Ten Words in Context

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

1 curt (kûrt) • The fast-food manager trained workers to give polite, full answers to customers, not curt responses.
   -adjective • Betsy doesn’t mean to be curt. When she’s with other people, she often says just a few quick words to them because she’s so shy.

2 demoralize (dî-môr’-ə-liz’) • Cara’s refusal to date my brother demoralized him so completely that for months, he lacked the confidence to ask another woman out.
   -verb • When Bonita gained a pound during her diet, it so demoralized her that she ate a banana split.
   _ Demoralize means A. to cheat. B. to discourage. C. to excite.

3 dilemma (dî-lêm’a) • The store manager faced a dilemma: either having an elderly, needy man arrested or ignoring store rules about shoplifters.
   -noun • In old romantic movies, the heroine’s dilemma often involves choosing between a rich boyfriend and the poor man she really loves.
   _ Dilemma means A. a hard choice. B. a great danger. C. a benefit.

4 inclination (in-klâ-nâ’shan) • My inclination is to major in nursing, but I’m going to speak to a few nurses before I make my final decision.
   -noun • That two-year-old has some irritating habits, such as her inclination to say “no” to everything.
   _ Inclination means A. a preference. B. a reason. C. a fate.

5 irate (i-rât’) • If Kate got angry only occasionally, I could take her more seriously, but she’s always irate about something or other.
   -adjective • Ray gets mad when his wife misplaces the TV’s remote control, and she becomes equally irate when he writes a check and forgets to record it in the checkbook.
   _ Irate means A. thrilled. B. selfish. C. furious.

6 retort (ri-tôrt’) • When I told my parents I’d put the dishes in the dishwasher the next morning, my father retorted, “Maybe we should serve you dinner in the mornings, too.”
   -verb • “What do you want?” the young woman asked Dracula. “Only to drink in your charms,” he retorted.
   _ Retort means A. to approve. B. to reply. C. to ask.
7 sabotage  
(sāb’ə-tōzh’)
-verb

- Terrorist groups train their members to sabotage airports and other public places.
- A fired programmer sabotaged the company’s network by infecting it with a computer virus.

_Sabotage means_
A. to develop.  B. to invest in.  C. to do harm to.

8 subsequent  
(sūb’sī-kwənt’)
-adjective

- "I was hired as a stock boy," said the company president. "My subsequent jobs took me steadily up the company ladder."
- The first few times Janet drove on a highway, she was terrified, but on subsequent trips, she felt more relaxed.

_Subsequent means_
A. first.  B. following.  C. previous.

9 wary  
(wār’ē)
-adjective

- "There’s no such thing as a free lunch" means that we should be wary about promises of getting something for nothing.
- I’m a little wary of people who, when they first meet me, treat me as if I’m their best friend.

_Wary means_
A. careful.  B. tired.  C. welcoming.

10 zeal  
(zēl)
-noun

- Velma attacked her food with such zeal that I thought she hadn’t eaten for a week!
- My neighbor has so much zeal about keeping our neighborhood clean that he sweeps our sidewalk if we don’t do it ourselves.

_Zeal means_
A. resistance.  B. passion.  C. skill.

Matching Words with Definitions

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

1. ________________  A tendency, or preference, to think, act, or behave in a certain way; a leaning
2. ________________  Rudely brief when speaking to someone; abrupt
3. ________________  Cautious; on guard
4. ________________  To reply, especially in a quick, sharp, or witty way
5. ________________  To lower the spirits of; weaken the confidence or cheerfulness of
6. ________________  A situation requiring a difficult choice
7. ________________  Following, in time or order; next; later
8. ________________  Enthusiastic devotion; intense enthusiasm
9. ________________  To deliberately destroy or damage
10. ________________  Very angry

**CAUTION:** Do not go any further until you are sure the above answers are correct. Then you can use the definitions to help you in the following practices. Your goal is eventually to know the words well enough so that you don’t need to check the definitions at all.
Sentence Check 1

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

A. curt   B. demoralize   C. dilemma   D. inclination   E. irate
F. retort   G. sabotage   H. subsequent   I. wary   J. zeal

1. Rob's ___ was whether to go to work feeling sick or to stay home and lose a day's pay.

2. Be ___ when something sounds too good to be true—it probably is.

3. I have to watch my budget because I have a(n) ___ to overspend.

4. The director cut off most of the auditioning singers with a(n) ___ response: “Thank you. That will be all.”

5. The striking miners planned to ___ one of the mines by blowing up the main entrance.

6. Because Devan expected to get an A on his research paper, receiving a grade of C truly ___(e)d him.

7. The team played miserably in the first game of the season, but they managed to win all ___ games.

8. My father always became ___ when any of his children came home after curfew. One time he began yelling at me even before my date had left.

9. If adolescents could apply to their studies just a bit of the ___ they feel for music and video games, their grades would improve dramatically.

10. When the wisecracking waiter said, “That hat looks ridiculous, lady,” the woman stated, “I didn’t come here to be insulted.” “That’s ___ what you think!” ___(e)d the waiter.

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

Sentence Check 2

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

1-2. Already angry, the customer became even more ___ when he received only this ___ response: “No returns.”

3-4. When I answer my phone and hear someone demand, “Who is this?” my ___ is to ___ “I’m the person whose phone warn ___ing. Who is this?”

5-6. Because of terrorist attempts to ___ flights, airlines security workers are ___ of even innocent-looking passengers.
7–8. I began the semester with great __ for my chemistry class, but the realization that I didn’t have the necessary background quickly __ (e)d me.

9–10. Margo intended to accept the job offer to be a salad chef, but a(n) __ offer for an office position has presented her with a(n) __: Should she take the interesting restaurant job, which pays poorly, or the higher-paying job that may not interest her much?

**Final Check: Telephone Salespeople**

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

If my carpets need cleaning or if I want a new cellphone plan, I will do some comparison shopping first. I am not likely to buy anything suddenly just because a complete stranger has phoned―usually during the dinner hour―to sell it. For this and other reasons, I have always been (1) __ of telephone salespeople. I don’t like their cheerful, overly amiable’ voices and their nervy suggestions as to how I might easily pay for whatever it is they are selling. My (2) __ is to get off the phone as soon as possible.

My husband, however, creates a(n) (3) __ for me when he takes these calls. He doesn’t want what is being sold either, but he feels sorry for the telemarketers. He doesn’t want to (4) __ them with such a(n) (5) __ reply as “No.” When they begin their sales pitches, he is overcome by their (6) __ for their products and therefore listens politely. Then he (7) __ s my efforts to discourage (8) __ calls by suggesting that the salespeople call back later to talk to his wife! I don’t know who gets more (9) __ when that happens—I or the salespeople, disappointed when they realize we never intended to buy a thing. More than once, when I’ve finally said “No sale” for the last time to an adamantly telemarketer who had been refusing to take “no” for an answer, he or she has (10) __ (e)d, “Well, thanks for wasting my time.”

**Scores**

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Enter your scores above and in the Vocabulary Performance Chart on the inside back cover of the book.