

# Lesson 15

## **bungle** BUNG•gul VERB

to work, act, do, or make (something) in a clumsy, unskillful way [Take your time with that, or you'll *bungle* the job.]

## **confront** kun•FRONT VERB

1. to meet face to face [What if we *confront* a bear on the path?]
2. to meet or face in a bold or challenging way [The two top-rated teams will *confront* one another in the first round of the tournament.]

## **deficient** di•FISH•unt ADJECTIVE

lacking some necessary thing or part; imperfect; incomplete [If your diet is *deficient* in vitamins, you will have poor health.]

## **diverse** di•VURCE ADJECTIVE

different; unlike; varied or mixed [The *diverse* group included farmers, doctors, and artists of all ages and from all over the country.]

## **emphatic** em•FAT•ik ADJECTIVE

said, felt, or done with emphasis, or force; strongly expressive [Her answer was an *emphatic* no.]

## **imperil** im•PAIR•ul VERB

to put in danger [If the fire spreads, it will *imperil* the whole neighborhood.]

## **initiate** ih•NISH•ee•ate VERB

1. to begin or start [The teacher asked a question to *initiate* a discussion.]
2. to admit a person into a club or group, especially with a special ceremony [Our club will *initiate* six new members next month.]

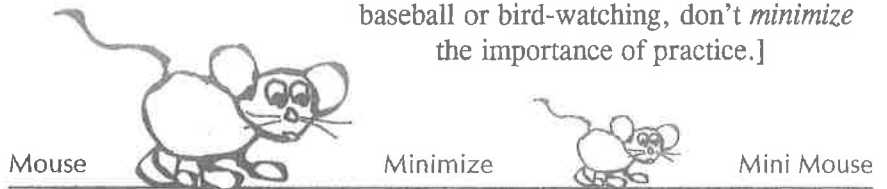
## **merit** MAIR•it

NOUN quality, worth, or excellence [I think that Sam's plan has *merit*.]

VERB to be deserving of or qualified for [Does she *merit* a second chance?]

## **minimize** MIN•uh•mize VERB

1. to reduce to the least possible amount or degree; to make as small as possible [Let's try to *minimize* the clutter in this room.]
2. to treat, use, or consider as being of little importance or value [Whether it's for band or baseball or bird-watching, don't *minimize* the importance of practice.]



## **populous** POP•yoo•lus ADJECTIVE

having a large population; crowded with inhabitants [New Jersey is far more *populous* than Wyoming, but Wyoming has twelve times as much land area.]

## **recipient** ri•SIP•ee•unt NOUN

a person or thing that receives [A gift tag usually identifies both the *recipient* and the person the gift is from.]

## **scrawl** SCRAWL

NOUN irregular, almost unreadable handwriting [The artist signed the painting with a *scrawl*.]

VERB to write or draw quickly and carelessly; to write with poorly formed letters [If you *scrawl* the list, I won't know what to get.]

## **unsightly** un•SITE•lee ADJECTIVE

unpleasant to look at; ugly [Weeds had made the garden *unsightly*.]

## **unwieldy** un•WEEL•dee ADJECTIVE

hard to handle or control because of size, weight, or shape [My *unwieldy* suitcase slowed me down.]

## **verbal** VUR•bul ADJECTIVE

1. having to do with words; made up of words; using words [Alice has excellent *verbal* skills.]

2. said rather than written [We had only a *verbal* contract.]

# Lesson 16

## **barrage** buh•ROZH NOUN

many things, such as objects, blows, or words, all coming at the same time; a heavy attack [Reporters responded to the governor's announcement with a *barrage* of questions.]

## **controversy** KON•truh•vur•see NOUN

a disagreement, especially one involving a difference of opinion; a quarrel or dispute [The *controversy* was finally settled by a vote.]

## **dissuade** di•SWADE VERB

to make someone change his or her mind about an action; to persuade not to do something [I tried to *dissuade* Jeff from going.]

## **eradicate** ih•RAD•uh•kate VERB

to remove or destroy completely; to wipe out; to eliminate [Modern medicine has not found a way to *eradicate* the common cold.]

## **immerse** ih•MURSE VERB

1. to plunge or dip into a liquid so as to cover completely [Sara refused to *immerse* even her big toe in the muddy lake.]
2. to be completely occupied mentally [In the library, I can *immerse* myself in my reading.]

## **impulsive** im•PUL•suv ADJECTIVE

acting suddenly without real thought; in the habit of acting this way [Mark regretted his *impulsive* decision to buy orange sneakers.]

## **invincible** in•VIN•suh•bul ADJECTIVE

not able to be overcome; unbeatable [The undefeated Wolves seemed *invincible* as the tournament began.]

## **lowly** LOH•lee ADJECTIVE

of or suited to a low position or rank; ordinary; not proud in manner or spirit [The man was not ashamed of his *lowly* birth, and even after becoming wealthy, he kept his old friends.]

It was **TAKE YOUR KID TO WORK DAY** again, and we had to write reports on what we did. These are some of my notes and snapshots.

## **novelty** NOV•ul•tee NOUN

1. the quality of being fresh and unusual; newness [The game's *novelty* entertained us for a while; then we grew bored again.]
2. anything that is new, fresh, or unusual; a change [After living in an apartment, having a house and yard was a *novelty* for the family.]
3. a small, inexpensive toy or trinket; often used in the plural [That store sells *novelties* and greeting cards.]

## **outrageous** out•RAY•jus ADJECTIVE

going beyond what is right, reasonable, or proper; shocking [Her *outrageous* behavior shows she doesn't care what others think.]

## **puny** PYOO•nee ADJECTIVE

lesser in size, strength, or importance; small; weak [That guy may look *puny*, but I wouldn't mess with him if I were you.]

## **recline** ri•KLINE VERB

to lean back or lie down [Why don't you *recline* on the sofa until you feel better?]

## **rigid** RIJ•ud ADJECTIVE

1. not bending; not flexible [Uncooked spaghetti is *rigid* and easily snaps into pieces.]
2. very strict; stern; severe [The rules are *rigid*, and they are strictly enforced.]

## **solidify** suh•LID•uh•fy VERB

to make or become solid, hard, strong, or united [Freezing temperatures make water *solidify* into ice.]

## **vocalize** VOH•kul•ize VERB

to express or make sound with the voice; to speak or sing [Don't just shake your head; *vocalize* your objection.]



The boss's secretary has to handle a whole barrage of appointments, phone calls, and stuff. Her hairdo is totally rigid. I'm guessing that it solidified about fifteen years ago.

# Lesson 17

**abominable** uh•BOM•uh•nuh•bul ADJECTIVE  
nasty and disgusting; very disagreeable or unpleasant [Her manners are *abominable*; I've never seen anyone act so rudely.]

**authorization** aw•thur•uh•ZAY•shun NOUN  
official permission or approval; legal power or right [Your parents must give *authorization* for you to go on the field trip.]

**crucial** KROO•shul ADJECTIVE  
extremely important [The *crucial* play was the 37-yard field goal that finally gave us the lead.]

**evaluate** ih•VAL•yoo•ate VERB  
to figure out the value, quality, meaning, or importance of a person or thing [A jury is supposed to *evaluate* all of the evidence.]

**fiery** FY•ree ADJECTIVE

1. made of fire or having to do with fire [The building was destroyed in a *fiery* explosion.]
2. like fire in color or temperature [Her *fiery* red hair was long and curly.]
3. having or showing strong emotion; spirited [The *fiery* speech brought us to our feet.]
4. easily stirred up; excitable [My cousin's *fiery* personality often gets him into trouble.]

**implication** im•pli•KAY•shun NOUN  
something that is hinted at or suggested but not directly expressed [When you say "Bill has left," the *implication* is that he was here earlier.]

**knead** NEED VERB

1. to prepare material, such as clay, by repeatedly pressing and folding it [If you *knead* the dough, it will become smooth and easy to shape into loaves.]
2. to press, rub, or squeeze with the hands; to massage [The team trainer had to *knead* the runner's foot to relieve the soreness.]

**picturesque** pik•chur•ESK ADJECTIVE  
like a picture; fit for a picture; beautiful or interesting to look at [The *picturesque* view from our hotel made us want to go exploring.]

**predator** PRED•uh•tur NOUN

1. an animal that kills and eats other animals [The early *predator* gets the worm.]
2. a person, such as a pirate, who lives by taking advantage of others [The police chief described the suspects as dangerous *predators*.]

**provoke** pruh•VOKE VERB

1. to anger, irritate, or annoy [When I can't sleep, any little noise can *provoke* me.]
2. to stir up action or feeling; to cause to happen [A good poster *provokes* interest.]

**reiterate** ree•IT•uh•rate VERB  
to say more than once, often for emphasis ["Let me *reiterate*," the reporter said, "that a storm watch is in effect until 8:30 P.M."]

**BRING YOUR PARENTS TO SCHOOL DAY**  
*was kind of fun this year. Parents were treated like students all day. Here are some snapshots and notes I used for a school newspaper article.*

**saturate** SACH•uh•rate VERB

1. to soak completely [A heavy rainstorm can *saturate* your clothing within minutes, but it takes hours for them to dry out.]
2. to cause to be so filled or supplied that no more can be taken in or held [After you *saturate* the sponge, squeeze it over the sink.]

**sediment** SED•uh•munt NOUN  
matter that settles to the bottom of a liquid [Some of the sugar formed *sediment* in the bottom of the lemonade pitcher.]

**thunderstruck** THUN•dur•struk ADJECTIVE  
shocked or amazed [Larkin was *thunderstruck* when she heard that her painting had won first prize at the art fair.]

**ulterior** ul•TEER•ee•ur ADJECTIVE  
deliberately concealed or kept hidden [The workman had an *ulterior* reason for going up on the roof; he intended to loosen some tiles so that they would need to be replaced.]

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# Lesson 18

**adamant** AD•uh•munt ADJECTIVE

not giving in; unyielding [I wanted to stay up later, but Mom was *adamant* about bedtime.]

**additive** AD•uh•tiv NOUN

something added in small quantities to change or improve something else [Additives are used to make food look tastier and stay fresh longer.]

**adjoin** uh•JOIN VERB

to be next to or close to [A pharmacy *adjoins* the food store but has its own entrance.]

**beastly** BEAST•lee ADJECTIVE

disagreeable; unpleasant; disgusting [He was a *beastly* man whom none of us could stand.]

**brood** BROOD

NOUN 1. a group of birds, especially fowl, born to the same mother at the same time [The hen watched over her *brood*.]

NOUN 2. all of the children in a family [The father hurried his *brood* inside, out of the rain.]

VERB to keep thinking about something in a sad or troubled way [It does no good to *brood* about a past mistake.]

**commerce** KOM•urce NOUN

the buying and selling of goods, especially on a large scale between cities, states, or nations; trade [U.S. business leaders toured India to see about expanding *commerce* between the two countries.]

**confiscate** KON•fiss•kate VERB

to seize (something) that one has the authority to take away [Ms. Mack always *confiscates* any snacks her students bring to eat during class.]

**desolate** DESS•uh•lut ADJECTIVE

1. lonely; miserable and cheerless [When her last child moved away, Mrs. Cho felt *desolate*.]

2. ruined; destroyed [The trees had all been cut, and what had once been forest was now *desolate* land.]

**excavate** EX•kuh•vate VERB

1. to uncover or remove by digging; to unearth [Two teams worked to *excavate* the ruins.]

2. to hollow out; to make a hole in; to dig [A giant machine was used to *excavate* the tunnel.]

**habitual** huh•BIH•choo•ul ADJECTIVE

being, doing, or acting in a certain way by habit; steady; customary [Mike was a *habitual* latecomer, so I knew I'd have to wait.]

**pact** PAKT NOUN

an agreement between two or more people or groups about what they will do; a treaty [The two nations made a *pact* to defend each other from attack.]

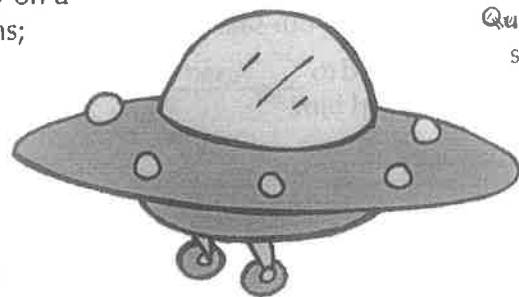
**skirmish** SKUR•mish NOUN

1. a brief fight between small forces [A dozer soldiers were caught up in a *skirmish* for control of the bridge.]

2. any brief or unimportant conflict [That was only a *skirmish*; the real struggle will come when Congress debates the bill.]

**velocity** vuh•LOSS•uh•tee NOUN

rapidity of motion; speed [The *velocity* of light is 186,000 miles per second.]



Question: Why did the spaceship captain turn off all the lights?

Answer: So he could travel at the velocity of light in the dark.

**wistful** WIST•ful ADJECTIVE

mildly sad because of an unfulfilled wish or desire; sadly thoughtful or wishful [Sara heard the party next door and gave a *wistful* smile.]

**wrath** RATH NOUN

very great anger [Control your *wrath*, or you may do something you'll regret.]

# Lesson 19

**ascent** uh•SENT NOUN

1. the act of moving upward in rank, position, or condition [The eagle's *ascent* was rapid.]
2. a way or place that slopes upward; an upward route [We struggled up the *ascent*.]

**divulge** duh•VULJ VERB

to make known; to reveal [Don't *divulge* the answer before I work it out for myself.]

**eventual** ih•VEN•choo•ul ADJECTIVE

happening at last; happening in the end; final [Lee's *eventual* recovery from pneumonia was a relief to all of us.]

**exuberant** eg•ZOO•bur•unt ADJECTIVE

1. showing good health and high spirits; full of life [Mrs. Darby was *exuberant* when she heard the good news.]
2. very great; extreme [*Exuberant* praise is nice to hear, but don't let it go to your head.]

**far-fetched** FAR•FETCHT ADJECTIVE

hard to accept or to believe; not reasonable, natural, or likely [Planning to get rich by buying lottery tickets is a *far-fetched* scheme.]

**feign** FANE VERB

to pretend [Jane nodded to *feign* interest in the conversation; her mind was on other things.]

**impose** im•POZE VERB

1. to put a tax, punishment, and so on into force [The legislature debated whether to *impose* a new tax on dairy products.]
2. to force one's presence, wishes, and so on, on another; to take unfair advantage of [I hate to *impose* on you, but may I use your car?]

**lithe** LYTH ADJECTIVE

able to bend easily; flexible; limber [Judy did a back bend to show us how *lithe* she was.]

**oblivious** uh•BLIV•ee•us ADJECTIVE

not aware or alert, due to being lost in thought or simply not paying attention [The boy rode his bike into the street, *oblivious* of the traffic.]

**potent** POTE•unt ADJECTIVE

capable of producing a desired effect; powerful and effective [A *potent* medicine cured the infection in a few days.]

**premonition** prem•uh•NISH•un NOUN

a feeling (not based on knowledge) that something, good or bad, will happen [Jill was nervous about her brother's safety because she had a *premonition* that he would be injured.]

**reprieve** ri•PREEV

NOUN 1. a delay in carrying out a punishment or some other undesirable action [The prisoner had been given the death penalty, but a judge granted a *reprieve* while new evidence was examined.]

NOUN 2. temporary relief or escape from any difficulty, pain, or trouble [I babysat for a few hours to give my neighbor a *reprieve*.]

VERB to give a reprieve [Will Dad *reprieve* us from mowing the lawn if it's really hot outside?]

**restrain** ri•STRAIN VERB

1. to prevent from acting or doing; to keep in or hold back; to control [We couldn't *restrain* our laughter for one more minute.]

2. to limit or take away freedom, as by tying up or putting in jail [Handcuffs are used to *restrain* people who have been arrested.]

**surly** SUR•lee ADJECTIVE

bad-tempered and unfriendly; rude [My *surly* neighbor just grunted when I said hello.]

**vendor** VEN•dur NOUN

one who sells goods; a seller [A *vendor* at the corner was selling roses.]

The god of war rode out one day  
Upon a lithe young filly.

"I'm Thor!" he cried.

The horse replied,  
"You forgot the thaddle, thilly!"



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## Lesson 20 Words You Thought You Knew

You already know how to pronounce and use these familiar words. Now learn some of their less-familiar meanings.

### account

VERB to give a satisfactory explanation or reason; used with *for* [Can you *account for* your tardiness?]

NOUN a statement, report, or description [I gave my *account* of the accident.]

### character

1. the behavior, qualities, or features of a person or thing; personality; nature [Judge her by her *character*, not by her appearance.]

2. moral strength; self-discipline; honesty [The question is whether either candidate has *character*.]

3. a letter, figure, or symbol used in writing or printing [The *&* *character* means "and."]

### execute

VERB to put into effect or action; to do; to fulfill [We have discussed this plan thoroughly; now it's time to *execute* it.]

### fix

VERB 1. to fasten tightly or permanently; to set firmly in place [Fix the tile to the wall.]

VERB 2. to influence in advance the result or action of a race, election, and so on, to one's advantage [One lawyer tried to *fix* the trial by bribing the judge.]

NOUN a difficult or awkward situation [We were left in a *fix* when our flight was canceled at the last minute.]

### foil

VERB to keep from being successful [A soldier loyal to the government tried to *foil* the revolt.]

### initial

ADJECTIVE having to do with or occurring at the beginning; first [Felix's *initial* reaction was anger, but he calmed down later.]

### jar

VERB to shake or vibrate from a sudden shock or collision; to cause shaking or vibration; to jolt [If you *jar* the table, the water may spill.]

### lark

NOUN something done just for fun; playful adventure [As a *lark*, we hid Louisa's keys.]

### mock

ADJECTIVE not real; imitation [The crown was covered with *mock* jewels, and what appeared to be gold was actually brass.]

### peer

NOUN a person who has the same rank, value, or qualities as another; an equal [Teenagers often care more about what their *peers* approve of than what their parents and other adults think.]



What a bunch of characters!

### sound

ADJECTIVE 1. in good condition; sturdy [The engine is *sound*, but the tires need to be replaced.] 2. sensible; wise; dependable [The argument was *sound*, and it convinced us.]

### stalk

VERB 1. to walk in a stiff, proud, or angry manner [If a waiter annoys Lila, she will *stalk* right out of the restaurant.] 2. to hunt, track, or pursue, especially quietly or sneakily [We watched a cat *stalk* a bird.]

### steel

VERB to make hard, strong, or tough [I need to *steel* myself to tell my aunt the truth.]

### uniform

ADJECTIVE 1. always the same; not changing [The weather was quite *uniform* from day to day.] 2. showing little or no difference in form, size, design, or parts [Packaged cookies are more *uniform* than those made at home.]

### vault

VERB to leap (over) something [I thought that guy was about to *vault* right over the counter.]

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