

Confidence-In-Context Coaching
Lesson 1 Workbook

A. Words about Careers

The five words in this section might all be used when discussing jobs or careers: curriculum vitae, tenure, hiatus, elucidate, sinecure.

Your career words explained

The first word we'll define is actually a Latin phrase: "**curriculum vitae**," meaning literally "the course of life." Like a resume, your curriculum vitae, or "CV," gives the details of your work and professional history, but also includes your academic background, personal achievements, and any awards and recognitions you have received. The terms "curriculum vitae" and "resume" are often used interchangeably, but you might be more likely to hear "curriculum vitae" in an academic setting, such as a college or university.

Example: "To help you get the best job, be sure to list your professional certifications on your curriculum vitae."

"**Tenure**" is another word that is often associated with the world of education. This noun has the same roots as the French "tenir," or "to hold," and means "holding or possession of a job, status, or position." Tenure can refer to a specific period of time – for example, "He accomplished a great deal during his tenure as chairman." In academics, tenure is used to denote an indefinite period of time: a teacher who "gets tenure" has their position guaranteed from then on.

Example: "The organization's membership list doubled in size during her tenure as president."

Our third word is the noun "**hiatus**." A hiatus is a pause or break in something that is otherwise ongoing. For example, a newspaper editor might write a column each week for publication, but when the editor is away on holiday, the column goes on hiatus – that is, there is a gap in the regularly-scheduled publishing. You could say that both the editor and the column are on vacation. "Hiatus" is both singular and plural, though it's also correct to say "hiatuses." However, since the term is most frequently used when talking about one instance in time, you generally won't be faced with the problem of which form to use.

Example: "The offices are closed while the department is on hiatus."

Was that last word confusing? If so, perhaps I should elucidate. The fourth word in our list is “**elucidate**,” which means “to make clear” or “to shed light on.” A synonym of elucidate is “explain.” If you’re a teacher, this is something you’ll be doing quite often.

Example: “His clear explanation helped elucidate the details of the complicated instructions.”

The final word in this section is the noun “**sinecure**.” This might be your ultimate goal when using a curriculum vitae to find work – a sinecure is a job where you don’t have any duties or responsibilities, but you still get paid.

Example: “Rather than being a sinecure, this job has me doing something every minute of the day!”

B. Peaceful Words

Here’s a set of words that will give you a peaceful, easy feeling: equanimity, affable, mitigate, congenial, serendipity.

Your peaceful words explained

“**Equanimity**” means “calmness, especially during stressful situations.” It’s a characteristic of someone who maintains his or her composure. It’s often used to refer to a person’s way of speaking as well as their attitude – for example, “Although his tone was very aggressive, she answered him with equanimity.” Equanimity also refers to stability or steadiness, in a mental or emotional sense.

Example: “His exercises in meditation and prayer helped him view the chaos in his life with perfect equanimity.”

An affable person is someone who is sociable and easy to talk to, and also someone who finds it easy to talk to other people. “**Affable**” means “friendly,” but in a quiet, calm way. Affable people are not necessarily the life of the party or the centers of attention. Instead, they’re the ones who listen as much as they talk. Everybody feels comfortable talking to them, because they’re comfortable talking to anyone. Other adjectives that describe this

type of person are “amiable” and “cordial” – that is to say, polite and willing to go along with others, in a spirit of friendship.

Example: “Alex is invited to every outing – she’s so amiable, she can get along with anyone.

If there’s conflict between two people in a group, one thing an amiable person can do is help decrease, or mitigate the tension. “**Mitigate**” means to reduce or decrease the effect of something negative. Sometimes that negative thing is more tangible, like a migraine: medication can mitigate the pain of a headache. Sometimes it’s a negative emotion or feeling. Have you ever given someone flowers when they’ve had bad news, because you want to mitigate their sadness?

Example: “Construction workers are often required to wear earplugs to mitigate the noise of the machinery they operate.”

There won’t be much tension to mitigate when you’re with someone congenial.

“**Congenial**” means “having the same likes and dislikes.” You and your best friend are likely congenial kindred spirits. If you’re in a group of people who enjoy the same thing – for example, an activity like skiing, or singing in a choir – then you’re in congenial company. You can also be in a congenial situation: one where you’re completely in your comfort zone, surrounded by affable people, even if you’re not a part of any particular group.

Example: “Being a music lover, I found myself in congenial company at the opening of the Sydney Opera House’s new season.”

Do you love opera? Imagine that one day you have to walk home by a different route, because they’re doing construction on the main street to mitigate the traffic congestion. You walk by a small restaurant you’ve never seen before, and go in for a look. Inside, you find delicious food, and singing waiters who serenade you with beautiful arias from your favorite operas. If you hadn’t been forced into this different path, you’d never have found this restaurant. That’s “**serendipity**” – the accidental discovery of something good or beneficial. In fact, serendipity is sometimes called a “happy accident.”

Example: “She met her future husband through serendipity, when they were seated together at a friend’s wedding party.”

C. Words for Difficult or Dangerous Situations

Look out! These five words might be used when you're dealing with difficult or dangerous situations: pandemic, virulent, detrimental, sequester, stringent.

Your words for difficult or dangerous situations explained

"Pandemic" means "widespread" – that is, covering a large geographic area and affecting many people. You'll usually hear this in relation to an illness. In fact, an epidemic is promoted to "pandemic" status when it spreads beyond the usual range of infection. For example, the so-called 'bird flu' is considered an epidemic if it affects many people in one country, but if it spreads across the globe, it will become pandemic.

Example: "With all of the air travel being done these days between continents, medical researchers are afraid that some diseases may become pandemic if people return home after being infected."

An illness like this, which can spread quickly and easily between populations, is often said to be virulent, especially if it results in many deaths. **"Virulent"** means "highly infectious and deadly." The Ebola virus, which kills over half of the people who catch it, is a virulent disease. Let's hope that particular illness doesn't become pandemic.

Example: "The pandemic of 1918 was caused by a particularly virulent strain of influenza, resulting in the deaths of over 20 million people worldwide."

The effects of such an illness are detrimental to a population. **"Detrimental"** means "causing harm or damage." Synonyms of "detrimental" are "destructive," "harmful," and "unfortunate."

Example: "Because most of the victims of the 1918 pandemic influenza were adults between 20 and 45 years old, many countries lost a large percentage of their workforce within a short period of time, which proved detrimental to their economies, already damaged by World War I."

One way of fighting a pandemic illness is to **"sequester"** the people who are infected, to make it harder for the disease to spread. The verb "sequester" means "to isolate and

make separate from outside contact.” When you sequester someone, you are putting them in seclusion, or isolation.

Example: “The doctors suspected that the child had been infected with measles, so they sequestered him in an isolated area, rather than putting him in the common ward with the other patients.

Some “**stringent**” measures might be needed if you have to sequester an entire population due to the possibility of a pandemic illness. “Stringent” means “keeping strictly to specific rules or standards.” The underlying sense of the word is that these rules are difficult to follow, but that there would be negative consequences if you didn’t follow them. “Stringent” can also mean severe, rigorous, or rigid.

Example: “The hospital established a stringent policy that all visitors had to follow when visiting patients, including a complete change of clothes and hourly hand-washing.”

D. Words for Amusing, Funny and Quirky Characteristics

You might find this section rather entertaining. You’ll be learning words that are often used when speaking of things that can be amusing or funny, but in a slightly strange way: foible, droll, hyperbole, parody, potter.

Your words for amusing, funny and quirky characteristics explained

The first word is “**foible**.” A foible is an unusual habit or mannerism, particularly one that creates vulnerability. The word comes from the French word *faible* meaning “feeble” and implies a weakness, specifically in a person’s character. It’s a small weakness, but it can cause them harm. Think of a suit of armour that protects a knight. Let’s say this knight polishes his armour every day, but puts extra effort into making the right knee shiny, because he thinks that will bring him luck. Unfortunately, all that polishing makes the knee area weaker, and the next spear goes right through it. This little chink in the armour is a metaphorical foible – the real foible is the knight’s habit of over-polishing that spot.

Example: “He insisted on always sitting at the head of the table when he played poker. This foible prevented him from competing in the big tournaments, where seating is assigned randomly.”

You might find this previous example of a foible somewhat droll. “**Droll**” means “wry” or “whimsical” or “odd, in a humorous way.” It’s a quieter, subtle humour. The Three Stooges and Benny Hill are generally not described as “droll.”

Example: “We all enjoyed her droll presentation on Shakespeare; it was full of witty comments comparing his play’s characters to modern movie stars.”

In fact, I laughed so hard at her presentation that my teeth fell out! Well, no, that was hyperbole. “**Hyperbole**” means an exaggeration or overstatement, used in order to emphasize a point. It’s often done in order to create a humorous effect. Many comedians rely on hyperbole for their acts, saying things like “I was so thin as a child my parents didn’t bother giving me a key to the front door. I just went in through the mail slot.” Advertisers make their living off hyperbole. Not every product can be the best, but they all claim to be.

Example: “The studio’s statement that millions of people went to the movie premiere on Friday is sheer hyperbole – ticket sales show that only a few thousand people attended.”

Some movies are parodies, like “This Is Spinal Tap,” a mock documentary about a heavy metal band and its concert tours. A “**parody**” is an imitation of a person, place, or thing, done in order to poke fun at them. The Australian television show “CNNNN” made fun of 24-hour cable news networks, and “The Colbert Report” does the same for news programs in the USA. Sometimes this is done just to be humorous, but other times a parody can be sharper, mocking someone’s mannerisms in a way intended to be hurtful.

Example: “Jane’s parody of her French professor’s lectures had everyone laughing, but when the teacher walked into the classroom, she was not amused.”

A typical parody of an absent-minded professor includes wandering around aimlessly, doing things randomly, without very many results. The word “**potter**” means to mess about doing nothing in particular. In parodies, this is a common foible of an older person, or one who’s not altogether mentally sound.

Example: “After he won the lottery, Bruce quit his job and spent every day just pottering around in the garden.”

E. Words for Describing Truth and Lies

Sometimes it’s hard to tell truth from fiction. All of the words in this section deal with truth and lies: fabrication, verbatim, erroneous, chimera, specious.

Your words for describing truth and lies explained

The first word we’ll be looking at is “**fabrication**.” You might be familiar with this word in the sense of “making something” – often machine parts or tools – and the meaning we’re talking about is similar. A “fabrication” is something that’s made up – that is, a lie. A fabrication is a story, a fiction, a falsehood.

Example: “Steven was four hours late, but his explanation that his late arrival was due to an escaped circus elephant was obviously a fabrication.”

Now, let’s say Steven really was caught in traffic for four hours, during which time he heard on the radio that the problem was due to an escaped elephant. The radio announcer was having a bit of fun with his audience – but Steven didn’t know this. He’ll still give the same reason for arriving four hours late, but now his reason isn’t a fabrication, it’s just erroneous. “**Erroneous**” means “based on false information,” in error, mistaken.

Example: “When the zoo reported a missing elephant, the city closed all of the schools, in the erroneous belief that the lions had also gotten loose.”

On the other hand, Steven might have been driving slowly home, imagining himself riding on the back of an elephant at the head of a circus parade. He was lost in his daydream, caught in a fantasy, a chimera. A “**chimera**” is a creation of the imagination, a foolish fancy, or an imaginary thing.

Example: “Early European travellers to Africa brought back descriptions of giraffes and elephants that were dismissed as chimeras by people who didn’t believe such things could exist.”

Something that seems believable and reasonable at first glance, but is easily proven false when examined closely, is said to be “**specious**”. This term is often used to describe argument, or reasoning. A good example of specious reasoning is the following:

- God is love.
- Love is blind.
- I am blind.
- Therefore I am God.

On the surface, this seems perfectly logical, where A leads to B leads to C back to A, but when you look at the statements, they lead to a completely illogical conclusion. Another word for a specious argument is a “fallacy.”

Example: “The lawyer tried to prove that the woman was guilty by quoting her previous statements about the incident, but as she hadn’t said anything incriminating, this was a specious argument.”

Quoting something that someone previously said can sometimes help you separate truth and fiction, but only if you’re quoting them verbatim. “**Verbatim**” means word for word, exactly as it was said.

Example: “The court reporter read back the lawyer’s words verbatim, and the judge realized that his arguments were based on false evidence.”

F. Difficult Words that Appear Easy

The most difficult words to learn are sometimes the ones that look the simplest. But it’s easy to confuse words that seem familiar, when their meanings aren’t what you expect. In this section, we’ll look at three familiar words - champion, brook, and pedestrian – and discover their Ultimate Vocabulary definitions. We’ll also learn two words that might describe the confusion surrounding these words: quandary and abstruse.

Your familiar but perhaps difficult words explained

Let's start with the word "**champion**." It's a word you hear frequently in sports, when you're talking about a winner, someone who's made it to the top. The meaning we're going to learn is actually very similar. As a verb, "to champion" means to promote, to "talk up," or to advertise positively. You can champion a person or a cause, trying to get people to support them. Advertisers champion their product, trying to convince you to use it. In other words, you're trying to get something or someone to the top, to make it or them a winner.

Example: "After the terrible earthquake that nearly destroyed the city, local officials and celebrities championed the movement to replace the wooden buildings with reinforced concrete."

The next word in this section is "**brook**." We're not talking about the noun referring to a small stream, but rather a verb that means to tolerate or put up with, specifically with something negative.

Example: "I have been teaching school for over thirty years, and I will brook no interference in my classroom from parents who disagree with the grades I give the students."

The third word that we'll look at for its hidden meaning is "**pedestrian**." When you're walking down the street, you're a pedestrian – that's a noun. But unless you're doing a very silly walk, you're also *being* pedestrian – an adjective. The adjective "pedestrian" means "unremarkable" or "ordinary."

Example: "The lives of the people around him seemed so pedestrian that the would-be author couldn't use them for inspiration when writing his first novel."

Before you knew these words had meanings other than the ones everyone knows, you might have been in a quandary when you saw them being used in ways you didn't expect. Our fourth word in this section is "**quandary**," meaning uncertainty, or difficulty in knowing what to do.

Example: "Two of his friends asked him for a recommendation to the same job, and he's in a quandary because he can't sponsor one of them without alienating the other."

And now that you're comfortable with these old words and their new meanings, you won't find their usage in these contexts so abstruse. Something that is difficult to understand, perhaps even so much that you feel you can't begin to try, is "**abstruse**."

Example: "I picked up a book on recent discoveries in physics, but it was so abstruse that even my university classes in higher mathematics were no help in understanding the text."

Tests for Reinforcing What you have Learnt

A. Words about careers

Now that you've heard and read these five words in use, can you think of conversations you've had recently where you might have been able to use them? Here are some sample sentences with one of these target words missing. See if you can fill in the correct word in each sentence.

Test Sentences:

1. She tried to tell me how to do it, but her directions were too vague, and I had to ask her to _____.
2. During the two-day _____ in broadcasting caused by the loss of power after the storm, the television station's news reporters filed their stories over the telephone.
3. A professional _____ should always include the locations where you worked, and details about what you did there.
4. Because the office is only open to the public one day a week, the receptionist's job is mostly a _____.
5. What do you want to accomplish during your _____ as president?

Answers:

1. She tried to tell me how to do it, but her directions were too vague, and I had to ask her to **elucidate**.

*The directions were vague, meaning that it was not clear what to do. **Elucidate** means “to make clear.”*

2. During the two-day **hiatus** in broadcasting caused by the loss of power after the storm, the television station’s news reporters filed their stories over the telephone.

*The station was not able to broadcast without power, so there was a break in programming. A **hiatus** is a break or gap in something that is otherwise ongoing.*

3. A professional **curriculum vitae** should always include the locations where you worked, and details about what you did there.

*Where you worked, what you did, and who you worked with – these things all describe part of your life. When you put them together, you’ve created a **curriculum vitae**, the “course of your life.”*

4. Because the office is only open to the public one day a week, the receptionist’s job is mostly a **sinecure**.

*A receptionist who rarely has anyone coming to the office has nothing to do. A job where you get paid for doing nothing is a **sinecure**.*

5. What do you want to accomplish during your **tenure** as president?

*A president is chosen or elected for a specific period of time. The time spent in a job, status, position, or elected office is called **tenure**.*

Unless your current job is a **sinecure**, you might be thinking of changing jobs. If so, it’s a good time to review your **curriculum vitae**. Be sure to **elucidate** the reasons for any **hiatus** in your career, and note the beginning and ending dates of your **tenure** in each position.

And when you’re done, check off five more words on your Ultimate Vocabulary list:

- elucidate
- curriculum vitae
- tenure
- hiatus
- sinecure

B. Peaceful Words

What do you talk about when you're with your friends? Perhaps you can use some of these new words you're learning to describe your feelings of calm and contentment in being in such congenial company. Here are some sample sentences, each with one of our key words missing. Fill in the correct word in each sentence.

Test Sentences:

1. This new vaccination is not a complete cure for malaria, but it definitely _____ the side effects of the disease.
2. Everything was going wrong during the dress rehearsal – the spotlights didn't work, the curtain fell down, and the actors couldn't remember their lines – but even so, the producer managed to direct the performance with _____.
3. Alexander Fleming's discovery of penicillin in 1928 was a matter of _____, when he noticed that a bacteria culture had been accidentally contaminated by bacteria-killing mould from another laboratory nearby.
4. Bob is such an _____ person. He finds something to talk about with everyone he meets.
5. I find this group of people to be very _____ - we all enjoy listening to jazz, and then talking about the performances afterwards.

Answers:

1. This new vaccination is not a complete cure for malaria, but it definitely **mitigates** the side effects of the disease.

*The vaccination decreases the side effects of the sickness. **Mitigate** means “to lessen or decrease,” specifically when referring to something negative, such as illness.*

2. Everything was going wrong during the dress rehearsal – the spotlights didn’t work, the curtain fell down, and the actors couldn’t remember their lines – but even so, the producer managed to direct the performance with **equanimity**.

*In the middle of a stressful, chaotic situation, the producer kept her composure, and was able to speak calmly while directing the actors. **Equanimity** means “calmness under stress” or “steadiness of mind.”*

3. Alexander Fleming’s discovery of penicillin in 1928 was a matter of **serendipity**, when he noticed that a bacteria culture had been accidentally contaminated by bacteria-killing mould from another laboratory nearby.

*If the mould hadn’t been blown by the breeze into Fleming’s laboratory – and if he hadn’t noticed how it killed the bacteria in the petri dish – he might never have discovered penicillin. This is **serendipity**, when something happens by accident that results in the discovery of a good thing.*

4. Bob is such an **amiable** person. He finds something to talk about with everyone he meets.

*Bob enjoys interacting with people, and is easy to talk to. Someone who is **amiable** is sociable and friendly, and has the ability to put other people at ease in conversation.*

5. I find this group of people to be very **congenial** - we all enjoy listening to jazz, and then talking about the performances afterwards.

*Not everyone likes the same type of music. People who like or dislike the same things are **congenial**.*

Sometimes it’s just **serendipity** when you end up in a group of strangers and find that, after all, they’re **congenial** company, **affable** people, and now new friends. Having good friends does a great deal to **mitigate** the stresses that can happen in daily life, and can help you deal with your problems with greater **equanimity**.

And now, calmly check off five more words on your Ultimate Vocabulary list:

- serendipity
- congenial
- mitigate
- affable
- equanimity

C. Words for Difficult or Dangerous Situations

Infection can spread quickly, but so can information, especially in this world of instant internet communication. When you're reading the news from around the globe, keep an eye out for these words in stories about new diseases and cures. But right now, listen to these sentences, and fill in the missing word in each with one of the five Ultimate Vocabulary words from this lesson.

Test Sentences

1. The port authorities put _____ guidelines in place to prevent people from smuggling animals out of the country.
2. While she was recovering from her bout of pneumonia, Alice was _____ in a private room at the hospital.
3. Be careful with your prescription medication: taking too much or too little might have a _____ effect on your health.
4. When the European explorers came to the New World, they often brought smallpox and other illnesses with them which proved _____ to native populations lacking any resistance to those diseases.
5. Experts fear that unless more study is done on the causes and control of the West Nile virus, we may be facing a _____ illness in the near future.

Answers:

1. The port authorities put **stringent** guidelines in place to prevent people from smuggling animals out of the country.

*The guidelines set by the port authorities are very specific rules, and people who break those rules will be punished. “**Stringent**” means severe, rigorous, and strict.*

2. While she was recovering from her bout of pneumonia, Alice was **sequestered** in a private room at the hospital.

*Someone in a private room is isolated from others. “**Sequestered**” means secluded, withdrawn, separated from outside contact.*

3. Be careful with your prescription medication: taking too much or too little might have a **detrimental** effect on your health.

*If you take too much aspirin at one time, it may damage your hearing and cause a ringing in your ears. Something that is damaging, that causes harm, is “**detrimental**.”*

4. When the European explorers came to the New World, they often brought smallpox and other illnesses with them which proved **virulent** to native populations lacking any resistance to those diseases.

*Smallpox spread rapidly among the native populations, who had never encountered this disease, and had no immunity to it. “**Virulent**” means highly infectious, and usually deadly.*

5. Experts fear that unless more study is done on the causes and control of the West Nile virus, we may be facing a **pandemic** illness in the near future.

*When several children in a school have chicken pox or a similar contagious illness, the school will often shut down for a while to prevent a wider spread of infection. An illness that spreads beyond a region, and even a country, is called a “**pandemic**” illness.*

Even though modern medicine has effective drugs and treatments for many illnesses, there are some **virulent** diseases in the world for which no-one has discovered treatment. These diseases are very **detrimental** to the regions where they’re found, but rather than **sequestering** those populations and ignoring the problem, we should make it a **stringent** requirement of any pharmaceutical research program to devote time and money to finding cures. It’s in our best interest to eliminate these diseases, and prevent a possible future **pandemic** illness that will affect all of us, no matter where we live.

I hope you have a “healthy” respect for the power of words by now. You’ve learned a set of five useful words from your Ultimate Vocabulary list:

- stringent
- pandemic
- detrimental
- sequester
- virulent

D. Words for Amusing, Funny and Quirky Characteristics

It’s important to know how to say things, as well as what to say. Learning these Ultimate Vocabulary words will give you the confidence to use them in their correct context. To practice, listen to these five sentences and fill in one of this section’s target words in the appropriate place.

Test Sentences:

1. One of that actor’s _____ is his ritual of eating half a banana exactly one-half hour before each performance.
2. I found his choice of music to be very _____; not many people would request the songs of Dead Can Dance to be played at a funeral.
3. Children frequently use _____, saying things like “My dog is a million times smarter than your brother.”
4. The schoolchildren performed a wonderful _____ of Gilbert and Sullivan’s operetta “The Mikado,” setting it in a sushi restaurant in New York City.
5. The librarian spent so much time _____ around the rare books section, she was rarely available to help the students with their research.

Answers:

1. One of that actor’s **foibles** is his ritual of eating half a banana exactly one-half hour before each performance.

A “**foible**” is a personal quirk or unusual habit, and often one which creates a weakness in the person who has it. What would the actor do if there were no bananas available that day?

2. I found his choice of music to be very **droll**; not many people would request the songs of Dead Can Dance to be played at a funeral.

*Unless you really like their music, it might be seen as an odd but humorous choice of bands for a funeral. “**Droll**” means oddly humorous or whimsical, and perhaps something that not everyone would even recognize as humour. For example, if there’s no mention of the band’s name, only those people who know their music would get the joke.*

3. Children frequently use **hyperbole**, saying things like “My dog is a million times smarter than your brother.”

*If you use exaggeration or overstatement to make a point, you are using “**hyperbole**”. It’s often used deliberately for a humorous effect, saying something that’s obviously impossible, but funny in context. Dogs are only a hundred times smarter than people, by the way.*

4. The schoolchildren performed a wonderful **parody** of Gilbert and Sullivan’s operetta “The Mikado,” setting it in a sushi restaurant in New York City.

*The schoolchildren used the basic premise of the operetta, but changed the location and the words to make a version that pokes fun at the original. A “**parody**” is an imitation that mocks the original, usually gently. However, if you parody a specific person’s foibles, you may end up hurting them.*

5. The librarian spent so much time **pottering** around the rare books section; she was rarely available to help the students with their research.

*The librarian is wandering between the shelves, forgetting what time it is, and not even aware that there are people who might be looking for her. She’s not doing anything in particular, just picking up a book here and there. She’s pottering around the rare books section. To “**potter**” means to wander aimlessly, not accomplishing much, and doing what little you do in a random fashion.*

Humour, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. But with your growing vocabulary of powerful words, you'll be able to use them to create exactly the effect you want. They're so powerful; they can change the orbit of the moon! No, sorry, that was:

- hyperbole
- potter
- foible
- droll
- parody

E. Words for Describing Truth and Lies

Believe me when I say that knowing the correct words to use and when to use them is a powerful tool. Let's see if you can get to the true meaning of the five vocabulary words in this section by filling in the blanks in these example sentences.

Test Sentences:

1. The boys told their mother that a passing car had splashed mud all over their sister's dress, but she knew it was a _____ when she saw how dirty their hands were.
2. Some people buy a lottery ticket every day; the _____ of instant and unlimited wealth is always in their mind.
3. It's a _____ argument to say that if a child is three feet tall when she's three, she'll be ten feet tall when she's ten.
4. Your conclusion that cows are a leading cause of global warming is based on _____ information.
5. Even if you could recite the works of Shakespeare _____, I wouldn't cast you as the leading role in this play.

Answers:

1. The boys told their mother that a passing car had splashed mud all over their sister's dress, but she knew it was a **fabrication** when she saw how dirty their hands were.

*Children don't lie very well sometimes, and it's obvious when they're making things up. A "**fabrication**" is a made-up story or a lie.*

2. Some people buy a lottery ticket every day; the **chimera** of instant and unlimited wealth is always in their mind.

*The odds of winning a lottery are so high, it's more of a fantasy than a reality, and most people will spend their winnings in their minds before they even buy a ticket. A "**chimera**" is a fantasy or an imaginary creation.*

3. It's a **specious** argument to say that if a child is three feet tall when she's three, she'll be ten feet tall when she's ten.

*Trying to make a logical argument out of illogical statements can lead you to create a specious line of reasoning. "**Specious**" means "based on false premises."*

4. Your conclusion that cows are a leading cause of global warming is based on **erroneous** information.

*Specious arguments are often based on erroneous information. "**Erroneous**" means inaccurate or mistaken; something that is assumed to be true, but is in fact false.*

5. Even if you could recite the works of Shakespeare **verbatim**, I wouldn't cast you as the leading role in this play.

*An actor who knew all of Shakespeare's plays verbatim would normally be a valuable addition to a theatre. "**Verbatim**" means exactly as written, word for word.*

Once you know the true meaning of these words, they won't play you false. Review the Ultimate Vocabulary word lists daily and your dream of using these powerful words in everyday situations will turn from a **chimera** into a reality. Remember these words and definitions **verbatim**:

- fabrication
- chimera
- specious
- erroneous

- verbatim

F. Difficult Words that Appear Easy

Even if you're no longer in school, it's a good idea to keep your brain stimulated by learning new things. You've learned five new words in this section – now see if you can fit them into their proper places in the following sentences.

Test Sentences:

1. That actress brought down the energy level of the entire cast with her _____ interpretation of the character.
2. The class in linguistics might seem _____ at first, but once you learn all of the terminology; it will be easier to understand.
3. The head of the purchasing department would _____ no dispute about where the money should be spent.
4. Sometimes the people who are most effective at _____ the cure for a disease are the ones who have suffered from it.
5. I've fallen in love with someone from another country, which presents a _____, because I don't want to live so far away from my family.

Answers:

1. That actress brought down the energy level of the entire cast with her **pedestrian** interpretation of the character.
A dull, uninspiring performance by one person can affect everyone else on stage. "Pedestrian" means dull, unexceptional, uninteresting.
2. The class in linguistics might seem **abstruse** at first, but once you learn all of the terminology, it will be easier to understand.
When you're first learning about something, it might seem so complicated that it's impossible to comprehend. The word "abstruse" means difficult to understand.
3. The head of the purchasing department would **brook** no dispute about where the money should be spent.

*This purchasing department makes all of its budget decisions six months in advance, and hates to change the spreadsheets. They don't want to hear about other people's opinions on money matters, and won't listen to any objections. "To **brook**" means "to tolerate," but in a negative sense; use this verb when you're talking about something you WON'T tolerate.*

4. Sometimes the people who are most effective at **championing** the cure for a disease are the ones who have suffered from it.

*It's often easier to raise funds for a cause when you can relate a personal experience that explains your reason for being involved. If you're trying to raise support for a movement or a person, you are "**championing**" their cause.*

5. I've fallen in love with someone from another country, which presents a **quandary**, because I don't want to live so far away from my family.

*Wanting to be with your family, but also wanting to live with your love on the other side of the world – that's a dilemma. And that's the meaning of "**quandary**": a difficult decision, a state of perplexity and uncertainty.*

Now that the meanings of these five words are no longer **abstruse**, you'll be able to **champion** their use by more people. No more **pedestrian** conversations – you'll **brook** no resistance to adding these powerful words to your vocabulary. And you won't be in a **quandary** about when and how to use these words, because you've added them to your Ultimate Vocabulary checklist:

- champion
- abstruse
- pedestrian
- quandary
- brook