

Lesson 4

Word List

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

approbation
a prə bā' shən

n. An expression of approval; praise.
The company's flexible-hours policy won the employees' **approbation**.

benighted
bi nī' təd

adj. Existing in a state of moral, cultural, or intellectual darkness; unenlightened.
To insist that males and females perform only stereotypical, gender-based roles is **benighted**.

bourgeois
boorzh' wə

n. The middle class or a member of the middle class.
Madame Loisel in Guy de Maupassant's "The Necklace" is miserable in her status as a member of the **bourgeois**.
adj. 1. Very concerned with middle-class values, such as respectability and material well being, with an inclination toward mediocrity.
Was it really imperative to wear a suit to this event, Sam wondered, or was it just one more **bourgeois** demand for which he had no patience?
2. Reflecting mediocrity.
Sam considered his neighbor's taste in home decorating to be **bourgeois**.

credo
krē' do

n. A strongly held belief; a guide to one's action.
The **credo** of the Three Musketeers was "All for one, and one for all."

empirical
im pir' i kəl

adj. Based on experience or observation as opposed to theory; capable of being confirmed by observation.
Modern science began with insistence upon **empirical** data as opposed to unsubstantiated ideas of philosophers of the ancient world.

eschew
e shoō'

v. To stay away from; to shun, especially on practical or moral grounds.
Not a strict vegetarian, Rebekah **eschews** meat, although she will eat a few kinds of fish.

expatiate
ek' spa' shē āt

v. To speak or write about in great detail; to elaborate, usually used with *on* or *upon*.
The senator **expatiated** upon the need to preserve our dwindling wetlands.

iconoclast
i kā' nə klast

n. One who attacks established beliefs, customs, or institutions.
Iconoclast Betty Friedan rejected the notion that "biology is destiny" in her 1963 revolutionary work *The Feminine Mystique*.
iconoclastic *adj.*

indigence
in' di jənts

n. An extreme level of poverty.
Many families reduced to **indigence** by the Great Depression of the 1930s traveled to California looking for work.
indigent *n.* A person who is indigent.
adj. Without means of support.

laudable
lə' də bəl

adj. Praiseworthy.
The parents' efforts to save the publicly funded nursery school from being closed were **laudable** but marked by conflicts from the start.

mandate
man' dāt

n. A clear command or instruction.

After years of battle with the French, in the 1960s the Muslim majority's vote in Algeria **mandated** its independence.

v. To require or order.

The Constitution **mandates** the right of an accused to a fair trial.

ostensible
ə sten' sə bəl

adj. Only seemingly so; apparent.

His **ostensible** reason for stopping at the café was to socialize, but he was really trailing someone in his role as a private detective.

recalcitrant
ri kal' sə trənt

adj. Unwilling to accept another's authority; stubbornly defiant.

In spite of Nicole's efforts to bring the **recalcitrant** horse into the trailer, it continued to pull back as soon as they reached the ramp.

recalcitrance *n.*

regurgitate
rē gər' jə tāt

v. 1. To expel (partially digested food) from the stomach.

Some birds feed their young by **regurgitating** food into their offsprings' beaks.

2. To repeat mindlessly what one has learned.

Students need to develop critical thinking skills rather than merely **regurgitate** what they hear in a lecture.

risible
ri' zə bəl

adj. Provoking or causing laughter.

The actor declaimed King Lear's speeches in so pompous a manner that the effect was **risible** rather than moving.

4A 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. An **indigent** person is one who gets upset easily.

2. A **benighted** attitude is one that is lacking in common sense.

3. A **bourgeois** is a member of the upper class.

4. An **ostensible** purpose is one that only seems genuine.

8. expatiate

- (a) United States Representative Barbara Jordan eloquently _____ upon the reasons for impeachment of President Richard M. Nixon.
- (b) Mr. Drury _____ on his daughter's successes in a ten-page letter to me.
- (c) During the potato famine in their country, many of the Irish _____, never to return.

4C Word Study

Fill in the missing word in each of the sentences below. Then write a brief definition of the word. The number gives the lesson from which the word is taken.

- The prefix *ad-* means "toward." It combines with the Latin *umbra* (shadow) to form the English word _____ (2), meaning _____.
- The prefix *con-* or *com-* means "with." It combines with the Latin *genitus* (born) to form the English word _____ (2), meaning _____.
- The prefix *per-* means "throughout." It combines with the Latin *annus* (year) to form the English word _____ (3), meaning _____.
- The prefix *bene-* means "good." It combines with the Latin *facere* (to do) to form the English word _____ (3), meaning _____.
- The prefix *re-* means "back." It combines with the Latin *calcitare* (to kick) to form the English word _____ (4), meaning _____.
- The Greek *eikon* means "image." It combines with another Greek word *klastes* (one who breaks) to form the English word _____, (4) meaning _____.
- The Latin *credere* (to believe) forms the English word _____ (4), meaning _____.
- The prefixes *in-* and *ex-* or *e-* mean "not" and "out" respectively. They combine with the Latin *luctari* (to struggle) to form the English word _____ (2), meaning _____.
- Two Greek words, *proto* (first) and *typos* (model) combine to form the English word _____ (2), meaning _____.
- The prefix *ob-* means "against." It combines with the Latin *durus* (hard) to form the English word _____ (1), meaning _____.

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 empirical
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 regurgitate
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4D 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. **credo**

- (a) I believe that Amber had a baby boy.
- (b) Sharon still believes in the tooth fairy.
- (c) Claude Monet maintained that the real subject of his paintings was light.

2. **iconoclast**

- (a) Rosie acts as if everyone else is stupid.
- (b) Einstein changed forever the classical scientific view of space and time.
- (c) The outspoken Irish writer George Bernard Shaw was also a critic and social reformer.

3. **approbation**

- (a) "Their work does not seem good enough for this construction project."
- (b) "Satisfaction guaranteed or your money back."
- (c) "Well done!"

4. **recalcitrance**

- (a) Neither partner would apologize to the other after the argument.
- (b) The screw-top lid is so tight that I can't get it off.
- (c) All our efforts to rid the lawn of dandelions have failed.

5. **laudable**

- (a) Granny's hobby is taking care of stray cats and finding them homes.
- (b) After doing poorly in school at first, Graham started getting A's and B's.
- (c) The Hospice movement brings comfort to the terminally ill and their families.

6. **risible**

- (a) After setting a goal of \$10,000, fund organizers actually raised only approximately half that amount.
- (b) Jay climbed onto the horse and found himself facing the wrong way.
- (c) The smell of bacon reminded us that we had not yet had breakfast.

7. **empirical**

- (a) Observers report greatly increased sightings of bald eagles.
- (b) I know the paint isn't dry yet because I touched it to find out.
- (c) Sunlight can be separated into all the colors of the rainbow.

8. **indigence**

- (a) "I can't believe you thought I'd lie!" cried Yolande.
- (b) The patient has no insurance and is unable to pay the hospital bill.
- (c) The castaways despaired when the plane flew away without spotting them.

9. **ostensible**

- (a) They often think of ways to show that they are rich.
- (b) They claimed to be tourists, but the F.B.I. suspects them of spying.
- (c) I usually drive into town, but today I decided to walk.

10. **mandate**

- (a) There is no reason for you to do all the work yourself when I can help you.
- (b) Julie ran ten miles a day while training for the marathon.
- (c) Do you realize that a slice of chocolate cake with icing contains over four hundred calories?

4E Passage

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

House of Children

Educational theory in the nineteenth century was based on the notion that students were empty vessels into which the teacher poured knowledge. Learners demonstrated their progress by **regurgitating** this information on tests; failing to do so was viewed as purposeful **recalcitrance** and punished accordingly. The idea that children have a natural thirst for knowledge and are capable of learning on their own if simply given the opportunity would have struck most pedagogues as **risible**.

Such was the climate of the time when Maria Montessori attended school. She was born in 1870 into a typical **bourgeois** Italian family—her father was a government finance official for the tobacco industry; her mother, an intelligent and articulate woman, ran the home. The schools Maria went to were no different from others attended by children of her social class; the girls and boys received instruction separately. Girls studied music, needlework, and household management, subjects appropriate for females who were taught to **eschew** any thoughts of professional careers and to prepare themselves to become dutiful wives and loving mothers.

While she was still in primary school, Maria's **iconoclastic** nature, which was to characterize her life, first became apparent. She expressed a desire to attend a technical school where she could study mathematics. Signor Montessori was shocked at the idea and refused to give his consent. Fortunately, Maria's mother supported her. Although, as a dutiful wife, she did not contradict her husband when he declaimed his ideas about a woman's role in society, Maria's mother eventually wore down his resistance. Maria attended the technical school and went on to study medicine at the University of Rome, becoming the first woman in Italy to receive a medical degree. When she graduated in 1896, her father attended, smiling proudly. She had won his **approbation**. "I felt like a lion-tamer that day," she later recalled.

Psychiatry, the study of mental illness, was in its infancy at the turn of the century when Dr. Montessori chose it as her specialty. Children suffering from mental disorders were assumed to be unteachable and were kept locked in barren rooms with not one object to touch or hold. Appalled by this **benighted** attitude, Dr. Montessori set up a school for eight-year-olds in the institution to which she had been assigned. She taught classes based on **empirical** principles that she developed

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as she went along. Guiding the children rather than instructing them, she provided materials that stimulated their senses. Her diminutive charges learned responsibility by caring for plants and small animals; they learned to keep themselves and their classroom clean and tidy. They were encouraged but not required to complete structured tasks, which Montessori developed for them. They were free to move about and arrange the classroom furniture for their convenience rather than for the teacher's.

While others in the field viewed Dr. Montessori's experiments as **laudable**, they believed they were bound to fail. However, when her students passed exams on a level with children outside the institution, her colleagues realized that they had underestimated her ideas. Montessori began to question the quality of education for all children. She wrote later in *The Montessori Method* that she "became convinced that similar methods applied to normal children would develop or set free their personality in a marvelous and surprising way." Because of her success, Dr. Montessori was invited to set up a school for the children of **indigent** families in Rome's poorest district. When she opened the school on January 6, 1907, she called it Casa dei Bambini or Children's House. The techniques and materials used there became a model for many such schools, initially in Italy and then throughout the world.

In 1922, the Italian government gave Dr. Montessori a **mandate** to revise the methods in the nation's public schools. By then her fame had spread throughout the world; in books, articles, and lectures she **expatiated** upon the lessons she had learned from those she had been **ostensibly** teaching. She expressed her **credo** in these words from *The Child in the Family*: ". . . children are weak human beings who live among the strong; they are not understood, and their profound needs are unrecognized by adult society." She ended her book with a warning: "Until the adults consciously face their errors and correct them, they will find themselves in a forest of insoluble problems. And children, becoming in their turn adults, will be victims of the same error, which they will transmit from generation to generation."

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. How did Maria Montessori develop her theories of education?
2. In what way were Montessori's views about working with children with mental disorders **iconoclastic**?
3. During Dr. Montessori's childhood, what was the **ostensible** reason for sending boys and girls to different schools?
4. If girls today were asked to follow the course of study used in Montessori's time, how do you think they would respond?

5. How do you know that Maria Montessori's father eventually viewed her educational choices as **laudable**?

6. How might Signor Montessori have expressed his **credo**?

7. Why would it be inaccurate to describe the students of Casa dei Bambini as **bourgeois**?

8. In what way were Montessori's ideas about education different from those that dominated when she was growing up?

9. How did the Italian government express its **approbation** of Dr. Montessori?

FUN & FASCINATING FACTS

Bourgeois (pronounced boor-zhwa) is both a singular and a plural noun as well as an adjective. It comes unchanged in meaning and pronunciation from the French and derives from the French *bourg*, "a town." *Bourgeoisie* (pronounced boor-zhwa-zee) is a collective noun that refers to the middle class as a whole.

Iconoclast is formed from the Greek *eikon*, "image," and *klastes*, "breaker" or "destroyer." The original iconoclasts were eighth and ninth century Christians who felt that religious images were false

idols that should be destroyed. Many priceless works of art were lost as a result. Today's iconoclasts are less violent in their behavior.

Laud comes from the Latin *laudare*, "to praise." In addition to **laudable**, the adjective *laudatory*, which means "expressing praise," is formed from this verb. A losing but good-natured candidate in an election might give a speech that is both *laudatory* (by praising his or her opponent) and *laudable* (because the loser shows no bitterness).

