

UNIT 1

Read the following passage, taking note of the **boldface** words and their contexts. These words are among those you will be studying in Unit 1. As you complete the exercises in this Unit, it may help to refer to the way the words are used below.

Greetings from the WPA

<Letters>

Twenty-five percent of workers in the United States were unemployed during the height of the Great Depression. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's administration created the Works Progress Administration (WPA). It employed over eight million people in construction and arts projects from 1935 to 1943.

April 10, 1937
Butte, Montana

Dearest Rose,

I'd say I've been meaning to write for ages and I think of you often, but I know you loathe that sort of **servile** sentimentality, and I wouldn't want to **wrangle** about it next time we meet. Moe and I were just talking about when the three of us were together in Chicago. We got to reminiscing, and soon we were goofing around like we used to—we must have **reverted** halfway to infancy! He said you're working for the Works Progress Administration in New York. I've been writing for the WPA myself.

Things got worse in Chicago after you left. I was in and out of odd jobs, mostly out of them, and I moved back to Montana. I stayed in Missoula for a bit, at my parents' house, which is the same **citadel** of good

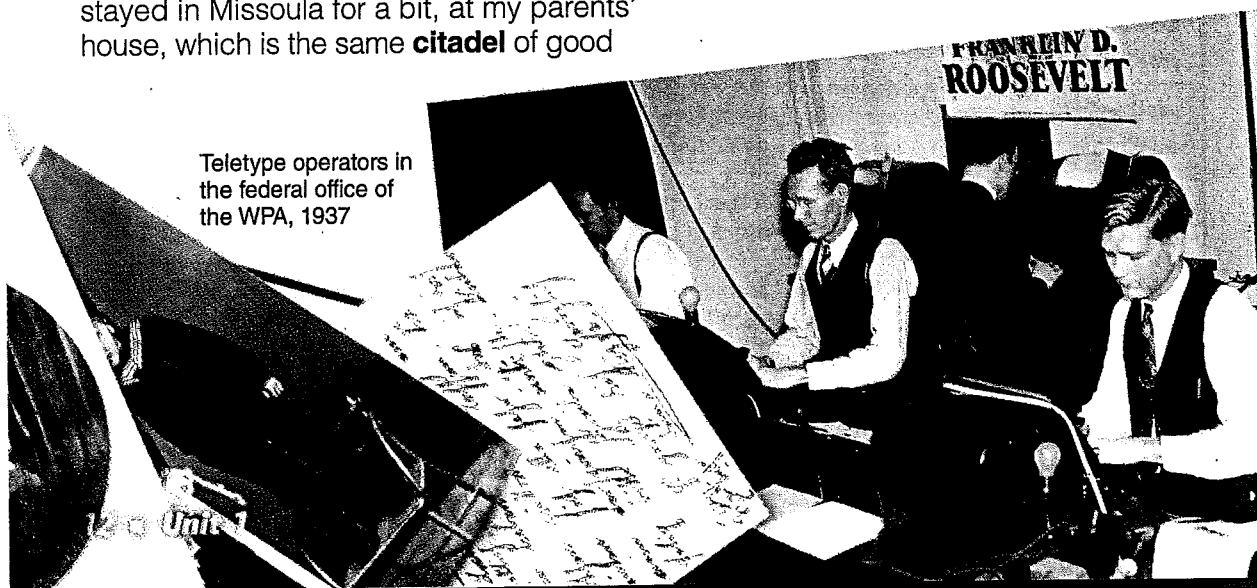
manners and polite conversation that I remember. I'm grateful they took me in, but I felt uncomfortable about it. I don't know why I should feel like a **laggard** when everyone else is out of work, too, but it really got me down and put me in a **churlish** state of mind. After weeks of grumpily **hovering** around the house, I found work at a ranch that provided room and board.

When that job ended, I lucked into some work for the WPA. I'm writing "objective descriptions" of town, countryside, and work projects. I watched construction on the Fort Peck Dam. Now I'm in Butte, climbing through **rubble** and machinery at the copper mines nearby. By official **decree**, I'm here to record facts and figures, but I can't resist interviewing the miners, and I believe this is the best writing work I've done. I'll send you an **excerpt** once I've written more.

Send a letter if you can, or maybe I'll come see you in New York when I'm done with Butte.

Yours,
Henry

Teletype operators in the federal office of the WPA, 1937



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Yours,
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WPA artists at work on a mural;
Woman displaying WPA poster, 1936



June 3, 1937
New York City, New York

Dear Henry,

It's been hard times out east, too, and worse this year, just after it had seemed the country was **groping** its way back to normalcy. The only artists I know making a living with their art are working for the WPA, and I'm lucky to be one of them. I've done a series of woodcuts for posters and may soon have a chance to **collaborate** with another painter on a mural for a hospital. Some of the work that the WPA artists produce is very good, but I haven't spent as much time worrying about **plaudits** and praise as about keeping the work lined up. Around two thousand New York artists are working for the Federal Arts Project this year. The pay's not much, but I wonder what I'd be doing without it. Wonder is the beginning of wisdom, but that's a kind of wisdom I'm happy to put off.

Just back from waiting on the predictably long line for our paychecks. It's become a social event. We pass the time chatting about painting and **jostling** each other out of line for a laugh.

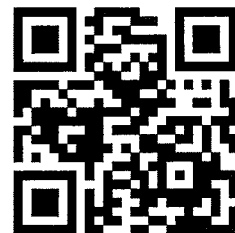
I can hardly imagine you in New York, but that doesn't **preclude** your arrival.

Love,
Rose



Relief workers on a cable during
the construction of the Fort Peck
Dam, 1936

Audio



For Words and
audio passages,
snap the code, or
go to vocabularyworkshop.com.

Definitions

Note the spelling, pronunciation, part(s) of speech, and definition(s) of each of the following words. Then write the appropriate form of the word in the blank spaces in the illustrative sentence(s) following. Finally, study the lists of synonyms and antonyms.

1. adage
(ad' ij)

(*n.*) a proverb, wise saying

One way to begin an informal speech or an oral report is to quote an old _____.

SYNONYMS: maxim, aphorism

2. bonanza
(bə nan' zə)

(*n.*) a rich mass of ore in a mine; something very valuable, profitable, or rewarding; a source of wealth or prosperity; a very large amount; sudden profit or gain

The thrilling adventure movie set in Alaska proved to be a box-office _____.

SYNONYM: windfall

3. churlish
(chər' lish)

(*adj.*) lacking politeness or good manners; lacking sensitivity; difficult to work with or deal with; rude

The store manager instructed all the salesclerks to avoid _____ replies to customers' questions.

SYNONYMS: surly, ill-tempered

ANTONYMS: courteous, civil, well-mannered

4. citadel
(sit' ə del)

(*n.*) a fortress that overlooks and protects a city; any strong or commanding place

A medieval _____ once guarded the capital city of the Greek island of Rhodes.

SYNONYMS: fort, stronghold, bulwark, bastion

5. collaborate
(kə lab' ə rāt)

(*v.*) to work with, work together

Several students plan to _____ on a geology project for the annual science fair.

SYNONYMS: team up, join forces

ANTONYM: work alone

6. decree
(di krē')

(*n.*) an order having the force of law; (*v.*) to issue such an order; to command firmly or forcefully

Caesar Augustus issued a _____ that all the world be taxed.

Why does nature always seem to _____ nasty weather for our annual family picnic?

SYNONYMS: (*n.*) proclamation, edict; (*v.*) proclaim

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7. discordant
(dis kôr' dânt)

(*adj.*) disagreeable in sound, jarring; lacking in harmony

Their little spat struck a _____ note in our otherwise happy family get-together.

SYNONYMS: grating, shrill, different, divergent, conflicting

ANTONYMS: harmonious, in agreement

8. evolve
(ē vâlv')

(*v.*) to develop gradually; to rise to a higher level

Authors hope that their notes, descriptions, and character sketches will _____ into a book.

SYNONYMS: unfold, emerge; ANTONYMS: wither, atrophy

9. excerpt
(ek' sərpt)

(*n.*) a passage taken from a book, article, etc.; (*v.*) to take such a passage; to quote

My essay includes a long _____ from a speech by Sojourner Truth.

If you _____ some material from a reference book, be sure to enclose it in quotation marks.

SYNONYMS: (*n.*) portion, section, extract

10. grope
(gröp)

(*v.*) to feel about hesitantly with the hands; to search blindly and uncertainly

When the power failed, we had to _____ in the dark to find a working flashlight.

SYNONYMS: fumble for, cast about for

11. hover
(hæv' ər)

(*v.*) to float or hang suspended over; to move back and forth uncertainly over or around

A large group of vultures _____ in the air above the wounded animal.

SYNONYMS: linger, waver, seesaw; ANTONYM: soar

12. jostle
(jäs' əl)

(*v.*) to make or force one's way by pushing or elbowing; to bump, brush against; to compete for

I tried not to _____ other riders as I exited the crowded bus.

SYNONYM: push

13. laggard
(lag' ərd)

(*n.*) a person who moves slowly or falls behind; (*adj.*) falling behind; slow to move, act, or respond

Tour guides often have to urge _____ to keep up with the rest of the group.

Tenants who are _____ in paying rent run the risk of being forced to move.

SYNONYMS: (*n.*) slowpoke, straggler; (*adj.*) sluggish

ANTONYMS: (*n.*) early bird; (*adj.*) swift, speedy, prompt

14. plaudits
(plô' ditz)

(*n., pl.*) applause; enthusiastic praise or approval

The skaters who won the gold medals gratefully accepted the _____ of their fans.

SYNONYMS: cheers, acclaim

ANTONYMS: boos, disapproval, ridicule

15. preclude
(prē klüd')

(*v.*) to make impossible, prevent, shut out

Three wrong answers will _____ any contestant from entering the quiz show's final round.

SYNONYMS: hinder, check, stop

ANTONYMS: help, promote, facilitate

16. revert
(rē vɜrt')

(*v.*) to return, go back

Control of a property usually _____ to the legal owner when a lease is up.

SYNONYMS: relapse, regress

ANTONYMS: progress, advance

17. rubble
(rəb' əl)

(*n.*) broken stone or bricks; ruins

Bulldozers and wrecking balls soon reduced the damaged building to a heap of smoking _____.

SYNONYM: wreckage

18. servile
(sər' vil)

(*adj.*) of or relating to a slave; behaving like or suitable for a slave or a servant, menial; lacking spirit or independence, abjectly submissive

Most serious performers prefer constructive criticism to _____ flattery.

SYNONYMS: slavish, groveling

ANTONYMS: masterly, overbearing

19. vigil
(vij' əl)

(*n.*) a watch, especially at night; any period of watchful attention

Thousands attended the solemn _____ at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

20. wrangle
(ran' gəl)

(*v.*) to quarrel or argue in a noisy, angry way; to obtain by argument; to herd; (*n.*) a noisy quarrel

My brother and sister always _____ over whose turn it is to take out the trash.

The customer got into a nasty _____ with the shopkeeper.

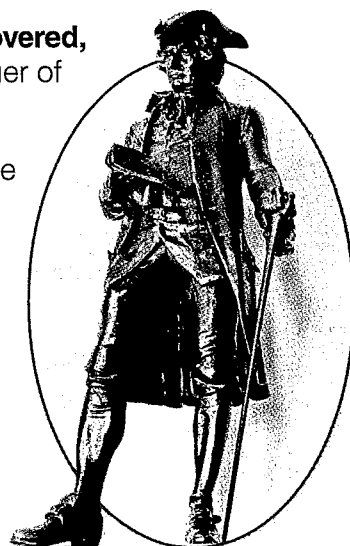
SYNONYMS: (*v.*) squabble, bicker

ANTONYMS: (*v.*) agree, concur

Choosing the Right Word

Select the **boldface** word that better completes each sentence. You might refer to the passage on pages 12–13 to see how most of these words are used in context.

1. Under the Articles of Confederation, the thirteen states (**hovered, wrangled**) so much that the nation seemed to be in danger of breaking up.
2. All those who (**decreed, collaborated**) with the enemy in the hope of gaining special favors will be punished severely.
3. The little club that they set up to talk over community problems (**evolved, jostled**) over the years into a national political organization.
4. As we searched through the (**rubble, citadel**) after the earthquake, it was heartbreaking to find such articles as a teakettle and a child's doll.
5. Every time he quotes an old (**vigil, adage**), he looks as though he has just had a brilliant new idea.
6. She raised so many objections to attending the dance that it was obvious she was (**groping, precluding**) for an excuse not to go.
7. The "broken-down old furniture" that the woman left to her children turned out to be a (**bonanza, rubble**) of valuable antiques.
8. I chose to read a(n) (**decree, excerpt**) from *Leaves of Grass* by Walt Whitman for my poetry recitation.
9. The assembly speaker may have been boring, but that was no excuse for the students' (**laggard, churlish**) behavior toward him.
10. At midnight, the sentry took his post, standing (**citadel, vigil**) over the cache of weapons.
11. For weeks, an anxious world (**wrangled, hovered**) between war and peace as diplomats desperately struggled to resolve the crisis.
12. After much (**wrangling, precluding**), the student council was able to convince the principal to give students more passing time between classes.
13. A president needs advisors who will frankly explain what they really think, rather than just offer (**servile, discordant**) agreement and constant approval.
14. The landscape artists want to (**collaborate, evolve**) with the architects so that the entire house looks as though it is part of the natural environment.
15. The committee found it impossible to reach any agreement on the matter because the views of its members were so (**churlish, discordant**).



John Hanson, President of the Continental Congress, governed the American colonies under the Articles of Confederation.

16. When I fumbled the ball on the three-yard line, the (**plaudits, excerpts**) of the crowd suddenly turned into jeers and catcalls.
17. After I had broken curfew for the third time in one week, my angry parents (**precluded, decreed**) that I was grounded for the rest of the term.
18. I refuse to accept the excuse that the pressures of a new job caused you to (**revert, grope**) to your old habit of cigarette smoking.
19. There are times when we all need to be (**jostled, reverted**) away from old, familiar ideas that may no longer be as true as they once seemed.
20. The principal was quick to approve new programs for our club but (**servile, laggard**) in providing financial support for them.
21. From the hundreds of newspaper items, the lawyer carefully (**collaborated, excerpted**) three short paragraphs that supported his case.
22. The fact that he was found guilty of a felony many years ago doesn't (**evolve, preclude**) his running for mayor.
23. I have always regarded our colleges and universities as (**citadels, plaudits**) of learning and bastions against ignorance and superstition.
24. After the operation, we sat in the hospital lounge, keeping a nightlong (**vigil, bonanza**) until we heard from the doctor.
25. I hate when people (**hover, rubble**) over me when I'm on my computer.

Synonyms

Choose the word from this Unit that is the same or most nearly the same in meaning as the **boldface** word or expression in the phrase. Write that word on the line. Use a dictionary if necessary.

1. as the ad campaign slowly **progressed** _____
2. tried to **prohibit** further objections to the bill _____
3. an inspiring **motto** to live by _____
4. **shoved** the table so hard that it tipped over _____
5. **scrabble** for an answer to the question _____
6. represented quite a **bonus** for the company _____
7. crushed beneath many tons of **debris** _____
8. additional practice for the **cacophonous** choir _____
9. annoyed by all that **fawning** attention _____
10. kept a **lookout** while the soldiers slept _____

Vocabulary in Context

Literary Text

The following excerpts are from *The Scarlet Pimpernel* by Baroness Orczy. Some of the words you have studied in this Unit appear in **boldface** type. Complete each statement below the excerpt by circling the letter of the correct answer.

1. And that was the whole story. It seemed so simple! and Marguerite could but marvel at the wonderful ingenuity, the boundless pluck and audacity which had **evolved** and helped to carry out this daring plan.

When something has **evolved**, it has

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| a. collapsed | c. resisted |
| b. progressed | d. profited |

2. It was distinctly more fitting to his newborn dignity to be as rude as possible; it was a sure sign of **servility** to meekly reply to civil questions.

A state of **servility** suggests

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| a. disappointment | c. submissiveness |
| b. gratification | d. watchfulness |

3. "There's all them Frenchy devils over the Channel yonder a-murderin' their king and nobility, and Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke a-fightin' and a-**wranglin'** between them, if we Englishmen should 'low them to go on in their ungodly way."

The act of **wrangling** involves

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| a. squabbling | c. lingering |
| b. fibbing | d. agreeing |

4. Both the young men looked a little haggard and anxious, but otherwise they were irreproachably dressed, and there was not the slightest sign, about their courtly demeanour, of the terrible catastrophe, which they must have felt **hovering** round them and round their chief.

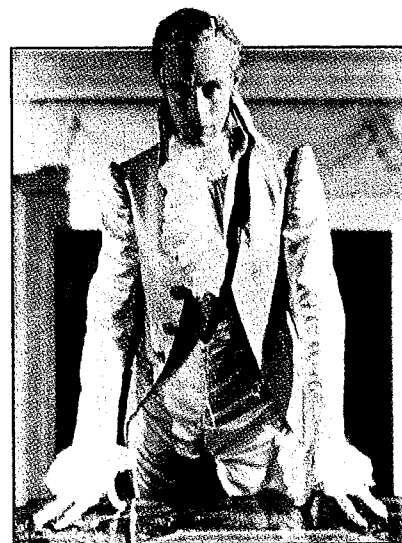
Something that is **hovering** is NOT

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| a. hanging | c. lingering |
| b. possible | d. distant |

5. Fate had willed it so. Marguerite, torn by the most terrible conflict the heart of woman can ever know, had resigned herself to its **decrees**. But Armand must be saved at any cost; he, first of all, for he was her brother, had been mother, father, friend to her ever since she, a tiny babe, had lost both her parents.

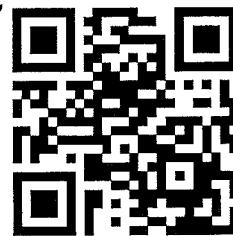
Decrees are

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| a. ideas | c. praise |
| b. verdicts | d. promises |



Actor Leslie Howard stars in the classic 1934 film version of *The Scarlet Pimpernel*.

Interactive
Quiz



Snap the code, or go to
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