

_____

_____

3. *It was a terrible car crash, but, amazingly, Tom emerged from it* ***without a scratch.***

_____

_____

4. *The firm was* ***on its last legs*** *before Tom and Paul bought it, but now it makes a good profit.*

_____

_____

5. *Tom and Sara were getting on very well until Sara's mother went to live with them and started* ***making waves.***

_____

_____

C Rewrite the following sentences, replacing the colloquial or slang words or expressions with standard words or expressions.

1. *Have you seen Jane's new car? It must* ***have cost a bomb.***

_____

2. ***Get a move on!*** *We're going to miss the train!*

_____

3. *I was really* ***cheesed off*** *when I didn't get the job. The woman who got it had fewer qualifications.*

_____

_____

4. *Jim's new* ***squeeze*** *is very attractive. They were at the party last night.*

_____

5. *Tony can't have done the bank robbery. He's in* ***the nick.***

_____

The plural form of nouns ending in "-y"

Singular nouns in English form plural forms in different ways.

Most add -s to form the plural:

cat → cats **house → houses** **mother → mothers**

Nouns ending in a consonant followed by **y**, however, have **-ies** in the plural:

fairy → fairies **lady → ladies**

Nouns ending in a vowel followed by **y**, add **-s** to form the plural:

monkey → monkeys

Proper nouns ending in **y** add **-s**:

the two Germanys.

Exercise 2

Fill in each blank with the plural form of the word in brackets.

1. *One of Tom's hobbies is attending car _____ . (**rally**)*
2. *The family experienced two _____ in one year. (**tragedy**)*
3. *Kitchens on ships are known as _____ . (**galley**)*
4. *Jones had been guilty of many _____ in his life, but this was the worst. (**folly**)*
5. *That area is full of dark _____ and lanes. (**alley**)*
6. *The children asked to ride on the _____ on the beach. (**donkey**)*
7. *The publisher agreed to pay the author _____ on the number of books sold. (**royalty**)*
8. *The pudding is made with a selection of fresh _____ . (**berry**)*
9. *The charity collecting box was full, but it contained mostly _____ . (**penny**)*
10. *I have two cousins called Mary and both _____ are small and dark-haired. (**Mary**)*

Unit 18

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

A terrifying challenge

One day Dictys, a fisherman from the Aegean island of Seriphos, was walking along the beach when he **espied** a very large chest. His curiosity was aroused and he began to pull it back along the beach. He was surprised at how heavy it was and he began to think that it might contain treasure.

He was impatient to view the contents, but he couldn't get it open. When he finally did, he looked into the chest with **dumfounded astonishment**. Inside was a girl of great beauty and she was holding a baby in her arms.

Her name was Danae and she was the daughter of King Acrisius. She had been **immured** by her father in a tower so that she would not have the opportunity of getting married and **procreating**. It had been prophesied that the king would, one day, have a grandson who would **slay** him.

Zeus, the king of the gods, had somehow gained entry to the tower and married Danae secretly. The marriage resulted in a son and King Acrisius was filled with fear. He had his daughter and grandson placed in a chest and ordered it to be cast into the sea.

Dictys cared for mother and son in his humble home. One day Danae met the king of Seriphos, Polydectes, and he became **enamoured of** her. When he asked for her hand in marriage, Danae was very reluctant because Polydectes had a reputation for being a cruel tyrant.

She informed him that she was happy in her present state and did not wish to **be joined in wedlock** with anyone. Her son, Perseus, **entreated** the king to leave his mother in peace, and Polydectes said that he would do so if Perseus brought him a Gorgon's head.

This was a **prodigious** challenge. Polydectes knew that it was **a tall order** and, indeed, thought that it was impossible. The Gorgons were hideous monsters who could turn anyone to stone if they looked into their eyes.

Perseus, however, had a plan. He was the son of Zeus and he asked for the help of Athena, goddess of wisdom, and Hermes, the messenger of the gods. They gave Perseus certain gifts which would help him in his task. The young man used these to great effect and he succeeded in cutting off the head of the Gorgon called Medusa.

Polydectes and his friends treated Perseus's claim with amused disbelief. But they were to regret this as they were turned to stone when they looked at the head of Medusa.

Vocabulary Study

astonishment, dumbfounded astonishment

The word **dumbfounded** means extremely surprised. The word **astonishment** means great surprise. Therefore, to have the two words together is an example of redundancy. You can omit one of the words without altering the sense:

- *He looked into the chest with **astonishment**.*
- *He was **dumbfounded** when he looked into the chest.*

enamoured, enamoured of

This expression, used in formal, or sometimes humorous, contexts, means to be in love with someone or to like someone or something very much. It can easily be replaced by a less formal expression:

- *James has been **enamoured of** Anne for a long time, but she has just got engaged to Tom.*
- *James has been **in love** with Anne for a long time, but she has just got engaged to Tom.*

entreat

This expression, used in formal contexts, means to ask someone to do something in a strong, passionate way. It can be replaced with a less formal expression with this kind of meaning, such as **beg**:

- *The young woman **entreated** the tyrant to spare her husband's life.*
- *The young woman **pleaded** with the tyrant to spare her husband's life.*

espy

This is a literary word meaning to see something suddenly. It can be replaced by a simpler expression from standard language with a similar meaning:

- *The child **espied** something glittering in the sand.*
- *The child **caught sight of** something glittering in the sand.*

immure

This word, used in formal or literary contexts, means to shut someone up so that they cannot get out. It can be replaced by a plain word from standard language:

- *The prisoners of the king were **immured** in a dungeon under the castle.*
- *The prisoners of the king were **imprisoned** in a dungeon under the castle.*

order, a tall order

This is a cliché which means something which is very difficult to do. You can replace it with a phrase such as **a difficult task** or a similar phrase:

- *They've asked us to decorate the house in two days, which is **a tall order**.*
- *They've asked us to decorate the house in two days, which is **a very hard task**.*

procreate

This word, used in formal contexts, means to bear children. It can easily be replaced by a less formal word with a similar meaning:

- *The horrible man said that people who could not look after themselves should not be allowed to* ***procreate.***
- *The horrible man said that people who could not look after themselves should not be allowed to* ***have children.***

prodigious

This word, often used in a formal context, means very great. It can easily be replaced by a less formal word, such as **huge** or a synonym for this:

- *It was a* ***prodigious*** *task for the young disabled man to climb the mountain.*
- *It was an* ***immense*** *task for the young disabled man to climb the mountain.*

slay

This is a literary word which means to kill, especially in a battle or fight. It can be replaced by the verb **kill**:

- *The young prince was* ***slain*** *in the last battle of the war.*
- *The young prince was* ***killed*** *in the last battle of the war.*

wedlock, be joined in wedlock

This expression, which is used in a legal or literary context, means to be married:

- *The prince and princess are to* ***be joined in wedlock*** *and the whole country is rejoicing.*
- *The prince and princess are to* ***be married*** *and the whole country is rejoicing.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *When he finally did, he looked into the chest with* ***dumfounded astonishment.***

_____

2. *One day Danae met the king of Seriphos, Polydectes, and he became* ***enamoured of*** *her.*

_____

_____

3. *Her son, Perseus,* ***entreated*** *the king to leave his mother in peace.*

_____

4. *This was a* ***prodigious*** *challenge.*

_____

5. *Polydectes knew that it was* ***a tall order*** *and, indeed, thought that it was impossible.*

_____

_____

B Replace the euphemisms in bold in the following sentences with more direct words or expressions.

1. *I think that James is being* ***less than truthful.***

_____

2. *The old lady* ***is losing her marbles*** *and needs full-time care.*

3. *Mary's just gone to* ***spend a penny****. She'll be here soon.*

C Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *Take one egg and separate the (* ***yolk / yoke*** *) from the white.*
2. *Put a (* ***tic / tick*** *) at each correct answer.*
3. *Several people praised her work and this seemed to (* ***discomfit / discomfort*** *) her.*

D Replace the expressions in bold in the following sentences with simpler words or expressions.

1. *This plan hasn't worked.* ***Back to the drawing board!***

2. *I'm surprised that Harry and Joan have started going out together. They're* ***chalk and cheese****.*

E Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *Several journalists* ***castigated*** *the government for its new immigration policy.*

2. *I signed the document after a brief* ***perusal****. I should have studied it more carefully.*

Eponyms

An **eponym** is a person from whose name a word, often the name of something, is derived. It can also refer to a word which is derived from a person's name. The following are examples of eponyms:

cardigan, a knitted jacket named after the Earl of **Cardigan**, a British cavalry officer (1797–1868) who wore such a garment during the Crimean War.

diesel, an internal-combustion engine ignited by highly compressed air, named after Rudolf **Diesel**, a German mechanical engineer (1858–1913).

joule, the metric unit of work or energy, named after James Prescott **Joule**, an English physicist (1818–89).

sandwich, a snack consisting of two pieces of bread with a filling between them, named after the Earl of **Sandwich** (1718–92), an English diplomat who was so keen on gambling that he refused to leave the gambling tables to eat meals.

Exercise 2

A The following words are all the names for things that you wear. Say which of them are named after people.

1. *anorak*
2. *mackintosh*
3. *tuxedo*
4. *beret*
5. *sandal*
6. *wellingtons*
7. *jeans*
8. *stetson*
9. *leotard*
10. *trilby*

B The following words are all the names of plants, trees or bushes. Say which of them are named after people.

1. *aspidistra*
2. *clematis*
3. *fuchsia*
4. *gardenia*
5. *lavender*
6. *wisteria*
7. *beech*
8. *freesia*
9. *geranium*
10. *primula*

Unit 19

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Was it a monster?

It was one of those hot, still days which bring on such a feeling of **torpor** that all you feel like doing is lying on a deckchair in the garden. However, it was the **penultimate** day of my holiday and I was determined to shake off my feelings of **slothfulness** and **indolence** and make the most of it.

I and three of my army **buddies** were celebrating the tenth anniversary of our release from the services by going on a walking holiday. We had rented a charming holiday cottage near Inverness in Scotland to use as a base.

By mutual consent, we decided that we would not go walking as a group today but would **do our own thing**. Mike, who taught history, had gone to look at a castle and a battle site. Paul and Mark, who both **had green fingers**, had gone off to look at some gardens. What would I do?

Overcoming my laziness, I decided to drive to Loch Ness and go for a stroll. I took a bottle of water and made myself a few sandwiches in case I got hungry. Then off I went.

As I walked round the loch, I **kept a weather eye open** just in case I caught sight of the famous monster, although I **derided** myself for so doing. After a bit, I sat down to eat my sandwiches. The heat had made me feel weary and I must have **drifted off**. When I woke, I was amazed to see three humps moving in a line across the loch. I was even more amazed to see what looked like a long neck topped by a small head rising out of the loch.

I could not believe what I saw. Quickly, I pulled out my camera, but before I could take a photograph, the creature, if that was it, had gone. Did I really see it or had I been dreaming? Had the heat haze created a mirage? I don't really know, but to this day, as far as I am concerned, **the jury is still out** on whether the monster exists or not.

When I returned to the cottage, the others had arrived back, but I said nothing to them about my strange experience. I didn't want to be teased on the subject for the rest of my life.

buddy
This is an informal expression meaning friend. It can be replaced by the word **friend** or, sometimes, according to the context and more formally, **companion** or **associate**:

- *They were **buddies** at school, but they had lost touch with each other until the school reunion.*
- *They were **friends** at school, but they had lost touch with each other until the school reunion.*

deride
This is a word, used in formal contexts, which means to laugh at. It can be replaced by less formal expressions such as **laugh at, ridicule** or words with similar meanings:

- *Jack's friends **derided** his clumsy attempts to ask Beth out on a date.*
- *Jack's friends **mocked** his clumsy attempts to ask Beth out on a date.*

drift, drift off
This is used in informal contexts to mean to fall asleep for a short time in a chair, etc, without meaning to. To avoid the colloquialism you can use **fall asleep**:

- *The lecture was so boring that I **drifted off**.*
- *The lecture was so boring that I **fell asleep**.*

Language Help

The informal expression nod off has the same meaning.

eye, keep a weather eye open
This is an idiom meaning to keep a close watch:

- *If you're going to the market, **keep a weather eye open** for pickpockets.*
- *If you're going to the market, **keep a sharp lookout** for pickpockets.*

finger, have green fingers
This is an idiom which means to be good at growing plants:

- *Jill has an impressive range of house plants. She **has green fingers**.*
- *Jill has an impressive range of house plants. She **is marvellous at growing plants**.*

jury, the jury is still out
This expression is an idiom meaning that someone is, or people are, still uncertain about something and that no decision has been reached. You can replace it by using an expression which relates to uncertainty, such as **it is uncertain**:

- *The drug has been successful on mice, but **the jury is still out** as to whether it is safe to use on humans.*
- *The drug has been successful on mice, but **it is still not known** whether it is safe to use on humans.*

penultimate
This word, in formal contexts, refers to the one before the last. You can replace it with the less formal phrase **second last**:

- *This is the **penultimate** week of the school term.*
- *This is the **second last** week of the school term.*

slothfulness, slothfulness and indolence
The words **slothfulness** and **indolence** both refer to laziness and lack of activity. Therefore, one of them is redundant. You can omit either of them without altering the sense.

thing, do your own thing
This is a colloquial expression meaning to do what you want to do or what interests you, without bothering about what others are doing:

- *Mr Black would like all the family to go on holiday together, but the older children want to **do their own thing** during the holidays.*
- *Mr Black would like all the family to go on holiday together, but the older children want to **do as they please** during the holidays.*
- *There were a lot of group activities organized for children in the holiday hotel, but our sons preferred to **do their own thing**. They spent most of their time down at the harbour with the fishermen.*
- *There were a lot of group activities organized for children in the holiday hotel, but our sons preferred to **do something that interested them**. They spent most of their time down at the harbour with the fishermen.*

torpor
This is a formal word meaning lack of energy or lack of activity. You can replace it with one of several less formal words, such as **sleepiness** or **inactivity**:

- *We sat in the garden after lunch, sunk in a state of* ***torpor*** *caused by the heat and too much wine.*
- *We sat in the garden after lunch, sunk in a state of* ***laziness*** *caused by the heat and too much wine.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *I was determined to shake off my feelings of* ***slothfulness*** *and* ***indolence*** *and make the most of the holiday.*

_____

_____

2. *Paul and Mark, who both* ***had green fingers****, had gone off to look at some gardens.*

_____

_____

3. *As I walked round the loch, I* ***kept a weather eye open*** *just in case I caught sight of the famous monster.*

_____

_____

4. *The heat had made me feel weary and I must have* ***drifted off****.*

_____

5. *As far as I am concerned,* ***the jury is still out*** *on whether the monster exists or not.*

_____

_____

B Replace the expressions in bold in the following sentences with standard words or expressions.

1. *I tried to warn Frank that Sue wasn't trustworthy, but my warning* ***fell on deaf ears****.*

_____

_____

2. *I know who's got the job, but it's not going to be announced till this afternoon. Till then* ***my lips are sealed****!*

_____

_____

3. *We **searched high and low**, but we failed to find the missing documents.*

_____

_____

4. *Good news! Tom and Lucy have decided to **tie the knot**.*

_____

C Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *There seems to be no **fraternal** affection between Sam and John, although they both love their parents and sister.*

_____

_____

2. *His reasons for resigning seemed rather **abstruse**.*

_____

3. *According to the estate agent's brochure, it is a centrally-situated **commodious** flat.*

_____

_____

D Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *They used to be wealthy, but they now live in (**straitened / straightened**) circumstances.*
2. *The speaker seemed to suffer a (**momentary / momentous**) lapse of memory when giving a paper at the conference.*
3. *The new young member of the chess club is being hailed as a (**prodigy / protégé**).*

"-oes" or "-os"

Words ending in **o** cause major spelling problems as, although many do simply add **-s** to form the plural, such as **piano/pianos**, some add **-es**, such as **potato/potatoes**, and some can be spelt either way, such as **buffalo/buffalos/buffaloes**.

There is no easy way of deciding whether to add **e** or not. You simply have to learn the plurals of words ending in **o** or look them up in a dictionary.

Shortened forms, however, add **-s**, for example, **photo/photos**.

Exercise 2

Complete the following sentences, inserting the plural form of each word in brackets.

1. *I need a kilo of _____ for this recipe. (* ***tomato*** *)*
2. *There were beautiful _____ on the walls of all the rooms in the castle. (* ***fresco*** *)*
3. *_____ are quite common in this part of the world. (* ***Tornado*** *)*
4. *Two of the members of the choir sang _____ . (* ***solo*** *)*
5. *Both firms have new _____ and are launching new marketing campaigns. (* ***logo*** *)*
6. *I hope the village fete is a success this year. The last two have been _____ . (* ***fiasco*** *)*
7. *The country is short of supplies since several countries are operating trade _____ against it. (* ***embargo*** *)*
8. *I rented two _____ for the children to watch. (* ***video*** *)*
9. *The _____ were in the majority and the proposed bill was defeated. (* ***no*** *)*
10. *We had _____ for dessert. (* ***mango*** *)*

Unit 20

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Different points of view

My dad needs to **get a reality check.** The exams are still weeks away and he really believes that all the students in my class will be studying. They certainly will not! They'll all be out **living it up.** It's the weekend and that's what people do at the weekend, isn't it?

But not me! My dad has decided that I can only go out tonight, Saturday, if I study all the rest of the weekend. He's even helped me draw up a study timetable and today I'm meant to be **swotting up on** history. Dad just **doesn't have a clue**! If I revise history just now I'll have forgotten it all by the time the exams come. I have to study late into the night just before the exam to have any chance of doing well.

The problem is that Dad's **hung up on** doing well in exams and going to university. He's always **rabbiting on** about it. He says that he would have loved to have the opportunities that I have and that I should make the most of them.

I'm not even sure that I want to go to university. Mum's brother, my Uncle Sam, runs a garage and I often help there. Now he says I'm really useful to him and I'd make a good mechanic. Dad says I spend far too much time down at the garage and that he doesn't want me to be a car mechanic.

I'm really interested in car racing and what I'd really like to do is be a mechanic to one of the big car racing teams. I daren't mention it at home. Dad would **flip**!

I'll do my best to do well in my exams but I do want to have some fun as well. My dad never seems to have any fun. My mum does. She has a lot of friends and she does things with them. Dad works all the time. He's always in the office or having meetings with other **suits**. He should **get a life!**

The other thing is I need to listen to music when I'm studying but Dad needs absolute silence even to read. He **goes mental** if I turn my music up and he comes racing in to my room to turn it down.

Ah well, I'd better get back to the history books.

Vocabulary Study

clue, not have a clue

This is an informal expression meaning not to understand anything about something or not to know anything about something:

- *Jill has offered to cook the meal tonight, but she* ***doesn't have a clue*** *about cooking.*
- *Jill has offered to cook the meal tonight, but she* ***knows nothing whatsoever*** *about cooking.*

flip

This word, in the context of the passage, means to get very angry:

- *Look at the time! My mum will* ***flip*** *if I'm late home again!*
- *Look at the time! My mum will* ***be furious*** *if I'm late home again!*

hung, hung up on

This expression, which is used in informal contexts, means to be obsessed about something. You can replace the colloquialism with an expression from standard language such as **obsessed with** or **preoccupied with**:

- *I'm surprised that Sara has started going out with Joe. She's* ***hung up on*** *money and Joe is quite poor.*
- *I'm surprised that Sara has started going out with Joe. She* ***has an obsession with*** *money and Joe is quite poor.*

life, get a life!

This is an expression, used in informal contexts, meaning that someone should become less boring and decide to have a more interesting life. It is often used as an exclamation and is rather rude. It can be replaced by a more formal expression, but this is unlikely to be so concise or so punchy:

- *Stop spending all your time criticizing the local young people and* ***get a life!***
- *Stop spending all your time criticizing the local young people and* ***do something interesting with your life!***
- *I can't believe you spent your week's holiday cleaning the house!* ***Get a life!***
- *I can't believe you spent your week's holiday cleaning the house!* ***Don't be so boring!***

live, live it up

This is an expression, used in informal contexts, which means to enjoy yourself. You can avoid the colloquialism by using one of several standard expressions referring to enjoying yourself:

- *Everyone else is out* ***living it up*** *and I have to look after my sister's children.*
- *Everyone else is out* ***having a good time*** *and I have to look after my sister's children.*

mental, go mental

The expression means, in the context of the passage, to get very angry. The colloquialism can be replaced by one of several expressions from standard language relating to getting angry:

- *The next-door neighbour* ***went mental*** *when my little brother kicked his football through her greenhouse.*
- *The next-door neighbour* ***went into a rage*** *when my little brother kicked his football through her greenhouse.*

rabbit, rabbit on

This expression, which is used in informal contexts, means to talk continuously about something. The colloquialism can be avoided by using an expression from standard language relating to talking a great deal about something:

- *Pam's got a new boyfriend and she's always* ***rabbiting on*** *about how wonderful he is.*
- *Pam's got a new boyfriend and she* ***never stops talking*** *about how wonderful he is.*

reality, get a reality check

This is a trendy cliché which means to face the situation as it really is. The cliché can be replaced with the expressions **be realistic** or a similar expression:

- *Jill thinks that she will get a part in the play. She needs to* ***get a reality check.*** *She's hopeless at acting.*
- *Jill thinks that she will get a part in the play. She needs to* ***be realistic.*** *She's hopeless at acting.*

suit

This word means, in the context of the passage, someone who wears a suit to work. It is used in a

derogatory way. It can be replaced by the word **businessman**, or a similar word:

- *If I'd been a **suit**, I'm sure the lawyer would have treated me with more respect, but I'm an unemployed builder.*
- *If I'd been a **professional person**, I'm sure the lawyer would have treated me with more respect, but I'm an unemployed builder.*

swot, swot up on

This is an expression, used in informal contexts, meaning to study hard, especially in preparation for an exam, etc. The colloquialism can be replaced by the word **study** or a word similar in meaning:

- *I'm **swotting up on** the Highway Code tonight because my driving exam's tomorrow.*
- *I'm **reading up on** the Highway Code tonight because my driving exam's tomorrow.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *They certainly will not! They'll all be out **living it up**.*

_____

2. *Dad just **doesn't have a clue**!*

_____

3. *Dad works all the time. He's always in the office or having meetings with other **suits**.*

_____

_____

4. *He should **get a life!***

_____

5. *He **goes mental** if I turn my music up.*

_____

B Rewrite the following sentences, replacing the colloquial or slang words or expressions with standard words or expressions.

1. *I don't want a computer with a lot of complicated extras. I want a **bog standard** one.*

_____

_____

2. *Jim's first wife was a highly intelligent woman, but his second wife is a **bimbo**.*

_____

_____

3. *The manager was in the habit of* ***dissing*** *the women in the company and was accused of sexism.*

_____

_____

4. *Bob didn't realize that Mike and Jenny* ***were an item*** *and asked Jenny to go out with him.*

_____

_____

C Replace the expressions in bold in the following sentences with standard words or expressions.

1. *We only go out to eat* ***once in a blue moon.***

_____

2. *I think we should discuss the matter in my office and not in a restaurant.* ***Walls have ears!***

_____

_____

3. *Mary said that she* ***had slaved over a hot stove*** *all day to produce a delicious dinner, but we think that she bought the food ready-cooked from the food hall of a local store.*

_____

_____

_____

D Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *Joe had a broken arm and was (* ***racked / wrecked*** *) with pain, but he managed to go down the mountain to get help for his friend.*
2. *There were rumours of a takeover bid and (* ***moral / morale*** *) was very low in the firm.*
3. *The artist sat down in front of his easel and started to mix colours on his (* ***palette / pallet*** *).*

More about Language

Idioms

An **idiom** is an expression whose meaning cannot easily be understood from the meanings of the individual words which it contains. Thus, you can know the meaning of all the words in the expression **pull the wool over someone's eyes** and know what the expression would mean if it were used literally, but you cannot deduce from this its metaphorical meaning, which is to deceive someone. Similarly, you can easily work out what the expression **put your heads together** means literally, but not realize that its metaphorical meaning is to discuss something.

Idioms play an important part in enriching the English language and there are a great many of them. It is important that students become familiar with them.

Exercise 2

Insert the words missing from the idioms.

1. *Tom is not always truthful. You should* ***take*** *what he says* ***with a*** _____ ***of salt.***
2. *Jane must have decided to* _____ ***a veil over*** *the incident. She has never mentioned it again.*
3. *John has never been accused of doing anything completely illegal, but he has been known to* _____ ***close to the wind.***
4. *The principal has found out that Jill's been playing truant; now she is going to have to* ***face the*** _____ .
5. *I need some exercise. I think I'll* _____ ***my legs*** *before lunch.*
6. *I thought it would take me a long time to find a copy of the book, but I* _____ ***it lucky*** *in the first shop I went into.*
7. *We're going to celebrate the end of the exams by* ***painting the*** _____ ***red.***
8. *Some people are doing more of the work than others and this is not fair. You all need to start to* ***pull your*** _____ .
9. *Mary's in a very bad mood. Harry must have said something to* ***rub her up the*** _____ ***way.***
10. *Pat has to* ***burn the*** _____ ***oil.*** *She must hand in her essay tomorrow.*

Unit 21

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

A book review

A Happy Place is the first novel of Amy Langton. **It has to be said that** this is rather obvious, at least in some parts of the book. Undoubtedly, she has a gift for description but her descriptive passages are often **prolix** and her use of language is frequently rather forced. She seems to be trying too hard. I wonder if she works with a thesaurus constantly at her elbow. If so, she should use it more sparingly.

Then there is the fact that the plot is so **convoluted** that it is almost impossible to follow. I kept having to turn back several pages because I had got completely lost. At times I was tempted to **throw in the towel**, but I persisted to the end and I am glad that I did. The complications of the plot, together with the fact that the list of characters is incredibly long, makes the book a very slow read.

Fortunately, there is a cast list and a family tree at the front of the book. Readers will find themselves having to consult them frequently. This is not a book to whisk through rapidly. Publishers indicate on the cover of the book that this is the first volume of a trilogy, a brave gesture on the part of a first novelist. If we **tough it out** to the end of the first volume, our hard work on the plot and characters will be rewarded when we come to the next ones. The characters will, by then, seem like old friends, except for those **ill-starred** ones who die in the first volume.

Langton may lack some of the technical **know-how** of more experienced novelists but her work **has much to commend it**. I have already said that she has a talent for description. Despite the aforementioned flaws, her descriptive passages are often fresh and innovative. She has even more of a talent for character **depiction**. The various members of the Dawson family and their friends and enemies who inhabit the happy place of the title really come to life under her pen. They are cleverly drawn from real life and you will recognize some of them from your own circle of friends.

It is the plot, however convoluted, that is the high point of the book. Indeed I was fascinated by some of the **singular** story-lines. I won't tell you too much about them because I don't want to spoil the story for you by revealing too much. But you just have to read this book.

commend, have much to commend it

If you say that something **has much to commend it**, you mean that it has many good points. It is a cliché and you can replace it with one of several expressions, such as **good point**, **advantage** and **benefit**:

- *The house is slightly smaller than we would like, but it **has much to commend it** and we are seriously considering buying it.*
- *The house is slightly smaller than we would like, but it **has many good points** and we are seriously considering buying it.*

convoluted

This is a word, used in formal contexts, which means complicated, difficult to understand. It can easily be replaced by the use of a less formal word, such as **complicated**, **complex** or **involved**:

- *We stopped to ask a man the way to Bluebell Cottage, but the directions he gave us were so **convoluted** that we couldn't follow them and we got lost.*
- *We stopped to ask a man the way to Bluebell Cottage, but the directions he gave us were so **involved** that we couldn't follow them and we got lost.*

depiction

This word means, in the sense of the passage, description. It can be replaced by a less formal expression such as **description** or **portrayal**:

- *The author's **depiction** of Britain between the wars is historically quite accurate.*
- *The author's **portrayal** of Britain between the wars is historically quite accurate.*

ill-starred

This expression, which is quite formal, has become a cliché. When used of a person, it means unlucky and so, perhaps, likely to fail or die. The cliché can be replaced with **unlucky** or **unfortunate**:

- *The **ill-starred** prince was badly wounded in the first battle of the war and killed in the last battle.*
- *The **unfortunate** prince was badly wounded in the first battle of the war and killed in the last battle.*

know-how

This word, used in informal contexts, refers to the knowledge, such as technical knowledge, necessary to do something competently. The colloquialism can be replaced by **skill** or **expertise**:

- *We're looking for someone with quite a lot of computer **know-how** for the job.*
- *We're looking for someone with quite a lot of computer **expertise** for the job.*

prolix

This is a word, used in the formal context of a piece of writing or speech, that means too long or using too many words. You can easily substitute one of several simpler expressions for it, such as **lengthy**, **over-long**, **long-winded**, and **wordy**:

- *The content of the student's essays is usually of a high standard, but they are so **prolix** that it is difficult to get to the point.*
- *The content of the student's essays is usually of a high standard, but they are so **wordy** that it is difficult to get to the point.*

said, it has to be said that

This is a cliché which need not indicate, as you might think, that something is so important that it absolutely has to be stated. It is often used really meaninglessly, because the speaker or writer thinks it sounds good. It can be omitted without altering the sense.

singular

This is a word, used in formal or literary contexts, which means unusual. It can be replaced by one of several less formal words, such as **unusual**, **uncommon** or **strange**:

- *My friend had a **singular** way of expressing himself and I knew immediately that he had composed the unsigned letter.*
- *My friend had an **odd** way of expressing himself and I knew immediately that he had composed the unsigned letter.*

tough, tough it out

This is an expression, used in informal contexts, which means to keep going in a difficult situation. The colloquialism can be replaced by words such as **persevere** and **persist**:

- *The winter is very harsh in this area, but we* ***tough it out*** *because the summers are so wonderful.*
- *The winter is very harsh in this area, but we* ***keep going*** *because the summers are so wonderful.*

towel, throw in the towel

This is an idiom which means to give up, usually because you know that you cannot succeed:

- *A band of protesters fought long and hard to stop the building of the new road, but eventually they decided to* ***throw in the towel*** *since they had very little local support.*
- *A band of protesters fought long and hard to stop the building of the new road, but eventually they decided to* ***admit defeat*** *since they had very little local support.*

Language Help

An alternative form of the idiom is **throw in the sponge**.

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *Then there is the fact that the plot is so* ***convoluted*** *that it is almost impossible to follow.*

_____

_____

2. *At times I was tempted to* ***throw in the towel.***

_____

3. *If we* ***tough it out*** *to the end of the first volume, our hard work on the plot and characters will be rewarded.*

_____

_____

4. *Langton may lack some of the technical* ***know-how*** *of more experienced novelists.*

_____

_____

5. *She has even more of a talent for character* ***depiction.***

_____

B Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *During the war, many towns were (* ***raised / razed*** *) to the ground.*
2. *We need to find a new (* ***angle / angel*** *) for the story.*
3. *She placed a (* ***wreath / wreathe*** *) of flowers on the grave.*

4. *She gave a (**courtsey / curtsy**) to the queen.*

5. *The fax machine is in (**usage / use**) at the moment.*

C Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *The verb "enquire" **is synonymous with** the verb "ask".*

_____

2. *The principal **enjoined** the students to have nothing to do with any form of drugs.*

_____

_____

3. *The post **encompasses** a wide range of duties and calls for a wide range of qualifications.*

_____

_____

D Replace the expressions in bold in the following sentences with standard words or expressions.

1. *I wouldn't enter the competition if I didn't think I **had a fighting chance**.*

_____

_____

2. *I don't think this is the kind of dish that would appeal to **the man in the street**.*

_____

_____

3. *Tom didn't like sailing at all and was glad to be back on **terra firma** again.*

_____

_____

Antonyms

An **antonym** is a word that is opposite in meaning, or in some of its meanings, to another word:

Word	Antonym
stupid	clever
slow	fast
brave	cowardly
ill	well
large	small

It is possible for one word to have more than one antonym. Thus, **healthy**, as well as **well**, is an antonym of **ill**; **little**, as well as **small**, is an antonym of **large**; **quick** and **rapid**, as well as **fast**, are antonyms of **slow**.

Exercise 2

Fill in each blank with an antonym of the word in brackets.

1. *It took Sam quite a few weeks to _____ his house. (**buy**)*
2. *It was a _____ thing to do. (**cowardly**)*
3. *_____ people want to live in that area. (**Many**)*
4. *She made sandwiches with _____ slices of bread. (**thick**)*
5. *It's a _____ road. (**winding**)*
6. *The skin on her hands is very _____. (**smooth**)*
7. *It was a _____ thing to do. (**foolish**)*
8. *Jill sent Mary a _____ letter. (**tactless**)*
9. *Jack felt _____ of what he had done. (**ashamed**)*
10. *I thought that the picture was _____. (**hideous**)*

Unit 22

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Flat rows

"I'm looking for somewhere to live," said Jane to Anne. "Do you know anyone who's looking for a flatmate?"

"What!" said Anne. "You've been in that flat since you started at university. What's happened?"

"It's our new flatmate, Meg," said Jane. "She moved in a couple of weeks ago at the beginning of term and she's **doing my head in** already. I can't stand her. From the minute she walked in the door she's set out to **rule the roost**. She makes lists of things we need to buy and draws up rosters of all the jobs that need doing around the flat. We were all **laid back** about all that before she came and everything worked perfectly all right. Now living there is horrible. She's become **a thorn in** our **flesh**."

"Why don't you tell her how you feel?" asked Anne.

"I have," said Jane, "but she just says that we need to be more organized, that we were very **sloppy** before."

"Why don't you **show her the door**?" asked Anne. "You shouldn't have to put up with that in your own home. It's a lovely flat and you'll easily find someone to replace her."

"I would **turf** her **out** tomorrow if I could," replied Jane, "but don't forget that I'm not the leaseholder. The flat is in Pam's name and she's the only one that can ask Meg to go."

"So what's Pam got to say about the situation?" asked Anne. "Surely she realizes that all is not well in the flat. She must hate having to put up with such a bad atmosphere."

"Pam really **doesn't give a damn** what happens in the flat as long as the rent is paid on time," replied Jane. "She doesn't want anything to **rock the boat** until she graduates. She's a year ahead of us at university and she's sitting her finals

at the end of this term. She **has tunnel vision** about getting a first. Her parents live quite nearby and she's taken to staying at their house to get some peace to study away from all the arguing. Meanwhile we're all miserable **as anything**."

"If the others feel the way you do, you should all go to Pam and tell her that you'll all leave if she doesn't get rid of this girl."

"We might just do that," said Jane.

Vocabulary Study

anything, as anything

This expression, which is used in informal contexts, means to a great degree. The colloquialism can be replaced by an expression such as **very** or **extremely**:

- *You'll have to run as fast **as anything** if you're going to catch the bus.*
- *You'll have to run **very** fast if you're going to catch the bus.*

boat, rock the boat

This is an idiom meaning to cause trouble in a situation which was working all right. You can replace it with an expression such as **cause problems, cause difficulties** or **cause trouble**:

- *The committee had discussed the matter and reached a unanimous decision, but Beth arrived late and **rocked the boat** with some of her suggestions.*
- *The committee had discussed the matter and reached a unanimous decision, but Beth arrived late and **caused difficulties** with some of her suggestions.*

damn, not to give a damn

If you say that you **don't give a damn**, it means that you don't care at all. It is used in informal contexts and the colloquialism can be replaced by an expression from standard language, such as **not to care at all** or **not be at all concerned**:

- *Jack **doesn't give a damn** what happens to the rest of the workers as long as his job is safe.*
- *Jack **doesn't worry at all** what happens to the rest of the workers as long as his job is safe.*

door, show someone the door

The expression **show someone the door** is an idiom which means to tell someone to go. It can be replaced by using an expression such as **order someone to leave**:

- *If the salesman was trying to bully you into buying one of his products, you should have **shown him the door**.*
- *If the salesman was trying to bully you into buying one of his products, you should have **told him to get out**.*

head, do someone's head in

If someone or something **does your head in**, it means that they make you angry, upset or confused. It is used in an informal context and the colloquialism can be replaced by an expression such as **irritate someone** or **annoy someone**.

- *I wish my upstairs neighbour wouldn't play such loud music. It's really **doing my head in**.*
- *I wish my upstairs neighbour wouldn't play such loud music. It's really **irritating me**.*

laid back

This expression, which is used in informal contexts, means relaxed. The colloquialism can be replaced by **relaxed** or a synonym for it, such as **calm** or **composed**:

- *Jim remains **laid back** in any crisis, but his wife gets agitated about the smallest problem.*
- *Jim remains **calm** in any crisis, but his wife gets agitated about the smallest problem.*

roost, rule the roost

If someone **rules the roost**, he or she is in control of something. It can be replaced by one of several expressions such as **be in control of, control, be in charge of, rule** or **dominate**:

- *Frank's grandmother is a very strong woman and she **rules the roost** in the family home.*

- *Frank's grandmother is a very strong woman and she **dominates** the family home.*

sloppy

This word is used in informal contexts, and means, in the context of the passage, careless. The colloquialism can be replaced with an expression such as **careless, untidy** or **disorganized**:

- *Anne is a clever student, but she always hands in **sloppy** written work. She should take more care.*
- *Anne is a clever student, but she always hands in **messy** written work. She should take more care.*

thorn, a thorn in your flesh

This is an idiom which is used to refer to someone or something that constantly irritates you. It can be replaced by the word **nuisance, pest** or an expression with a similar meaning:

- *Pete's teenage sister, Amy, lives with him and Lucy, and Amy is a real **thorn in** Lucy's **flesh**.*
- *Pete's teenage sister, Amy, lives with him and Lucy, and Amy is a real **source of annoyance** to Lucy.*

tunnel, have tunnel vision

This is a cliché which means to **concentrate on one thing only**. It can be replaced by this expression or one with a similar meaning, such as **focus all your attention on** or **be totally absorbed by**:

- *Sara **has tunnel vision** about her work. She's not interested in any hobbies or just having fun.*
- *Sara **is completely absorbed by** her work. She's not interested in any hobbies or just having fun.*

Language Help

Tunnel vision is a medical condition in which you can only see easily things that are straight ahead of you.

turf someone out

This is an expression, used in informal contexts, which means to throw someone out. The colloquialism can be replaced by an expression such as **throw out** or **put out**:

- *The landlord has no right to **turf** you **out** without reason. You should talk to a lawyer.*
- *The landlord has no right to **evict** you without reason. You should talk to a lawyer.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *From the minute she walked in the door she's set out to **rule the roost**.*

_____

2. *She's become **a thorn in** our **flesh**.*

_____

3. *"Why don't you **show her the door**?" asked Anne.*

_____

4. *Pam really **doesn't give a damn** what happens in the flat as long as the rent is paid on time.*

_____

_____

5. *She doesn't want anything to **rock the boat** until she graduates.*

_____

B Rewrite the following sentences, replacing the colloquial or slang words or expressions with standard words or expressions.

1. *We soon* ***suzzed out*** *what Jack's motive was.*

_____

2. *I don't know what to give Jane's children for lunch. They're so* ***picky.***

_____

3. *We hope that Jim will get a place at the local university, but it's still a bit* ***iffy.*** *It depends on his final exam results.*

_____

_____

4. *There are a lot of things wrong with our new house. It must have been built by a* ***cowboy.***

_____

_____

5. *Frank took* ***a sickie*** *because he wanted to go to the football match.*

_____

C Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *The auditors have to be certain of the* ***probity*** *of the company directors.*

_____

_____

2. *The* ***effluent*** *from the chemical factory is bound to harm the environment.*

_____

_____

3. *She had the* ***effrontery*** *to say that Jane's house was dirty.*

_____

D Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *The dictator has plans to (* ***annex / annexe*** *) a neighbouring country.*
2. *The cow is due to (* ***calf / calve*** *) very soon.*

More about Language

"eco-"

The prefix **eco-** means connected with the environment, or with ecology, as in **eco-friendly**, not causing any damage or danger to the environment. It is derived from **ecology**, which refers to the relationships between living organisms, such as plants and animals, and their environment:

> *The gradual rise in temperature has had an effect on the **ecology** of the area.*

It is also the scientific study of these relationships:

> *Tom is studying plant **ecology** in the tropics.*

Because of the modern interest in, and concern for, the environment, the prefix **eco-** has given rise to several new words.

Exercise 2

A Replace each phrase with a single word beginning with the prefix *eco-*.

1. *not presenting a threat to the environment* _____
2. *relating to the relationships between living organisms and their natural habitat*

   _____
3. *concerned with the protection and preservation of the natural environment*

   _____
4. *a person who studies the relationships of living organisms and their natural environment*

   _____
5. *a biological community consisting of interacting organisms and their physical environment*

   _____

B What do the following *eco-* words mean?

1. *ecotourism:* _____

_____

2. *ecoterrorism:* _____

_____

3. *ecowarrior:* _____

_____

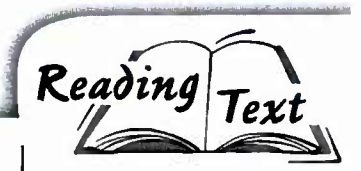
4. *ecotoxicology:* _____

_____

5. *ecolabelling:* _____

_____

Unit 23



Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

Farewell to John

Perhaps some of you were rather nervous when you heard that I had called a meeting of all the staff. The last few occasions on which I have done that have been sad occasions for some of the people present, because the meetings were called to announce that we were about to **downsize** the company.

This, however, is a **happy** and **joyous** occasion. John Morris, our head storeman, has reached the **ripe old age** of 65 and is retiring from the company at the official age of retirement. Apparently, he is not retiring from work altogether, but he is to take a part-time job in his daughter's shop. Sadly, we won't be seeing him around very much. His daughter lives in Cornwall and so John is off to **pastures new.**

Most young people now at the start of their careers realize that they will not have a job for life. Things were different when John started out, and he has spent his whole working life in Simpson & Mason.

John began his career when Bert Johnson was head storeman. I understand that he was rather a **strict martinet** in his running of the storeroom. I have heard stories of him having new young workers in tears. However, I have also heard, mainly from John, that he was very fair and encouraging to those who were **hard-working** and **diligent**.

John says that Bert had no sympathy for **slackers**. However, he apparently was also a man of great compassion when any of his staff had genuine problems.

The position of storeman may not sound very important, but it is a **pivotal** one in the company because he is in charge of stock control. If we don't have the stock on time, then customers are disappointed and we lose sales. The **interface** between the storeroom and the sales office is a crucial one.

We hope that things will continue to run as smoothly after John hands over to Frank Brown, but Frank will be the first to appreciate that it will be a difficult task. We wish Frank every success in the job.

More importantly, we wish John all the best in his new life and thank him for his hard work and dedication to the firm. John, we **bid** you **adieu**. We hope you have a long and happy retirement.

Vocabulary Study

adieu, bid someone adieu

This expression, used in formal or literary contexts, is used when you are parting from someone. You can replace it with the less formal **say goodbye**:

- *We enjoyed meeting you, but our holiday has come to an end and we must **bid** you **adieu**.*
- *We enjoyed meeting you, but our holiday has come to an end and we must **say goodbye** to you.*

age, a or the ripe old age

This is a cliché which simply means an age which is considered to be quite old. Although supposedly used in a complimentary way to the person referred to, it usually sounds patronizing and is best avoided. The best way of doing this is to omit the "ripe old" part of the expression:

- *We wish happy birthday to Mrs Wilson, who has reached **the ripe old age** of 85.*
- *We wish happy birthday to Mrs Wilson, who has reached **the age** of 85.*

downsize

This word, which has become much overused, especially in an employment or business context, means to reduce. It can be avoided by the use of an expression such as **reduce** (in size), **decrease** (in size), **make smaller** or **cut**:

- *During the recession we had to **downsize** the office workforce, but now that things have improved financially, we are thinking of taking on more staff.*
- *During the recession we had to **reduce** the office workforce, but now that things have improved financially, we are thinking of taking on more staff.*

happy, happy and joyous

The word **joyous** means joyful and so carries the same meaning as the word **happy**. Therefore, one of the words is redundant. You can omit either of them without altering the sense.

hard-working and diligent

The word **diligent** means hard-working and so either **hard-working** or **diligent** is redundant. You can omit either word without altering the sense.

interface

This word, which is much overused, means, in the context of the passage, a point of connection between things. It is often used by people who think it sounds impressive, but it can sound pompous. It can be avoided by using a simpler word, such as **link** or **connection**:

- *We need to establish a regular, active **interface** between management and workers.*
- *We need to establish a regular, active **link** between management and workers.*

Language Help

The expression has its origins in computing where it can mean a connection between two electronic devices such as a computer and a printer.

martinet, a strict martinet

A **martinet** is a very strict person who insists that people obey rules and laws. Therefore, the word **strict** is redundant in this context. You can omit it without altering the sense.

pasture, pastures new

This is an expression meaning a change of place or surroundings:

- *We're all surprised that Pam and Joe have gone off to **pastures new**. We thought they were very happy living here.*
- *We're all surprised that Pam and Joe have gone **somewhere new**. We thought they were very happy living here.*

Language Help

This is a shortened form of **fresh fields and pastures new**, which has the same meaning. This is a misquotation from the poem "*Lycidas*", by the English poet John Milton, the original quotation being **fresh woods and pastures new**.

pivotal

This a much overused expression meaning important. It can be avoided by using a simpler word, such as **important** or **significant**:

- *He played a **pivotal** part in the trade negotiations with the United States.*
- *He played a **vital** part in the trade negotiations with the United States.*

slacker

This is a word, used in informal contexts, which means a lazy person. The colloquialism can be replaced by **lazy person** or a synonym for this, such as **idle person** or **idler**. Alternatively, you can reorganize the sentence slightly and just use an adjective, such as **lazy** or **idle**:

- *Fred says that he doesn't know why he was sacked, but we all know that he was a **slacker** who deserved to be sacked.*
- *Fred says that he doesn't know why he was sacked, but we all know that he was **indolent** and he deserved to be sacked.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *This, however, is a **happy** and **joyous** occasion.*

_____

2. *His daughter lives in Cornwall and so John is off to **pastures new**.*

_____

3. *I understand that he was rather **a strict martinet** in his running of the storeroom.*

_____

_____

4. *He was very fair and encouraging to those who were **hard-working** and **diligent**.*

_____

5. *The position of storeman may not sound very important, but it is a **pivotal** one in the company.*

_____

_____

B Rewrite the following sentences, omitting any redundant words or expressions.

1. *It was definitely a decidedly rude remark to make.*

_____

2. *An early picture by the artist is proving elusive and difficult to find.*

_____

3. *Meg suffers from claustrophobia and cannot bear to be within a confined space.*

_____

C Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *James is a tenor but Peter sings (**base / bass**).*
2. *These plants won't grow here. The (**climatic / climactic**) conditions are quite unsuitable.*
3. *The patient is very ill and must be kept under (**observance / observation**).*
4. *The tyrant claimed to care a great deal about his religion and people of other faiths were (**persecuted / prosecuted**) under his regime.*
5. *I was surprised that my aunt's reaction to the old photographs was so (**emotional / emotive**). I had never seen her weep before.*

D Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. *The **orthography** of the language is difficult to master.*

_____

2. *My uncle had a life-long interest in **numismatics**.*

_____

"their", "there" and "they're"

The words **their** and **there** are liable to be confused because they sound similar. It is important to learn the difference between them.

The word **there** means "in, to or at that place":

> *I was hoping to visit Joe in London, but he is not **there** just now.*
> *Put the box of books over **there**, please.*

There is also used in sentences such as:

> ***There** is a bus stop just along here.*
> ***There** were ten people present.*
> ***There** was no reason for you to go.*

The word **their** is the possessive of "they" and means "of them", "belonging to them":

> *These students have all forgotten **their** books.*
> *They apologized for **their** rude behaviour.*

Sometimes, the word **they're** is confused with **their** and **there**. **They're** is a shortened form of "they are":

> ***They're** not very happy about having to move to a new school.*
> *I've just seen Jack and Anne and they said that **they're** going on holiday.*

Exercise 2

Insert either *their*, *there* or *they're*, whichever is correct, in each sentence.

1. *Unfortunately, I can't be _____ tomorrow as I have to go to work.*
2. *The students have gone and _____ not coming back.*
3. *_____ has been no change in the condition of the patient.*
4. *Sam and Lucy live in the city. They moved _____ last year.*
5. *Where is _____ new house? I haven't been _____.*
6. *_____ not crying. _____ laughing.*
7. *We knew that _____ was little hope of success.*
8. *The children know that _____ happiness matters a great deal to us.*

Unit 24

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

A folk hero

The death of Jimmy March has occurred. Jimmy was 86 and had lived in the Southwich area all his life. He was a familiar figure to many of us and he will be much missed. Fortunately, he **met his end** at home, surrounded by members of his family.

Although he was a most **self-deprecating** person, he was, undoubtedly, one of the leaders of the Celtic folk scene. Even though he has not played professionally for some time, his influence on other folk performers is such that his name is still very well known. To many of them he is an **icon** and a **hero**.

Many folk lovers may not have had the privilege of hearing Jimmy March play in person, but, thanks to technology, they can listen to his music on cassettes or CDs. Jimmy, however, was not a fan of technology. Indeed, he had a great dislike for **state-of-the-art** recording equipment. He said that all he needed to make music was his voice and a guitar. It is reputed that he always seemed rather pleased when some of the complicated machinery began to **malfunction**.

At the peak of his career he was held to be **second to none** as a performer of Celtic music, but he was also a noted composer. He took many traditional poems and set them to music. He also took some traditional songs and gave them new settings. Indeed, he reshaped Celtic music and did much to make it popular.

Jimmy lived to a relatively old age, but he **had a nephrectomy** a few years ago and had one of his kidneys removed. He never seemed to recover properly from the operation and it was a long time before he was well enough to perform publicly.

In many cases, the lifestyles of folk musicians had a **deleterious** effect on their health. Many of them travelled a lot, visiting the various clubs, and this **took its toll** on their health. Many of them **had a drink problem** and often smoked as well.

Jimmy did not smoke or drink, but he did spend much of his early life playing in smoke-filled clubs and bars. He suffered for much of his life from breathing problems and, eventually, from lung cancer. Doctors now think that his health problems were a result of passive smoking.

As a tribute to Jimmy, his friends and family plan to bring attention to the reality and danger of this condition.

deleterious

This word, used in formal contexts, means bad or harmful:

- *The student's frequent absences from school inevitably have had a **deleterious** effect on his education.*
- *The student's frequent absences from school inevitably have had a **damaging** effect on his education.*

drink, have a drink problem

The expression to **have a drink problem** is a euphemism for to **be an alcoholic**:

- *We knew that Sam often drank a lot, but we didn't realize that he **had a drink problem**.*
- *We knew that Sam often drank a lot, but we didn't realize that he was **an alcohol addict**.*

end, meet your end

This is a euphemism for to **die** and can be replaced by the simpler expression. Where relevant, it can be replaced by **be killed**:

- *He **met his end** on the mountains which he loved so much.*
- *He **died** on the mountains which he loved so much.*

icon and hero

The word **icon** refers to a famous person whom many people admire, especially when they are seen as representing a particular way of life or set of beliefs. However, it has recently lost some of the force of its meaning and has become a cliché meaning little more than a famous, popular person. The word **hero** originally referred to someone who was admired for their bravery and courage, but now it can also refer to someone who is admired for other qualities and skills, such as pop-singing. Thus, in the context of the passage, **icon** and **hero** mean much the same. One of them is redundant and either can be omitted without altering the sense.

malfunction

This is a word, used in formal or technical contexts, which means fail to work. It is often used unnecessarily by people who think it sounds impressive when a simpler expression would do:

- *The car's engine **is malfunctioning** and it sometimes fails to start.*
- *The car's engine **isn't working properly** and it sometimes fails to start.*

nephrectomy, have a nephrectomy

This word, used in technical or formal contexts, means the surgical removal of a kidney. To also say **have one of his kidneys removed** in the same sentence is an example of redundancy. You can omit either of the expressions without altering the sense. Because **nephrectomy** is such a technical word and the passage is not a technical text, it is better to omit **nephrectomy**.

second, second to none

This expression is a cliché which means that someone or something is the best. It is often used in an exaggerated way to indicate how good someone or something is. You can replace it with an expression referring to this meaning:

- *Lucy is **second to none** at cake-making.*
- *Lucy is **excellent** at cake-making.*
- *Lucy is **an excellent cake-maker**.*

self-deprecating

This word, used in formal contexts, means making your abilities or achievements seem less great or less important than other people's. You can also indicate this habit of not boasting about your achievements by replacing the formal word with **modest** or, sometimes, **humble**:

- *John is extremely good at athletics as well as academic work, but he is a most **self-deprecating** student.*
- *John is extremely good at athletics as well as academic work, but he is a most **modest** student.*

state-of-the-art

This expression means using the most advanced or modern methods. It is so over-used that it has become a cliché. You can replace

the cliché with an expression such as **modern, advanced** or **up-to-date**:

- *We can't really afford the kind of **state-of-the-art** equipment that our competitors have invested in.*
- *We can't really afford the kind of **up-to-date** equipment that our competitors have invested in.*

toll, take its toll

This is a cliché which indicates that something is having a bad or harmful effect on someone or something:

- *The two MPs had been friends for years, but gradually political differences **took its toll** on their friendship.*
- *The two MPs had been friends for years, but gradually political differences **had a damaging effect** on their friendship.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *Fortunately, he **met his end** at home, surrounded by members of his family.*

_____

2. *To many of them he is an **icon** and a **hero**.*

_____

3. *Indeed, he had a great dislike for **state-of-the-art** recording equipment.*

_____

4. *At the peak of his career he was held to be **second to none** as a performer of Celtic music.*

_____

_____

5. *Many of them **had a drink problem** and often smoked as well.*

_____

B Replace the expressions in bold in the following sentences with simpler words or expressions.

1. *My exams start tomorrow. I'd better go to bed early so that I can be **bright-eyed and bushy-tailed** in the morning.*

_____

_____

2. *The electrician has arrived with his **bag of tricks** to fix the central heating system.*

_____

_____

3. *Soldiers clambered on to the train* ***cheek by jowl*** *with townspeople trying to escape from the area.*

4. *I don't know* ***the whys and wherefores*** *of the situation. I just know that it has been announced that the marketing and design departments are to be merged.*

5. *Jane was not convinced that her husband was doing the right thing in starting his own business, but she supported him* ***through thick and thin.***

6. *It was already* ***the wee small hours*** *when Lucy came home from the dance and her parents were furious.*

C Rewrite the following sentences, replacing each word or expression in bold with a simpler word or expression.

1. ***The cognoscenti*** *might not have liked the play, but, judging from box-office sales, ordinary play-goers must have liked it very much.*

2. *After a considerable amount of* ***cogitation*** *we reluctantly decided to sell the house.*

D Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *All the travellers arrived at the station on time but there was an (* ***unconscionable / unconscious*** *) delay before the train pulled into the station.*

2. *Meg had decided not to go to the ball, but as the date of it approached she began to (* ***waiver / waver*** *).*

Trade names

Trade names are names given to articles by their manufacturers. All nouns which are trade names should be spelt with an initial capital letter. Manufacturers are very protective of their trade names, which have legal status, and they can get extremely annoyed when their trade names, are wrongly spelt with an initial lower-case letter. If you are unsure about whether a particular word is a trade name or not, you should look it up in a dictionary.

Exercise 2

Rewrite the following sentences, putting an initial capital letter in any word which is a trade name.

1. *The book was wrapped in cellophane.* _____
2. *Can you lend me a biro?* _____
3. *He beat me at chess, but I beat him at scrabble.*

   _____
4. *The dancer wore a leotard.* _____
5. *The children were playing dominoes.* _____
6. *The terrain was very rough and we had to hire a jeep.*

   _____
7. *It was very cold, but she was wearing just a T-shirt and jeans.*

   _____
8. *The boy built a model spaceship out of lego.*

   _____
9. *They located the ship by means of radar.*

   _____
10. *I need some sellotape to wrap these presents.*

    _____

Unit 25

Reading Text

Read this passage, paying particular attention to the words and expressions in bold. Look up their meanings and usage in the next section, Vocabulary Study.

An expensive design

The board of Advanced Advertising had met to discuss the plans for their new premises. The lease on their present building was due to end in three years' time and they had decided to investigate the possibility of building something instead of leasing again.

"These are the designs for the new building and I think they're very impressive and very stylish," said Adam, the Design Director. "But we've had a couple of builders **take a dekko** at them and they've both given very high estimates for construction. Admittedly, the estimates were **off-the-cuff** because we were in a hurry to get some idea of costs. However, both builders said that that design of building couldn't be built for any less."

"These costs are ridiculously high!" gasped Mark, the Finance Director. "We're building a set of offices, not a palace!"

"There speaks a typical **bean-counter**," laughed Adam. "You never think about anything else but money."

"Just as well," replied Mark. "We bean-counters need to make sure that you arty types **keep your feet on the ground**. I can't believe you're seriously considering this building. We have to work within the **parameters** of our budget."

"In any case," said Jeff, the Production Director, "this building is a **quantum leap** from the brief we sent the architects. They didn't do anything like we asked. The function of the building is really more important than looks and I thought we stressed that."

"We did," said Mark, "but they seem to have forgotten it. They seemed to have concentrated on the fancy extras instead of the function. I think we should try another, more practical, architect."

"That's not really fair," said Adam. "**Vis à vis** this particular design, I agree that they've **gone over the top**, but they're a very reputable firm. I'm sure that they can come up with what we want."

The various members of the board then had a discussion to decide whether they should accept Adam's decision or seek a new firm of architects. Finally, they decided to agree with Adam. In the case of Mark, this was because it was the easiest and quickest thing to do and he didn't have time to discuss the matter any further.

"**On your head be it**, Adam," said John, the managing director, "if they don't come up with something more sensible next time. We want something practical and we want something that can be built for a reasonable price. The company is **not made of money**."

Vocabulary Study

bean-counter

This word is used in an informal, usually derogatory or humorous, context to mean someone involved in the financial side of business. It can be replaced by the standard word **accountant**:

- *The editorial staff in the firm are complaining that the **bean-counters** are too much involved in publishing decisions.*
- *The editorial staff in the firm are complaining that the **accountants** are too much involved in publishing decisions.*

cuff, off-the-cuff

This expression is used to refer to a speech, for example, and means done without preparation. It can be replaced by using an expression such as **spontaneous, impromptu**, or **unrehearsed**:

- *One of the official speakers did not turn up for the conference and my husband was asked, at the last minute, to give an **off-the-cuff** lecture.*
- *One of the official speakers did not turn up for the conference and my husband was asked, at the last minute, to give an **impromptu** lecture.*

dekko, take a dekko

This expression, used in informal contexts, means to look at something. The colloquialism can easily be avoided by an expression such as **look at, have a look** or **take a look**:

- ***Take a dekko** at this car! How much do you think Jim paid for it?*
- ***Take a look** at this car! How much do you think Jim paid for it?*

ground, keep your feet on the ground

This is an idiom which means **to act in a practical way**. It can be replaced by using the latter expression or a synonym for it, such as **be practical, be sensible** or **be realistic**:

- *Try to get Lucy to **keep her feet on the ground**. She's so excited about planning her wedding that she's considering things she can't possibly afford.*
- *Try to get Lucy to **be prctical**. She's so excited about planning her wedding that she's considering things she can't possibly afford.*

head, on your head be it

This is a cliché meaning **it'll be your fault**. The cliché can be replaced either by the latter expression or a synonym for it, such as **you'll be to blame** or **you'll be responsible**:

- *I think we should leave the party now. **On your head be it** if we miss the last bus! Mum and Dad will be furious!*
- *I think we should leave the party now. **You'll be to blame** if we miss the last bus! Mum and Dad will be furious!*

leap, quantum leap

This expression refers to a sudden, dramatic, very important change or development. It was originally often used of developments, such as scientific developments, that were really important. However, it soon became a cliché and lost some of the force of its meaning. It is now frequently used of any reasonably big, but not necessarily important, change. It is advisable not to overuse the expression:

- *The local dramatic society asked me to write a play for them but their production was a **quantum leap** from what I wrote.*
- *The local dramatic society asked me to write a play for them but their production was a **big change** from what I wrote.*

money, not made of money

This expression, which is used in informal contexts and usually in negative statements, indicates that someone is not at all rich. It is a cliché which can be avoided by using **rich** or a synonym for it:

- *No, you can't have those shoes. We've just bought you new school uniform and we're **not made of money**.*
- *No, you can't have those shoes. We've just bought you new school uniform and we're **not exactly wealthy**.*
- *No, you can't have those shoes. We've just bought you new school uniform and we're **not at all rich**.*

parameter

This was originally a term used in mathematics and science but it has come into the general language and has become a cliché. It means something that establishes or restricts how something is done or what can be done. The cliché is much overused, but it can be replaced by one of several expressions such as **limit**, **control** or **restriction**:

- *Our clients said that we would be able to do what we liked when redecorating their house, but they then laid down quite strict financial **parameters** and even stricter time **parameters**.*
- *Our clients said that we would be able to do what we liked when redecorating their house, but they then laid down quite strict financial **limits** and even stricter time **limits**.*

top, go over the top

This is an informal expression meaning to do something to an exaggerated or extreme degree. The colloquialism can be replaced by a standard expression such as **go too far**:

- *I know we asked Jane to decorate the house for Christmas, but she's **gone over the top**. There are streamers and ribbons everywhere, not to mention flowers and bunches of holly.*
- *I know we asked Jane to decorate the house for Christmas, but she's **gone too far**. There are streamers and ribbons everywhere, not to mention flowers and bunches of holly.*

vis à vis

This expression, used in formal contexts, is a borrowing from French. It means in relation to and can be replaced by a less formal expression, such as **in relation to**, **in connection with** or a synonym for these:

- ***Vis à vis** salary, this will depend on qualifications and experience.*
- ***With reference to** salary, this will depend on qualifications and experience.*

Exercise 1

A Rephrase each sentence without using the words in bold and without changing its meaning.

1. *Admittedly, the estimates were **off-the-cuff** because we were in a hurry to get some idea of costs.*

_____

_____

2. *There speaks a typical **bean-counter**.*

_____

3. *We have to work within the **parameters** of our budget.*

_____

4. *This building is a* ***quantum leap*** *from the brief we sent the architects.*

_____

5. *I agree that they've* ***gone over the top****, but they're a very reputable firm.*

_____

B Replace the euphemisms in bold in the following sentences with more direct words or expressions.

1. *The post-mortem has indicated that the dead man did not commit suicide, as was previously thought, and police have not ruled out* ***foul play****.*

_____

_____

2. *Many of the women who hang around the station at night are* ***on the game****.*

_____

_____

C Underline the correct word in brackets.

1. *The line manager is supposed to (* ***appraise / apprise*** *) their work twice a year and give them a written statement about any problems.*
2. *John is a very (* ***discreet / discrete*** *) person and you can discuss your problems with him, knowing that he will not mention them to anyone else.*
3. *The book describes the development of the insect and there is an illustration of the (* ***lava / larva*** *) coming out of the egg.*
4. *They had no choice but to (* ***liquidate / liquidize*** *) the company because it was so deeply in debt with no signs of recovery.*

D Rewrite the following sentences, replacing the colloquial or slang words or expressions with standard words or expressions.

1. *None of you seem to be able to deal with my complaint. I want to speak to the head* ***honcho****.*

_____

_____

2. *Jim's parents are so* ***chuffed*** *that he passed his exams that they've bought him a car.*

_____

_____

3. *Where's the nearest garage? Our car's* ***conked out****.*

_____

Nouns and adjectives

Many nouns and adjectives are derived from the same root and so are members of the same word family. Thus, the noun **athlete** has the adjective **athletic**, the noun **beauty** has the adjective **beautiful**, the noun **coward** has the adjective **cowardly**, the noun **laugh** has the adjective **laughable**, the noun **power** has the adjective **powerful**, and the noun **risk** has the adjective **risky**.

However, several nouns and adjectives relating to the same thing or quality have been derived from different roots and, indeed, sometimes from different languages. For example, the noun **brother** has the adjective **fraternal**, the noun **cat** has the adjective **feline**, the noun **hand** has the adjective **manual**, the noun **moon** has the adjective **lunar**, and the noun **stomach** has the noun **gastric**.

Exercise 2

Give the adjectives which relate to the following nouns.

1. *nonsense* — _____
2. *horse* — _____
3. *language* — _____
4. *noise* — _____
5. *mouth* — _____
6. *face* — _____
7. *monster* — _____
8. *machine* — _____
9. *fog* — _____
10. *pig* — _____

Suggested Answers for Vocabulary Building Workbook 3

Unit 1

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.

B 1. died 2. illegitimate 3. a child/baby

C 1. magnates 2. mussels 3. dingy 4. secrete

D 1. The soldier died from the blow which he received in battle.
2. She helped her husband to commit the crime.
3. Harry is suffering from a rare cardiac condition.

Exercise 2

1. cite 2. cereal 3. boar 4. alter 5. hue
6. peal 7. review 8. flu 9. hangar 10. aisle

Unit 2

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.

B 1. junction 2. cannon 3. cords 4. allusion

C 1. We were surprised to discover that tourists were treated with such overt hostility.
2. Let me reiterate that we will do all in our power to help.
3. Our MP is making his maiden speech to parliament.
4. Members of the government are concerned about the number of students who are leaving school without being able to read.

D 1. inform 2. Following

Exercise 2

1. girl's 2. students' 3. children's
4. Peter's; Roz's 5. piano's 6. year's
7. Tuesday's 8. teachers' 9. potatoes
10. Men's

Unit 3

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study

B 1. is very knowledgeable about
2. rare 3. obvious
4. very disappointed 5. good enough

C 1. obvious 2. adviser 3. showed
4. swift 5. criticizes strongly

Exercise 2

1. light as a feather 2. smooth as silk
3. calm as a millpond 4. as cool as a cucumber
5. as good as gold 6. as dry as a bone
7. blind as a bat 8. as pretty as a picture
9. as deaf as a post 10. as stubborn as a mule

Unit 4

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.

B 1. anaesthetic 2. etymology 3. viral
4. faze 5. complemented

C 1. The dress was made of satin and was dark blue.
2. My final point is that the proposed changes will benefit the whole community.
3. We are anticipating that a large number of people will want to hear the MP speak and so we are holding the meeting in the town hall.

D 1. alcohol 2. have been stolen

Exercise 2

1. a 2. an 3. an 4. an 5. A
6. an 7. a 8. a 9. an 10. a

Unit 5

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.

B 1. guilty 2. tiredness 3. important
4. cowardly

C 1. jealousy 2. become friends again
3. take the blame

D 1. marshal 2. diagnosis 3. purposely

Exercise 2

1. emigration 2. envelop 3. prostrate
4. assent 5. statute 6. retch
7. peddle 8. motif 9. astrology
10. elicit

Unit 6

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.

B 1. amazed 2. make-up 3. approximate

C 1. precipitate 2. triumphant 3. restive
4. authoritative 5. ingenuous

D 1. very early in the morning 2. a great many

Exercise 2

A 1. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
2. North Atlantic Treaty Organization
3. Federation Internationale de Football Association
4. radio detecting and ranging

B 1. acronym: sound navigation and ranging
2. not acronym
3. not acronym
4. not acronym
5. acronym: self-contained underwater breathing apparatus

6. acronym: not in my back yard
7. not acronym
8. acronym: light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation
9. acronym: National Aeronautics and Space Administration
10. acronym: Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes

Unit 7

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. committed suicide
2. go to the toilet 3. dismiss
C 1. relaxing 2. excellent 3. party
D 1. full 2. what she's good at
3. explain 4. shame

Exercise 2

A 1. lead 2. row 3. sow 4. wound
5. slough 6. routed
B 1. fair 2. pulse 3. row 4. pole

Unit 8

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. deprecate 2. antique 3. salon
4. seasonal 5. temerity
C 1. gone wrong 2. cheated 3. stole
4. criticizing 5. idiot

Exercise 2

1. referred 2. cancelled 3. watering
4. lapping 5. budgeted 6. marvelled
7. equalled 8. targeted 9. drooping
10. conned

Unit 9

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. a subject of angry disagreement
2. exactly 3. have disappeared
4. unsuccessful 5. has an obsession
C 1. the small amount of
2. overcome 3. deceit 4. hairy
5. was weakened

Exercise 2

1. wrote 2. grown 3. stolen 4. threw
5. wakened 6. wove 7. bitten 8. flown
9. blown 10. sprang

Unit 10

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. lightning 2. dependants 3. troupe
4. whet 5. urban
C 1. not noticeable 2. determined 3. untiring
D 1. I don't understand
2. enjoyed themselves very much

Exercise 2

1. Japanese 2. French 3. Latin 4. Spanish
5. Italian 6. Latin 7. French 8. Chinese
9. Italian 10. German

Unit 11

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. very angry 2. was reckless 3. women
C 1. Lucy has just been told that her father is dying of a disease of the lungs.
2. Mother and daughter embraced each other when they met after a long separation.
3. The village nestled at the foot of lofty, snowy peaks.
D 1. gourmand 2. contemptible
3. militates 4. oral

Exercise 2

1. fewer 2. less 3. fewer 4. fewer 5. less
6. fewer 7. less 8. less 9. fewer 10. less

Unit 12

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. Mike is a rude child who refuses to do what his parents and teachers tell him to.
2. Harry wasn't sure whether to move to the city or not, but Liz was adamant in her refusal to go.
C 1. fail/not make progress
2. given permission 3. getting old
D 1. opponent 2. speaking several languages
3. adjective 4. compulsory 5. gather

Exercise 2

1. organizing 2. surprised 3. revise
4. stabilization 5. chastised 6. televised
7. materialize 8. supervise 9. baptized
10. prioritize

Unit 13

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. delicious 2. kill 3. very hot
4. in prison 5. nap
C 1. dissect 2. thermometer 3. decried
4. carat 5. zenith

Exercise 2

1. Portuguese 2. Lebanese 3. Maltese
4. Viennese 5. Taiwanese 6. Nepalese

7. Vietnamese 8. legalese
9. officialese 10. computerese

Unit 14

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. bribe 2. is pregnant 3. in prison
C 1. burial 2. scope
D 1. protesting 2. under suspicion
3. stop drinking 4. began to listen carefully
5. very supportive

Exercise 2

1. incredible 2. winnable 3. edible
4. washable 5. indispensable 6. digestible
7. unforgettable 8. drinkable
9. unintelligible 10. invincible

Unit 15

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. swingeing 2. forte 3. counsellor
4. canvass 5. exhaustive
C 1. clothes 2. opening 3. roundabout
4. evil 5. tact

Exercise 2

1. decathlon 2. decathlete 3. decibel
4. decapod 5. decametre 6. decagon
7. decimetre 8. decalitre 9. decilitre
10. decimate

Unit 16

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. go to the toilet 2. naked 3. the facts of life
C 1. battens 2. censured 3. boughs
4. voracity
D 1. surrender 2. obvious 3. talkative

Exercise 2

1. female 2. feminine 3. female
4. female 5. effeminate 6. feminine
7. feminine 8. female 9. feminist
10. effeminate

Unit 17

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. unwell 2. peaceful place 3. unhurt
4. close to collapse 5. causing trouble
C 1. have been very expensive
2. Hurry up! 3. annoyed 4. girlfriend 5. prison

Exercise 2

1. rallies 2. tragedies 3. galleys 4. follies
5. alleys 6. donkeys 7. royalties 8. berries
9. pennies 10. Marys

Unit 18

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. lying 2. is losing her mind 3. the toilet
C 1. yolk 2. tick 3. discomfit
D 1. We'll have to start again!
2. completely different
E 1. severely criticized 2. read through

Exercise 2

A 1. no 2. yes 3. no 4. no 5. no
6. yes 7. no 8. yes 9. yes 10. yes
B 1. no 2. no 3. yes 4. yes 5. no
6. yes 7. no 8. yes 9. no 10. no

Unit 19

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. was ignored
2. I'm not saying anything!
3. searched everywhere
4. get married
C 1. brotherly 2. puzzling/difficult to understand
3. roomy/spacious
D 1. straitened 2. momentary 3. prodigy

Exercise 2

1. tomatoes 2. frescoes/frescos
3. Tornadoes/Tornados 4. solos
5. logos 6. fiascos
7. embargoes 8. videos
9. noes 10. mangoes

Unit 20

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. ordinary
2. an attractive but not very bright woman
3. showing disrespect to
4. were a couple
C 1. very rarely 2. Someone might be listening!
3. had cooked
D 1. was racked 2. morale 3. palette

Exercise 2

1. take ... with a pinch of salt
2. draw a veil over
3. sail close to the wind

4. face the music 5. stretch my legs
6. struck it lucky 7. painting the town red
8. pull your weight 9. rub her up the wrong way
10. burn the midnight oil

Unit 21

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. razed 2. angle 3. wreath
4. curtsy 5. use
C 1. means the same as
2. urged 3. covers
D 1. had a chance of winning
2. the ordinary person 3. land

Exercise 2

1. sell 2. brave 3. Few
4. thin 5. straight 6. rough
7. sensible/wise 8. tactful 9. proud
10. beautiful

Unit 22

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. realized 2. fussy 3. uncertain
4. dishonest businessman/unqualified builder
5. a day's sick leave, without being ill
C 1. honesty 2. waste 3. impudence
D 1. annex 2. calve

Exercise 2

A 1. eco-friendly 2. ecological 3. ecological
4. ecologist 5. ecosystem
B 1. a kind of tourism which aims to encourage people to visit areas of natural beauty without causing damage to the environment
2. acts of violence carried out against those who are considered to be damaging the environment in some way, e.g. by industrial pollution
3. a person who takes direct, often unlawful, action to try to preserve the environment in some way
4. the scientific study of the toxic effect of waste materials and other pollutants on the environment
5. the labelling of products to show that they have been produced in a way that does not harm the environment

Unit 23

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. It was a decidedly rude remark to make.
2. An early picture by the artist is proving difficult to find.
3. Meg suffers from claustrophobia.
C 1. bass 2. climatic 3. observation
4. persecuted 5. emotional
D 1. spelling 2. the study of coins

Exercise 2

1. there 2. they're 3. There
4. there 5. their, there 6. They're, They're
7. there 8. their

Unit 24

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. lively and energetic
2. equipment/tools
3. side by side/very close together
4. the reasons for
5. whatever difficulties occurred
6. very early in the morning
C 1. Experts 2. thought
D 1. unconscionable 2. waver

Exercise 2

1. The book was wrapped in Cellophane.
2. Can you lend me a Biro?
3. He beat me at chess, but I beat him at Scrabble.
4. The dancer wore a leotard.
5. The children were playing dominoes.
6. The terrain was very rough and we had to hire a Jeep.
7. It was very cold, but she was wearing just a T-shirt and jeans.
8. The boy built a model spaceship out of Lego.
9. They located the ship by means of radar.
10. I need some Sellotape to wrap these presents.

Unit 25

Exercise 1

A Answers can be found in Vocabulary Study.
B 1. a crime had been committed
2. prostitutes
C 1. appraise 2. discreet 3. larva
4. liquidate
D 1. boss 2. pleased 3. broken down

Exercise 2

1. nonsensical 2. equine 3. linguistic
4. noisy 5. oral 6. facial
7. monstrous 8. mechanical 9. foggy
10. porcine/piggish

Made with ScanKromsator

Vocabulary Building

This series of four workbooks is specifically designed to provide students with a sound understanding of English vocabulary and ample practice in its use.

Workbooks 3 and **4** aim at increasing students' knowledge of English words and expressions and so encouraging them to extend the range of their own vocabulary. Each book contains 25 passages demonstrating such features as euphemisms, words appropriate only in informal contexts, difficult words replaceable by simpler words for clarity, clichés, and so on. There is also a section, ***More about Language***, which presents statements about selected aspects of English such as confusables, idioms, proverbs, acronyms and spelling problems. Both sets of information are followed by exercises developed to test and reinforce students' grasp of what they have learnt.

About the Writer

A graduate of Edinburgh University, *Betty Kirkpatrick* has had a long and distinguished career as editor, publisher and writer of English reference books. She was the editor of the *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary*, the editor of *Roget's Thesaurus* and the compiler of the *Oxford Paperback Thesaurus*. Her *Dictionary of Clichés*, published by Bloomsbury, is also available in a US edition and a Japanese edition. A language consultant to the *Encarta Dictionary* and a consultant to Collins school dictionaries, she writes a weekly language column for the *Herald* newspaper, based in Glasgow.

LEARNERS PUBLISHING

ISBN 978-981-4133-02-9

9 789814 133029