

UNIT 11 VOCABULARY **clandestine contingency egocentric exonerate incongruous indigenous liability prolific reinstate superfluous**

TEN WORDS IN CONTEXT: In the space provided, write the letter of the meaning closest to that of each **boldfaced** word. Use the context of the sentences to help you figure out each word's meaning.

1. **clandestine** [adjective]

- In a **clandestine** meeting in the alley, Steve sold his employer's valuable anti-aging formula to a competitor.
- The famous "Underground Railroad" was not an actual railroad: it was a **clandestine** network that took escaped slaves to safety.

_____ **clandestine** means a. popular b. unnecessary c. concealed

2. **contingency** [noun]

- Faye thought her company might transfer her to another city. With that **contingency** in mind, she decided to rent a house rather than buy.
- We believe in providing for every **contingency**. We have a list of emergency phone numbers, a first-aid kit, and candles.

_____ **contingency** means a. a possibility b. an advantage c. a desire

3. **egocentric** [adjective]

- Denise is completely **egocentric**. Whatever event takes place, she thinks only of how it will affect her personally.
- "We've talked enough about me," said the **egocentric** author to a friend. "Now let's talk about you. What do you think of my new book?"

_____ **egocentric** means a. self-involved b. unselfish c. self-educated

4. **exonerate** [verb]

- Saul was suspected of robbing a bank, but he was **exonerated** when the camera's photos clearly showed someone else holding up the teller.
- Politicians accused of illegal activities always seem to say the same things: that they'll be **exonerated** when all the facts are known.

_____ **exonerate** means a. to be harmed b. to be found guilty c. to be found not guilty

5. **incongruous** [adjective]

- The cuckoo lays eggs in other birds' nests. This practice can result in the **incongruous** sight of one large cuckoo chick among several tiny baby robins.
- It wasn't really **incongruous** for a former general to join the peace movement. He had seen the horrors of war.

_____ **incongruous** means a. contradictory b. unnecessary c. not noticeable

6. **indigenous** [adjective]

- Kangaroos are **indigenous** only to Australia. They have never been found living anywhere else in the world.
- Corn was not **indigenous** to Europe, so Europeans had never seen or heard of it until their explorers reached the New World.

_____ **indigenous** means a. important b. native c. welcomed

7. **liability** [noun]

- My shyness with strangers would be a **liability** in any job that involved meeting the public, such as sales.
- When Juanita returned to school at age 40, she was afraid her age would be a **liability**. Instead, she found that it gave her an advantage over younger students.

_____ **liability** means a. an asset b. a handicap c. a necessity

8. **prolific** [adjective]

- Rabbits deserve their reputation for being **prolific**. A female can produce three families each summer.
- Haydn was a **prolific** composer. He wrote, among many other musical works, 104 symphonies.

_____ **prolific** means a. creating abundantly b. working secretly c. important

9. **reinstate** [verb]

- Michiko left work for a year to stay home with her new baby. When she returned, she was relieved to be **reinstated** in her former job.
- The college had canceled the course in folklore, but the demand was so great that the classes had to be **reinstated**.

_____ **reinstate** means a. to recognize b. to appreciate c. to put back

10. superfluous [adjective]

- In the phrase, “rich millionaire,” the word *rich* is **superfluous**. All millionaires are rich.
- Lately, business at the store has been so slow that the three clerks have almost nothing to do. Two of them are **superfluous**.

_____ **superfluous** means a. unnecessary b. ordinary c. required

MATCHING WORDS WITH DEFINITIONS: Following are definitions of the ten words. Clearly print each word next to its definition. The sentences above and on the previous page will help you decide on the meaning of each word.

11. _____ a possible future event that must be prepared for or guarded against; possibility
12. _____ beyond what is needed, wanted, or useful; extra
13. _____ done in secret; kept hidden
14. _____ living, growing, or produced naturally in a particular place; native
15. _____ out of place; having parts that are not in harmony or that are inconsistent
16. _____ producing many works, results, or offspring; fertile
17. _____ self-centered; seeing everything in terms of oneself
18. _____ something that acts as a disadvantage; a drawback
19. _____ to clear of an accusation or charge; prove innocent
20. _____ to restore to a previous position or condition; bring back into being or use

SENTENCE CHECK 2: Using the answer lines provided, complete each item below with **two** words from the box. Use each word once.

- 21-22. People who spend Christmas in Florida often find the decorations _____. Santa Clauses, sleighs, reindeer, and fir trees somehow seem _____ to the North and look odd juxtaposed with palm trees and tropical flowers.
- 23-24. When a million dollars mysteriously vanished, the company decided to fire its accountant. But he was _____ (e)d and _____ (e)d in his position when the cause was traced to a computer malfunction.
- 25-26. The _____ author has just come out with her fiftieth novel. Although she publishes numerous books, her writing style remains tight, with no _____ words.
- 27-28. The foreman is so _____ that he has become a _____ to the company. Concerned only with his own needs, he’s oblivious to the needs of the workers.
- 29-30. The ship’s captain seemed to be losing his mental balance. Fearing that he might become completely insane, the crew held a(n) _____ meeting to discuss what to do in that _____.

FINAL CHECK – My Large Family: Read the following selection carefully. Fill in each blank with the correct vocabulary word. Context clues will help you figure out which word goes in which blank. Use each word once.

For many years I didn’t realize that my family was larger than normal. That’s because enormous families somehow seemed (31) _____ to our neighborhood. I don’t know what made people on our block so (32) _____, but the Harrisons, on one side of us, had nine kids; and the Montoyas, on the other side, had twelve. When Mom said she was going to have her eleventh child, the ten of us wondered if another baby wasn’t (33) _____ : one more than necessary. Still, I think we enjoyed one another as much as any family I know. Naturally, we had our battles, but though they were sometimes intense, they never lasted long, and it didn’t take much to (34) _____ yourself in a brother’s or sister’s good graces. If nothing else worked, you could always (35) _____ yourself by blaming whatever happened on another sibling who wasn’t home at the moment. Also, we learned to cooperate. When you have to get along with so many different people, you learn not to be (36) _____. A self-centered person wouldn’t have lasted ten minutes in my home.

Of course, there were times when the size of our family was a (37) _____. With all those people around, any kind of (38) _____ activity was just about impossible—there was simply no place to hide and no way to keep a secret. Our numbers could be a disadvantage to others, as well. Once, a new neighbor, not realizing how many of us there were, offered to take us all for ice cream. With amusement, he watched the (39) _____ sight of nine children and one toddler trying to squeeze into an ordinary passenger car. Although he obviously hadn’t been prepared for such a(n) (40) _____, it didn’t squelch his plans. He just grinned and said, “Okay, we’ll go in shifts.”