

Lesson 5

Word List

Study the definitions of the words below; then do the exercises for the lesson.

antic

an' tik

n. (usually pl.) A playful or funny act.

The **antics** of the clown made the crowd roar with laughter.

attire

ə tīr'

n. Clothes, especially fine and expensive clothes.

One often needs special **attire** to be in a wedding party.

v. To dress up or be dressed up.

The designer **attired** the models in shirts and trousers for the fashion show.

captivate

kap' ti vāt

v. To please greatly; to win over by special charm.

The cast's superb acting **captivated** the audience.

deft

deft

adj. Quick and sure; skillful at handling.

A **deft** juggler can keep five or more objects in the air at one time.

diligent

dil' ə jənt

adj. Working with great care and effort.

Diligent students usually attain high marks.

eclipse

ē klips'

n. The total or partial hiding of one heavenly body by another.

An **eclipse** of the sun occurs when the moon passes directly in front of it.

v. To do or be better than; to outshine.

Her latest novel **eclipses** all of her previous work.

evolve

ē vōlv'

v. To develop and change gradually over time.

Some scientists think that modern birds may have **evolved** from dinosaurs.

evolution *n.* (ev ə lōō' shən) The changes that take place as something evolves.

The **evolution** of aircraft from the Wright brothers' flimsy plane to the modern jet airplane occurred over an incredibly short time.

innate

in āt'

adj. Having from birth; occurring naturally rather than being learned.

Mozart's **innate** musical ability showed itself at a very early age.

inscribe

in skrib'

v. To write, print, or etch into as a permanent record.

Most of the gravestones were simply **inscribed** with the person's name, date of birth, and date of death.

inscription *n.* (in skrip' shən) The act of inscribing or what is inscribed.

Coins of the United States bear the **inscription** "E PLURIBUS UNUM."

posture

pās' chər

n. The way one holds one's body; a pose or position.

You can improve your **posture** by throwing your shoulders back.

v. To assume a particular position, especially a pretended one.

They **postured** as my supporters while secretly campaigning against me.

shroud
shroud

- n.* 1. Something that covers or hides from view.
A **shroud** of mystery surrounds the couple's disappearance.
2. Cloth used to wrap a dead body before burial.
It used to be the custom to make a **shroud** from a long linen sheet dipped in melted wax.
v. To block from sight.
Dense fog on the river **shrouded** the tug boats.

stifle
stī' fəl

- v.* 1. To cut off the air from; to smother.
Thick smoke **stifled** those who remained in the burning building.
2. To hold back; to check.
The spectators tried to **stifle** their yawns during the lengthy ceremony.

tentative
ten' tə tiv

- adj.* Not fully worked out or final; hesitating or uncertain.
The deadline is **tentative** and may be extended.

tranquil
traŋ' kwil

- adj.* Calm; peaceful.
The sea was **tranquil** with no hint of the approaching storm.
tranquility *n.* (traŋ kwil' ə tē) The state of being tranquil.
Many authors prefer writing during the **tranquility** of early morning before anyone else is up.

versatile
vər' sə təl

- adj.* Able to do many different things or to be used in many different ways.
She is a **versatile** musician who can play eight instruments.
versatility *n.* (vər sə til' ə tē) The state or condition of being versatile.
The tomato's **versatility** and distinct flavor make it a favorite of many cooks.

5A Finding Meanings

Choose two phrases to form a sentence that correctly uses a word from Word List 5. Write each sentence on the line provided.

1. (a) To evolve is to
(b) To posture is to
(c) pretend to a position one doesn't really hold.
(d) remain in one position without moving.

2. (a) make fun of that person.
(b) To attire someone is to
(c) dress that person.
(d) To captivate someone is to

3. (a) A deft move is one that
(b) is made in an uncertain way.
(c) is repeated over and over.
(d) A tentative move is one that

4. (a) gradual change over time.
(b) Tranquility is
(c) the ability to do many things well.
(d) Evolution is

5. (a) A diligent person is one who
(b) engages in foolish or playful acts. (c) A versatile person is one who
(d) makes an effort to exercise great care.
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6. (a) To stifle someone is to
(b) To eclipse someone is to (c) fill that person with joy.
(d) cut off that person's supply of air.
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7. (a) Versatility is
(b) Tranquility is (c) the state of being at peace.
(d) an unwillingness to change one's mind.
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8. (a) Something that is inscribed is
(b) carried out in secret. (c) written into a permanent record.
(d) Something that is innate is
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9. (a) a covering for a dead body.
(b) An eclipse is (c) a silly or playful act.
(d) A shroud is
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10. (a) To be deft
(b) is to be greatly pleased and interested. (c) To be captivated
(d) is to be held against one's will.

antic
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versatile

5B Just the Right Word

Improve each of the following sentences by crossing out the bold phrase and replacing it with a word (or a form of the word) from Word List 5.

- The children's **playful acts** made their parents roar with laughter.
- Your **ability to do so many things well** was what impressed the voters the most.
- What is the correct **clothing that should be worn** for an awards banquet?
- She **completely won over** the audience with her fine performance.
- I admire the **very skillful** way you handled what could have been an embarrassing situation.
- When is the next **time that the earth will pass directly between the sun's position and that** of the moon?

7. My aunt's exceptional vigor was **present from the time of her birth**; even as an infant she was active and strong.
8. Your backache is probably caused by your poor **way of holding your body**.
9. The bride **struggled to hold back** a giggle when the nervous bridegroom dropped the ring during the ceremony.
10. A thick fog **hid from sight everything that was in** the harbor.

5C Applying Meanings

Circle the letter of each correct answer to the questions below. Each question has from one to four correct answers.

1. Which of the following can be **versatile**?
- (a) a tool (c) a performer
(b) a date in history (d) a thank-you note
2. Which of the following is an article of **attire**?
- (a) a vest (c) a hat
(b) a walking stick (d) a pair of gloves
3. Which of the following might be an **antic**?
- (a) tickling someone (c) making funny faces
(b) robbing someone (d) turning cartwheels
4. Which of the following could be **tentative**?
- (a) a movement (c) a proposal
(b) a suggestion (d) a triumph
5. Which of the following have **evolved**?
- (a) plants (c) animals
(b) human beings (d) automobiles
6. On which of the following might you find an **inscription**?
- (a) a pedestal (c) the inside cover of a book
(b) the front of a building (d) an exhibit in a museum

7. Which of the following would you expect to be **tranquil**?

- (a) a hectic chase (c) a rural scene
(b) a sanctuary (d) a rose garden

8. Which of the following is a **posture**?

- (a) sitting slumped over (c) standing up with arms crossed
(b) dressing up (d) lying down

5D Word Study

Each group of four words below contains two words that are either synonyms or antonyms. Circle these two words; then circle the *S* if they are synonyms, the *A* if they are antonyms.

1. outshine	eclipse	vacate	posture	S	A
2. skillful	deft	humid	innate	S	A
3. tranquil	hidden	peaceful	versatile	S	A
4. exchange	purify	pollute	propel	S	A
5. swivel	charge	inflate	turn	S	A
6. hectic	distinct	rural	calm	S	A
7. squalid	diligent	versatile	magnificent	S	A
8. superb	splendid	distinct	enormous	S	A
9. danger	buffet	terrain	jeopardy	S	A
10. propel	detain	pollute	persecute	S	A

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5E Passage

Read the passage below; then complete the exercise that follows.

A Born Artist

To exhibit one's work at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., would be a high point in any artist's career; to receive such an honor at the age of fourteen is truly remarkable. Yet that was the age of the Chinese painter Wang Yani when her paintings were given their first American showing there in 1989. Hundreds of thousands of visitors came and were **captivated** by her pictures of animals, birds, and landscapes. And in the Smithsonian's Sackler Gallery, audiences were able to watch as Yani, barefoot and **attired** casually in shirt and denim shorts, walked on stage, and with **deft** strokes of the brush produced works of art right before their eyes. She did so with total concentration, seemingly unaware of the onlookers.

If fourteen seems a young age to receive so much attention, consider this: Yani's first exhibition, in her native China, was held when she was four! She has been working **diligently** at her art since the age of two; that was when Wang Shi Chiang first became aware of his daughter's interest in painting. Himself a well-known artist, he encouraged Yani by providing her with large sheets of paper, ink, and brushes, the traditional materials of Chinese painting. He never gave her a lesson and also discouraged her teachers at school from doing so. He believed such instruction would only **stifle** her imagination and prevent her from expressing her feelings freely. His faith in his daughter's **innate** talent was fully justified by her early success. In fact, Wang Yani's fame soon **eclipsed** her father's fame.

Yani's first subjects were monkeys. She became fascinated with their **antics** after a visit to the local zoo and painted hundreds of pictures of them. One of her favorites is thirty feet long and took her just four hours to complete. It shows 112 monkeys in various **postures**, each with a different expression.

As she grew older, she became more **versatile** and began painting other creatures such as birds, horses, and lions. Later, her style **evolved**, and she broadened her range of subjects to include trees, flowers, and, especially, landscapes. Her interest in landscapes is not surprising since Yani lives in a region of great natural beauty in southern China, with gently rolling hills, clear streams, and ancient temples. Not far away are the famous cone-shaped Guilin mountains, often **shrouded** in mist, and a favorite subject of the young painter. Yani paints what she feels about what she sees rather than simply what she sees, and in her paintings of the mountains she tries to capture the feeling of **tranquility** that she experienced while visiting the scene.

She often begins by spilling ink onto the paper, a method known as po-mo. She follows this with a few **tentative** strokes, then proceeds rapidly until the painting is completed, often in less than half an hour. Yani often includes an **inscription** in Chinese characters as part of a painting. A typical one reads, "Autumn is a withering season for the trees, but the animals are happy."

By the time she was sixteen, Yani had painted more than ten thousand pictures. You might wonder if she has time for other things. In addition to pursuing her studies, she reads for pleasure, especially Chinese literature. She also enjoys playing basketball and table tennis. Her other talents are singing and dancing, skills that she feels help her with her painting, for in a good painting, according to a Chinese saying, "the brush sings and the ink dances."

Answer each of the following questions in the form of a sentence. If a question does not contain a vocabulary word from this lesson's word list, use one in your answer. Use each word only once. Questions and answers will then contain all fifteen words (or forms of the words).

1. Why do you think Yani was able to produce more than ten thousand paintings by the time she was sixteen?

2. Why do you think Yani's first brush strokes are sometimes made in a **tentative** manner?

3. What feeling does Yani capture in her paintings of the Guilin mountains?

4. What subject **captivated** Yani when she was very young?

5. What ability is required in order to enjoy the **inscription** on a painting by Yani?

6. What is the meaning of **stifle** as it is used in the passage?

7. How can you explain Yani's ability to paint when she was so young and had never received any lessons?

8. What is the meaning of **posture** as it is used in the passage?

9. Has Yani always worn traditional Chinese **attire** when appearing in public?

10. How does Yani demonstrate her **versatility** in painting?

11. What is the meaning of **eclipse** as it is used in the passage?

12. Why would you expect a painting done by Yani when she was six years old to be different from one done when she was sixteen?

13. How does Yani's style of working enable her to finish a painting in such a short time?

14. What kind of monkeys' **antics** do you think Yani found amusing?

15. What is the meaning of **shroud** as it is used in the passage?

FUN & FASCINATING FACTS

The Latin word *natus* means "born" and forms the root of several English words. **Innate** qualities are those that seem to have been with a person since birth. *Prenatal* care is that given to a mother before the birth of her child. To be a *native* of a particular place means that one was born in that place.

Old English was the language spoken in England between 500 and 1200. A number of its words have

survived, often with changed spellings and slightly altered meanings to become part of modern English. **Shroud** is such a word; it comes from *scrud*, an Old English word for a loose article of clothing that covered most of the body. The dead would usually be buried wearing the *scrud* they had worn in life, and in time the word, changed to *shroud*, came to mean "a covering for a dead body." As a verb it came to mean "to hide from sight" or "to cover."