

ACADEMIC WORDS

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This exercise contains many words that you can expect to find in a college textbook. For each group of five, select the word that best fits each reading selection. The answer key is on the last page. You can, if you like, use the spaces provided to write your own definitions.

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| a. concurrent | 1. We laughed and cried a lot during the movie, and there were so many scary scenes. By the time the lights came on, we felt like we'd been through the whole _____ of human emotion. |
| b. methodical | 2. I once found an egg that was so round that it was more like a _____ than an oval. |
| c. sphere | 3. Only one person can access my online account at any one time. However, I've seen other memberships that allow an unlimited number of _____ users. |
| d. spectrum | 4. Justine was very _____ when it came to organizing her research. She had her whole project divided into "phase 1," "phase 2," and so on. In addition, all her source material was neatly categorized by both author and topic. |
| e. fluctuate | 5. Gas prices continued to _____ due to the uncertainty about the availability of oil from the Middle East. |

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

concurrent:

methodical:

sphere:

spectrum:

fluctuate:

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| a. plethora | 6. For homework, Ronald had to _____ a list of short-term goals that he planned to achieve by the end of the semester. |
| b. infer | 7. During his "Blue Period," painter Pablo Picasso only used gloomy hues like gray, white, blue, and black. Conversely, one of his famous paintings, "Guernica," uses a _____ of colors. |
| c. compile | 8. Jocelyn was hoping for consistent data, but the findings of her research ended up _____ due to the unusual age group she chose. |
| d. coarse | 9. The difference between a healthy and unhealthy liver is the way they feel and look. A healthy liver is smooth, while a liver scarred by |
| e. skewed | |

cirrhosis tends to be rather _____.

10. It would be wrong of us to _____ that a student who is quiet in the classroom will have poor grades. He or she might be both shy and smart or might understand the material so well that there is no need to ask questions.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

plethora:

infer:

compile:

coarse:

skewed:

- a. dynamic
- b. irrelevant
- c. vestigial
- d. coalesce
- e. stagnant
11. The drought caused the river to withdraw from the land, leaving many small bodies of water cut off from the natural flow. Mosquitos bred quickly in these _____ ponds, eventually leading to a rise in the incidents of malaria.
12. The professor answered Mayra's question about how the final exam was going to be graded, even though it was obviously _____ to a class discussion about the life of Albert Einstein.
13. Mario suddenly realized that the _____ of his relationship to Gina had changed. The two of them used to do whatever Mario decided, but now Gina was making all the decisions, and he was always anxious to please her.
14. In 2006, Japanese scientists captured a dolphin that had what appear to be _____ hind legs. These "remains of legs" provide further evidence for an evolutionary theory: Distant ancestors of the dolphin and the whale, according to evidence in fossil records, once crawled on land, and they are not-so-distant relatives of the hippopotamus.
15. The smoke that rose from the bottle began to _____ into a ghostly human form. Could the myths be true? Had the archeologist released a genie?

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

dynamic:

irrelevant:

vestigial:

coalesce:

stagnant:

- a. summit
 - b. inquiry
 - c. propel
 - d. oscillate
 - e. intrinsic
16. The high-pitched strings on a guitar _____ faster than low-pitched strings.
 17. When Karen reached the _____ of Black Mountain, she took a video of herself and the amazing view, and she posted it on YouTube.
 18. The security guard's careful _____ into the death of his brother yielded more results than that of the detective assigned to the case.
 19. Rose couldn't figure out what could possibly _____ this yacht. There was no sail, no visible engine, and no sound of a motor.
 20. Some people believe that your personality is mostly learned, that it is developed from your life experiences. Others point out, however, that many personality traits appear to be _____.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

summit:

inquiry:

propel:

oscillate:

intrinsic:

- a. horizontal
 - b. petrified
 - c. absorb
 - d. transcend
 - e. constrict
21. Vertical tanning beds give each customer a much more even tan because he or she stands up within them. On the other hand, _____ tanning beds are much more comfortable because customers can lie down.
 22. Yellow anacondas, indigenous to the Amazon Rainforest, are known for their deadly feeding technique: the serpent tightly coils its muscular body to _____ its prey's breathing, thereby suffocating it to death before swallowing it whole.
 23. The Harry Potter and X-men movies appeal to international audiences because they _____ cultural boundaries.
 24. The beautiful decorative rocks were full of ancient, _____ tree bark and leaves.
 25. After a desert rainstorm, the dry ground is very quick to _____ the standing water.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

horizontal:

petrified:

absorb:

transcend:

constrict:

- a. fruition
- b. emit
- c. velocity
- d. clockwise
- e. prevalent
26. If you draw a line in a _____ motion, at a 90-degree angle, you will eventually create a circle.
27. It's puzzling that autism appears to be a more _____ condition in children of professional football quarterbacks. For instance, the sons of Doug Flutie, Rodney Peete, and Jim Kelly all have this condition.
28. Greg never thought he would become a college graduate, but as he shook the college president's hand and received his diploma, he realized that his dream had come to _____.
29. The _____ of the passing car caused Martin's hat to fly off of his head.
30. Nichole's chocolate diamond earrings _____ a glare so bright that people turn their heads when she passes by.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

fruition:

emit:

velocity:

clockwise:

prevalent:

- a. adhere
- b. meager
- c. subterranean
- d. diurnal
- e. ubiquitous
31. Not all termites are _____. Dry wood termites, for example, live above ground, often in the attics of homes.
32. _____ flowers are usually colorful because most colors, even dark blues and reds, are clearly visible in sunlight. Nocturnal flower, on the other hand, are usually large and white because other colors would be barely discernable in moonlight.
33. I abhor walking on the beach while I'm sweaty because the sand tends to _____ to my entire body, even to my eyelids.
34. In the Appalachian Mountains, drivers must be aware of spontaneous, _____ fog. In a moment's time, it will appear everywhere and cause dangerous accidents.
35. The _____ grade that Jean received on his term paper did not give him a sense of accomplishment.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

adhere:

meager:

subterranean:

diurnal:

ubiquitous:

- a. synthesis
- b. notation
- c. convection
- d. invasive
- e. buoyant
36. Many people view getting a colonoscopy as a(n) _____ procedure, both physically and emotionally.
37. The life jacket proved to be quite _____. I was able to hold Jasmine and her friend and still stay afloat.
38. Some critics praise the movie *Fright Night*, the original 1985 version, as a perfect _____ of comedy and horror.
39. Scientists sometimes invent their own private form of _____. As a personal set of abbreviations and symbols, it helps them write comments more quickly and easily.
40. The use of _____ is an effective way of cooking food because it circulates hot air and evenly cooks food.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

synthesis:

notation:

convection:

invasive:

buoyant:

- a. stimulate 41. Smoking presents many health _____ to both the smokers and to those around them.
- b. wane 42. The heavy rains will _____ the community's water supply.
- c. augment 43. The scandal caused the senator's popularity to _____.
- d. hazards 44. Samuel could easily _____ what his drunken father was going to do with the baseball bat. He'd been talking about destroying that television for years.
- e. deduce 45. A rise in employee awards, if the awards are appropriate and meaningful, may _____ productivity.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

stimulate:

wane:

augment:

hazards:

deduce:

- a. dilute 46. Sports drinks are normally much too sweet for Jake, so he decided to _____ them with bottled water before heading to the gym each day.
- b. schematic 47. Sarah's new mother-in-law was way too nosy and _____. She actually dropped by the hotel to visit the newlyweds on their honeymoon.
- c. replicate
- d. intrusive 48. When Simon's computer crashed, he lost almost all of his banking records. Fortunately, he still had his receipts and deposit slips from the past month. It took time, but he was at least able to _____ the lost records of the previous 30 days.
- e. adjacent
49. You told me that your new cloning procedure was simple, but we have been unable to duplicate your results. If you could put your complex lab procedures into some kind of _____ for us, perhaps the lab team could follow it step-by-step and succeed.

50. My roommate has a bedroom next to mine. That normally isn't a problem, unless his girlfriend stays the night. These walls are so thin that I can hear any sound in a (n) _____ room.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

dilute:

schematic:

replicate:

intrusive:

adjacent:

- a. pinnacle 51. This town is so easy to navigate through. Everything exists in a grid pattern, so all streets are either parallel or _____ to each other.
- b. deficient 52. One advantage chameleons have is that they are able to change colors and _____ themselves in their surroundings. This makes them more difficult for predators to find.
- c. stipulate
- d. camouflage 53. For a professional athlete, the _____ of success is winning a World Championship.
- e. perpendicular 54. Our laws _____ that, in order to find a person guilty of a crime, the jury must believe "beyond a reasonable doubt" that he or she committed it.
55. Many people who possess weak bones have diets that are _____ in calcium or vitamin D.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

pinnacle:

deficient:

stipulate:

camouflage:

perpendicular:

- a. extrapolate 56. When I put liquid gelatin mix in the fridge, the temperature makes it _____ into a semisolid form.
- b. ooze 57. After looking at the extensive data, Dr. Bromer was able to _____ a pattern for his theory.

- c. concentric
- d. deplete
- e. coagulate

58. The physician stated in his report that the accident victim's brain matter began to _____ out of her skull because of the extraordinary swelling that resulted from her injuries.
59. The earthquake's vibrations rippled across the landscape in _____ circles, very much like the ripples formed by a rock thrown into a pond.
60. Why is spring water so beautiful and healthy? One reason is that a lack of oxygen dissolved into the water tends to _____ it of germs and other microscopic organisms, making it crystal clear.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

extrapolate:

ooze:

concentric:

deplete:

coagulate:

- a. principle
 - b. principal
 - c. suspension
 - d. depression
 - e. focus
61. A meteor is capable of leaving a significant _____ if it impacts the Earth's surface.
62. Many companies often experiment with _____ groups before introducing a new product to worldwide markets. If a relatively small group doesn't like something about the product, the company can make changes before going into widespread production.
63. Fasting during Ramadan is one _____ in the Quran that devout Muslims must follow.
64. Though there were eight members on the committee, Mr. Robinson was the _____ director. All decisions had to be given his final approval.
65. Sometimes in a glacier, there are many fossils held in _____ in its layers of ice.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

principle:

principal:

suspension:

depression:

focus:

- a. sedentary
 - b. internal
 - c. counterclockwise
 - d. inductive
 - e. indigenous
66. When the pitcher could not move his shoulder in a _____ motion, the doctor knew that he more than likely had torn his rotator cuff.
67. During her office day at the office, Aliyah is required to remain _____ for most of the day, which tends to make her terribly sleepy in the early afternoon.
68. One effective way of recognizing the “big picture” beyond the details is by using _____ reasoning. This allows us to focus on the smaller details and make larger generalizations from them.
69. Many of the _____ people of Hawaii have difficulty metabolizing the standard American diet. They all-too-easily become overweight.
70. Special x-ray, magnetic, or ultrasound equipment is used to see a patient’s _____ organs.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

sedentary:

internal:

counterclockwise:

inductive:

indigenous:

- a. ration
 - b. degenerate
 - c. chamber
 - d. opaque
 - e. volume
71. Each _____ of a honeycomb in a beehive has a specific purpose, such as food storage or egg incubation.
72. The elderly are encouraged to learn a new skill so that their brain functioning does not _____ with age.
73. Janice gave each chimp an equal _____ of food so that the pack would be less confrontational during feeding time.
74. In chemistry lab, Herman misread the professor’s directions and filled the beaker with the wrong _____ of acid.
75. Linda did not clean her pool this summer because she was saving money to fix the pool pump. Unfortunately, the water quickly became _____ with algae, and she became afraid of what else might be living down in those unseen depths.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

ration:

degenerate:

chamber:

opaque:

volume:

- a. decompose 76. In small towns, a wedding is often a _____ event. In cities, however, weddings tend to be private gatherings.
- b. stasis 77. The space voyage of the Starship Exeter would take 62 years, but the crew members were kept in _____. Upon arrival, they'd be the same biological age as when they left.
- c. communal
- d. abate 78. Manure has to _____ before farmers can use it as fertilizer.
- e. culminate 79. The musicians didn't want their concert to _____ in a fireworks display. They wanted the audience to leave thinking about the music, not about any theatrical tricks.
80. Whenever tourists passed by on the bridge, the shy young couple would momentarily _____ in their passionate exchange.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

decompose:

stasis:

communal:

abate:

culminate:

- a. proximal 81. Mario didn't understand what "mass hysteria" was until his professor provided some _____ examples of it.
- b. concrete 82. Even though the scientific method has strict procedures that prevent dishonesty, it is still possible for researchers to _____ their experimental data.
- c. falsify
- d. latent 83. Chronic kidney disease sometimes stays _____ for a long time. By the time symptoms begin to show, the damage is often too severe to correct.
- e. vigilance 84. The guardsmen at Fort Jackson are known for their exceptional _____. Even under cover of darkness, we'll have a hard time sneaking in.

85. The reconnaissance report indicated that the terrorist's bomb blast was _____ to a school. Fortunately, none of the children or teachers were injured.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

proximal:

concrete:

falsify:

latent:

vigilance:

- a. precipitate
- b. microbial
- c. trait
- d. serendipitous
- e. gaseous
86. In a literary work, *dynamic* characters display more than one personality _____. *Flat* and *static* characters, on the other hand, are often simple, and they tend to stay the same throughout the story.
87. The most dangerous chemical weapons are often _____, affecting the victim through the lungs.
88. It seems ironic that the blue whale, the largest animal on the planet, feeds on miniscule _____ life, such as plankton.
89. You're talking theory mostly, aren't you? We have yet to see the real-world actions that will _____ from your policies.
90. It is said that the manner in which the wheel was discovered was completely _____. Cavemen were simply chiseling rock and happened to stumble upon a very beautiful yet practical shape.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

precipitate:

microbial:

trait:

serendipitous:

gaseous:

- a. vertical
- b. magnitude
91. In order to unlock your account, many online websites ask for _____ of your password.
92. The Leaning Tower of Pisa was initially erected in a _____ position but started to lean during its lengthy construction.

- c. innovate
- d. verification
- e. latitude

93. If people understood the _____ of some of their decisions, they would probably think twice before they acted.
94. The great thing about America is that no matter what your background, economic situation, or ethnicity, if you are actively motivated to succeed, there will be a wide _____ of opportunities for you to do so.
95. The focus of the college's Quality Enhancement Plan is to _____ lesson plans so that they help students further develop their Critical Thinking Skills.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

vertical:

magnitude:

innovate:

verification:

latitude:

- a. sparse
 - b. recede
 - c. volatile
 - d. err
 - e. simulate
96. The _____ nature of some hazardous materials makes it necessary for us to follow directions carefully.
97. The crowd at Wal-Mart on Black Friday began to _____ when the manager announced that the store was out of iPads.
98. The actions in many video games are created by having real people _____ the characters' movements while being recorded on a camera.
99. The concert promoters had to cancel the show because the ticket sales were so _____.
100. To _____ is forgivable because none of us is perfect.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

sparse:

recede:

volatile:

err:

simulate:

101. After a rainstorm, the desert flowers seemed to _____ the barren

habitat:

comprehensive:

retrograde:

- a. detract 111. Not all of the _____ objects in the night sky are stars.
- b. replenish 112. Most doctors recommend that you get most of your essential _____ from food, rather than from nutritional supplements.
- c. celestial 113. All this talk of the high school principal's alleged sex scandal tends to _____ from the primary issue: the quality of classes at her school.
- d. converse
- e. nutrients 114. Various celebrities like Bono, Jay-Z, and Chris Tucker have donated vast sums of money to countries with weak infrastructures. With the right utility companies in place, these countries can consistently _____ their water supply and grow crops more abundantly.
115. Inductive reasoning is the _____ of deductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning creates big ideas from little details, and deductive reasoning creates little details from big ideas.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

detract:

replenish:

celestial:

converse:

nutrients:

- a. replenish 116. The sound of thunder is a commonly known _____ of rain.
- b. averse 117. The Earth does not orbit the Sun in a perfect circle, but rather in a(n) _____.
- c. precursor 118. In medieval Europe, when an army laid siege to a castle, the castle had almost no way to _____ its food supply. The inhabitants sometimes even ate their own horses.
- d. transient
- e. ellipse 119. Winter months in the Antarctic are so _____ to human life that researchers must live in heated underground bunkers, almost never venturing outside until the return of spring.
120. My authority in this office is merely _____. Once our boss returns from vacation, you will once again answer to her.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

replenish:

averse:

precursor:

transient:

ellipse:

- a. demographic 121. As he trained, Joe’s strength increased quickly, but eventually his performance _____. At that point his regular workouts only served to maintain the strength he had.
- b. plateaued 122. Since my parents are from different cultures and different races, I’m not sure what _____ I fall under.
- c. implicit 123. In the 1600s, Isaac Newton was hesitant to publish his theory of gravity because he was afraid he would be accused of studying black magic. _____ to his theory was the idea of “action at a distance,” which states that one object appears to exert a “magical” force over other objects without touching them.
- d. coerce 124. Nicole tried to _____ her professor to give her a better grade by threatening to reveal their unethical sexual relationship.
- e. cognitive 125. Some students who have difficulty in their early schooling become super-achievers in later life. This is because their struggles have forced them become more aware of their own _____ processes than most people.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

demographic:

plateau:

implicit:

coerce:

cognitive:

- a. juxtapose 126. To _____ her worry—and because her paper showed so much promise—Roxanne’s professor offered her an extra week complete her work.
- b. underlying 127. I think that Jenna and Lamont are having a tough time. They seemed

- c. polarize pleasant enough at their son’s birthday party, but the _____ tension was unmistakable.
- d. mitigate
- e. inhibit
128. The discussion of gays in the military only seemed to _____ the liberal and conservative viewpoints at last night’s debate.
129. In horror novels, authors often _____ contradictory images to produce frightening moods: the “black flames of Hell,” the “chilling lullaby,” “the warm embrace of death,” or the serial killer with the knife who calmly consoles his victim: “The only way to redemption is through me.”
130. Noise tends to _____ my ability to study, unless it’s soothing background noise like a fountain or the bustle of a crowd at a library.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

juxtapose:

underlying:

polarize:

mitigate:

inhibit:

- a. affect
- b. effect
- Either of these can be used more than once.
131. The alcohol began to _____ Jill much more than she had anticipated.
132. The only personal _____ of mine that the police failed to return was my wristwatch. I had somehow gotten lost in the evidence room.
133. How astonishing that this ugly caterpillar will eventually _____ such a startling transformation!
134. The most common _____ of hypothyroidism is fatigue.
135. There are many emotions experienced when one goes to a funeral, such as grief, anger, indifference, or despair. One lesser known psychological _____ that sometimes accompanies the death of a loved one—for which people sometimes feel ashamed—is a profound sense of relief.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

affect (as a verb):

affect (as a noun):

effect (as a verb):

effect (as a noun):

- a. benign
- b. disposition
- c. optimal
- d. component
- e. reflexive
136. Jamie was frightened by the fact that her date knew exactly where she lived, even though she'd never told him. But she was pretty sure his intentions were _____, once she discovered that he was her UPS deliveryman.
137. Because of the impurities in our fuel supply, the performance of our engines has been less than _____.
138. This planet, I'd say, almost seems to have a hostile _____, at least in regard to humans. So far, our tent has been struck by lightning, our starship has had to land twice because it was sinking too deeply into the soil, and our entire crew has contracted an untreatable rash from the native plant life.
139. The most controversial _____ in our training plan is a safety rule that prohibits our employees from using fire extinguishers, even in the event of a fire!
140. When she pretended to punch him in the stomach, he blocked her arm and spilled soda all over her. Though his reaction was merely _____, he still felt guilty over it.

Definitions (Try writing your own; you can check yourself with a dictionary):

benign:

disposition:

optimal:

component:

reflexive:

ANSWER KEY:

1. d (spectrum)	36. d (invasive)	71. c (chamber)	106. d (comprehensive)
2. c (sphere)	37. e (buoyant)	72. b (degenerate)	107. a (lava)
3. a (concurrent)	38. a (synthesis)	73. a (ration)	108. e (retrograde)
4. b (methodical)	39. b (notation)	74. e (volume)	109. b (flux)
5. e (fluctuate)	40. c (convection)	75. d (opaque)	110. c (habitat)
6. c (compile)	41. d (hazards)	76. c (communal)	111. c (celestial)
7. a (plethora)	42. c (augment)	77. b (stasis)	112. e (nutrients)
8. e (skewed)	43. b (wane)	78. a (decompose)	113. a (detract)
9. d (coarse)	44. e (deduce)	79. e (culminate)	114. b (replenish)
10. b (infer)	45. a (stimulate)	80. d (abate)	115. d (converse)
11. e (stagnant)	46. a (dilute)	81. b (concrete)	116. c (precursor)
12. b (irrelevant)	47. d (intrusive)	82. c (falsify)	117. e (ellipse)
13. a (dynamic)	48. c (replicate)	83. d (latent)	118. a (replenish)
14. c (vestigial)	49. b (schematic)	84. e (vigilance)	119. b (averse)
15. d (coalesce)	50. e (adjacent)	85. a (proximal)	120. d (transient)
16. d (oscillate)	51. e (perpendicular)	86. c (trait)	121. b (plateaued)
17. a (summit)	52. d (camouflage)	87. e (gaseous)	122. a (demographic)
18. b (inquiry)	53. a (pinnacle)	88. b (microbial)	123. c (implicit)
19. c (propel)	54. c (stipulate)	89. a (precipitate)	124. d (coerce)
20. e (intrinsic)	55. b (deficient)	90. d (serendipitous)	125. e (cognitive)
21. a (horizontal)	56. e (coagulate)	91. d (verification)	126. d (mitigate)
22. e (constrict)	57. a (extrapolate)	92. a (vertical)	127. b (underlying)
23. d (transcend)	58. b (ooze)	93. b (magnitude)	128. c (polarize)
24. b (petrified)	59. c (concentric)	94. e (latitude)	129. a (juxtapose)
25. c (absorb)	60. d (deplete)	95. c (innovate)	130. e (inhibit)
26. d (clockwise)	61. d (depression)	96. c (volatile)	131. a (affect)
27. e (prevalent)	62. e (focus)	97. b (recede)	132. b (effect)
28. a (fruition)	63. a (principle)	98. e (simulate)	133. b (effect)
29. c (velocity)	64. b (principal)	99. a (sparse)	134. b (effect)
30. b (emit)	65. c (suspension)	100. d (err)	135. a (affect)
31. c (subterranean)	66. c (counterclockwise)	101. d (revitalize)	136. a (benign)
32. d (diurnal)	67. a (sedentary)	102. e (solidify)	137. c (optimal)
33. a (adhere)	68. d (inductive)	103. b (inhabit)	138. b (disposition)
34. e (ubiquitous)	69. e (indigenous)	104. c (adverse)	139. d (component)
35. b (meager)	70. b (internal)	105. a (variable)	140. e (reflexive)