

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

astute
ə stōōt'

adj. Wise in a clever or practical way.

An **astute** shopper compares prices carefully before making a purchase.

authentic
ô then' tik

adj. Genuine; true.

An authority on old maps declared that the sixteenth-century chart of the Florida Keys is **authentic**.

authenticity *n.* (ô then tis' i tē) The condition of being genuine.

Lawyers questioned the **authenticity** of the signature on the agreement.

authenticate *v.* To prove that something is genuine.

Only an art expert can **authenticate** the painting as one by Rubens.



.....
Describe for your partner a time when you found out something was fake and not authentic.

delicacy
del' i kə sē

n. 1. A choice item of food.

Smoked salmon is a **delicacy**.

2. Great consideration for the feelings of others.

Discussing her mistake will embarrass her unless you handle the matter with **delicacy**.



.....
Discuss with your partner a situation you would need to handle with delicacy.

derogatory
də räg' ə tōr ē

adj. Expressing a low opinion; intended to hurt the reputation of a person or thing.

His habit of making **derogatory** comments about other students made him unpopular.



.....
Tell your partner a derogatory comment you heard about a famous person, and explain why it was rude.

devour
də vour'

v. 1. To eat up hungrily.

We were so hungry after school, we **devoured** all the fruit in the refrigerator.

2. To take in eagerly with the eyes or ears.

We **devoured** the graphic novels the librarian gave us.



.....
Describe to your partner the last thing you devoured.

figment
fig' mēnt

n. Something that is made up in the mind but that has no connection with reality.

The monster in the closet is a **figment** of the child's imagination.

1

Vocabulary Extension

estimate

verb To figure out roughly; to make an approximate calculation.

noun A number that is not exact; a careful guess.



Academic Context

You may often be asked to **estimate** things when precise numbers are not quick or easy to figure out.

Sometimes you might **estimate** before counting or measuring something, and then you might compare your **estimate** to the exact number or measurement.

Discussion & Writing Prompt

Describe the last time you **estimated** something. How did you make a careful guess?

2 min.

1. Turn and talk to your partner or group.

Use this space to take notes or draw your ideas.

3 min.

2. Write 2–4 sentences.

Be ready to share what you have written.

mythical
mith' i kəl

adj. Imaginary; not real.
Unicorns are **mythical** creatures.

plumage
plūm' ij

n. A bird's feathers.
Parrots have brightly colored **plumage**.

predatory
pred' ə tōr ē

adj. 1. Living by killing and eating other animals.
Crocodiles are **predatory** reptiles.
2. Living by using, controlling, or hurting others.
Predatory bands of pirates once sailed the Mediterranean seeking victims.
predator *n.* 1. A creature that lives by killing.
A sea eagle is a **predator** that dives for fish.
2. A person who looks for others to use, control, or hurt them in some way.
The Vikings were **predators** who terrified coastal towns.

prior
pri' ə r

adj. 1. Coming earlier in time.
I was unable to see you this morning because I had a **prior** appointment.
2. Coming before in order or importance.
The court ruled that the Native Americans had a **prior** claim to the land.



Share with your partner something that happened to you just prior to coming to school.

scavenge
skav' ənj

v. To search through or pick over, looking for something usable.
People with metal detectors **scavenge** the beach looking for coins.
scavenger *n.* 1. Someone who scavenges.
After the fire, **scavengers** looked through the debris, hoping to find something of value.
2. An animal that feeds on dead or decaying matter.
Vultures, hyenas, and other **scavengers** are an important part of nature's clean-up crew.

slaughter
slōt' ə r

v. 1. To kill in order to obtain meat.
The hogs are rounded up before they are **slaughtered**.
2. To kill people or animals in large numbers or in a cruel way.
For centuries, whales have been **slaughtered** for their oil and other valuable products.
n. 1. The killing of an animal for food.
The **slaughter** of beef cattle should be carried out as swiftly and painlessly as possible.
2. The act of killing on a large scale or in a cruel way.
Those who drink and drive contribute to the **slaughter** on the nation's highways.

solitude

säl' ə tōōd



n. The condition of being alone or at some distance from people.
We enjoyed the **solitude** of a walk on the deserted beach.

Talk to your partner about a moment of solitude that you had recently.

ungainly

un gān' lē

adj. Moving in a clumsy or awkward way.

Walruses, graceful in the water, are **ungainly** creatures on land.

vulnerable

vul' nər ə bəl



adj. Open to attack; easily injured physically or emotionally.

Elderly people are more **vulnerable** to disease than younger people.

Discuss how someone acts when he or she is feeling vulnerable.

2A**Using Words in Context**

Read the following sentences. If the word in bold is used correctly, write C on the line. If the word is used incorrectly, write I on the line.

- (a) I **slaughtered** dozens of ants with bug spray. ____

(b) Mass **slaughter** of the American bison almost led to its extinction. ____

(c) You put your mail in a **slaughter**. ____

(d) Gales of **slaughter** greeted the speaker's jeers. ____
- (a) We had a **prior** agreement with the neighbors that we could buy the puppy. ____

(b) Sixth grade takes place **prior** to seventh grade. ____

(c) **Prior** to the storm, the wind buffeted the trees back and forth. ____

(d) First, hold your cup, and then pour some **prior** water into it. ____
- (a) The Egyptian coin I found in my backyard can't be **authentic**. ____

(b) The **authenticity** of the rare book was confirmed by scholars. ____

(c) These dinosaur bones have not been **authenticated** by experts. ____

(d) The Robinsons felt exhausted and **authentic** after the long day. ____
- (a) When the water in the fish tank gets **derogatory**, it's time to clean it. ____

(b) I didn't mean to sound **derogatory**, and I'm sorry if I hurt your feelings. ____

(c) I heard several **derogatory** comments on the television show. ____

(d) The runner jogged through the warm **derogatory** sunshine. ____

astute

authentic

delicacy

derogatory

devour

figment

mythical

plumage

predatory

prior

scavenge

slaughter

solitude

ungainly

vulnerable

5. (a) I wasn't hungry at all, so I **devoured** the food. ____
(b) By the time it was put out, the fire had **devoured** over a thousand acres. ____
(c) Alyssa **devoured** novels by the dozen. ____
(d) The hikers **devoured** the food hungrily and then rested. ____
6. (a) Snails are a **delicacy** to many people. ____
(b) The matter was handled with great **delicacy**, and no one's feelings were hurt. ____
(c) A tall **delicacy** grew outside the kitchen door. ____
(d) We checked all the **delicacies** on the bike before I rode it. ____
7. (a) His **ungainly** gait was explained by a childhood accident. ____
(b) The **ungainly** professional ballerina twirled gracefully across the stage. ____
(c) Penguins look **ungainly** until they flop into the water. ____
(d) Jayden's **ungainly** water was cold and refreshing. ____
8. (a) Hakim **astutely** observed that without extra funding, the library would shut down. ____
(b) The silly, **astute** dog tripped over the hose and fell on its face. ____
(c) Gabriella believed she was **astute** enough to fool her parents. ____
(d) The ice was **astute** enough to easily support our weight. ____
9. (a) Try to **scavenge** whatever you can from the beach. ____
(b) **Scavengers** are at the bottom of the food chain, living on leftovers. ____
(c) A good soccer player can **scavenge** a few goals every game. ____
(d) The baby would fall over every time it tried to **scavenge**. ____
10. (a) Jules attended a **predatory** school before going to college. ____
(b) A **predatory** rainstorm misted the meadow with dew. ____
(c) **Predatory** thieves roamed the land outside the castle. ____
(d) In the animal kingdom, you can be both **predator** and prey. ____

2B

Making Connections

Circle the letter next to each correct answer. There may be more than one correct answer.

1. Which word or words go with *not real*?
 (a) authentic (b) figment (c) fanciful (d) mythical
2. Which word or words go with *bird*?
 (a) mythical (b) plumage (c) ungainly (d) authentic
3. Which word or words go with *alone*?
 (a) solitary (b) solar (c) solid (d) solitude
4. Which word or words go with *weak*?
 (a) feeble (b) derogatory (c) puny (d) vulnerable
5. Which word or words go with *smart*?
 (a) authentic (b) brilliant (c) ungainly (d) astute
6. Which word or words go with *eat*?
 (a) authentic (b) consume (c) devour (d) plumage
7. Which word or words go with *real*?
 (a) authentic (b) genuine (c) mythical (d) casual
8. Which word or words go with *insult*?
 (a) devour (b) derogatory (c) compete (d) slaughter
9. Which word or words go with *kill*?
 (a) scavenge (b) exterminate (c) slay (d) slaughter
10. Which word or words go with *awkward*?
 (a) unwieldy (b) ungainly (c) unruly (d) vulnerable

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| astute |
| authentic |
| delicacy |
| derogatory |
| devour |
| figment |
| mythical |
| plumage |
| predatory |
| prior |
| scavenge |
| slaughter |
| solitude |
| ungainly |
| vulnerable |

Determining Meanings

Circle the letter next to each answer choice that correctly completes the sentence. There may be more than one correct answer.

1. Figments

- (a) of the imagination might be a unicorn, dragon, and mermaid.
- (b) grow on trees where the climate is warm.
- (c) of stone flew into the windshield and cracked it.
- (d) of a child's mind, like monsters, can be scary.

2. A prior

- (a) cake was brought in, and Luisa blew out the candles.
- (b) meeting established the rules that were to be followed.
- (c) expedition had failed to reach the South Pole.
- (d) problem was solved, but a new problem took its place.

3. Scavengers

- (a) in the sky shone down on the forest.
- (b) like vultures are a necessary part of nature.
- (c) might spend a lot of time going through trash cans and dumpsters.
- (d) of poetry might enjoy this first edition.

4. The mythical

- (a) hero inspired many stories.
- (b) land called Atlantis may have once existed.
- (c) deep breath made me feel more calm.
- (d) answer could mean yes or no.

5. The plumage

- (a) of eagles was used by North American tribes.
- (b) of penguins protects them against the severe cold.
- (c) of egrets was used to decorate ladies' hats.
- (d) of a snake is shed several times during its life.

6. Solitude

- (a) was welcome after the hectic day at school.
- (b) provided inspiration for the poet's early writing about loneliness.
- (c) on the edges of the window looked like lace.
- (d) was impossible for someone leading such a busy life.

7. **Vulnerability**

- (a) around the pond turned to sticky mud.
- (b) can make a person easily hurt.
- (c) can turn black to gray.
- (d) is a characteristic of newborn babies.

8. An **astutely**

- (a) blue paint decorated the walls.
- (b) wise person would have guessed the answer right away.
- (c) sad face could be seen in the window.
- (d) intelligent book about school safety was published last week.



Completing Sentences

Complete the sentences to demonstrate your knowledge of the words in bold.

1. Something that is a **figment** of the imagination is

_____.

2. I am most **vulnerable** when

_____.

3. If an old letter is **authentic**, that means

_____.

4. My favorite **mythical** creature is

_____.

5. An animal that **scavenges** looks for

_____.

6. A **derogatory** remark would make me feel

_____.

7. When I want **solitude**, I

_____.

8. You may want to handle a situation with **delicacy** because

_____.

9. An **ungainly** person would find it hard to

_____.

10. To **devour** something, you have to be

_____.

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Read the passage.



The Last Dodo

If someone referred to you as a “dodo,” you would probably be insulted. It is a **derogatory** term that describes someone who is not very **astute**. The origin of the English word can be traced back to the Portuguese *duodo*, which means “a foolish person.” Dodo was the name Portuguese settlers gave to the large, flightless bird that inhabited the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. Some people think of the dodo as a **mythical** creature. It is a fact that this was a real bird, however, and its story is a sad one.

For thousands of years, until the island of Mauritius was discovered by Portuguese sailors in 1507, this odd-looking bird existed in peaceful **solitude**. Because there were no **predatory** animals on the island, the dodo had long since lost the ability to fly. And, because it lacked natural enemies, it was very trusting and made no attempt to flee when approached by humans. Because of this, the Portuguese considered the bird stupid and gave it the name by which we know it today—the dodo.

Even if it had been less trusting of humans, the dodo would still have been **vulnerable**. It was too overweight and **ungainly** to run very fast. The settlers on the island found that dodos, although a little tough, were good to eat, and they **slaughtered** them in ever-increasing numbers. Domesticated animals brought to the island by the settlers added to the dodos’ problems. The female dodo laid a single large white egg, which it deposited on the ground, usually in a tuft of grass. **Prior** to the arrival of the original settlers, the eggs had lain undisturbed until they hatched. To the dogs that now roamed the island, these eggs were a **delicacy**; the dogs **scavenged** the island and **devoured** any dodo eggs they encountered. The dodo was last seen alive in 1681. None is believed to have survived after that date.

As time passed, people began to wonder if the dodo had ever existed. Drawings done by artists who had visited Mauritius showed a bird somewhat larger than a swan, with an elongated neck, a large head, an enormous black bill, and a short, tufted tail. Its **plumage** was grayish in color over most of its body and white on its breast. The majority of people who saw these pictures convinced themselves that such an odd-looking creature must be a **figment** of the artist’s imagination; at that time, there was no way of establishing whether they provided an **authentic** record of an actual creature.

Then, in 1889, a large number of dodo bones were discovered in a swamp on Mauritius. Several skeletons were reconstructed from them and subsequently displayed in museums in London and Paris. These relics are all that remain of this odd-looking but rather lovable bird.

► Answer each of the following questions with a sentence. If a question does not contain a vocabulary word from the lesson's word list, use one in your answer. Use each word only once.

1. What drastic change occurred in the dodos' living conditions in 1507?

2. What is the meaning of **prior** as it is used in the passage?

3. What was it about the dodo's nature that made it easy to catch?

4. What was it about the dodo's physical condition that made it easy to catch?

5. What other names of birds are **derogatory** when applied to humans?

6. How was the existence of the dodo **authenticated**?

7. What did the Portuguese think of the dodo's intelligence?

8. What is the meaning of **delicacy** as it is used in the passage?

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| scavenge |
| slaughter |
| solitude |
| ungainly |
| vulnerable |

9. What color were a dodo's feathers?

10. What is the meaning of **devoured** as it is used in the passage?

11. Why did many people believe the dodo to be a **figment** of an artist's imagination?

12. What did people think about the dodo before the discovery of the bones?

13. What is the meaning of **slaughtered** as it is used in the passage?

14. What is the meaning of **predatory** as it is used in the passage?

15. How would you describe the dogs that lived on the island?

Fun & Fascinating FACTS

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- The Latin for *feather* is *pluma*. In addition to the word **plumage**, this Latin root gives us the English word *plume*, which is a noun, meaning "a large feather or group of feathers," and a verb, meaning "to smooth its feathers." (Birds *plume* themselves with their beaks.) The French word for *pen* is *plume* and comes from the same Latin root. Pens were once

made from large feathers with the ends split to hold ink.

.....

- The Latin *solus* means "alone" or "without company" and forms the root of a number of English words in addition to **solitude**. *Solitaire* is a card game for just one person. *Solitary* means "alone" or "without company." *Solo* means "performed by one person."

