

EXERCISE 1 WRITING CORRECT WORDS

Unit 1

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

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| 1. An expression having a meaning different from the meaning of the individual words in it | 1. _____ |
| 2. The secret language used by a particular group or class | 2. _____ |
| 3. The mental associations suggested by a word | 3. _____ |
| 4. The study of changes in the meanings of words | 4. _____ |
| 5. The everyday spoken language of a country or region | 5. _____ |
| 6. The technical vocabulary of those in the same occupation or field | 6. _____ |
| 7. The exact meaning of a word | 7. _____ |
| 8. Highly informal language | 8. _____ |
| 9. Referring to formerly common words that are now rarely used | 9. _____ |
| 10. Conforming to established usage in speech or writing | 10. _____ |

EXERCISE 2 USING WORDS CORRECTLY

Each of the following questions contains an italicized vocabulary word. Choose the correct answer to the question, and write *Yes* or *No* on the answer line.

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| 1. Are the <i>connotations</i> of the word <i>inexpensive</i> more favorable than the connotations of the word <i>cheap</i> ? | 1. _____ |
| 2. Is a <i>hit</i> the same thing in the <i>jargons</i> of baseball and football? | 2. _____ |
| 3. If you want to make a good impression at a job interview, will you use <i>slang</i> ? | 3. _____ |
| 4. Might two spies use <i>argot</i> so that others could not understand them? | 4. _____ |
| 5. Is the <i>denotation</i> of a word its range of suggested meanings? | 5. _____ |
| 6. Does <i>semantics</i> deal with the alterations of meanings in a language? | 6. _____ |
| 7. Would you expect a scholarly book to be written in the <i>vernacular</i> ? | 7. _____ |
| 8. Do newspapers contain many <i>archaic</i> terms? | 8. _____ |
| 9. Is "down in the dumps" an <i>idiom</i> ? | 9. _____ |
| 10. In a term paper, would you use <i>standard</i> English? | 10. _____ |

EXERCISE 3 CHOOSING THE BEST WORD

Decide which vocabulary word or related form best completes the sentence, and write the letter of your choice on the answer line.

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| 1. If your teacher asks for the _____ of a word, he or she wants you to furnish an exact definition. | 1. _____ |
| a. semantics b. idiom c. connotation d. denotation | |

2. Many dictionaries contain words that are no longer used, but they are labeled as _____.
a. connotative b. vernacular c. archaic d. standard 2. _____
3. The jury could not understand the testimony of the jockey because he used so much _____.
a. argot b. idiom c. connotation d. vernacular 3. _____
4. If Lucy had followed _____ rules of punctuation, her letter would have been easier to understand.
a. vernacular b. standard c. archaic d. connotative 4. _____
5. The novelist captured the _____ of the mountain people.
a. connotation b. semantics c. jargon d. vernacular 5. _____
6. *Thin* and *scrawny* mean the same, but each has a different _____.
a. idiom b. connotation c. argot d. semantic 6. _____
7. Compiling a dictionary of current _____ is difficult because most of the terms are used only a short time.
a. slang b. denotation c. semantics d. connotation 7. _____
8. Saying that someone is going to "hit the roof" is one of several _____ that people use to describe an angry reaction.
a. semantics b. connotations c. idioms d. jargons 8. _____
9. The study of _____ has proven that language undergoes gradual change.
a. idioms b. connotation c. argot d. semantics 9. _____
10. The _____ of computer experts is often difficult for people outside the field to understand.
a. slang b. vernacular c. denotation d. jargon 10. _____

EXERCISE 4 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.

1. Pam used less _____ as she got older. (*slang*) 1. _____
2. To appreciate _____ speech, one must hear it spoken by a native. (*vernacular*) 2. _____
3. *Thy* is an _____ pronoun. (*archaic*) 3. _____
4. The _____ of *argument* and *quarrel* are almost the same. (*denotation*) 4. _____
5. Although Gretchen does well on _____ tests, she always gets nervous before taking them. (*standard*) 5. _____
6. Dale is sensitive to the _____ aspects of language. (*connotation*) 6. _____
7. _____ expressions cannot be understood from the meanings of the individual words. (*Idiom*) 7. _____
8. Sometimes people will disagree about wording when there is really only a small _____ difference. (*semantics*) 8. _____
9. When used for a general audience, _____ can be confusing and meaningless. (*jargon*) 9. _____
10. Michael could not understand the _____ of the prisoners. (*argot*) 10. _____

READING COMPREHENSION

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

LEVELS OF USAGE

(1) According to *semanticists*, English is a vigorous language that is constantly changing.

(2) Words like *forsooth*, *belike*, and *parlous*, though commonly used during Shakespeare's time, are considered *archaic* today. (3) In the same way, specialized terms that are currently limited to the *jargon* of a particular profession may become part of ordinary usage tomorrow.

With the amount of change that occurs, the English language is highly flexible. (4) It includes everything from the private *argot* of special groups to the more formal language used for serious occasions. We learn that to communicate effectively we must use the level of language that is appropriate to a given situation.

(5) Formal English is the kind of *standard* English that is used for serious writing and for ceremonial speeches. (6) Formal English is

sometimes known as literary English because the term *denotes* the kind of writing found in some works of literature and in scholarly publications. In formal English, writers and speakers use complex, precisely structured sentences and conservative grammar. (7) Users of formal English choose sophisticated vocabulary with a concentration on the *connotations* of words. (8) When formal English is required, people avoid using both *slang* and contractions.

(9) Informal English, the second kind of standard English, is closer to the *vernacular*. It is widely used in conversation, broadcasting, and informal speeches, and in many newspapers, magazines, and books. It is characterized by sentence length and variety that are typical of conversation. Sentences are shorter and have fewer clauses than in formal English. (10) Usage is more relaxed than in formal

English, and contractions and *idioms* may be common.

Nonstandard English is composed of words, expressions, and grammatical constructions that do not conform to accepted usage. Although many authors use nonstandard English to create realistic dialogue, sentences like Eugene O'Neill's "Well, you got to watch out, that's all I says" should be avoided when you communicate with a general audience.

Choosing words and sentence structures appropriate to a topic and a situation is similar to choosing clothing suitable for a particular occasion. Just as you would not wear your best outfit to clean the attic, you would not want to choose language that could not be understood. In speaking and writing, you want the clearest and most effective way to convey your meaning.

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. _____ claim that English is a constantly changing language.
- Those who study architecture
 - Journalists
 - Those who study changes in meaning
 - Dictionary writers

2. Words like *forsooth* and *belike* are _____ today.
- rarely used
 - common
 - literary
 - humorous

1. _____

2. _____

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 3. Terms that are limited to the _____ of particular professions may be in ordinary usage tomorrow. | 3. _____ | | |
| a. experts | c. lives | | |
| b. specialized vocabularies | d. rare examples | | |
| 4. English includes everything from _____ to formal language. | 4. _____ | | |
| a. phrases | c. improved pronunciation | | |
| b. associations | d. secret language | | |
| 5. Formal English is the _____ English used for serious writing and speaking. | 5. _____ | | |
| a. commonly accepted | c. ordinary | | |
| b. informal | d. commonly discussed | | |
| 6. The term <i>literary</i> _____ the writing of literature and scholarship. | 6. _____ | | |
| a. classifies | c. describes | | |
| b. does not apply to | d. improves | | |
| 7. Users of formal English concentrate on the _____ meanings of words. | 7. _____ | | |
| a. rare | b. rough | c. interesting | d. suggested |
| 8. In formal English, people avoid contractions and _____. | 8. _____ | | |
| a. grammar | c. highly informal language | | |
| b. long sentences | d. punctuation | | |
| 9. Informal English is closer to _____. | 9. _____ | | |
| a. written language | c. suggested language | | |
| b. everyday speech | d. correct grammar | | |
| 10. _____ are common in informal English. | 10. _____ | | |
| a. Expressions with special meanings | c. Formal structures | | |
| b. Confusing words | d. Rare words | | |

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Choose a piece of writing such as a newspaper or magazine article or a passage from a work by an author whom you admire. Using at least five vocabulary words from this lesson, write a paragraph in which you discuss the author's use of language. Underline each vocabulary word that you use.

VOCABULARY ENRICHMENT

Vernacular, which comes from the Latin word *vernaculus*, meaning "of home-born slaves," has an interesting connection with Roman history. In ancient times it was common for wealthy Roman families to own many slaves. These slaves and their families often lived in the house with their owners. A slave child born in the master's house was known as a *verna*. As centuries passed, people forgot that *verna* meant "home-born slave" and associated the word solely with "home-born." Our word *vernacular*, referring to the home-born, or native, speech of a country, comes from the Latin word.

Activity Using your dictionary, look up the following words and write their meanings and Latin roots. Then write an explanation of the connection between the root and the meaning.

1. ancillary 2. servitude 3. menial 4. domestic