

Lesson
33

The Lowest of the Low

Vocabulary

All the words in this lesson have negative connotations.

defame (di FAYM) V. to slander, libel, or discredit (*The editor set out to defame the candidate by exposing his past mistakes.*)

defile (di FYL) V. to make dirty; to dishonor or corrupt (*Mindless gossip will defile the good name of the new minister.*)

depravity (di PRAV i tee) N. wickedness or corruption (*Even Germany's enemies underestimated Adolf Hitler's depravity.*)

desecrate (DES i KRAYT) V. to defile, violate, or contaminate something sacred (*Ancient superstition says it is certain death to desecrate the tomb of an Egyptian pharaoh.*)

despicable (DES pi kuh buhl) ADJ. contemptible or worthy of scorn (*The landlord's despicable treatment of his tenants should be investigated.*)

flagrant (FLAY gruhnt) ADJ. outrageous or scandalous (*John's flagrant disregard for the rules was the subject of much discussion.*)

guile (gyl) N. deceit or treachery (*The two parties concluded the deal amicably and without guile.*)

hedonistic (HEED uhn IS tik) ADJ. pleasure-loving (*My sister fell in with a hedonistic crowd, and she soon found little time for schoolwork.*)

imperil (im PER uhl) V. to endanger or jeopardize (*The inexperience of the young pilot may imperil the passengers.*)

infernal (in FUR nuhl) ADJ. hellish (*The forge produced heat of such infernal intensity that working near it was a hardship.*)

insolence (IN suh luhns) N. rudeness; insulting behavior (*David's insolence caused his father to take away the use of the car.*)

lewd (lood) ADJ. indecent or obscene (*No one believed she could be lewd but only that her words had been misunderstood.*)

malevolent (muh LEV uh luhnt) ADJ. showing ill will; spiteful (*In fairy tales, boys and girls are often pitted against malevolent forces.*)

marauder (muh RAW dur) N. a person or animal that makes raids for booty (*A raccoon is a nocturnal marauder that raids camper's food supplies.*)

morbid (MOR bid) ADJ. unhealthy or unwholesome; gloomy (*The old man has a morbid preoccupation with death.*)

odious (OH dee uhs) ADJ. hateful or offensive (*The idea of moving away from his hometown was odious to Jack.*)

prodigal (PRAHD i guhl) ADJ. wasteful; spending too much (*Because of her prodigal behavior, my sister went bankrupt.*)

profane (proh FAYN) ADJ. having no regard for sacred things; vulgar (*My mother will not have that profane book in our house.*)

revile (ri VYL) V. to verbally abuse (*No matter how her enemies revile her, she holds true to her principles.*)

subvert (suhb VURT) V. to overthrow or destroy (*The ambitious ruler will subvert our democratic ideals in his quest for power.*)

Exercise 1

Choose the letter of the word that best completes the sentence.

1. Jim's ---- abuse of his privileges is causing resentment among the other members.
A. infernal B. profane C. odious D. flagrant
2. History is full of examples of both the goodness and the ---- of humankind.
F. insolence G. depravity H. guile J. marauder
3. Our minister considers rock 'n' roll music ----, and he allows his children to listen to only sacred music.
A. prodigal B. infernal C. profane D. morbid
4. Joan's ---- ways soon left her penniless.
F. prodigal G. despicable H. morbid J. odious
5. In the eighth and ninth centuries, people of the coastal villages of Britain lived in terror of periodic raids by the Viking ----.
A. prodigal B. depravity C. guile D. marauder
6. My parents absolutely forbid any movies in our home that contain excessively violent or ---- scenes.
F. lewd G. malevolent H. flagrant J. prodigal
7. The newspaper's attempt to ---- the official's spotless reputation was quite obvious.
A. subvert B. revile C. defile D. imperil
8. The defendant continued to make rude and insulting remarks to the court until the judge had enough of his ---- and had him removed from the courtroom.
F. depravity G. insolence H. guile J. marauder
9. You will ---- your life by not wearing a seatbelt while in a car.
A. defile B. desecrate C. imperil D. subvert
10. Through a combination of raw nerve and underhanded, devious ----, the young woman took control of the company.
F. depravity G. guile H. insolence J. marauder

Exercise 2

Choose the letter of the word that most nearly has the *opposite* meaning of the word in capital letters.

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|----------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| 11. DESPICABLE | A. menacing | C. evil | 16. SUBVERT | F. overthrow | H. support |
| | B. decent | D. desperate | | G. follow | J. decline |
| 12. INFERNAL | F. singular | H. heavenly | 17. DESECRATE | A. revise | C. sicken |
| | G. dull | J. diabolic | | B. collapse | D. sanctify |
| 13. DEFAME | A. honor | C. chatter | 18. MORBID | F. curious | H. moral |
| | B. mangle | D. overthrow | | G. cheerful | J. virtuous |
| 14. MALEVOLENT | F. married | H. pitiful | 19. ODISIOUS | A. filthy | C. obscure |
| | G. friendly | J. harsh | | B. pleasant | D. forgetful |
| 15. HEDONISTIC | A. shameful | C. cheerful | 20. REVILE | F. compliment | H. blame |
| | B. content | D. self-denying | | G. exclaim | J. forgive |

Vocabulary

Exercise 1

- 1 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 2 (F) (G) (H) (J)
- 3 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 4 (F) (G) (H) (J)
- 5 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 6 (F) (G) (H) (J)
- 7 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 8 (F) (G) (H) (J)
- 9 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 10 (F) (G) (H) (J)

Exercise 2

- 11 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 12 (F) (G) (H) (J)
- 13 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 14 (F) (G) (H) (J)
- 15 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 16 (F) (G) (H) (J)
- 17 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 18 (F) (G) (H) (J)
- 19 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 20 (F) (G) (H) (J)