

# LESSON 20

From **The Inaugural Address (1961)** (speech)  
by John F. Kennedy

In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course. Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been **summoned** to give **testimony** to its national loyalty. The graves of young Americans who answered the call to service surround the globe.

Now the trumpet summons us again—not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need—not as a call to battle, though embattled we are—but a call to bear the burden of a long **twilight** struggle, year in and year out “rejoicing in hope, patient in **tribulation**”—a struggle against the common enemies of man: **tyranny**, poverty, disease, and war itself.

Can we **forge** against these enemies a grand and global **alliance**, North and South, East and West, that can assure a more fruitful life for all mankind? Will you join in that historic effort?

In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of **maximum**

danger. I do not **shrink** from this responsibility—I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith, and the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it—and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.

And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.

My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask of us here the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which we ask of you. With a good **conscience** our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God’s work must truly be our own.

## • Exercise 1: Context Clues

Read the passage above, paying special attention to the words in dark type. These are the Master Words you will study in this lesson. As you read, look for context clues in the sentences and paragraphs around each master word. Circle any words and phrases that give clues to the meaning of the master words.

### Master Words

Place a check by words you feel you know; underline words you don’t know.

alliance	forge	shrink	testimony	twilight
conscience	maximum	summon	tribulation	tyranny

## • • • • Exercise 2: Using Context Clues

Fill in the form for each of the Master Words listed below with context clues (if any), your definition, and the dictionary definition. If you have difficulty writing a definition, try using the word in a sentence instead.

- alliance**                      Part of Speech: *n.*                      Context Clues: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_
- conscience**                      Part of Speech: *n.*                      Context Clues: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_
- forge**                      Part of Speech: *v.*                      Context Clues: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_
- maximum**                      Part of Speech: *adj.*                      Context Clues: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_
- shrink**                      Part of Speech: *v.*                      Context Clues: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_
- summon**                      Part of Speech: *v.*                      Context Clues: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_
- testimony**                      Part of Speech: *n.*                      Context Clues: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_
- tribulation**                      Part of Speech: *n.*                      Context Clues: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_
- twilight**                      Part of Speech: *adj.*                      Context Clues: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_
- tyranny**                      Part of Speech: *n.*                      Context Clues: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

### Exercise 3: Synonyms and Antonyms

Use the synonyms and antonyms in the word list to fill in the blanks except where you see an X.

	Synonyms	Antonyms	Word List	
1. <b>summon</b>	_____	_____	advance	freedom
2. <b>testimony</b>	_____	X	blessing	greatest
3. <b>tribulation</b>	_____	_____	bright	immorality
4. <b>tyranny</b>	_____	_____	call	minimum
5. <b>forge</b>	_____	_____	dictatorship	morals
6. <b>alliance</b>	_____	_____	dismiss	obscure
7. <b>twilight</b>	_____	_____	dissolve	separation
8. <b>maximum</b>	_____	_____	evidence	trouble
9. <b>shrink</b>	_____	_____	flinch	union
10. <b>conscience</b>	_____	_____	form	

### Exercise 4: Sentence Completion

From the Master Words, choose the appropriate word for the blank in each of the following sentences. Write the word in the space provided at the right.

- I would like to ...?... a new relationship based on trust and friendship. \_\_\_\_\_
- Often ...?... results when too much power is put in the hands of too few. \_\_\_\_\_
- Coach had to ...?... Shawn to the sideline for a quick word of advice. \_\_\_\_\_
- The great ...?... that man has suffered shows in his haggard face. \_\_\_\_\_
- Each speaker gave ...?... to the achievements of the guest of honor. \_\_\_\_\_
- I will never be a doctor. I ...?... from the smallest drop of blood. \_\_\_\_\_
- I knew you had (a, an) ...?... and would do the right thing in the end. \_\_\_\_\_
- During World War II, the United States and Britain formed (a, an) ...?... to defeat Nazi Germany. \_\_\_\_\_
- The ...?... number of people allowed into the hall is 5,000; more would be unsafe. \_\_\_\_\_
- They made one final ...?... effort with only a dim hope of success. \_\_\_\_\_

## •••• Exercise 5: Using Words with Multiple Meanings

Each of the Master Words in bold type in these sentences has a different meaning from the same word in the passage. For each word, note the part of speech and write your definition of the word as it is used in the sentence. Then write the dictionary definition.

1. Unfortunately, deer often feed at **twilight**, and it is hard for drivers to see them in the dwindling light.

Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

2. The blacksmith worked at his **forge**, heating the metal and hammering it into horseshoes.

Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

3. After the number of occupants reached the legal **maximum**, no one else was allowed into the hall.

Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Washing clothing made from knitted fabric in hot water will often **shrink** it.

Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

5. The eyewitness gave her **testimony** in court, telling what she had seen of the crime.

Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

## •••• Exercise 6: Analogies

Determine the relationship between the first pair of words in each item. Then write the Master Word on the blank that would create a similar relationship with the second pair of words. The types of relationships used are cause/effect, degree, producer/product, synonyms, and whole/parts. (See page 158 for a guide to analogy types.)

1. few : least :: many : \_\_\_\_\_

2. farmer : harvest :: dictator : \_\_\_\_\_

3. smash : broken :: \_\_\_\_\_ : smaller

4. shining : bright :: \_\_\_\_\_ : dim

5. chain : links :: \_\_\_\_\_ : nations

### Write About It: Speech

**Write a short speech** that you might give at a ceremony honoring an important event in American history. The speech might honor heroes who fell in a famous Civil War battle or a major achievement in America's space program. Use formal English that would be appropriate for such an occasion. Include at least four of the Master Words in your speech.

# Unit Word Study

## Classic Roots and Affixes (*pro-*, *voc/voke*)

The master word **provoke** is based on the Latin root *voc*, sometimes spelled *voke*, which means “to call.” The root comes from the Latin *vocare*, which also means “to call” and is related to the Latin word *vox*, meaning “voice.” The prefix *pro-* usually means “before,” “forward,” or “forth,” so to provoke is literally “to call forth.” Use this information to complete the exercise below.

### Matching

Write the letter of the definition after the correct word on the left. Use a dictionary if necessary.

- |                       |       |   |
|-----------------------|-------|---|
| 1. <b>provocation</b> | _____ | a. a calling; a career                                |
| 2. <b>invoke</b>      | _____ | b. to give voice to; to speak or sing                 |
| 3. <b>revoke</b>      | _____ | c. something that calls forth a reaction of some kind |
| 4. <b>vocation</b>    | _____ | d. to call back; to withdraw or cancel                |
| 5. <b>vocalize</b>    | _____ | e. to call on for help or inspiration                 |

### Understanding Word Origins

The Master Word **maximum** contains the prefix *maxi-*, which means “very large,” “very long,” or “greatest.” *Maxi-* appears in several English words and is also used (sometimes with the hyphen retained) in newly invented words to suggest that they are very big or effective. For instance, a juice company calling its product container a maxi-bottle is stressing the very large size of the product. Using this information, write a definition of each word in the left column. Then use the word in a sentence. Consult a dictionary if you need help.

- |              |             |       |
|--------------|-------------|-------|
| 1. maxiskirt | Definition: | _____ |
|              | Sentence:   | _____ |
| 2. maximize  | Definition: | _____ |
|              | Sentence:   | _____ |
| 3. maxicoat  | Definition: | _____ |
|              | Sentence:   | _____ |
| 4. maximal   | Definition: | _____ |
|              | Sentence:   | _____ |

# Unit Word Study

## Idioms and Sayings

An idiom is a saying in which the meaning is not immediately clear from the denotation of the individual words that make it up. For example, the idiom *after a fashion*, which the doctor uses in the passage from *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* (p. 92), means “in some way but not very well.” If you don’t know the meaning of an idiom, you will have to use context clues to figure it out. Idioms are sometimes listed under their key words in regular dictionaries; for instance, you might find *after a fashion* at the end of the dictionary entry for *fashion*. You can also refer to special idiom dictionaries or search the Internet for definitions.

## Matching

The sentences below contain idioms in bold print that come from the passages in this unit. Write the letter of the definition on the right that matches the idiom in each sentence. Use the context clues to help you.

- |       |   |  |
|-------|---|--|
| _____ | 1. Margaret frowned in irritation, for she was <b>put out</b> that I had not obeyed her.  | a. show approval                               |
| _____ | 2. I was glad that Mrs. Flowers chose to <b>smile on me</b> , since her positive attitude toward me made a big difference in my life. | b. assisted a mother in the birth of her child |
| _____ | 3. We heard a frenzied voice <b>break in</b> on the radio program to announce the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.                    | c. annoyed                                     |
| _____ | 4. “In my forty years in the medical profession, I have <b>brought into this world</b> a large number of babies,” said the doctor.    | d. interrupt                                   |

## Using Idioms

The idioms in bold print in these sentences each include a Master Word from the unit. Use the context and your knowledge of the Master Words to figure out the meaning of each idiom. Write the definition, and then use the idiom in a sentence of your own.

1. Jo is a **shrinking violet** who rarely speaks except among close friends.

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Despite the rain, we will **forge ahead** with construction in order to meet our deadline.

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

3. That dress designer is on the **cutting edge** of fashion.

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Although he has entered his **twilight years**, Uncle Al is still the boss in our family.

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

# Unit Assessment

## I. Read the passage below. Then answer questions 1–8.

### The Kennedy Inauguration

John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address, given in 1961, is considered one of the finest presidential speeches of all time. As the new chief **executive** of our nation, Kennedy was able to **articulate** his vision for the direction America should take for years to come.

Speaking at the height of the Cold War, Kennedy wanted to **forge** and strengthen **alliances** with other nations in this fight against communism. He also wanted to **reassure** worried Americans that their country would be strong in this struggle. So he spoke firmly about the dangers of **tyranny** and the vital importance of freedom.

Kennedy also wanted to **summon** Americans to do their duty, both at home and abroad. His inspiring line, "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country," is just such a summons.

Kennedy made his speech with all the **dignity** suited to the formal occasion of a presidential inauguration. Yet he also realized that television—then still a relatively new invention—was bringing

his words and image right into people's living rooms. For that reason, he worked hard to create intimacy with his audience, a feeling of **familiarity** that would make each listener feel that he or she was part of the grand event.

To help make the occasion even more memorable, President Kennedy invited the world-famous poet Robert Frost, a fellow New Englander, to recite a poem at his inauguration. Although other poets had written about inaugurations in the past, Frost was the first to be invited to the official swearing-in ceremony.

Decades later President Bill Clinton, who deeply admired John F. Kennedy, would also invite a poet to recite at his inauguration. The poet Clinton invited was Maya Angelou, who came from his home state of Arkansas. Angelou is famous not only for poetry but also for an autobiography telling about her Arkansas childhood, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*.

**Questions 1–3:** Find the word most nearly opposite in meaning to the given word.

1. **reassure** is most nearly **opposite** in meaning to

- (A) forget
- (B) believe
- (C) worry
- (D) retreat
- (E) begin

2. **familiarity** is most nearly **opposite** in meaning to

- (A) replacement
- (B) formality
- (C) boredom
- (D) simplicity
- (E) relationship

3. **alliances** is most nearly **opposite** in meaning to

- (A) feuds
- (B) friendships
- (C) nationalities
- (D) memories
- (E) politics

**Questions 4–6:** Find the word most similar in meaning to the given word.

4. **tyranny** is most **similar** in meaning to

- (A) government
- (B) ruler
- (C) dictatorship
- (D) ceremony
- (E) obsession

5. **articulate** is most **similar** in meaning to

- (A) wonder
- (B) dream
- (C) question
- (D) express
- (E) govern

6. **executive** is most **similar** in meaning to

- (A) administrator
- (B) investor
- (C) patriot
- (D) politician
- (E) speaker

# Unit Assessment

**Questions 7–8:** Choose the answer about the part of speech of the given word as used in the sentence.

7. What is the part of speech of the word **summon** as used in the sentence?

Kennedy also wanted to **summon** Americans to do their duty.

- (A) verb
- (B) noun
- (C) adjective
- (D) adverb
- (E) preposition

8. What is the part of speech of the word **forge** as used in the sentence?

Kennedy wanted to **forge** and strengthen alliances with other nations.

- (A) verb
- (B) noun
- (C) adjective
- (D) adverb
- (E) preposition

**Questions 9–10:** Choose the answer with the words from the unit that best fit the blanks and complete the sentence.

9. An inauguration is usually an occasion of great ...?... in which a new president tries to ...?... ideas about the direction he or she hopes to take the nation.

- (A) tribulation, summon
- (B) conscience, barrel
- (C) incident, reassure
- (D) dignity, articulate
- (E) testimony, restrain

10. Good speakers like John F. Kennedy use words to their ...?... effect and try to ...?... emotional reactions in listeners.

- (A) taut, barrel
- (B) maximum, provoke
- (C) unceremonious, fix
- (D) hysterical, articulate
- (E) bizarre, shrink

*continued*



# Unit Assessment

## II. Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

One of the Lhari checking papers stopped and **fixed** him with an inscrutable gray stare but finally turned away again.

Bart began really to worry. Captain Steele would never miss his ship! But he saw only one disembarking passenger who had not yet been surrounded by a group of welcoming relatives or **summoned** a robotcab and gone.

—from *The Colors of Space* by Marion Zimmer Bradley

11. What word or phrase is most similar to the word **fixed** in the passage?
- (A) repaired (B) sat on (C) understood (D) focused on
12. Which word(s) or phrase(s) from the passage best helps the reader understand the meaning of **fixed**?
- (A) checking papers (B) stare (C) turned (D) worry
13. Which dictionary definition below best matches the use of the word **summoned** in the passage?
- (A) v. called over (B) v. ordered to appear in court (C) n. those who were called (D) v. called from the spirit world

## III. Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

The ...?... was so obsessed with her cause that she began ranting about it in the middle of the crowded mall. Several shoppers thought her ...?... speech was a sign of madness.

14. Which pair of words best completes the blanks in the passage?
- (A) aristocrat, effortless (B) executive, methodical (C) midwife, stupefied (D) fanatic, frenzied
15. Which words or phrases from the passage best help the reader answer question 14?
- (A) obsessed, ranting, madness (B) shoppers, crowded, mall (C) cause, speech, sign (D) middle, crowded, several

# Unit Assessment

## IV. Read the passage below and answer the question that follows.

“That old **nuisance** of a Rachel Lynde was here again today, pestering me for a subscription towards buying a carpet for the vestry room,” said Mr. Harrison wrathfully. “I detest that woman more than anybody I know.”

—from *Anne of Avonlea* by Lucy Maud Montgomery

16. What two clues from the passage help you understand the meaning of **nuisance**?

- Ⓐ old, again
- Ⓑ pestering, detest
- Ⓒ today, wrathfully
- Ⓓ subscription, carpet

## V. Analytical Writing: Comparing a Public Speech and Its Transcription

The passage from John F. Kennedy’s Inaugural Address is a written version, or transcription, of part of a speech made by a historical figure on an important occasion. You can watch Kennedy making the actual speech at many Internet sites, including that of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, [jfklibrary.org](http://jfklibrary.org).

View the speech, focusing on the final portion that appears in Lesson 20. Then write an essay in which you analyze the effects of the speech in the two different media, oral and written. Discuss the purpose, occasion, and audience of the speech and the effectiveness with which Kennedy argues specific claims. Then consider which elements of the speech are lost or weakened in writing and which are retained or improved. The following Master Words from this unit may be especially appropriate for your essay. Use as many of them as you can.

articulate	executive	inclusive	reassure	testimony
dignity	forge	maximum	summon	tyranny

### Developing and Strengthening Your Writing Process

Go through the writing process—planning, drafting, revising, editing—as you work on your analytical essay. In the planning stage, for example, you may want to make a two-column comparison-and-contrast chart with one column for the oral version and another for the written version. Add notes in each column about the differences and similarities you see. Then develop the central idea your notes suggest and plan out a structure for your essay. The advance planning will help you write a good first draft. Share that draft with a partner and ask for feedback, using a collaborative online tool. Then revise your essay accordingly. When you are satisfied with your revision, edit your report for grammar, spelling, and other conventions.