



charlatan
corroborate
disseminate
diverge
dormant

hoist
illicit
irrevocable
precipitate
proliferation

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 charlatan

(shâr'lə-tən)

-noun

— *Charlatan* means

- My grandmother once bought a “magnetic box” from a **charlatan** who assured her that it would cure her arthritis. Of course, the box was worthless.
 - In the days of the Wild West, **charlatans** sold “snake oil” as a remedy for everything from baldness to insanity.
- A. an investor. B. an expert. C. a con artist.

2 corroborate

(kə-rōb'ə-rāt')

-verb

— *Corroborate* means

- You claim you were at a soccer game when the crime was committed. Can anyone **corroborate** your story?
 - Sid says he saw a flying saucer in the park, but no one else in the area has come forward to **corroborate** his account.
- A. to question. B. to support. C. to understand.

3 disseminate

(dīs-sēm'ə-nāt')

-verb

— *Disseminate* means

- Campaign workers went all over the city to **disseminate** pamphlets and flyers about their candidate.
 - What would be the best way to **disseminate** information about the next school board meeting? It's important for all parents to attend.
- A. to spread. B. to conceal. C. to improve.

4 diverge

(dī-vûrj')

-verb

— *Diverge* means

- The brothers' paths **diverged** greatly. One became a famous lawyer, and the other ended up in jail for armed robbery.
 - In a well-known poem, Robert Frost uses a branching path as a symbol of life's decisions: “Two roads **diverged** in a wood, and I—I took the one less traveled by.”
- A. to separate. B. to unite. C. to disappear.

5 dormant

(dôr'mənt)

-adjective

— *Dormant* means

- Many insects lay eggs that remain **dormant** all winter and do not hatch until spring, in the warmer weather.
 - A visit to Puerto Rico reawakened Anita's **dormant** interest in Spanish, the language of her childhood.
- A. not active. B. irreversible. C. growing.

6 hoist

(hoist)

-verb

— *Hoist* means

- Let's go over to the construction site and watch the crane **hoist** the beams into place for the new skyscraper.
 - So far, attempts to **hoist** the wreckage of the jetliner from the ocean floor have been unsuccessful.
- A. to follow. B. to display. C. to raise.

7 illicit

(ĭl-lĭs'ĭt)

*-adjective*___ *Illicit* means

- Years of **illicit** activities resulted in Gene's being sentenced to serve a life term in prison.
 - Ted's business is **illicit**: he drives an unlicensed passenger van along a route that's supposed to be used only by city buses.
- A. fake. B. unlawful. C. unprofitable.

8 irrevocable

(ĭr-rĕv'ə-kə-bəl)

*-adjective*___ *Irrevocable* means

- Layla would like to break off her engagement to Ahmed, but she feels that her promise to marry him is **irrevocable**.
 - Giving a child up for adoption has become a subject of debate. Should the mother be allowed to change her mind, or should her decision be **irrevocable**?
- A. not reversible. B. mistaken. C. not certain.

9 precipitate

(prĕ-sĭp'ə-tāt')

*-verb*___ *Precipitate* means

- Mark's search for a larger house was **precipitated** by his marriage to a woman with four children.
 - The discovery that Elliot had been setting fires **precipitated** his parents' decision to send him to a child psychologist.
- A. to bring on. B. to prevent. C. to permit.

10 proliferation

(prō-lĭf'ər-ā'shən)

*-noun*___ *Proliferation* means

- Hana's doctors hope that chemotherapy will halt the **proliferation** of cancer cells in her body.
 - The **proliferation** of dandelions in my yard is too much for me to handle. They're growing faster than I can destroy them.
- A. damage. B. a shortage. C. a rapid increase.

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. _____ Inactive; alive but not actively growing, as if asleep
2. _____ To spread or scatter widely; distribute
3. _____ Not able to be canceled or undone; irreversible
4. _____ A rapid spread or increase
5. _____ To confirm; strengthen with further evidence; provide proof of
6. _____ To cause to happen quickly, suddenly, or sooner than expected
7. _____ To lift, especially with some mechanical means, like a cable
8. _____ A fake; a person who falsely claims to have some special skill or knowledge
9. _____ To branch off in different directions from the same starting point; to become different
10. _____ Illegal

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.