

## 1A Understanding Meanings

Read the sentences below. If a sentence correctly uses the word in bold, write *C* on the line below it. If a sentence is incorrect, rewrite it so that the vocabulary word in bold is used correctly.

1. To **delineate** something is to describe it.

2. A **bibulous** gathering is one at which alcohol is consumed to excess.

3. A **utopia** is a false promise.

4. An **obdurate** person is one who sticks stubbornly to a position.

5. A **covert** act is one that is open for all to see.

acolyte  
bibulous  
coalesce  
covert  
declaim  
delineate  
demagogue  
encomium  
obdurate  
prescience  
protagonist  
sedulous  
trenchant  
utopia  
valedictory

6. An **encomium** is an expression of displeasure.

7. An **acolyte** is anything that brings about change.

8. **Demagoguery** is appealing to people's prejudices in pursuit of power.

9. A **prescient** person is one who is able to foresee what might happen.

10. A **valedictory** is a farewell address.

11. A **sedulous** effort is one that is halfhearted.

12. A **protagonist** is a person who is quick to criticize.

13. To **declaim** something is to deny having anything to do with it.

14. A **trenchant** comment is one that is vigorously expressed.

15. To **coalesce** is to come together into a single body.

## 1B Using Words

If the word (or a form of the word) in bold fits a sentence in the group below, write the word in the blank space. If the word does not fit, leave the space empty.

### 1. declaim

- (a) Pam said she would \_\_\_\_\_ the reward because she did not really need the money.  
 (b) Sultan loves to \_\_\_\_\_ his views on educational reform to anyone who will listen.  
 (c) "I didn't quite catch what you said, so would you please \_\_\_\_\_ it?"

### 2. obdurate

- (a) In winter, heavy frosts make the soccer field too \_\_\_\_\_ to play on.  
 (b) Kumiko begged her parents to change their minds, but they were \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (c) Pulling out weeds was such \_\_\_\_\_ work that we soon quit.

### 3. valedictory

- (a) This brief note was Professor Higgs's \_\_\_\_\_ to her colleagues.  
 (b) It is customary for presidents to give a \_\_\_\_\_ speech upon leaving office.  
 (c) The cast members presented a Miró print as a \_\_\_\_\_ to the director.

### 4. bibulous

- (a) No \_\_\_\_\_ drinks will be served to those who are under twenty-one.  
 (b) The office holiday party is no longer the \_\_\_\_\_ affair it once was.  
 (c) Some people believe that drinking one glass of wine a day can be a healthful rather than a dangerously \_\_\_\_\_ act.

### 5. protagonist

- (a) Macbeth is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Shakespeare's tragedy of that name.  
 (b) England was France's \_\_\_\_\_ in the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453).  
 (c) Every \_\_\_\_\_ in the 100-meter dash was given a chance of winning.

### 6. coalesce

- (a) The two automobiles \_\_\_\_\_ during the accident.  
 (b) The political parties looked for a leader around whom they could \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (c) Water molecules begin to \_\_\_\_\_ when the temperature drops to 0 degrees centigrade.

### 7. prescience

- (a) Dario's decision to take the earlier train suggested \_\_\_\_\_ when he learned that the later train had derailed.  
 (b) Farmers frequently show great \_\_\_\_\_ regarding the weather.  
 (c) With the completed project due in two days, the designers felt a great amount of \_\_\_\_\_.

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**8. sedulous**

- (a) She gave a \_\_\_\_\_ grin when I discovered her prank.
- (b) The work in the midday sun is extremely \_\_\_\_\_, but you will be paid well for your efforts.
- (c) After the blizzard, the snow removal crews were \_\_\_\_\_ in their efforts to clear the streets.

**1C 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 or the A if they are antonyms.

1. secret	obdurate	silent	covert	S	A
2. flexible	obdurate	prescient	honest	S	A
3. bully	protagonist	follower	acolyte	S	A
4. utopian	enormous	vague	trenchant	S	A
5. alert	bibulous	abstemious	sedulous	S	A
6. coalesce	delineate	soften	scatter	S	A
7. demagogue	encomium	protagonist	tribute	S	A
8. relevant	sedulous	utopian	diligent	S	A
9. prescience	hindsight	valedictory	defeat	S	A
10. delineate	declaim	declare	desire	S	A

**1D Images of Words**

Circle the letter of each sentence that suggests the numbered bold vocabulary word. In each group, you may circle more than one letter or none at all.

**1. demagoguery**

- (a) The man claimed to be a doctor, but actually he knew little about medicine.
- (b) The speaker argued that improving government-sponsored health-care benefits to older citizens would cost too much.
- (c) Making subtle appeals to racial prejudice in order to get votes is shameful.

**2. covert**

- (a) The overthrow of the Bokhari government took most people by surprise.
- (b) Though they try to hide it, it's obvious that Terry and Marcel are in love.
- (c) The agents were disappointed when their sting to catch the smugglers failed.



**3. acolyte**

- (a) The tree was just four feet high when we planted it.
- (b) Although the neurosurgeon performed the crucial procedures, the resident helped throughout the operation with the routine ones.
- (c) The apprentice watched as the mason began constructing the curved wall.

**4. delineate**

- (a) With a few quick pencil strokes, Roz captured Sean's bemused expression.
- (b) Roberta repeated that she had been home since eight o'clock and knew nothing about the theft.
- (c) Charles Dickens's ability to portray characters vividly is widely acknowledged.

**5. encomium**

- (a) "They didn't give me enough time to do the job properly."
- (b) "Be careful! Look where you're going!"
- (c) This humidifier has received the highest ratings from an independent testing center.

**6. valediction**

- (a) "Everything I am I owe to my angel mother" is one of Abraham Lincoln's better known quotes on his personal life.
- (b) "A plague on both your houses!" cried Mercutio.
- (c) "Pisa Pizza has the best calzones in town."

**7. utopian**

- (a) My grandparents came to this country seeking a new life.
- (b) Our group is monitoring the water quality in the bay.
- (c) One day, poverty, crime, and disease will be banished from the earth.

**8. protagonist**

- (a) Willy Loman confronts a variety of trying situations throughout the play.
- (b) Audrey Hepburn played the leading role in the Broadway musical *My Fair Lady*.
- (c) Former President Jimmy Carter won the 2002 Nobel Peace Prize.

**9. trenchant**

- (a) The soldiers positioned themselves in a way that prevented a surprise attack.
- (b) Caroline did not think much of Stephen King's latest book.
- (c) "The negotiator's comment cut right to the heart of the matter in the dispute between management and labor."

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10. **prescience**

- (a) "I think I'm going to be ill," Helen murmured.
- (b) Harry felt certain the car would break down as soon as the warranty expired.
- (c) The next full moon will be on the ninth of October.

## 1E Passage

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

## Invisible Man

During the summer of 1945, Ralph Ellison lived on a friend's farm in Vermont, recuperating from a stress-related illness, a result of his wartime service in the Merchant Marine. He hoped to use the time to write. Even though he was little known as an author, he had written essays about literature for years. One day as he sat at his typewriter, he pecked out the words, "I am an invisible man."

At first, he was unsure what the sentence meant, but as he pondered it, a number of ideas relating to his identity as an African American began to **coalesce** for him. Although at the time he was unaware of the impact his book would have, he had begun writing one of the most significant novels of the twentieth century. It took him seven years. When the work was published in 1952 as *Invisible Man*, the **encomiums** that greeted it (including the National Book Award for fiction in 1953) ensured its instant status as a classic American novel. It has held this position ever since. One frequently mentioned feature of the book is the use Ellison makes of the richness and diversity of African American speech and experience. Another feature often noted is the **prescience** of the book. Many of the events **delineated** in the novel have parallels in the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements that erupted in the United States within a few years of its publication.

The **protagonist** of *Invisible Man* is an unnamed African American. He is invisible as an individual because white Americans, blinded by racial stereotypes, see only the color of his skin. The novel begins with his graduation from a high school in the South. He has been asked to give the **valedictory** address. Later he is invited to present his speech before a gathering of the town's leading white male citizens and to receive a scholarship from them. This turns out to be a **bibulous** occasion, at which the entertainment is a fight pitting Invisible Man and his classmates against each other. His speech is almost forgotten. Bruised and bloodied from the fight, Invisible Man **declaims** his speech. Still dazed from the melee, however, he uses the words "social equality" in place of "social responsibility." One of the men in the audience angrily challenges him, informing him: "We mean to do right by you, but you've got to know your place at all times." The rest of the novel concerns Invisible Man's attempts to "find his place," and it is emphatically not the place to which white America has consigned him.

Dropped from the college he attended because he has unwittingly embarrassed the president of the school, Invisible Man travels north to New York to look for work. After a series of jobs, he becomes an **acolyte** of Brother Jack, the leader of the Brotherhood, a group that hopes to further their goals of social change by using the discontent of African Americans over discrimination. Modeled in part on the Communist Party, which sought a **covert** alliance with African Americans for its own political ends, the Brotherhood offers a **utopian** vision of equality. However, Invisible Man gradually understands that he and other black members are being used by the organization.

The **demagoguery** of Ras the Exhorter, leader of a black separatist group, offers as little hope for change to African Americans as the false promises of the Brotherhood do. In the midst of a violent riot, spawned in part by the Brotherhood and taken up by Ras and his followers, Invisible Man takes shelter inside an underground coal cellar from which vantage point he tells his story. In the closing passage of the novel, he announces, "I'm shaking off the old skin and I'll leave it here in the hole. I'm coming out, no less invisible without it, but coming out nevertheless. And I suppose it's damn well time."

In the years that followed, Ellison's **trenchant** critique of race relations in America was not well received by militant African American leaders, who viewed him as an apologist for white America. But Ellison was **obdurate** in his insistence that literature was not propaganda for particular causes. In one of his essays he states, "I had to accept the fact that if I tried to adapt to their point of view, I would not only be dishonest but would violate disastrously that sense of complexity, historical and cultural, political and personal, out of which it is my fate and privilege to write."

For the next forty years, Ellison worked **sedulously** on a second novel. When he died in April 1994, it was still unfinished and consisted of some fifteen hundred manuscript pages kept in no particular order in several cardboard boxes. Ellison's widow invited his longtime friend John Callahan, a professor of literature, to shape this material into a novel. The resulting 368-page work, titled *Juneteenth*, was published in 1999 to mixed reviews. *Invisible Man* had set an extraordinarily high standard that the second book, in the view of some critics, failed to match. Ellison once said, "I would rather write one good book than five bad ones." In the end that is perhaps what he did.

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.

1. Why would it be inaccurate to say that Ellison presents a **utopian** view of African American life in *Invisible Man*?

2. Why is it unusual for a **protagonist** to have no name?

3. Why can we assume that the gathering of white citizens grew more raucous as the evening progressed?

4. What effect did the sentence "I am an invisible man" have on Ralph Ellison?

5. What kind of work do you think Invisible Man did for Brother Jack?

6. What details in the story suggest that Ras probably **declaimed** his ideas to those who would listen?

7. Why would the **prescience** of the ideas in the book not have been apparent on publication?

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8. What details suggest that Invisible Man was **sedulous** in his studies?

9. How does the passage indicate that Ellison's response to his critics was not **covert**?

10. How do you know that Invisible Man was **obdurate** in refusing to take the place that white society had assigned him?

11. In what way was the reception of *Juneteenth* different from that of *Invisible Man*?

## FUN & FASCINATING FACTS

A **covert** act is one that is hidden or kept secret. The term comes from the French verb *couvrir*, "to cover." Its antonym is *overt*. An *overt* act is one that is open for all to see. This word comes from the French *ouvrir*, "to open."

Since *pro-* means "for;" and *anti-* means "against," it would seem reasonable to assume that *antagonist* and **protagonist** are antonyms, but such is not the case. *Antagonist* derives from *anti-*, "against," and the Greek *agon*, "a struggle," and means "one who opposes or struggles against another." *Protagonist* is actually formed from *proto-*, "first," and the Greek

*agonistes*, "an actor," and means "the main character in a play or story." In ancient Greek drama, the *protagonist* was the first actor to occupy the stage and engage in dialogue with the chorus.

Sir Thomas More was an English statesman and author. In 1516, he wrote *Utopia*, a description of an ideal state governed by reason. The title derives from the Greek *ou*, "not," and *topos*, "place." It literally means "no (such) place." The word entered the language unchanged as a noun and acquired an adjective form *utopian*. Unless naming the place described by More, the word is not capitalized.