

Lesson Nine

1. **benign** (bĭ nĕɹ) *adjective* beneficial; favorable
 Her *benign* expression encouraged me to apologize for our argument.
syn: harmless, propitious *ant: malignant*

2. **blithe** (blɪð) *adjective* carefree and lighthearted
 Always a *blithe* spirit, Sandy called in sick to work and went to the beach.
syn: joyous, cheerful *ant: joyless*

3. **bumpkin** (bŭmp' kĭn) *noun* an unsophisticated person
 After living in the city for so many years, Ed thought his new, rural neighbors were *bumpkins* because of their simplistic attitudes.
syn: yokel

4. **corroborate** (kə rɒb' ə rāt') *verb* to make more certain, add evidence to
 Bill obtained a doctor's note to *corroborate* his excuse for a recent sick leave.
syn: substantiate, validate *ant: contradict*

5. **culpable** (kŭl' pə bəl) *adjective* blameable, responsible for
 Charles Manson was considered *culpable* in the Sharon Tate murder trial although he committed no murders himself.
syn: blameworthy *ant: praiseworthy*

6. **frenetic** (frə nĕt' ĭk) *adjective* frenzied
 Although I worked at a *frenetic* pace, it seemed as if my studying would never be finished in time for the exam.
syn: frantic *ant: calmed*

7. **goad** (gōd) *verb* to urge, to prod
 The teacher *goaded* the slow student to finish his work.
syn: spur, incite *ant: curb*

8. **indecorous** (ĭn dĕk' ə r əs) *adjective* lacking good taste; improper
 The prim older lady thought the teenager's loud laugh and carefree attitude were *indecorous* in church.
syn: inappropriate *ant: seemly*

9. **indolent** (ĭn' də lənt) *adjective* lazy
 The hot, humid weather made us *indolent*; we lounged on the porch and drank lemonade all day.
syn: torpid, idle *ant: active*

10. **pervasive** (pər vā' sɪv) *adjective* permeating; present throughout
Malaria was *pervasive* in the tropics before the introduction of DDT.
syn: ubiquitous *ant: absent from*
11. **provocative** (prə vɒk' ə tɪv) *adjective* stimulating; inciting to action
The daughter considered her mother's short skirt too *provocative*.
syn: instigate
12. **punitive** (pyōō' nɪ tɪv) *adjective* punishing
Punitive monetary damages are usually higher than actual damages if negligence can be proven.
ant: pardon
13. **recrimination** (rɪ krɪm' ə nā shən) *noun* an accusation made to counter another
Many *recriminations* and legal problems followed the burglary charge, even though it was later dismissed.
14. **soporific** (sɒp' ə rɪf' ɪk) *noun* something that induces sleep
I used to think TV was a *soporific* since it put my father to sleep whenever he watched it.
syn: drowsy
15. **toady** (tō' dē) *noun* a person who flatters; sycophant
The *toadies* and courtiers surrounded the spoiled young prince, agreeing with every idiotic statement he uttered.
syn: fawner, flatterer

Exercise I — Words in Context

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

indolent

frenetic

soporific

blithely

provocative

- A. The owner of the automotive plant approached the new worker. Adam, the _____ one, late for work again and nearly _____ most of the day, resented being criticized. He made several _____ remarks about quitting that instant. Since the pace of activity around Adam had been _____ all day, the boss _____ informed him that he was fired.

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

benign

punitive

bumpkin

toady

indecorous

- B. The king and queen's jester and flattering _____ had had too much to drink during the meal; as a result he insulted a baron with a(n) _____ remark. The nobleman insisted on retribution or some _____ measures aimed at the staggering, ill-clothed _____. The king realized the insult was the simple _____ result of drunkenness and forgave his favorite fool.