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Using the *Vocabu-Lit*® Program

Vocabu-Lit® is a unique vocabulary program. In format and approach, it differs in several ways from the usual vocabulary-building materials.

First, *Vocabu-Lit*® contains examples of how the vocabulary words have been used by various writers and speakers. Reading the different passages not only will expose you to good writing but also will show you how vocabulary can become an effective writing tool.

Second, *Vocabu-Lit*® does not ask you to learn a large number of words at one sitting. Instead, you work with just ten words at a time and are provided several experiences with those words. Each experience reinforces the previous one, helping you to master meaning.

Third, *Vocabu-Lit*® takes advantage of the way you naturally acquire language by having you study words in context. Learning words through context aids you in two ways. First, it leads you to define a word more precisely. It also helps you develop an important reading skill: the ability to use clues from surrounding words and sentences to determine a word's meaning.

Reading the Passage

Each lesson begins with a selection from a book, essay, story, poem, or speech. You are encouraged to read straight through the selection without paying too much attention to the Master Words (the ten words in bold type). You should be aware, however, that these are the words you will learn in the lesson. Your understanding of the general meaning of the passage will help you determine the definitions of the Master Words.

Self-Testing for Understanding

The first exercise is a self-test. It will help you identify the words that you have not yet mastered. Often you may think you know a Master Word. But the meaning you know may differ from the meaning of the word as it is used in the passage. Or you may be unable to state the exact definition of a word. This exercise teaches you to look at a word in

context and define its meaning more precisely.

To examine a word in context, you study the surrounding words and sentences, or context clues. For example, in "He was a mendicant because he had to beg," the words *because he had to beg* give you the context clue that *mendicant* means "beggar." Opposite or contrasting terms may also reveal the meaning of a word. In "He was far from poor; in fact he was affluent," the words *far from poor* tell you that *affluent* means "not poor"—in other words, "rich." An unfamiliar word may also be followed by examples that explain its meaning, such as "Mrs. Murphy was a hospitable woman who warmly welcomed everyone." Here, "warmly welcomed everyone" explains the word *hospitable*. Key words such as *means, is, for example, in other words, or and so forth* help direct you to a word's meaning.

Writing Definitions

In the second exercise, you are asked to write definitions of the ten Master Words. In the first part of the exercise, define as many of the ten words as you can without using a dictionary. Use context clues from the passage and your own experience with the words to write your definitions. In the second part of the exercise, you look up the words in a dictionary and write the correct definition on the line provided. You may wish to compare this definition to your definition.

Choosing Synonyms and Antonyms

The third exercise asks you to pick a synonym and an antonym for Master Words in the lesson. Synonyms are words that mean the same or *nearly the same* as one another. Antonyms are words that mean the opposite or *nearly the opposite*. Feel free to use your dictionary to help with this exercise.

Note: Some Master Words do not have an antonym. In such cases, the antonym blank has been marked with an X. Also, a synonym or antonym may seem to match more than one Master Word in the exercise. Be sure to choose the word that is the *best* match for the Master Word.

Using the *Vocabu-Lit*® Program

Completing Analogies

In the fourth exercise, you are asked to complete word analogies using the Master Words. An analogy is a comparison between two or more related things. Here too, you may be working with synonyms and antonyms, as well as cause-and-effect, and other types of word relationships. Look at this example:

day :night ::rich :_____

The symbol : means “is to” and :: means “as.” Thus the analogy could be read: “Day is to night as rich is to_____.”

The words *day* and *night* are opposites, or antonyms. So you should look for an antonym of *rich* in your list of Master Words. The Master Word *penniless* would be a correct response.

Fitting Words into Context

Exercise five includes ten sentences. You are to complete each sentence with the correct Master Word. Each sentence supplies clues to help you select the best answer. Thus, while testing your understanding of the new words, this exercise also provides practice in using the Master Words in context.

Playing with the Words

In the last exercise, you use the Master Words to solve a variety of puzzles and to play games. Acrostics, crossword puzzles, word spirals, and other activities are offered. But there are also more unusual puzzles that challenge you to arrange words by degree and to play word association games. You will also be invited to write stories using your newly acquired vocabulary.

Reviewing Knowledge

There are four review lessons in this book—lessons 8, 16, 24, and 32. These lessons test your mastery of the vocabulary words from the previous seven lessons by asking you to complete four different types of tests. The review lessons should help you pinpoint any Master Words that you still need to master.

LESSON 14

Read the following selection to get the general meaning. Then look at the selection again. Pay special attention to the words in dark type. These are the

from “**The Speckled Band**”
by Arthur Conan Doyle

A lady dressed in black and heavily veiled, who had been sitting in the window, rose as we entered.

“Good morning, madam,” said Holmes cheerily. “My name is Sherlock Holmes. This is my **intimate** friend and **associate**, Dr. Watson, before whom you can speak as freely as before myself. Ha, I am glad to see that Mrs. Hudson has had the good sense to light the fire. Pray draw up to it, and I shall order you a cup of hot coffee, for I observe that you are shivering.”

“It is not cold which makes me shiver,” said the woman in a low voice, changing her seat as requested.

“What then?”

“It is fear, Mr. Holmes. It is terror.” She raised her veil as she spoke, and we could see that she was indeed in a **pitiable** state of **agitation**, her face all **drawn** and gray, with restless, frightened eyes, like those of some hunted animal. Her features and figure were those of a woman of thirty, but her hair was shot with **premature** gray, and her

Master Words for this lesson. Notice how they are used in the sentences.

expression was weary and **haggard**. Sherlock Holmes ran over her with one of his quick, all-**comprehensive** glances.

“You must not fear,” said he soothingly, bending forward and patting her forearm. “We shall soon set matters right, I have no doubt. You have come in by train this morning, I see.”

“You know me, then?”

“No, but I observe the second half of a return ticket in the palm of your left glove. You must have started early and yet you had a good drive in a dog-cart,¹ along heavy roads, before you reached the station.”

The lady gave a violent start, and stared in **bewilderment** at my companion.

“There is no mystery, my dear madam,” said he, smiling. “The left arm of your jacket is spattered with mud in no less than seven places. The marks are perfectly fresh. There is no vehicle **save** a dog-cart which throws up mud in that way, and then only when you sit on the left-hand side of the driver.”

¹ A dog cart is a small horse-drawn carriage with two seats placed back to back.

EXERCISE 1

SELF-TEST: Look at the Master Words listed below. Underline the words you know. Circle the words you

are not sure about. Draw a rectangle around the words you don't know.

MASTER WORDS	
agitation	haggard
associate	intimate
bewilderment	pitiable
comprehensive	premature
drawn	save

EXERCISE 2

Read each Master Word below. On line **a**, write what you think the word means. Then look up the word in the dictionary. On line **b**, write the dictionary definition.

If there is more than one definition, choose the best one for the selection.

1. **agitation** (n.)

a. _____

b. _____

2. **associate** (n.)

a. _____

b. _____

3. **bewilderment** (n.)

a. _____

b. _____

4. **comprehensive** (adj.)

a. _____

b. _____

5. **drawn** (adj.)

a. _____

b. _____

6. **haggard** (adj.)

a. _____

b. _____

7. **intimate** (adj.)

a. _____

b. _____

8. **pitiable** (adj.)

a. _____

b. _____

9. **premature** (adj.)

a. _____

b. _____

10. **save** (conj.)

a. _____

b. _____

EXERCISE 3

Choose a word or phrase from the word bank to write a synonym and antonyms for each Master Word listed

below. Some words have no synonym or no antonym. In those cases, the line has been marked with an X.

calmness	confusion	except	incomplete	pale	public
certainty	early	healthy	late	partner	touching
complete	enemy	including	nervousness	personal	wasted

Synonyms

Antonyms

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|
| 1. agitation | _____ | _____ |
| 2. associate | _____ | _____ |
| 3. bewilderment | _____ | _____ |
| 4. comprehensive | _____ | _____ |
| 5. drawn | _____ | _____ |
| 6. haggard | _____ | X |
| 7. intimate | _____ | _____ |
| 8. pitiable | _____ | X |
| 9. premature | _____ | _____ |
| 10. save | _____ | _____ |

EXERCISE 4

For each set of items listed below, read the first pair of words and think about the way in which they are related. The word pairs listed below may be synonyms, antonyms, or cause-and-effect relationships.

Now complete another pair of words with the same kind of relationship by adding a Master Word. The first one has been done for you.

- | | | | |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1. clapping | :enjoyment | ::tapping | : <u>agitation</u> |
| 2. mistrust | :enemy | ::trust | : _____ |
| 3. after | :late | ::before | : _____ |
| 4. also | :including | ::except | : _____ |
| 5. victory | :joy | ::mystery | : _____ |
| 6. high points | :summarized | ::everything | : _____ |
| 7. everyone | :public | ::just us two | : _____ |
| 8. pampered | :plump | ::overworked | : _____ |
| 9. alligator | :fearsome | ::lost kitten | : _____ |

EXERCISE 5

Use the Master Words listed below to complete the following sentences.

agitation
associate

bewilderment
comprehensive

drawn
haggard

intimate
pitiable

premature
save

1. Her face was pale and _____ as if she'd seen a ghost.
2. My _____ and I started this business together.
3. His torn and dirty clothes gave him a _____ appearance.
4. I write _____ secrets in my journal.
5. This fat book is a _____ history of basketball.
6. It is _____ to celebrate a victory in the eighth inning.
7. He had finished his household duties _____ polishing the silver.
8. The starving dog let out a _____ whine.
9. Her anger and _____ were obvious as she paced the floor.
10. I was filled with _____; the magician had disappeared!

EXERCISE 6

Draw or write about a person, situation, or thing expressing one of the following groups of Master Words.

drawn
haggard

bewilderment
pitiable

premature
agitation



LESSON 21

Read the following selection to get the general meaning. Then look at the selection again. Pay special attention to the words in dark type. These are the

from **To Kill a Mockingbird**

by Harper Lee

Jem . . . seemed to **function effectively** alone or in a group, but Jem was a poor example: no **tutorial** system **devised** by man could have stopped him from getting at books. As for me, I knew nothing except what I gathered from *Time* magazine and reading everything I could lay my hands on at home, but as I inched sluggishly along the **treadmill** of the Maycomb County school system, I could not help receiving the **impression** that I was being cheated out of something. Out of what I knew not, yet I did not believe that twelve years of **unrelieved** boredom was exactly what the state had in mind for me.

As the year passed, released from school thirty minutes before Jem, who had to stay until three o'clock, I ran by the Radley Place as fast as I could, not stopping until I reached the safety of our front porch. One afternoon as I raced by, something caught my eye and caught it in such a way that I took a deep breath, a long look around, and went back.

Two live oaks stood at the edge of the Radley lot; their roots reached out into the side-road and made it bumpy. Something about one of the trees attracted my attention.

Master Words for this lesson. Notice how they are used in the sentences.

Some tinfoil was sticking into a **knot-hole*** just above my eye level, winking at me in the afternoon sun. I stood on tiptoe, hastily looked around once more, reached into the hole, and withdrew two pieces of chewing gum minus their outer wrappers.

My first **impulse** was to get it into my mouth as quickly as possible, but I remembered where I was. I ran home, and on our front porch I examined my loot. The gum looked fresh. I sniffed it and it smelled all right. I licked it and waited for a while. When I did not die I crammed it into my mouth: Wrigley's Double-Mint.

When Jem came home he asked me where I got such a wad. I told him I found it.

"Don't eat things you find, Scout."

"This wasn't on the ground, it was in a tree."

Jem growled.

"Well it was," I said. "It was sticking in that tree yonder, the one comin' from school."

"Spit it out right now!"

I spat it out. The **tang** was fading, anyway. "I've been chewin' it all afternoon and I ain't dead yet, not even sick."

*Teacher Note: In the original, this word was hyphenated. Over time, it came to be a one-word form.

EXERCISE 1

SELF-TEST: Look at the Master Words listed below. Underline the words you know. Circle the words you

are not sure about. Draw a rectangle around the words you don't know.

MASTER WORDS			
devise	impression	tang	unrelieved
effectively	impulse	treadmill	
function	knothole	tutorial	

EXERCISE 2

Read each Master Word below. On line **a**, write what you think the word means. Then look up the word in the dictionary. On line **b**, write the dictionary definition.

If there is more than one definition, choose the best one for the selection.

1. **devise** (v.)

a. _____

b. _____

2. **effectively** (adv.)

a. _____

b. _____

3. **function** (v.)

a. _____

b. _____

4. **impression** (n.)

a. _____

b. _____

5. **impulse** (n.)

a. _____

b. _____

6. **knothole** (n.)

a. _____

b. _____

7. **tang** (n.)

a. _____

b. _____

8. **treadmill** (n.)

a. _____

b. _____

9. **tutorial** (adj.)

a. _____

b. _____

10. **unrelieved** (adj.)

a. _____

b. _____

EXERCISE 3

Choose words or phrases from the word bank to write synonyms and antonyms for the Master Words listed

below. Some words have no antonym. In those cases, the line for the antonym has been marked with an X.

badly	fall apart	machine to walk on	short-term	work
blandness	hollow	plan	urge	zest
endless	idea	school	well	

Synonyms

Antonyms

1. devise	_____	X
2. effectively	_____	_____
3. function	_____	_____
4. impression	_____	X
5. impulse	_____	X
6. knothole	_____	X
7. tang	_____	_____
8. treadmill	_____	X
9. tutorial	_____	X
10. unrelieved	_____	_____

EXERCISE 4

For each set of items listed below, read the first pair of words and think about the way in which they are related. The word pairs may synonyms, antonyms, or other kinds of relationships.

Complete the second pair by adding a Master Word with the same relationship. The first one has been done for you.

1. garbage	:discard	::solution	: _____	devise
2. oversized	:fit	::broken	: _____	
3. blouse	:shirt	::feeling	: _____	
4. excitedly	:calmly	::poorly	: _____	
5. stair	:escalator	::sidewalk	: _____	
6. odd	:unusual	::never-ending	: _____	
7. car	:dent	::tree	: _____	
8. drowsy	:sleep	::sudden	: _____	
9. sound	:bang	::flavor	: _____	
10. fun	:recreational	::learning	: _____	

EXERCISE 5

Use the Master Words listed below to complete the following sentences.

devise	function	impulse	tang	tutorial
effectively	impression	knothole	treadmill	unrelieved

1. The lecturer's _____ murmur put me to sleep.
2. I hope this homemade radio will _____.
3. I got the _____ you were mad at me.
4. We were able to _____ patch the canoe with the tools we had.
5. Someday I'll _____ a system for finding lost socks.
6. I bought that toy on _____ and now I regret it.
7. The _____ in the tree offered an easy step up.
8. Their _____ approach to explaining origami made it very easy to do.
9. That new sour candy has a real _____.
10. I'd rather run on a track than a _____.

EXERCISE 6

Use at least five Master Words to write a story about a new invention.
