### Lesson 14

#### Word List

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Definition and Usage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>allege</td>
<td>v. To state as a fact but without offering proof. The police <strong>allege</strong> that the two teenagers took the car without permission.</td>
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<tr>
<td>alleged</td>
<td>adj. Claimed to be true. This is the <strong>alleged</strong> troublemaker.</td>
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<tr>
<td>allegation</td>
<td>n. (al a gá’ shan) Something that is alleged. Our neighbor claimed that my brother was the boy who broke his window, but he could not provide proof to back up his <strong>allegation</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>conclusive</td>
<td>adj. Putting an end to doubt; convincing. The cancelled check was <strong>conclusive</strong> proof that the bicycle had been paid for.</td>
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<tr>
<td>counterpart</td>
<td>n. A person or thing that is similar to another. The British prime minister is the <strong>counterpart</strong> of the American president.</td>
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<tr>
<td>dismal</td>
<td>adj. 1. Dark or extremely gloomy. The <strong>dismal</strong> weather kept us inside for most of our vacation at the beach. 2. Causing misery or sadness; depressing. The <strong>dismal</strong> conditions in Haiti forced many to flee their homeland.</td>
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<tr>
<td>enthralled</td>
<td>v. To hold the attention of as though under a spell. The acrobats on the trapeze <strong>enthralled</strong> the circus audience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>enthralling</td>
<td>adj. Having the power to enthral. The children listened for over an hour to the storyteller's <strong>enthralling</strong> tales.</td>
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<tr>
<td>exotic</td>
<td>adj. Fascinating because of being very different from the ordinary. Rare orchids and other <strong>exotic</strong> flowers decorated the tables at the wedding.</td>
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<tr>
<td>incredulous</td>
<td>adj. 1. Doubtful; skeptical. The teacher was <strong>incredulous</strong> when the student claimed to have read the novel in two hours. 2. Showing disbelief. My friend gave me an <strong>incredulous</strong> look when I said I had seen a flying saucer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>incredulity</td>
<td>n. (in kré dyóo` lá té) Doubt or disbelief. My father gave me a look of <strong>incredulity</strong> when I said I had asked for extra homework.</td>
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<td><strong>legendary</strong></td>
<td>adj. 1. Well-known; famous and much talked about over a long period of time. Harriet Tubman, who led more than 300 slaves to freedom, is a <strong>legendary</strong> figure in American history. 2. Relating to a story (usually untrue) handed down from the past. Paul Bunyan, the <strong>legendary</strong> lumberjack of fantastic size and strength, is the hero of many “tall tales.”</td>
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<td><strong>lurk</strong></td>
<td>v. To prowl or lie hidden, as though about to attack. The farmer frightened away the fox that lurked by the henhouse.</td>
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<td><strong>menagerie</strong></td>
<td>n. A collection of animals kept in cages for showing to the public. The owner of the <strong>menagerie</strong> assured us that the animals were well cared for.</td>
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<td><strong>naive</strong></td>
<td>adj. 1. Inexperienced; ready to accept without analyzing. I was <strong>naive</strong> to believe that sending off the coupon would win me a free vacation in Hawaii. 2. Simple in a childlike way; innocent. Even though he is nine years old, he maintains a <strong>naive</strong> belief in the tooth fairy.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>pander</strong></td>
<td>v. To give or promise what is wanted in order to please someone. I believe that she <strong>panders</strong> to students by giving them better grades than they deserve.</td>
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<td><strong>plausible</strong></td>
<td>adj. Seeming to be true but not necessarily so. Lin Shao’s explanation of why she was late seems <strong>plausible</strong>, so I’ll accept it.</td>
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<td><strong>preposterous</strong></td>
<td>adj. Too absurd to be believed; ridiculous. You cannot believe this <strong>preposterous</strong> newspaper story that a six-month-old baby speaks three languages.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>scrupulous</strong></td>
<td>adj. 1. Marked by close attention to the smallest detail. The treasurer kept a <strong>scrupulous</strong> record of all moneys received and paid out. 2. Acting in a correct and honest manner. The children were <strong>scrupulous</strong> in the way they divided the money from the lemonade stand.</td>
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</table>
Choose two phrases to form a sentence that correctly uses a word from Word List 14. Write each sentence in the space provided.

1. (a) An incredulous person is someone (c) who has a childlike innocence.
   (b) who is not telling the truth. (d) A naive person is someone

2. (a) A counterpart is (c) a plant with healing properties.
   (b) a collection of animals. (d) A menagerie is

3. (a) To lurk is to (c) be prepared to defend oneself.
   (b) To pander is to (d) hide so as to attack without warning.

4. (a) A dismal story (c) A plausible story
   (b) is one that is believable. (d) is one made up as one goes along.

5. (a) Allegations are things that have (c) much in common with each other.
   (b) Counterparts are things that have (d) nothing to do with each other.

6. (a) An enthralling story is one (c) that is depressing.
   (b) A dismal account is one (d) that is quite unbelievable.

7. (a) A preposterous offer is (c) An alleged offer is
   (b) one that is made in writing. (d) one that cannot be taken seriously.

8. (a) is careful to avoid wrongdoing. (c) is careless of others’ feelings.
   (b) A legendary person is one who (d) A scrupulous person is one who
9. (a) one that can be taken two ways. (b) An incredulous reply is (c) one that expresses disbelief. (d) A conclusive reply is

14B Just the Right Word

Improve each of the following sentences by crossing out the bold phrase and replacing it with a word (or a form of the word) from Word List 14.

1. We loved Tahiti, the tropical paradise in the South Pacific, because it was so **fascinatingly different and so far away.**

2. The squirrel didn’t see the cat **waiting to attack while hiding** in the bushes.

3. We think we know what caused the gas pipe to rupture, but the evidence is not **strong enough to put an end to all doubt.**

4. There is no **other planet that is in any way similar** to Earth.

5. Her **statement that is not backed by proof** is that someone entered the house while she was away.

6. Robin Hood is a **famous character in stories handed down from the past but is probably not a real** figure.

7. The small children were **so attentive that they seemed to be under a spell cast** by Barney, the television dinosaur.

8. It’s not a good idea for parents to **try to provide satisfaction by giving in to their child’s every whim.**

9. When I first heard their story about finding a wallet full of money, I was **unable to accept it as true.**

10. To say that I would lie to protect myself is **too absurd to be believed.**

11. When you believed the promises in the chain letter, you were being **very foolish because of your inexperience in these matters.**
Circle the letter or letters of each correct answer. A question may have more than one correct answer.

1. Which of the following could be **plausible**?
   (a) an offer
   (b) a solution
   (c) an excuse
   (d) a lie

2. Which of the following expresses **incredulity**?
   (a) “That’s impossible!”
   (b) “You’re pulling my leg.”
   (c) “Is that so?”
   (d) “I suppose it’s possible.”

3. Which of the following could be **enthralling**?
   (a) a movie’s climax
   (b) a tedious story
   (c) an indifferent performance
   (d) strenuous toil

4. Which of the following might be found in a **menagerie**?
   (a) tigers
   (b) wolves
   (c) kittens
   (d) whales

5. Which of the following is an **exotic** first name?
   (a) Jane
   (b) Whoopee
   (c) Moonbeam
   (d) Jack

6. Which of the following could be **dismal**?
   (a) the weather
   (b) a forecast
   (c) a weekend
   (d) a hovel

7. Which of the following is a **legendary** figure?
   (a) Babe Ruth
   (b) Billy the Kid
   (c) Sandra Day O’Connor
   (d) Cleopatra

8. Which of the following could be **scrupulous**?
   (a) a person
   (b) an inspection
   (c) an incident
   (d) a privilege
The prefix *in-* means "not" and usually changes a word into its opposite. But not all words beginning with *in* contain this prefix. Study the words and decide which ones begin with the prefix *in-* meaning "not." If the word does contain the prefix *in-*, write *yes*. If it does not, write *no*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. incident</th>
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<th>2. inefficient</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. incline</td>
<td></td>
<td>4. incredulous</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. indifferent</td>
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<td>6. industrious</td>
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<td>7. inconspicuous</td>
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<td>8. intervene</td>
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<td>9. incompetent</td>
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<td>10. inevitable</td>
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<td>11. inundate</td>
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<td>12. infuriate</td>
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<td>13. inadequate</td>
<td></td>
<td>14. inherit</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. inconclusive</td>
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<td>16. initiate</td>
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<td>17. inconvenient</td>
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<td>18. intensify</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. intimidate</td>
<td></td>
<td>20. intrepid</td>
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**Words to Study:**
- allege
- conclusive
- counterpart
- dismal
- enthrall
- exotic
- incredulous
- legendary
- lurk
- menagerie
- naive
- pander
- plausible
- preposterous
- scrupulous
Read the passage. Then answer the questions that follow it.

**Bigfoot: Fact or Fantasy?**

When European explorers returned from Asia and Africa in the Middle Ages, they reported having seen twelve-foot lizards with huge jaws that could eat a person whole. Most people who heard these stories were **incredulous** and accused the travelers of lying. The stories seemed **preposterous** to them. At that time hardly anyone in Europe had ever seen a crocodile. For centuries, travelers have been ridiculed for their reports of **exotic** creatures seen in distant lands. But the Komodo dragon of Indonesia, the giant panda of Western China, and the mountain gorilla of Ethiopia, to mention just three that were dismissed at one time as imaginary, really do exist.

More recently, there have been stories of Bigfoot, the **legendary** ape-like creature of the American Northwest. And Bigfoot’s **counterpart** is said to live just below the snowline in the Himalayan Mountains of Asia. It is the yeti, also known as the Abominable Snowman. **Alleged** sightings, and even photographs, of both creatures make news periodically. Plaster casts have supposedly been made of their footprints. But the photographs are never sharp; the plaster casts could well be fakes; and the claims of those who say they have seen Bigfoot are not very **plausible**. Scientists have been **scrupulous** in their examination of the evidence. Their view is that it is not **conclusive**. Most remain unconvinced that Bigfoot and the yeti actually exist.

In spite of the scientists’ findings, some people feel the need to believe that such creatures do exist. Such people are **enthralled** by the mysterious. They would like to think that somewhere deep in the forest, Bigfoot is **lurking**. They imagine that high in the Himalayas, a team of mountaineers is about to come upon the yeti. Supermarket tabloids **pander** to these people. They print headlines such as “Bigfoot Stole My Baby” or “Yeti Attacks Climbers on Mount Everest.” Of course, only the most **naive** people believe such stories.

Given our **dismal** record of dealing with wild creatures, it would probably be best for Bigfoot and the yeti, if indeed they **are** real, to remain undiscovered. What would we do with them if we captured them? Such creatures do not belong in a **menagerie** to be peered at and photographed...
by sightseers. Such is the fate of the giant panda, the Komodo dragon, and
the mountain gorilla. Bigfoot and the yeti are probably best left where they
are now, creatures of our imagination, along with unicorns, fire-breathing
dragons, and mermaids.

Answer each of the following questions in the form of 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. Do tabloid newspapers do a responsible job of reporting the news?

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

3. What do Bigfoot and the Abominable Snowman have in common?

4. How does the yeti compare with Bigfoot?

5. What do many people imagine Bigfoot to be doing?

6. Where would a creature like Bigfoot *not* belong?

7. What is the meaning of **incredulous** as it is used in the passage?

8. What is the meaning of **scrupulous** as it is used in the passage?
9. Why does the passage describe spottings of Bigfoot as "alleged"?


10. Why do most people not accept claims of Bigfoot sightings?


11. What kind of evidence would lead scientists to believe that Bigfoot exists?


12. What would be a likely reaction of people should there be a more convincing account of a Bigfoot sighting?


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


14. Why would a rabbit not be considered an _exotic_ creature?


15. Why would a report that a unicorn had been spotted be _preposterous_?
The adjective **dismal** is formed from two Latin words: *dies*, "day," and *mal*, "bad." It is easy to see how having a bad day might make a person feel dismal.

The Old English word *thrael* means "a slave" and survives in our modern English word **enthral**, one of whose meanings is "to enslave." The more common meaning, "to hold as if in a spell," can suggest a kind of enslavement; to be enthralled by someone is to be so fascinated by him or her that one surrenders one's will to that person.

The Latin verb *credere* means "to believe" and is used in the formation of a number of English words. **Credulous** persons are easily fooled because they are inclined to believe whatever they are told, no matter how unlikely. On the other hand, persons who are **incredulous** find it hard to believe what they are being told. A **credible** story is one that sounds believable. An **incredible** story is one that is hard to believe.

A **scruple** is a twinge or sense of guilt felt when one wants to do something that one shouldn’t. A **scrupulous** person is someone who has scruples and won’t do something that is wrong or dishonest. Some people have no scruples and will do whatever is necessary to further their own purposes. They are **unscrupulous**.