

COMPLETING DEFINITIONS

Unit 9

On the answer line, write the word from the vocabulary list that best completes each definition.

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| 1. A strategy or a method of achieving a goal is a(n) _____. | 1. _____ |
| 2. Something that is unclear or has several possible meanings is _____. | 2. _____ |
| 3. A situation that forces a choice between two alternatives is a(n) _____. | 3. _____ |
| 4. A puzzling person, matter, or situation is a(n) _____. | 4. _____ |
| 5. Something that is coiled or twisted is _____. | 5. _____ |
| 6. A maze or a confusing network of passages is a(n) _____. | 6. _____ |
| 7. Something that has a complex structure or is hard to understand is _____. | 7. _____ |
| 8. To confuse completely or to puzzle is to _____. | 8. _____ |
| 9. Something that is able to be explained, solved, or easily dissolved is _____. | 9. _____ |
| 10. To feel doubt or uncertainty is to be in a(n) _____. | 10. _____ |

USING WORDS CORRECTLY

Decide whether the italicized vocabulary word has been used correctly in the sentence. On the answer line, write *Correct* for correct use and *Incorrect* for incorrect use.

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| 1. If a puzzle contains a mistake, it is easily <i>soluble</i> . | 1. _____ |
| 2. People who embroider sometimes follow <i>intricate</i> patterns. | 2. _____ |
| 3. The <i>convoluted</i> roads etched squares and triangles through the countryside. | 3. _____ |
| 4. Frank was faced with the <i>dilemma</i> of either dropping his favorite course or withdrawing from the swim team. | 4. _____ |
| 5. While touring a city in Spain, we became lost in a <i>labyrinth</i> of side streets. | 5. _____ |
| 6. Kwan was in a <i>quandary</i> over how many people he should invite to his party. | 6. _____ |
| 7. To get what he wanted, Samantha's little brother tried such <i>tactics</i> as pleading and crying. | 7. _____ |
| 8. Kate's directions were so <i>ambiguous</i> that we were able to find her house right away. | 8. _____ |
| 9. Chuck was <i>baffled</i> by the complicated instructions on the model airplane kit. | 9. _____ |
| 10. Once the criminal confessed to the burglary, the crime was an <i>enigma</i> . | 10. _____ |

CHOOSING THE BEST DEFINITION

For each italicized vocabulary word in the following sentences, write the letter of the best definition on the answer line.

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|--|------------|---------|-----------|
| 1. An Egyptian ruler once built a funeral temple for himself in the form of a great <i>labyrinth</i> . | 1. _____ | | |
| a. tomb | b. pyramid | c. maze | d. sphinx |

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|---|--|-----------|
| 2. Filigree jewelry has <i>intricate</i> and delicate designs worked in silver or gold wire.
a. complex
b. fragile | c. ornamental
d. uncommonly beautiful | 2. _____ |
| 3. How migrating birds know in which direction to fly is an <i>enigma</i> .
a. secret b. surprise c. puzzle d. accident | | 3. _____ |
| 4. Some short story themes are clear, but others are <i>ambiguous</i> .
a. well defined b. vague c. unknown d. deceiving | | 4. _____ |
| 5. Melissa found some <i>convoluted</i> multichambered shells on the beach.
a. broken b. delicate c. puzzling d. coiled | | 5. _____ |
| 6. The student's <i>dilemma</i> was deciding which to do first: study for an important test or write a ten-page report.
a. situation requiring a difficult choice
b. situation having no solution | c. puzzle
d. question | 6. _____ |
| 7. Many practical problems are <i>soluble</i> with the help of common sense.
a. puzzling b. solvable c. clearly worded d. impractical | | 7. _____ |
| 8. Bessie tried one <i>tactic</i> after another, but her parents would not raise her allowance.
a. argument b. job c. strategy d. goal | | 8. _____ |
| 9. "I am in a <i>quandary</i> over how to play this board game," admitted Juan.
a. positive mood c. uncertain state
b. hilarious state d. negative mood | | 9. _____ |
| 10. How animals hibernate <i>baffled</i> the children.
a. increased the work of
b. puzzled | c. frightened
d. delighted | 10. _____ |

USING DIFFERENT FORMS OF WORDS

Decide which form of the vocabulary word in parentheses best completes the sentence. The form given may be correct. Write your answer on the answer line.

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| 1. The instructions for operating the computer did nothing to ease Luke's _____. (<i>baffle</i>) | 1. _____ |
| 2. Hannibal, a famous African general, was an expert _____. (<i>tactic</i>) | 2. _____ |
| 3. Melanie spoke _____ about her plans for the weekend. (<i>ambiguous</i>) | 3. _____ |
| 4. At the health club, Larry faced a _____: should he attempt twenty-five push-ups or an equal number of sit-ups? (<i>dilemma</i>) | 4. _____ |
| 5. Penny was in a _____ over the menu for her dinner party. (<i>quandary</i>) | 5. _____ |
| 6. Sergio wondered at Maria's _____ smile when she told him she was too busy to attend the concert. (<i>enigma</i>) | 6. _____ |
| 7. Birds, fish, leaves, and flowers were _____ woven into the rich tapestry. (<i>intricate</i>) | 7. _____ |

NAME _____

DATE _____

8. The many _____ of the plot made the mystery story difficult to follow. 8. _____
(convoluted)
9. We tried to find our way to the old castle with a map of _____ complexity. 9. _____
(labyrinth)
10. The powdered milk was easily _____ in water. *(soluble)* 10. _____

READING COMPREHENSION

Each numbered sentence in the following passage contains an italicized vocabulary word. After you read the passage, you will complete an exercise.

THESEUS AND THE MINOTAUR

Would you have the courage to track down and challenge a monster that had previously killed everyone who had crossed its path? Theseus, a Greek mythological hero, did. The following passage recounts the legendary story of how and why Theseus slew the Minotaur, a terrifying monster that was half man and half bull.

This story does not begin with Theseus himself but with his father, King Aegeus of Athens. In a generous gesture, King Aegeus agreed to play host to the son of King Minos of Crete. His generosity was ill-fated. A hunting expedition, arranged by King Aegeus for the boy's entertainment, resulted in a tragic accident that claimed the boy's life.

(1) Dissatisfied with the Athenian king's *ambiguous* explanation of the tragedy, King Minos threatened to destroy Athens unless the people of the city made up for his son's death. King Minos demanded that fourteen young Athenian men and women be sent to Crete every nine years and sacrificed to the

ferocious Minotaur that lived on the island.

(2) The Athenians found themselves in a *dilemma*: they could either keep up the terms of the sacrifice or regularly send courageous youths to try to kill the monster. (3) Finding and slaying the Minotaur was not easily accomplished, for the monster lived in a huge *labyrinth* under the palace of Crete. (4) Full of *convoluted* passageways, the monster's den trapped all who dared enter. (5) If the Minotaur did not kill the youths, they could easily starve to death while searching for a way out of the *intricate* maze. (6) Only Daedalus, the architect and designer of the maze, knew how to find his way through the *baffling* structure.

Years passed with this unpleasant situation tormenting the people of Athens. Theseus, now grown up, daringly volunteered to join the latest group of youths departing for Crete. (7) As soon as Theseus arrived in Crete, Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos, was in a *quandary* over

the fate of the brave youth. She loved Theseus at first sight and could not bear the thought of the Minotaur's slaying him, but she was afraid to disobey her father.

(8) In secret, Ariadne consulted Daedalus about the *enigma* of the maze. (9) He suggested the following *tactic*: Theseus could simply uncoil a ball of thread as he wandered through the labyrinth. After killing the Minotaur, it would be easy for Theseus to retrace his path by rewinding the thread.

Following Daedalus' instructions, Theseus and some other courageous youths entered the labyrinth. Fortunately, they found the Minotaur asleep, and Theseus was able to kill the monster with his bare hands.

Retracing their steps, the brave youths made an easy exit and rushed to their waiting ship. Ariadne accompanied them on the return trip to Athens.

(10) On the way home, they rejoiced that the horrible problem of the Minotaur had at last proved *soluble*.

READING COMPREHENSION EXERCISE

Each of the following statements corresponds to a numbered sentence in the passage. Each statement contains a blank and is followed by four answer choices. Decide which choice fits best in the blank. The word or phrase that you choose must express roughly the same meaning as the italicized word in the passage. Write the letter of your choice on the answer line.

1. King Minos was not happy with the _____ explanation of his son's death.
a. unclear b. depressing c. lengthy d. unfortunate 1. _____
2. Only the Minotaur's death would solve the Athenians' problem, which made necessary _____.
a. a choice among many alternatives
b. only one possible solution
c. a choice between two alternatives
d. a choice among pleasant alternatives 2. _____
3. The Minotaur lived in a _____ under the palace.
a. cage b. barn c. maze d. trap 3. _____
4. The _____ passageways of the labyrinth were very confusing.
a. narrow b. puzzling c. wandering d. twisted 4. _____
5. One might starve to death while searching for a way out of the _____ maze.
a. complex b. intriguing c. winding d. twisted 5. _____
6. Daedalus was able to make his way through the _____ structure.
a. troubling b. disturbing c. puzzling d. frightening 6. _____
7. Ariadne was in a(n) _____ because she did not know whether to obey her father or help Theseus.
a. helpless state b. uncertain state c. depression d. rage 7. _____
8. Only Daedalus knew the answer to the _____ of the labyrinth.
a. horror b. conflict c. mystery d. architecture 8. _____
9. Unwinding a ball of thread was Theseus' _____ for escape.
a. tool b. trick c. method d. secret 9. _____
10. By killing the Minotaur, Theseus proved that the Athenians' problem was _____.
a. a mistake c. solvable
b. not very serious d. still to be solved 10. _____

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Imagine that the detective Sherlock Holmes is asked for advice on a robbery. The case involves a stolen diamond that was kept in the secret vault of a mansion. The owners of the diamond cannot understand how anyone could have broken into the safe without triggering the alarm system. Write a short composition that explains how Sherlock Holmes might solve this case. Use at least five words from this lesson and underline each one.