

Lesson Sixteen

1. **pique** (pēk) *verb* 1. to cause another's pride to be wounded 2. to excite curiosity or interest
 1. The old gentleman was *piqued* because he was not given a seat at the head table.
 2. Whenever I travel, my curiosity is *piqued*; then I must study all about where I am going.

2. **plagiarism** (plā'jəriz'əm) *noun* taking another's thoughts or words and using them as one's own
 Because his own papers earned him only a "D," he committed a desperate act of *plagiarism*.
syn: appropriation, theft, piracy *ant:* composition, creation, origination

3. **plebeian** (plī bē'ən) *noun/adj.* one of the common people; common or vulgar
 As a freshman in a new school, Frank knew he was nothing but a *plebeian*.
syn: proletarian, undistinguished *ant:* aristocrat, patrician, distinguished

4. **precocious** (prī kō'shəs) *adj.* developed earlier than usual, especially mentally
 Although he was not quite a prodigy, he certainly was a *precocious* piano player.
syn: premature, forward, advanced *ant:* backward, retarded, obtuse

5. **predatory** (prēd'ə tō ē) *adj.* inclined to rob or prey on others
 The buzzard is a scavenger, but the hawk is a *predatory* animal.
syn: pillaging, despoiling *ant:* nurturing

6. **prowess** (prou'is) *noun* unusual skill or ability; heroism in battle
 His physical *prowess* was matched by his superior mental ability.
syn: dexterity; bravery, valor *ant:* timidity, trepidation, vacillation

7. **pugnacious** (pūg nā'shəs) *adj.* eager and ready to fight; quarrelsome
 Because he was so *pugnacious*, he had few friends.
syn: combative, belligerent, aggressive, militant *ant:* placid, pacific, peaceful

8. **purloin** (pər loin') *verb* to steal
 They had not planned to *purloin* the jewels, but the temptation was too great.

9. **pusillanimous** (pyōō' sə lān' ə mās) *adj.* cowardly, fearful
 The Wizard of Oz granted the *pusillanimous* lion his wish to have courage.
syn: fainthearted, timid *ant:* brave, bold

10. **quell** (kwēl) *verb* to put an end to; to allay or quiet
 The police were called out to *quell* the riot.
syn: abate, pacify, subdue *ant:* agitate, aggravate, instigate

11. **quixotic** (kwīk sōt'ik) *adj.* extremely idealistic; not practical
 As a young man he had the *quixotic* notion that he could single-handedly end poverty in the country.
syn: impractical *ant:* realistic, practical

12. **rabble** (răb' əl) *noun* a disorderly crowd, a mob; the lowest class of people
The guards had to protect the president from the *rabble* in the streets.
syn: riffraff, populace
13. **rabid** (răb' id) *adj.* intense; furious or raging, mad
The two opposing parties engaged in a *rabid* struggle for control of the country.
syn: violent, extreme *ant:* calm, tame
14. **raconteur** (răk' ōn tyûr') *noun* a person skilled at telling stories or anecdotes
As a *raconteur*, George had no equal.
15. **raillery** (ră' lə rē) *noun* good-humored ridicule; banter
I much prefer Johnny's *raillery* to the cynical slurs of that other comedian.

EXERCISE I — Words in Context

From the list of words below, supply the words needed to complete the sentences.

raconteur	pugnacious	prowess
rabble	plebeians	

- A. In his old age, he found he was very popular with young children. His popularity came from his ability to tell stories. He told tales with such _____ that he was known as the neighborhood _____.
- B. The _____ gathered in the plaza were good, honest men who sought only their rights guaranteed by law; the Emperor, however, called them _____ and told the soldiers to run them off like the frightened little chickens they were. So it was quite a surprise when the citizens turned _____ and refused to leave the plaza.

From the list of words below, supply the words needed to complete the sentences.

pusillanimous	precocious	plagiarism
rabid	predatory	raillery

- C. Although he was used to the _____ that went on in the office, Tom thought the boss went too far when he said that his wife eating ice cream looked like a _____ dog. He wished that he were not so _____, but he knew he did not have the courage to confront his boss.
- D. As a child, Tom had always been _____, and as a result, he was graduated from high school at the age of fourteen. At twenty, when he was in graduate school, he submitted a number of stories for publication. When one of his rejected stories appeared in a magazine, Tom knew that some _____ editor had committed _____ and had stolen the story he had written.

From the list of words below, supply the words needed to complete the sentences.

piqued	quixotic	purloin	quell
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- E. He was a _____ young man who fought the windmills of bureaucracy and never even noticed that they were not in the least _____ by his attacks.