

Lesson Four

1. **acme** (ăk' mē) *noun* the highest point
After finally achieving a partnership in her law firm, Karen felt her career had reached its *acme*
syn: zenith, pinnacle *ant: nadir*
2. **apocryphal** (ə pŏk' rə fəl) *adjective* of doubtful origin; fictitious
Although Chris claimed that his uncle had, in a previous life, been Napoleon, the dubious evidence indicated that the story was *apocryphal*.
syn: spurious, false, erroneous *ant: truthful*
3. **catharsis** (kə thăr' sīs) *noun* an extremely emotional experience
When he learned of his mother's illness, the criminal underwent a *catharsis* and changed his evil ways.
4. **desiccate** (dēs' ĭ kāt') *verb* to dry up completely
They *desiccate* flowers and send them around the world.
5. **dissipate** (dīs' ə pāt') *verb* to waste; exhaust
Before bottled oxygen was available, those who climbed Mt. Everest found that their energy *dissipated* too quickly because of thin air.
syn: squander, expend
6. **efficacious** (ēf' ĭ kă' shəs) *adjective* effective; producing the desired outcome
The shot of adrenaline was *efficacious* in instantly restarting the victim's heart.
ant: ineffective
7. **ineffable** (ĭn ēf' ə bəl) *adjective* inexpressible; beyond description
The return of our long-lost brother filled us with such *ineffable* joy that all we could do was cry from happiness.
syn: unexplainable
8. **intrinsic** (ĭn trĭn' sĭk) *adjective* of or relating to the basic nature of a thing; inherent
Humans have an *intrinsic* desire to be loved.
syn: native, natural, instinctive *ant: extrinsic*
9. **inundate** (ĭn' ũn dāt') *verb* to cover with; to be overwhelmed with
He was *inundated* with desperate requests for tickets to the sold-out show.
syn: flood
10. **kudos** (kŏŏ' dŏz') *noun* praise, fame, glory
The playwright's successful new production won her *kudos* from the press.
syn: distinction *ant: opprobrium*

11. **maxim** (măk' sĭm) *noun* fundamental principle; rule; familiar statement
Many people feel the best *maxim* for peaceful living is the Golden Rule.
syn: proverb
12. **putrid** (pyōō' trĭd) *adjective* partially decayed or decomposed; having a foul smell
Cold coffee tastes bitter, but unrefrigerated fish can be *putrid* and dangerous.
syn: sickening, malodorous, rotten ant: fresh
13. **revere** (rĭ vĭr') *verb* to regard with respect, awe, and adoration
The cult members were aghast when the man they *revered* as a messiah was accused of embezzling funds.
syn: venerate, honor ant: revile
14. **servile** (sĭr' vəl) *adjective* submissive, slavish
The *servile* wolves showed their lower status to the highest-ranking wolf by cowering before him.
syn: subservient ant: haughty
15. **superfluous** (sōō pŭr' flōō əs) *adjective* unnecessary; excessive
He made many unimportant and *superfluous* remarks to cover his nervousness.
syn: extra, needless ant: essential

Exercise I — Words in Context

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

efficacious superfluous dessicated catharsis intrinsic

- A. Bob's _____ beliefs were so superficial that it appeared as though he experienced a(n) _____ each time he encountered a new philosophy.
- B. When writing short stories, Kafka eliminated _____ words and ideas.
- C. He questioned whether fruit that had been _____ was as _____ for one's health as fresh fruit.

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

kudos maxim acme apocryphal revere

- D. The stories of monsters and sea serpents are most likely _____. The Loch Ness Monster myth sits at the _____ of these legends, but Scotland's residents _____ their "Nessie."