

Beautiful Words

Avocabo Word List 56

AESTIVATE, CALIGINOUS,
DIAPHANOUS, EBULLIENT, ELIXIR,
EMOLLIENT, EPIPHANY, ESOTERIC,
FUGACIOUS, GOSSAMER,
IMBROGLIO, INSPISSATE, INURE,
LAGNIAPPE, OBSEQUIOUS,
PANACEA, PEREGRINATION,
PROPINQUITY, SERENDIPITY,
TERPSICHOREAN

Beauty: At What Price?

This unit's words are characterized by the beauty of how they sound. They trip off the tongue *euphoniouly* (itself a pleasing-sounding word.) *Euphony* is any agreeable, pleasing or harmonious sound. Its antonym is *cacophony*, meaning loud, jarring and discordant sounding. For those who seek economy of expression, beware! Beautiful words hide a flaw in their many garish syllables, in that they often are audaciously long-winded stand ins for simpler words.

Exercise 56-1: Discriminating Appropriate Usage

Indicate whether the sentences below use the list word (*in italic boldface*) correctly or incorrectly by circling or highlighting the appropriate icon. You will find explanations for incorrect usage in the answer portion of this unit. (20 marks)

1. In my **aestivation**, summer is far too long for students to be away from the classroom forgetting basic literacy and numeracy skills..

2. Police attempts to capture the three Hallowe'en pranksters were thwarted by poor visibility on the soupy, **caliginous** night surrounding the cemetery.

3. Jasper Conran's London Fashion Week show featured a seriously saucy collection of dresses playing with **diaphanous** fabrics that revealed structure beneath.

4. Dan Warmenhoven is an **ebullient**, optimistic fellow. So when he was preparing to advise employees a few days ago that he was going to have to fire 530 of them, he went to the website of the government's Bureau of Economic Analysis to find a scrap of promising economic news to share with the troops as well. "I spent about an hour, and I couldn't find a single thing. Nothing."

5. The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency's Chairman, Ahmadu Giade said yesterday that the NDLEA would ground any airline or shipping and transport company where any passenger or crew member is caught with **elixir** drug trafficking.

6. Having worked in the public service for more than 10 years myself, you just can't help but join in a chorus for better salaries and **emollients** for workers and pensioners. But you cannot do same for our MPs.

7. The lessons at the heart of *The Class* cross many subject lines, including examinations of the difference between punishment and revenge and when the line is crossed when challenging a student. There is no magical moment of achievement for Marin, no souring soundtrack to highlight an **epiphany** when a difficult child sees the light and embarks on a new and enlightened path. Rather it's one step forward and two back in Marin's class, but it's a journey that must be traveled.

8. Bradley's passion for unusual or **esoteric** reading material continues to this day and informs and shapes Flavia's world. The title of the first novel was found in an obscure book Bradley rescued from a garage sale. *The Sweetness from the Bottom of the Pie* derives from the definition of the word "crinkle" found in a six-volume work, *The Modern Eclectic Dictionary of the English Language* (1896).

9. Lord Peter Mandelson, the **fugacious** U.K. business secretary, is stirring up trouble on this side of the Atlantic. Mandelson, in the U.S. to promote trade, dropped the "F bomb" in front of a group of journalists at a party at the home of the British counsel-general in New York.



- ☑ ☒ 10. Visitors to Hollenbeck Park stop and stare when they see the huge white bird swim across the park's lake, climb into Jesus Hernandez's arms and give him a love peck. They watch in amazement as Hernandez tosses the goose back into the water and it ducks its head gleefully beneath the surface. Then it shakes off the drops and paddles back to the shore for another toss. When the two of them walk together away from the lake to a grassy park knoll, it's clear to all that this is no ordinary bird. "This is Chacho, and he is my best friend," Hernandez explains. The 60-year-old West Los Angeles electrician has driven to Hollenbeck Park twice a week for the last two years to visit with the creature that he raised from a *gossamer*.
- ☑ ☒ 11. Depression, recession, bear market... all have translated to job scares, a slowdown in demand and panic attacks. Here is a recap of the spillover effects of the ongoing economic *imbroglio* in the past fortnight, across the globe.
- ☑ ☒ 12. The two women's dislike for each other *inspissated* the atmosphere, slowing the conversation to pedantic, carefully chosen words.
- ☑ ☒ 13. One man was *inured* Friday morning in a two-vehicle crash on U.S. 24 at the intersection of County Road 43, east of Antwerp, the Ohio Highway Patrol said. Thomas Putnam, whose age and address were unavailable, was taken to Paulding County Hospital, where a hospital official declined to release any patient information.
- ☑ ☒ 14. Emma Ziegler Frugé remembers the Hoffmann store, which was a few blocks from her family home in Crowley, where she says she learned the meaning of *lagniappe*. My mother would send me to the store for a needed item, and I was allowed to use a nickel to buy gum or candy," she wrote. "Mr. and Mrs. Hoffman would sometimes give me an extra piece of candy."
- ☑ ☒ 15. Carnival is the Brazilian equivalent of Mardi Gras and is the country's biggest party. Millions of people in *obsequious* and feathered costumes pack the streets for a week to dance and listen to samba bands parade past on floats. For months leading up to Carnival, people perfect their samba skills in dance classes, and design and sew elaborate, colorful outfits.
- ☑ ☒ 16. In the recent stimulus debate, in which the right tried to trot out the manifestly failed economic policies of the last eight years as some sort of *panacea* for our current ills, they will now try to convince Americans that our health system is a success story.
- ☑ ☒ 17. Among some of the birds of prey likely to be seen are the *peregrination* (the fastest bird of prey in the world), kestrels, kites and maybe even a wedge-tailed eagle. But, for those novice bird-watchers out there, maybe a trip to the Alice Springs Desert Park would be good for a starting point to learn about native Central Australian birds.
- ☑ ☒ 18. Fortunately, the new HD credits introduced on Sunday night's episode are properly reverential to the original "Simpsons" credits. They still begin with a zoom in on Bart, doing his after school penance. They still flash through Lisa at band rehearsal, Homer extricating himself from a day's labor and Marge and Lisa doing the grocery shopping, all eventually converging on the family's living room and a seat in front of the television. In an age in which families rarely dine together in any form, credit to Marge for mandating that her clan at least eat simultaneously and with a certain *propinquity*.
- ☑ ☒ 19. I once asked my musically inclined friend to make me a bike tape, and he filled it with a lot of rockin' songs by some unknown artists. It worked very well. But now I basically turn the iPod to shuffle and let *serendipity* do its work. I've decided that harder, faster songs are great, but others work well, too. For example, 1940s swing is excellent, and old country truckin' songs get me going too.
- ☑ ☒ 20. Since Silicon Valley has so few real celebrities, why not go crazy for the ones we have: *Dancing With the Stars* premieres in one week with Apple co-founder Steve "Woz" Wozniak. It's a phenomenon the geeks are already calling "Dancing with the Woz" and is potentially the greatest *terpsichorean* trainwreck in television history. Woz has entered the ABC dance competition to prove that anyone can learn some new steps, and his fans are already gearing up to stack the vote by any means necessary.

Exercise 56-2: Definitions

Complete each of the following statements by filling in the blanks with the most appropriate word selected from the word list. You may use words only once! (20 marks)

- _____ 1. of or relating to dancing
- _____ 2. filaments from a spider's web
- _____ 3. a small gift (especially one given by a merchant to a customer who makes a purchase)
- _____ 4. joyously unrestrained
- _____ 5. substance believed to cure all ills
- _____ 6. the Greek goddess of healing
- _____ 7. an intricate and confusing interpersonal or political situation
- _____ 8. good luck in making unexpected and fortunate discoveries
- _____ 9. travelling or wandering around
- _____ 10. moment of sudden understanding
- _____ 11. sleep during summer
- _____ 12. make viscous or dense
- _____ 13. cause to accept or become hardened to
- _____ 14. having a softening or soothing effect, especially to the skin
- _____ 15. lasting a very short time
- _____ 16. dark and misty and gloomy
- _____ 17. so thin as to transmit light
- _____ 18. the property of being close together
- _____ 19. confined to and understandable by only an enlightened inner circle
- _____ 20. attempting to win favour from influential people by flattery

Exercise 56-3 Making Connections.

In a sentence or two, describe the relationship between each pair of words. Use a good dictionary to clarify unclear words. (10 marks)

- 1. elixir Philosopher's stone

- 2. aestivate hibernate

- 3. demulcent emollient

- 4. beignet lagniappe

- 5. season inure

Exercise 56-3 Etymology

Which list word derives from.... (5 marks)

- _____ 1. an old name for Sri Lanka, coined by Horace Walpole?
- _____ 2. the Latin word meaning 'to flee'?
- _____ 3. from American Spanish *la ñapa*, the gift?
- _____ 4. from the Greek word meaning 'dance-loving'?
- _____ 5. from the Greek work meaning 'within'?



Beautiful Words

Avocabo Word List 56: ANSWERS

Exercise 56-1: Discriminating Appropriate Usage

The following do not use the list word correctly. The correct words are listed.

1. estimation
5. illicit
6. emoluments
9. pugnacious
10. gosling
13. injured
15. sequined
17. peregrin falcon

Exercise 56-2: Definitions

1. terpsichorean
2. gossamer
3. lagniappe
4. ebullient
5. elixir or panacea (*in which case 6. is incorrect*)
6. Panacea (capitalized for name of god)
7. imbroglio
8. serendipity
9. peregrination
10. epiphany
11. aestivate
12. inspissate
13. inure
14. emollient
15. fugacious
16. caliginous
17. diaphanous
18. propinquity
19. esoteric
20. obsequious

Exercise 56-3: Making connections

1. The terms are synonymous. A philosopher's stone, or elixir, was a hypothetical substance that alchemists believed to be capable of changing base metals into gold
2. Aestivate and hibernate are antonyms. Aestivate is sleeping in the summer, whereas the more familiar term, hibernate, means to sleep during the winter season.
3. 'Demulcent' and 'emollient' are substances that soften. The terms are synonymous.
4. 'Beignet' and 'lagniappe' are words that derive from Louisiana French. Etymologically they are similar. Other words of similar origin include café au lait, faubourg, and krewe, reflecting New World French cuisine and culture. Other words reflect distinctive physical characteristics of the city, such as banquette, a raised sidewalk, and camelback and shotgun, distinctive architectural styles found there.
5. To season someone is to harden them to something, or inure them. The terms are synonyms.

Exercise 56-4: Etymology

1. serendipity, from Serendip
2. fugacious
3. lagniappe
4. terpsichorean
5. esoteric

Total Marks in Unit: 55 marks