

Lesson Ten

1. **expound** (ik spownd') v. to explain in detail; to clarify
Closing the Bible, the minister *expounded* the passage he had just read.
syn: *elaborate* ant: *muddle; confuse*
2. **cajole** (kə jōl') v. to persuade with false promises and flattery
Despite her best efforts, the mayor could not *cajole* Madame Harris into donating the land to the city.
syn: *coax; wheedle* ant: *dissuade; deter*
3. **inscrutable** (in skrōō' tə bəl) adj. not easily understood; hard to fathom
The crazed stalker left an *inscrutable* message on my answering machine.
syn: *enigmatic* ant: *obvious; evident*
4. **balk** (bōk) v. to refuse stubbornly or abruptly; to stop short and refuse to go on
Although Paul desperately needed the money, he *balked* at the idea of working for less than minimum wage.
syn: *hesitate; object* ant: *agree; continue*
5. **acrimony** (ə' krə mō nē) n. ill-natured, bitter hostility
Because of his *acrimony*, the old man found himself lonely and friendless.
syn: *animosity* ant: *friendliness*
6. **dour** (dowr) adj. stern and ill-humored
The librarian's *dour* expression and stereotypical bifocals contradicted her tattoos and noisy motorcycle.
syn: *forbidding* ant: *pleasant*
7. **exult** (ig zult') v. to rejoice; to feel triumphant
When the results were announced, the town wildly *exulted* in its team's victory.
syn: *celebrate*
8. **omniscient** (om nish' ont) adj. having unlimited knowledge; all-knowing
Dad described Santa Claus as an *omniscient* old man who knew whether we had been bad or good this year.

Exercise I

Words in Context

From the list below, supply the words needed to complete the paragraph. Some words will not be used.

fluctuate cajole expound acrimony
 exult inscrutable métrier harry

- A. Councilwoman Moore stepped up to the podium. "I don't think I need to _____ my reasons for voting against the proposed construction; I thought that the message was clear enough at the last meeting—when you all opposed it as well. Obviously, someone has _____ a few of you since last month, and your sudden, _____ decision to yield to Beta-Rad Enterprises bothers me a great deal. What happened to the surplus of _____ toward Beta-Rad from the last meeting? Don't you remember how we _____ in our victory over the radioactive waste dump? For two years, we've listened to Beta-Rad execs _____ us, and we finally had the chance to stop it for good. How could the opinions of fifteen people possibly _____ this much?"

From the list below, supply the words needed to complete the paragraph. Some words will not be used.

incognito feasible dour fiasco métrier
 lethargy balk omniscient harry

- B. "Hey, Jye, I think you've found your _____." "Could be." Jye glanced up only long enough to catch a glimpse of Nevé. Typing rapidly, Jye intermittently glanced at the stack of printed matrices next to the keyboard. Usually a(n) _____ person who remained hidden in his software-engineer cubicle all day, Jye adopted a manner bordering on cynicism and _____ getting him to do tech support beyond his cubicle walls was often a(n) _____ that created more trouble than it solved. Nevé was caught completely off-guard when Jye didn't _____ at the company's request that he test the system's network security by hacking into the company database. Though Jye had his ways, everyone knew that he was the _____ office authority when it came to network security protocol. It simply wouldn't have been _____ to use anyone else to test the integrity of Pentacode's newest software. Additionally, Jye's newfound energy changed his manner so much that he might as well have been _____ to those who didn't see him every day, when his attitude changed, his wardrobe and hairstyle changed as well.

9. feasible (fē' zə bel) *adj.* reasonable; capable of being carried out
 Though he is still young, Jeff has a *feasible* plan to participate in the Olympic games.
syn: possible, doable
ant: unworkable

10. fiasco (fē' əs' kō) *n.* a complete, ridiculous failure
 Our first date was a *fiasco*: I lost a contact lens, we got mugged, and a child threw up on Amber's shoes in the subway.
ant: success
syn: disaster

11. métrier (mə' tyā') *n.* the work one is especially suited for; one's specialty; an occupation
 Justin is a decent singer, but dancing is his real *métrier*.
ant: weakness
syn: forte

12. fluctuate (fluk' chōō āt) *v.* to rise and fall; to vary irregularly
 The stock market *fluctuates* so much that it seems silly to get upset when your stock goes down; it will probably go back up tomorrow.
ant: stabilize
syn: waver, vacillate

13. harry ('har' ē) *v.* to annoy or harass
 The baby's constant crying began to *harry* the other passengers on the train.
syn: bother, pester
ant: soothe

14. incognito (in kog nē' tō) *adj.* disguised; pretending not to be oneself
 To avoid clamoring fans, the actor donned a disguise and traveled *incognito*.

15. lethargy (leth' ə jē) *n.* lack of energy; sluggishness
 The heat and humidity made me sink into the couch, too overwhelmed with *lethargy* to move.
syn: torpor, lassitude
ant: vigor, vitality

Exercise II

Sentence Completion

Complete the sentence in a way that shows you understand the meaning of the italicized vocabulary word.

1. Finally able to dismount from his bicycle, Lance did not *exult* despite...
2. The monkeys native to India sometimes *harry* villagers by...
3. Ann's *lethargy* was not due to the heat; she was simply...
4. Caitlyn, a remarkable writer, found her *métier* as...
5. The wedding went well, but the *acrimony* between the families resulted in...
6. Please *expound* your explanation of...
7. The *inscrutable* actions of the building inspector caused...
8. To avoid a *fiasco* during your camping trip, be sure to...
9. I would have donated money, but I *balcked* when I learned that...
10. If the warden were indeed *omniscient*, then he would know that...
11. Uncle Tony was not originally a *dour* man; ten years ago, he...
12. Milton's *fluctuating* condition prevents the doctor from...
13. Not even six years of *cajoling* could convince Mrs. Garcia to...
14. Wary of being discovered by the rebels, the *incognito* Colonel Lito wore...
15. A *feasible* reason for missing work would be...

Exercise III

Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes

Study the entries and answer the questions that follow.

The root *agri* means "field, farming."
 The suffixes *ous* and *ose* mean "full of."
 The root *bell* means "war."
 The root *gere* means "bearing" or "waging."
 The prefix *ante* means "before."
 The suffix *onomy* means "study of."

- A. Using *literal* translations as guidance, define the following words without using a dictionary:
 1. antebellum
 2. bellicose
 3. agriculture
 4. belligerent
 5. anteroom
 6. agronomy
- B. The roots *ces* and *ced* mean "to go"; therefore, an *antecedent* is a word that _____.
- C. An industrial society is characterized by cities and manufacturing; an *agrarian* society is characterized by _____.
- D. List as many words as you can think of that contain the forms *agr* or *ante*.

Exercise IV

Inference

Complete the sentences by inferring information about the italicized word from its context.

- A. If you *harry* the stray dog, it's quite possible that it will...
- B. If an *avid* skiter crashes on the slope, you can assume that...
- C. Mom must have been *omniscient* if she knew that Derek secretly...

Exercise V

Critical Reading

Below is a reading passage followed by several multiple-choice questions similar to the ones you will encounter on the ACT. Carefully read the passage and choose the best answer to each of the questions.

The author of this passage is discussing the Victorian Era in Great Britain.

Despite its cruel working conditions and mass poverty, Victorian England will always be remembered as a forerunner to the modern industrial society. As an incubator for early industry, 19th century England was the first dominion in the world to experience the cultural byproducts that accompanied advancements in transportation and technology. The resulting cultural stuffs spawned a bouquet of unique historical attributes that today classify Victorian England.

Railways—the new method of mass land transportation to meet the blooming demands of early mass production—were at the heart of Victorian England's changes. Stimulating industry, railroads inspired advancements in coal mining, iron production, and construction engineering that resulted in better buildings, bridges, and machines; these advancements, in turn, made England the foremost machine-manufacturer in the world.

As the demand for industry increased, so did the demand for a working class: skilled artisans, craftsmen, and domestic out-workers who didn't require the construction of more facilities. The boom in skilled workers created a demand for more middle class members, such as doctors, bankers, and lawyers. Manufacturing also caused growth in the middle class due to requirements for educated professionals such as architects, engineers, and owners of industry.

The growth and importance of the new working class caused many of the British to question the justification of the existing class structure, in which the upper class appeared to reap the most benefits without having to endure the subhuman conditions of early factories. Realizing that they were crucial to industry, workers demonstrated their importance by organizing strikes in an effort to obtain better wages and working conditions. Forerunners of this movement were the Chartists, who not only wanted to enhance working conditions but also to redesign the government of England. The Chartists failed to change Parliament, but they did succeed in persuading Parliament to pass several acts from 1833 to 1847 that improved working conditions for women and children.

The literature of England reflected the new social consciousness of the Victorian period. Mass manufacturing led to cheap publishing, making books available for the increasingly literate masses, regardless of economic class. Owing to the availability of books, novels became popular and the prevalent subjects of literature changed. In a departure from Romantic literature, fiction entertained contemporary affairs and common people instead of ancient legends and kingly heroes. Writers such as Lewis Carroll and Charles Dickens were free to satirize the establishment or to depict the austere lives that many of the working class endured every day.

New schools of thought also emerged because of the new, convenient way to

distribute information, often to the benefit of the working class. Activists such as the Chartists explored new or better forms of government, drawing ideas from people and events throughout the world, one of whom was Karl Marx. In 1840, Karl Marx wrote the *Communist Manifesto* while workers were at the depths of misery. Marx's ideas favored the strength of the workers rather than the ingenuity of industry leaders, which immediately became an inspiration to many deprived workers. The American Revolution also fueled sentiment in Victorian England, especially now that the middle class could read about the exploits of American Revolutionary leaders and their ideas about human equality and inherent rights. Penny magazines, cheap to produce and easy to distribute, helped inflame the passions of the working class. New philosophies emerged as well, some of which exemplified the legitimacy of science. Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, published in 1859, caused sudden doubt in traditional modes of thought; some people embraced

Positivism, which states that concrete evidence and scientific laws govern the universe.

The changing perspectives of Victorian England also inspired artists and architects to depart from traditional styles. Designers abandoned classical décor for Gothic spires or gaudy embellishments and stained glass windows, creating unique designs that, to this day, many people easily identify as Victorian. Like the dividing social classes, artists also held to different opinions about the role of art. Some artists, threatened by the growth of industry, thought that art should remind people that they are human beings and not machines. Other Victorian artists debated over whether to maintain classical style or to embrace realism. Like literature, new forms of art were in high demand owing to the growing middle-class audience.

The railways of Victorian England carried much more than simple cargo and passengers; they carried the sweeping changes that would blanket the world in a new era—the Industrial Age—and it would last more than 200 years, until factories and railways would slowly disintegrate as technology carried humans into the Age of Information. The remnants from the era will continue to stand, however, in the form of Gothic cathedrals, Queen Anne homes, and miles of steel bridges constructed in a time when human effort was meant to be timeless.

- The primary purpose of this passage is to
 - explain Victorianism.
 - discuss the impact of industry on culture.
 - offer a theory on the "Age of the Railway."
 - discuss the characteristics of Victorianism.
- The overall tone of this passage is
 - informative.
 - descriptive.
 - thoughtful.
 - speculative.
- As used in line 14, the phrase *domestic out-workers* most likely means
 - outdoor workers.
 - people who work from their homes.
 - people who are no longer domestic.
 - people who do housework for other people.

4. As used in line 33, the term *Romantic* most likely refers to
 - F. the condition of being in love.
 - G. the time period immediately preceding the Victorian Era.
 - H. the art and philosophy of ancient Rome.
 - J. involvement with poetry.
5. According to lines 29-36, which of the following helped the novel to become popular?
 - A. inexpensive publishing
 - B. a more literate population
 - C. coal mining
 - D. ink production techniques
6. According to this passage, which is *not* one of the advancements due to railroads?
 - F. iron production
 - G. automobile manufacturing
 - H. construction engineering
 - J. better bridges
7. As used in line 50, "Positivism" most likely means
 - A. being attracted to the optimistic.
 - B. believing provable data is the basis for knowledge.
 - C. believing that everything is possible.
 - D. believing only the strong survive.
8. Which of the following is *not* discussed in the passage as contributing to the characteristics of the Victorian age?
 - F. an increase in industry and machines
 - G. art
 - H. architecture
 - J. clothing styles
9. Which statement best describes the relationship between the Victorian Era and the Industrial Age?
 - A. The elements of Victorian England helped lead the world into the Industrial Age.
 - B. Without the fallout from the Industrial Age, Victorian England would have been bereft of art and science.
 - C. Improvements in transportation allowed new art and philosophy to migrate to England during the Victorian Age.
 - D. Victorian England is really a product of the social, scientific, and philosophical changes brought about by the Industrial Age.
10. This passage would most likely be found in
 - F. a teen magazine.
 - G. an encyclopedia of politics.
 - H. a British history book.
 - J. a book on architecture.