



clandestine  
contingency  
egocentric  
exonerate  
incongruous

indigenous  
liability  
prolific  
reinstate  
superfluous

## Ten Words in Context

In the space provided, write the letter of the meaning closest to that of each **boldfaced** word. Use the context of the sentences to help you figure out each word's meaning.

**1 clandestine**

(klän-dēs'tīn)

-adjective

\_\_\_ *Clandestine* means

- In a **clandestine** meeting in an alley, Steve sold his employer's valuable anti-aging formula to a competitor.
- The famous "Underground Railroad" was not an actual railroad; it was a **clandestine** network that took escaped slaves to safety in the years before the Civil War.

A. popular.                      B. unnecessary.                      C. secret.

**2 contingency**

(kən-tīn'jən-sē)

-noun

\_\_\_ *Contingency* means

- Faye thought her company might transfer her to another city. With that **contingency** in mind, she decided to rent a house rather than buy one.
- We believe in providing for every **contingency**. We have a list of emergency phone numbers, a first-aid kit, and a box of candles in case of a power failure.

A. a possibility.                      B. an advantage.                      C. a desire.

**3 egocentric**

(ē'gō-sēn'trīk)

-adjective

\_\_\_ *Egocentric* means

- Denise is completely **egocentric**. Whatever event takes place, she thinks only of how it will affect her personally.
- "We've talked enough about me," said the **egocentric** author to a friend. "Now let's talk about you. What do you think of my new book?"

A. selfish.                      B. considerate.                      C. self-educated.

**4 exonerate**

(ēg-zōn'ər-āt')

-verb

\_\_\_ *Exonerate* means

- Saul was suspected of shoplifting, but he was **exonerated** when the hidden camera's photos clearly showed another man taking handfuls of DVDs from a rack and stuffing them into his backpack.
- Politicians accused of illegal activities always seem to say the same thing: that they'll be **exonerated** when all the facts are known.

A. to be harmed.                      B. to be found guilty.                      C. to be found not guilty.

**5 incongruous**

(īn-kōng'grō-əs)

-adjective

\_\_\_ *Incongruous* means

- The cuckoo lays eggs in other birds' nests. This practice can result in the **incongruous** sight of one large cuckoo chick among several tiny baby robins.
- It wasn't really **incongruous** for a former general to join the peace movement. He had seen the horrors of war.

A. contradictory.                      B. unnecessary.                      C. not noticeable.

**6 indigenous**

(īn-dīj'ə-nəs)

-adjective

\_\_\_ *Indigenous* means

- Kangaroos are **indigenous** only to Australia. They have never been found living anywhere else in the world.
- Corn was not **indigenous** to Europe, so Europeans had never seen or heard of it until their explorers first reached the New World and found it growing there.

A. important.                      B. native.                      C. welcomed.

- 7 liability**  
(lī'ə-bīl'ə-tē)  
-noun
- \_\_\_ *Liability* means
- My shyness with strangers would be a **liability** in any job that involved meeting the public, such as sales.
  - When Juanita returned to school at age 40, she was afraid her age would be a **liability**. Instead, she found that it gave her an advantage over younger students.
- A. an asset.                      B. a handicap.                      C. a necessity.
- 8 prolific**  
(prō-līf'īk)  
-adjective
- \_\_\_ *Prolific* means
- Rabbits deserve their reputation for being **prolific**. A female rabbit can produce three families each summer.
  - Haydn was a **prolific** composer. He wrote, among many other musical works, 104 symphonies.
- A. creating abundantly.                      B. working secretly.                      C. important.
- 9 reinstate**  
(rē'in-stāt')  
-verb
- \_\_\_ *Reinstate* means
- Michiko left work for a year to stay home with her new baby. When she returned, she was relieved and happy to be **reinstated** in her former job.
  - The college had canceled the course in folklore, but the demand was so great that the class had to be **reinstated**.
- A. to recognize.                      B. to appreciate.                      C. to put back.
- 10 superfluous**  
(sōō-pūr'flōō-əs)  
-adjective
- \_\_\_ *Superfluous* means
- In the phrase "rich millionaire," the word *rich* is **superfluous**. All millionaires are rich.
  - Lately, business at the store has been so slow that the three clerks have almost nothing to do. Two of them seem **superfluous**.
- A. unnecessary.                      B. ordinary.                      C. required.

## Matching Words with Definitions

Following are definitions of the ten words. Clearly write or print each word next to its definition. The sentences above and on the previous page will help you decide on the meaning of each word.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Something that acts as a disadvantage; a drawback
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Done in secret; kept hidden
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Out of place; having parts that are not in harmony or that are inconsistent
4. \_\_\_\_\_ A possible future event that must be prepared for or guarded against; possibility
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Living, growing, or produced naturally in a particular place; native
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Beyond what is needed, wanted, or useful; extra
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Producing many works, results, or offspring; fertile
8. \_\_\_\_\_ To clear of an accusation or charge; prove innocent
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Self-centered; seeing everything in terms of oneself
10. \_\_\_\_\_ To restore to a previous position or condition; bring back into being or use

**CAUTION:** Do not go any further until you are sure the above answers are correct. Then you can use the definitions to help you in the following practices. Your goal is eventually to know the words well enough so that you don't need to check the definitions at all.