

Many of the words we use today are derived from the names of famous people in history or characters in literature. For example, the word *sandwich* was inspired by an Englishman, John Montagu, the fourth Earl of Sandwich (1718–1792). The word originated after Montagu spent twenty-four hours at a gambling table, eating only pieces of cold beef *sandwiched* between slices of toast.

Each word in this lesson has its own interesting history with an entertaining story from the past. You can discover these stories for yourself in the reading passage of this lesson.

WORD LIST

boycott
galvanize
jovial
macadam
maverick
mentor
nemesis
odyssey
quixotic
tantalize

DEFINITIONS

After you have studied the definitions and example for each vocabulary word, write the word on the line to the right.

1. **boycott** (boi'kōt') *trans. verb* To take part in an organized group refusal to use a product or service as a means of protest. *noun* An organized group refusal.

Related Word *boycotter noun*

Example A group of concerned environmentalists *boycotted* the store that sold pesticides.

2. **galvanize** (gäl'və-nīz') *trans. verb* **a.** To stir to action or awareness. **b.** To stimulate or shock with an electric current. **c.** To put a coating of zinc on iron or steel as protection against rust.

Related Word *galvanization noun*

Example A persuasive speech *galvanized* the audience into donating money to a worthy cause.

3. **jovial** (jō've-əl) *adjective* Full of fun and good cheer; sociable.

Related Words *joviality noun; jovially adverb*

Example Because of his *jovial* personality, Mark was usually the life of the party.

4. **macadam** (mə-kād'əm) *noun* **a.** A paving material made of layers of small stones that are packed together with asphalt or tar. **b.** A road surface that has been paved with layers of small stones.

Related Word *macadamize verb*

Example The road leading through the country village was paved with *macadam*.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. **maverick** (mäv'ər-ĭk) *noun* a. A person who refuses to go along with the policies or views of his or her group; someone who is independent-minded; a nonconformist. b. An unbranded calf or colt. c. A horse or steer that has escaped from the herd. 5. _____

Example Club members called Jessica a *maverick* after she criticized their new rules.

6. **mentor** (mĕn'tōr') *noun* A person depended upon for wise advice and guidance; a trusted counselor. 6. _____

Example The professional athlete was a valuable *mentor* to the struggling high school football player.

7. **nemesis** (nĕm'ĭ-sĭs) *noun* a. Someone or something that is the source of just punishment. b. Just punishment for wrongdoing. c. An unbeatable rival. 7. _____

Example Freezing weather was the *nemesis* of the invading army.

8. **odyssey** (ōd'ĭ-sē) *noun* a. A long, adventurous, wandering journey. b. An intellectual or spiritual quest. 8. _____

Example In the 1800s explorers went on *odysseys*, hoping to discover unknown islands in the Pacific Ocean.

9. **quixotic** (kwĭk-sōt'ĭk) *adjective* Full of impractical ideas; idealistic. 9. _____

Related Word *quixotically* *adverb*

Example Ted's *quixotic* aunt encouraged her nephew to quit his job and travel through Europe.

10. **tantalize** (tăn'tə-lĭz') *trans. verb* To tease or torment by presenting something desirable while it is out of reach. 10. _____

Related Word *tantalizingly* *adverb*

Example Because Sarah was very hungry, the picture of the delicious meal *tantalized* her.

EXERCISE 1 COMPLETING DEFINITIONS

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

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|---|-----------|
| 1. To tempt but deny satisfaction is to _____. | 1. _____ |
| 2. To rouse to action is to _____. | 2. _____ |
| 3. To refuse to do business with so as to force change is to _____. | 3. _____ |
| 4. An independent-minded person or a nonconformist is a(n) _____. | 4. _____ |
| 5. The source of just punishment is a(n) _____. | 5. _____ |
| 6. A sociable, fun-loving person is _____. | 6. _____ |
| 7. An idealistic but impractical person is _____. | 7. _____ |
| 8. A wise adviser or trusted counselor is a(n) _____. | 8. _____ |
| 9. Layers of small stones used as a paving material are _____. | 9. _____ |
| 10. An adventurous, wandering journey is a(n) _____. | 10. _____ |

EXERCISE 2 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. "We'll <i>boycott</i> that store so effectively that business will be booming," promised the protesters. | 1. _____ |
| 2. At 6:00 A.M. a ringing alarm clock <i>galvanizes</i> me into action. | 2. _____ |
| 3. The twins wear yellow <i>macadams</i> on rainy days. | 3. _____ |
| 4. The French emperor Napoleon I met his <i>nemesis</i> in the English Duke of Wellington at Waterloo in 1815. | 4. _____ |
| 5. In a fable by Aesop, a fox is <i>tantalized</i> by a bunch of ripe grapes that is slightly out of reach. | 5. _____ |
| 6. The editor was an inspiring <i>mentor</i> for the reporter. | 6. _____ |
| 7. Tommy's <i>odyssey</i> took him into the next room. | 7. _____ |
| 8. Pam, the class <i>maverick</i> , acts like everyone else. | 8. _____ |
| 9. The clowns at the circus are very <i>jovial</i> . | 9. _____ |
| 10. Joan's <i>quixotic</i> personality enabled her to work at the same job for twenty years. | 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.

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. The cowhands searched the canyon for the missing _____. | 1. _____ |
| a. nemesis b. mentor c. boycotter d. maverick | |

2. Bob hoped his editorial would _____ the indifferent community.
a. galvanize b. macadamize c. boycott d. tantalize 2. _____
3. The reformer suggested a(n) _____ of the company that had unsafe working conditions.
a. nemesis b. boycott c. maverick d. odyssey 3. _____
4. Waving and laughing as he greeted us, Grandpa was as _____ as ever.
a. quixotic b. tantalizing c. galvanizing d. jovial 4. _____
5. Larry's _____ ideas about working kept him from getting a job.
a. quixotic b. jovial c. tantalizing d. galvanizing 5. _____
6. Janet skinned her knee on the _____ surface of the playground.
a. nemesis b. maverick c. mentor d. macadam 6. _____
7. The philosopher Socrates was the teacher and _____ of Plato.
a. nemesis b. mentor c. macadam d. odyssey 7. _____
8. Carla's summer _____ took her around the world.
a. nemesis b. boycott c. odyssey d. maverick 8. _____
9. "Too bad you can't come to Florida with me!" exclaimed Lee as he _____ his brother.
a. boycotted b. macadamized c. tantalized d. galvanized 9. _____
10. Susanne, a champion runner, finally met her _____ at the Olympics.
a. odyssey b. nemesis c. maverick d. mentor 10. _____

EXERCISE 4 CHOOSING THE BEST WORD

Decide which vocabulary word or related form best expresses the meaning of the italicized word or phrase in the sentence. On the answer line, write the letter of the correct choice.

1. The *sociable* child made friends quickly.
a. quixotic b. jovial c. tantalized d. boycotted 1. _____
2. Workers hurried to finish the road paved with *layers of compacted stones*.
a. boycott b. odyssey c. macadam d. nemesis 2. _____
3. Intense heat was the *just punishment* of the thieves who hid in the desert.
a. mentor b. nemesis c. maverick d. odyssey 3. _____
4. The coach's pep talk was responsible for the baseball team's being *stirred to action*.
a. quixotic b. boycotted c. tantalized d. galvanized 4. _____
5. The *people refusing to buy in order to force change* publicized their campaign through posters.
a. odysseys b. mavericks c. boycotters d. mentors 5. _____
6. In a Jules Verne novel, the main characters undertake a *long, adventurous journey* by balloon.
a. odyssey b. maverick c. boycott d. nemesis 6. _____
7. Critics called the unconventional playwright a *nonconformist*.
a. boycott b. mentor c. maverick d. nemesis 7. _____
8. The novelist's *wise adviser* introduced her to a literary agent.
a. nemesis b. mentor c. maverick d. macadam 8. _____

9. Always *impractical*, Sarah suggested, "Let's build a cabin and live off the land!" 9. _____
 a. jovial b. macadamized c. galvanized d. quixotic
10. Sally *tormented* her little sister by not giving her a favorite toy. 10. _____
 a. tantalized b. boycotted c. galvanized d. macadamized

READING COMPREHENSION

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

WORDS FROM NAMES

All of the words in this lesson have something in common: they come from peoples' names. Some of these people are historical figures. Others are fictional personalities, and a few are mythological characters.

Two of the words in this lesson are based on historical incidents. In the late 1870s, the Englishman Charles C. Boycott managed Lord Erne's Irish estate and collected rents from tenant farmers. Because of a serious food shortage, the farmers asked Boycott for a reduction in rent. (1) After Boycott denied their request, the farmers then refused to work for him, joining in the first *boycott*.

A refusal of a different kind led to the creation of the word *maverick*. The Texan Samuel A. Maverick (1803–1870) was a strong nonconformist who refused to brand his cattle. (2) His position resulted in the word *maverick*, which is used to describe an independent-minded person.

Some historical figures have made scientific contributions that led to new words. For example, in 1827 a Scottish civil engineer named John Loudon Macadam

published a successful essay that detailed the advantages of paving a road with small, broken stones. (3) The engineer's last name was then used for this type of road and *macadam* paving material. (4) The Italian physicist Luigi Galvani (1737–1798) conducted electrical experiments on frogs and thus inspired the verb *galvanize*.

A fictional character can often become as real in people's minds as a historical figure. Don Quixote de la Mancha, the main character in the Spanish author Miguel de Cervantes's sixteenth-century novel, is a good example of this. (5) From this colorful, impractical character came the word *quixotic*.

Two of the words in this lesson come from Homer's Greek epic poem, the *Odyssey* (written around 850 B.C.). In this poem the main character, Odysseus, attempts to sail home after a long battle at the city of Troy. (6) The return trip becomes a long *odyssey* as Odysseus faces obstacle after obstacle. (7) Also from the *Odyssey* comes the inspiration for the word *mentor*. In the classic story, Mentor is the wise adviser to Odysseus' son, Telemachus.

Just as fictional characters have endured through the centuries, giving the language new words, so have the ancient mythological figures. The word *jovial*, for example, comes from Jove (Jupiter), the king of the gods in Roman mythology. (8) People born under his influence were expected to be *jovial*, or full of fun like Jove. (9) The word *nemesis*, on the other hand, reflects a darker mood. Nemesis was a Greek goddess who judged humans, punishing those who dared to be too happy.

The Greek mythological figure King Tantalus is the source of another English word. Because Tantalus displeased the gods, Nemesis condemned him to stand forever in a pool of water beneath a fruit tree. Thirsty and hungry, Tantalus reached for water and fruit, but Nemesis caused both to recede from his grasp. (10) Tantalus' punishment was to be *tantalized* forever by the sight of what he could not have.

These words have unique stories behind them, but then so do you. Perhaps your own last name may someday become a new word.

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. An Irish tenant farmers' _____ was the source of a new word.
a. party b. protest c. estate d. relocation 1. _____
2. Another word came from the name of a man with a(n) _____ personality.
a. conformist b. pleasing c. nonconformist d. antisocial 2. _____
3. Another man's last name came to mean _____.
a. rare stones c. an essay
b. a paving material d. civil service 3. _____
4. Through experiments with frogs, an inventor originated a verb that came to mean _____.
a. to become conscious c. to wire for electricity
b. to socialize d. to stir to action 4. _____
5. A fictional character who is colorful and _____ gave the language another word.
a. unrealistic b. nearsighted c. practical d. militaristic 5. _____
6. Another fictional character who undertakes a(n) _____ inspired a new word.
a. new job c. adventurous journey
b. long battle d. long vacation 6. _____
7. Still another fictional character, a(n) _____, was the source of a new word.
a. warrior b. student c. adviser d. adventurer 7. _____
8. To be _____ is a characteristic associated with the Roman god Jove.
a. powerful b. serious c. reckless d. merry 8. _____
9. A Greek goddess inspired the expression that means _____.
a. just punishment c. undeserved punishment
b. irrational punishment d. unintentional punishment 9. _____
10. A Greek king's dilemma created a word that means _____.
a. having too much c. being stranded
b. to tempt and deny d. hunger and thirst 10. _____

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Included in this lesson are several words, such as *maverick*, *quixotic*, and *jovial* that suggest a certain type of personality. For example, someone with a *jovial* personality might constantly crack jokes or try to be the life of the party. Imagine that you have been asked to write a personality sketch for a magazine. Choose someone, real or imaginary, whose personality could be described by one of the three words. Write an opening paragraph for the profile that shows how your featured personality is *quixotic* or *jovial* or a *maverick*.

The **Bonus activity** for
Lessons 1 and 2 is on page T1.