

**Confidence-In-Context Coaching**  
**Lesson 7 Workbook**

## A. Words For Describing Change

Change is in the air! You're improving your vocabulary skills and learning how to use these powerful Ultimate Vocabulary words in context, which will lead to a change in your abilities as a conversationalist and public speaker. In this section, we'll speak about five words that describe change: transmute, protean, malleable, dynamic, metamorphosis.

### *Your words for describing change explained*

As you grow in confidence about using these vocabulary words in context, and start using them on a daily basis, your ordinary conversations will be transmuted into highly effective communication, where every word expresses the exact nuances of your thoughts.

**"Transmute"** is a verb meaning to alter, change or convert something. This change can be to the form or substance of an object or, on a metaphysical level, to a basic characteristic. A synonym for "transmute" is "transform."

**Example:** "The tropical fruit called ackee is poisonous when raw, but boiling the fruit will transmute the toxic substances into harmless compounds, and you can enjoy the ackee cooked with eggs and peppers in a traditional Jamaican dish."

A transmutation is a change that might not be apparent on the surface. By contrast, a metamorphosis is a complete change in form or substance. Depending on the circumstances, possible synonyms for **"metamorphosis"** include "reinvention" and "rebirth."

**Example:** "Children are always amazed at the process of metamorphosis that changes a lumpy leaf-chewing caterpillar into a delicate, nectar-sipping butterfly."

An octopus can squeeze its boneless body through a long narrow tube, or compact itself into a shallow underwater cave. This ability to take on different forms or characteristics is described by the word **"protean,"** meaning "extremely variable." The word comes from the name of the oldest sea god in Greek mythology, Proteus.

**Example:** "The protean skin coloration of animals like the chameleon and the reef squid allows them to blend in almost invisibly with their surroundings."

The reef squid actually uses rapid changes in skin color to communicate with other squid. Divers who come across these animals are amazed at the bright, dynamic colors and patterns on their skin. **"Dynamic"** means constantly changing or moving. A synonym for dynamic is "active"; the opposite of dynamic is "static."

**Example:** "Now that graphics designers can include animation and movies, web pages have gotten to be much more dynamic."

Creative people can express themselves in a variety of ways: in pencil drawings or oil paintings, in marble sculptures or in the more malleable medium of clay. **"Malleable"** means flexible or easily shaped, something that can be changed without breaking. You

can also use this word to describe an intangible characteristic, such as someone's personality.

**Example:** "Sarah got into a lot of trouble when she was a child; she was so malleable that she'd do anything her schoolmates told her to, even if it was against the rules."

## **B. Words For Discussing Technical Innovation**

Remember when "spam" referred to a canned luncheon meat, and not to unwanted e-mail messages? Many words have been adopted to describe things associated with computers and other technology. Here are five Ultimate Vocabulary words you might use when discussing the latest innovations: binary, decode, cryptic, anthropomorphic, superannuated.

### ***Your vocabulary for discussing technical innovation explained***

Computers are fantastically complicated machines that perform amazingly difficult tasks in the blink of an eye, but the basic principle underneath all computer functions is surprisingly simple: it's nothing more than a switch between "on" and "off", "yes" and "no." This binary switch is at the heart of all calculations. "**Binary**" means something that is separated into two parts that are both of equal importance, but are mutually exclusive. The so-called "binary language" is called that because its "letters" are only the number one and the number zero, nothing more, in increasingly complex combinations.

**Example:** "The physics professor explained the concepts of absolutes and degrees by comparing two types of lighting fixtures: the first one had a binary switch that turned the light off or on, and the other had a dimmer switch that would allow the light to slowly brighten."

Complicated concepts in physics are often easier to understand if you can see a demonstration using everyday objects and ideas. The best professors use a variety of methods to help their students decode the information in their textbooks. To "**decode**" something is to make it clear and easy to understand; this verb can be either transitive or intransitive. In the intransitive sense, "decode" means "to figure something out."

**Example:** "When I was working at the embassy, we received daily communications from agents in the city, and my job was to decode the messages before passing them on to the diplomats."

Everyone knows the best secret agents always make sure to keep their messages as cryptic as possible, in case they're intercepted by the enemy. Something that is "**cryptic**" is obscure or otherwise hard to understand. A cryptic communication has a hidden meaning, and may be written in secret code.

**Example:** “My nephew likes the fortune-telling machine at the county fair; he’ll spend hours dropping coins in the slot, watching the hand of the colorfully-dressed robot move back and forth, and collecting the cryptic messages printed out.”

A small child might actually believe that a turbaned dummy inside the glass box of a fortune-telling machine is a real person, talking to them directly. When something is shaped like a person, it’s easy to pretend that they’re human. But we also treat machines that look nothing like humans as if they could understand us – how many times have you yelled at your computer today? Perhaps, as humans, the only way we know how to communicate with something is to give it anthropomorphic characteristics first.

“**Anthropomorphic**” is an adjective meaning having the attributes of a human, but not being human. These attributes can be physical, emotional, or both.

**Example:** “Many cultures placed figureheads at the front of their ships, whether simple painted eyes on either side of the bow or a carved statue of a woman, in the anthropomorphic belief that this would help the ships navigate through any hazards.”

Figureheads aren’t part of modern ship design, and most people would look on them as superannuated, even for merely decorative purposes. “**Superannuated**” means old-fashioned or archaic, something that is outdated and obsolete.

**Example:** “We were listening to an old radio play last night, and my niece asked what the funny clicking noise was when one of the characters made a telephone call; it seems rotary phones are completely superannuated, and no one under thirty even knows what they used to sound like.”

## C. Words For Describing Relationships

It’s all coming together now - you’re getting more confidence in using these powerful vocabulary words in context. Making these Ultimate Vocabulary words a seamless part of your conversations will improve your ability to communicate and create productive relationships with others, both at work and in everyday interactions. Here are five more Ultimate Vocabulary words to work on, all of which can be used to describe relationships: alloy, symbiosis, reconcile, collusion, inundate.

### *Your words describing relationships explained*

The better your communication skills, the easier it will be to work with people in mutually-beneficial relationships. You’ll be able to form partnerships that help you reach your goals, even as your efforts help others. Such a symbiosis is the basis for healthy and productive interactions on both personal and professional levels. “**Symbiosis**” is a noun meaning “a mutually-beneficial relationship.” “Symbiotic” is the adjective that can describe such a relationship.

**Example:** “The brightly-colored clownfish lives in symbiosis with sea anemones; the clownfish is immune to the anemone’s poison and hides within its tentacles, and in return the fish keeps the anemone free of waste matter and decay.”

Often two things together are stronger and more effective than either thing taken separately. A good example is bronze, an alloy of copper and tin. Both copper and tin are malleable and easily bent, but bronze, even though it is a combination of the two, is stronger than both. An **"alloy"** is a metal that is made up of two or more metallic substances that have been combined.

**Example:** "Rose gold is an alloy of copper and gold that is found in several places in the Middle East and eastern Europe; the copper gives the metal a lovely reddish hue that makes it a popular choice for rings and other jewelry."

Many people invest in gold in order to keep money out of more volatile markets such as stocks. Because of the fixed amount of gold in existence, the value of gold is relatively stable - there is no way for more gold to suddenly inundate the market, lowering its value. **"Inundate"** means to overwhelm or deluge with something. A synonym for inundate is "flood."

**Example:** "The unemployment rate is so high in this town that every time our company advertises a job opening, our resources department is inundated with applications."

When there are more people looking for work than there are jobs available, the advantage is with the employers, who don't have to woo prospective employees with good benefits or competitive salaries. In these situations, people sometimes accuse corporations of being in collusion with the government to keep the unemployment rate artificially high. **"Collusion"** means coming together for a secret purpose. Another word for "collusion" is "conspiracy."

**Example:** "The company newsletter ran several articles praising the proposed health benefits plan, but we found out later that our CEO was in collusion with the head of the insurance organization to cut services to most employees under the new plan."

Most insurance companies try to maximise their profit, but people covered under their policies want to maximise their benefits. Corporate health plan administrators do their best to reconcile the two viewpoints to create plans that provide good coverage for the least amount of money. **"Reconcile"** means to create a good relationship between two things, to bring them together, or to make them equal or even.

**Example:** "Although Howard had not spoken to his family for over ten years, when he married, his wife convinced him to reconcile with his sister and brother, and they have even started taking vacations together."

## D. Words Containing "X"

"X" marks the spot in this session – all of the words you'll be learning have an "x" in them: quixotic, prolix, maxim, axiom, noxious

### *Your words containing "X" explained*

You're well on your way to mastering all of the Ultimate Vocabulary words we want to share with you, not just the ones spelled with an "x". If your goal was to learn all of the words in the English language that have an "x" in them, your friends might think that was

impractical, but somewhat quirky and charming, and would probably encourage you to take on the project, even though it would be quite a task. They might even describe you as “quixotic.” This word comes from the title character in the Spanish author Cervantes’ work “Don Quixote.” [nb pronunciation: “quixotic” = kwix AH tick, “Quixote” = key HO tay]. Like the Don, “**quixotic**” means someone who impulsively performs noble and romantic, but impractical, acts. The expression “tilting at windmills” also comes from this literary work, and has much the same meaning: setting yourself up against imaginary enemies, where the enemies are much larger or more powerful than you are.

**Example:** “Moved by a quixotic desire to make sure everyone receives flowers on Valentine’s Day, Ben decided to give a red rose to every person he meets on February 14<sup>th</sup> each year.”

The discussion of the word “quixotic” used quite a few words, and perhaps we could have found a way to define it more concisely. Instead, we came up with a rather prolix explanation. “**Prolix**” means wordy or verbose. It can mean using too many words, or that the words you’re using are overly obscure themselves, or both.

**Example:** “Prolix dissertations increase both obfuscation and ennui; or to put it more simply, overly-long speeches are often confusing and boring.”

As Cicero said, “Brevity is the best recommendation of speech, whether in a senator or an orator.” A modern version of this maxim is “Keep it short and simple.” A maxim is a saying about a general rule of life. Two synonyms for “**maxim**” are “proverb” and “aphorism.”

**Example:** “Jake was trying his best to get me to invest in his banking scheme before the rates went up, citing the old maxim ‘he who hesitates is lost’, but I didn’t trust his calculations, and decided to keep my money in mutual funds.”

The maxim “he who hesitates is lost” means that sometimes if you wait too long to take action, you’ll lose the opportunity to take action altogether. On the other hand, if you’re hesitating before jumping off a cliff, that might not be a bad thing. This proves maxims aren’t always true. By contrast, an “**axiom**” is something that is accepted as true because it has been proved constantly true in the past, or because it’s so obvious it doesn’t need to be proved again. The word is used most often when speaking of mathematics or logic.

**Example:** “The science of mathematics is based on axioms that form the foundation for further theories; for example, it is accepted as fact that only one straight line can be drawn between any two points.”

Testing theories in mathematics usually just involves a pencil and paper, unlike chemistry experiments, which can sometimes result in loud explosions and noxious odors when the wrong substances are combined. “**Noxious**” is an adjective meaning “unpleasant”. It’s

most often used to refer to an odor. Something that is noxious is quite often toxic as well – and there’s an extra x-word for you!

**Example:** “We were cleaning out the drawers in his desk and accidentally opened an old carton of leftover food – the entire office was filled with the noxious odor of spoiled meat for days.”

## **E. Words Starting With “V” For You To Conquer**

Julius Caesar said it first: “Veni, vidi, vici” - I came, I saw, I conquered. Here are five more Ultimate Vocabulary words for you to conquer: venue, vocation, vehement, vapid, and viable. V for victory!

### ***Your words starting with “v” explained***

One can just imagine Caesar at the head of his armies, planting the standard of the Roman Eagles firmly in the ground, shouting those words out across the conquered lands. His vehement statement would have made as much of an impression as his forceful actions. “**Vehement**” means being forceful, passionate, or intense when speaking, especially when speaking about something you have strong feelings about.

**Example:** “During the meeting of the local council, Mark interrupted a presentation on proposed budget cuts with a vehement defense of spending increases for public transportation.”

Sounds like that Council Meeting was more interesting than some we’ve been to, where hours go by filled with vapid speeches on irrelevant issues. “**Vapid**” can refer either to the speech itself, or the person making it, and means dull, lifeless, and bland, without anything of real meaning or interest to the audience.

**Example:** “I don’t understand why her books are so popular; to me, they’re nothing but vapid recitals of her memories of what seemed to be a completely unremarkable childhood.”

Some people are talented writers, while others find it hard to create compelling narratives. Even if writing is your vocation, it’s something that takes a lot of work to do well, as in any other endeavor. A “**vocation**” is a job or occupation that you have chosen to work in because you feel called to do it, and that you are good at doing it.

**Example:** “She is an excellent doctor, and her family always knew her vocation was medicine, since she spent much of her free time as a child helping to take care of the sick animals on the farm, and visiting the elderly at the local rest home.”



Medical School is often quite expensive. Many children may want to be doctors when they grow up, but depending on their family's financial situation, getting the education they need may not be a viable option. "**Viable**" means "able to be done" or "possible".

**Example:** "We received many suggestions from our employees about ways to improve the workflow, but while most of the ideas were good, only a few were practical enough to be viable choices to present to the Board at next year's Business Planning Meeting."

Many business meetings are held at hotels or convention centers, or other venues where there is on-site catering and large conference rooms already set up with tables and chairs. A "**venue**" is a place where events occur.

**Example:** "Now that the new theatre building is completed, it's quickly becoming the preferred venue for performances of all types, due to the quality and versatility of its stage and seating arrangements."

## **F. Words Describing Dreams And Visions**

These Ultimate Vocabulary words will help you achieve your dreams by providing you with the tools to create exceptional written and oral communication at work and home. Here are five words that describe dreams and visions: nostalgia, idyllic, renaissance, visionary, paragon.

### ***Your words describing dreams and visions explained***

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we all knew exactly the right words to use in every situation? There would be no misunderstanding, no disagreement, no argument over meaning ... well, maybe not. Even knowing exactly what someone means doesn't mean you'll agree with it! Perhaps it wouldn't be such an idyllic situation after all. "**Idyllic**" means peaceful, happy, and perfect. People often use this word to describe imaginary states, the way they wish things were.

**Example:** "It's easy to dream of an idyllic society where no one is hungry or sick, but it's harder to do the real work of providing food, shelter, and medical care for people in need."

You might hear your parents reminisce about growing up in the middle of communities that did take care of each other, where you knew that if your garden was destroyed by rabbits, your neighbors would be there soon after with new plants to help you get started again. A longing for things to be the way they were in the past is called "**nostalgia**".

**Example:** "In these days of instant messaging and cell phones, I find I'm prone to a bit of nostalgia for the written letters and postcards we used to send instead."

While many people, especially younger ones, have gotten used to using computers and other electronic means of communication, there has been somewhat of a renaissance of



letter-writing, and sales of fine paper and fountain pens have been on the rise.

**“Renaissance”** is a word from the French meaning “rebirth” or “revival”.

**Example:** “The Italian Renaissance of the 14<sup>th</sup> century was a time in which art, philosophy, and literature blossomed, bringing the cultural life of Europe back after the devastation of the Black Death.”

One of the pre-eminent artists and thinkers of the Italian Renaissance was Leonardo Da Vinci, who was talented in a number of fields, including art, mathematics, and music. In addition, he was a visionary engineer, sketching ideas for helicopters, hydraulic pumps, and hang gliders, most of which would not actually be built for centuries. **“Visionary”** means someone who sees the possibilities of the future.

**Example:** “The microcomputer revolution began with a few visionary thinkers who realized that small portable devices would eventually be more useful to everyday citizens than the large data processing machines required by business.”

Many people refer to Da Vinci as a paragon of the so-called “Renaissance Man” – someone who is equally adept at a variety of fields, who continually questions and explores the world around him, who is both creative and scientific. **“Paragon”** is a noun meaning the best, or the ideal, of something.

**Example:** “Helen always has snacks and drinks ready for visitors, and is adept at making sure that everyone in her house is comfortable – she is the very paragon of hospitality.”

## Tests for Reinforcing What You Have Learnt

### A. Words For Describing Change

#### Test Sentences

Here are five practice sentences; fill in the correct word in each:

1. Franklin spends his weekdays dressed conservatively in a dark suit and tie, but on Saturday nights he makes a remarkable \_\_\_\_\_ into a flamboyant karaoke singer in a sequined Elvis costume.
2. Believing that metals could be changed from one type to another, alchemists in the middle ages spent years trying to \_\_\_\_\_ lead into gold.
3. She is an amazing actress; her one-woman show shows off her \_\_\_\_\_ ability to portray a wide range of characters.
4. The children in my art class enjoy working with clay and other \_\_\_\_\_ materials, and have created some remarkable and imaginative sculptures.
5. John has such a \_\_\_\_\_ personality - he's always in motion, talking about a dozen things at once.

#### Answers:

1. Franklin spends his weekdays at the office dressed conservatively in a dark suit and tie, but on Saturday nights he makes a remarkable **metamorphosis** into a flamboyant karaoke singer in a sequined Elvis costume.  
*Franklin's clients are so used to seeing him as a quiet and conservative figure that they might not recognize him at the karaoke bar in his silver jumpsuit. When something has changed so radically, it can be referred to as a metamorphosis, or a complete change in shape, form, or nature.*
2. Believing that metals could be changed from one type to another, alchemists in the middle ages spent years trying to **transmute** lead into gold.  
*If it were possible to change lead into gold, it would have to happen at the molecular level, and would not be immediately apparent. To transmute something means to make a change in substance, but not necessarily one that is evident on the surface.*
3. She is an amazing actress; her one-woman show shows off her **protean** talent to portray a wide range of characters.

*"Protean" means the ability to take many different forms; in this example, the actress might use her body language as well as her voice to play the part of a nun or a homeless woman, the president of a corporation or an alien from outer space.*

4. The children in my art class enjoy working with clay and other **malleable** materials, and have created some remarkable and imaginative sculptures.

*Once clay is at the right consistency, it's very flexible and can be used to make sculptures as well as plates, bowls, and other objects. "Malleable" means easy to shape.*

5. John has such a **dynamic** personality - he's always in motion, talking about a dozen things at once.

*Something that is constantly moving and changing is "dynamic". The opposite of "dynamic" is "static."*

Now that you've learned these Ultimate Vocabulary words, you'll find that your conversations will undergo a **metamorphosis**. Instead of using the same words over and over again, you'll be able to choose exactly the right words to convey the subtle meanings you intend. Your conversation will be **dynamic** and never boring, and you'll be admired for your **protean** ability to shape your conversational style to any audience and every circumstance. But you'll only get this absolute confidence in using these words in context by practicing them until they're completely familiar to you. Start using these five powerful new words today:

1. protean
2. malleable
3. dynamic
4. metamorphosis
5. transmute

## B. Words For Describing Technical Innovation

No frogs were harmed in the making of this vocabulary training session! Here are some practice sentences so you can experiment with your new words:

### **Test Sentences:**

1. The base-ten numbering system we use for everyday purposes has ten digits from zero to nine, but the \_\_\_\_\_ numbering system only has two: zero and one.

2. Alan is very reluctant to purchase new stereo equipment; he's still using a \_\_\_\_\_ cassette player to record his songs, even though all the other band members do their recording on line.
3. Many messages sent to Allied forces during World War II were written using the Navajo Indian language, which proved to be almost impossible to \_\_\_\_\_ even if intercepted.
4. Sheila thinks that the new philosophy teacher is extremely wise, but I think he's just filling his lectures full of \_\_\_\_\_ references in order to sound more learned.
5. I know it's an \_\_\_\_\_ attitude, but when I come home and my cat seems so happy to see me, I think it's because she loves me, and not because she just wants to be fed.

## Answers:

1. The base-ten numbering system we use for everyday purposes has ten digits from zero to nine, but the **binary** numbering system only has two: zero and one.  
*Combining the two digits in various ways produces the same numbers; they're just harder to read unless you know the language. For example, "10" in binary is actually the number "2". Both of these digits are essential for the system to work. "Binary" means having two parts.*
2. Alan is very reluctant to purchase new stereo equipment; he's still using a **superannuated** cassette player to record his songs, even though all the other band members do their recording on line.  
*Cassettes were replaced with CDs, and now everything's digital. Using tape to make recordings is an old-fashioned method. "Superannuated" means old-fashioned, outdated, or obsolete.*
3. Many messages sent to Allied forces during World War II were written using the Navajo Indian language, which proved to be almost impossible to **decode** even if intercepted.  
*The Navajo language is unlike any other language on earth, which makes it a very good language to use for secret messages – if you can't speak Navajo, you would have no idea how to decode the message. "Decode" means "to make clear or understandable."*
4. Sheila thinks that the new philosophy teacher is extremely wise, because she doesn't understand half of what he says, but I think he's just filling his lectures full of **cryptic** references in order to sound more intelligent.  
*If people don't understand what you're talking about, perhaps they don't have the knowledge or background you do. Or perhaps it's because you're really not making any sense. "Cryptic" means hard to understand.*

5. I know it's an **anthropomorphic** attitude, but when I come home and my cat seems so happy to see me, I think it's because she loves me, and not because she just wants to be fed.

It's tempting to think that our pets feel the same way about us that we do them, but until animals are able to talk back to us, we'll never know. Assigning human emotions, human thoughts, or human shapes to animals, machines, or other non-human entities is called "anthropomorphizing" – the adjective describing this is "anthropomorphic."

The more words you know, the more you'll understand, and formerly-**cryptic** texts and conversations will become clear. Practice your new vocabulary words every day, and you'll quickly gain confidence in using them in context. Your five new Ultimate Vocabulary words are:

- anthropomorphic
- cryptic
- decode
- binary
- superannuated

## C. Words For Describing Relationships

Don't take any time off yet - here are five practice sentences using the words you've just learned. Put the correct word in each sentence:

### Test Sentences

1. Steel is an \_\_\_\_\_ of iron and carbon that is both harder and more durable than iron alone, although it is more brittle as well.
2. Several species of ants live only on particular types of trees, which they protect by chasing off other insects; in return, the trees contribute to the \_\_\_\_\_ by producing sweet sap to feed the ants.
3. I saw my uncle for the first time in thirty years, and he has become a very bitter and angry old man - it was hard for me to \_\_\_\_\_ my image of him now with the memories I have of him when he was young and happy.
4. Antitrust legislation needs to be put in place to prevent multinational corporations from working in \_\_\_\_\_ to fix the price of their products on the market.
5. We hope that the local government fixes the cracks in the levees, because if they break during the next big storm, the river will \_\_\_\_\_ most of the downtown area.

## Answers:

1. Steel is an **alloy** of iron and carbon that is both harder and more durable than iron alone, although it is more brittle as well.  
*People have been combining metals for thousands of years, trying to find the best mixes for their purposes. An "alloy" is a mix of two or more metals.*
2. Several species of ants live only on particular types of trees, which they protect by chasing off other insects; in return, the trees contribute to the **symbiosis** by producing sweet sap to feed the ants.  
*The tree and the ants have a mutually beneficial relationship, with the tree gaining protection from harmful insects, and the ants receiving food and shelter. "Symbiosis" means a relationship where both parties benefit. The relationship can be between two members of the same group, or between two entirely different species.*
3. I saw my uncle for the first time in thirty years, and he has become a very bitter and angry old man - it was hard for me to **reconcile** my image of him now with the memories I have of him when he was young and happy.  
*It can be difficult to bring two opposing things into balance. To reconcile things means to bring a balance between them, to create a relationship between them, or to make them even or equal.*
4. Antitrust legislation needs to be put in place to prevent multinational corporations from working in **collusion** to fix the price of their products on the market.  
*A secret, behind-the-scenes agreement is often a conspiracy to create a situation that is beneficial for some parties but not others. Another word for conspiracy is "collusion."*
5. We hope that the local government fixes the cracks in the levees, because if they break during the next big storm, the river will **inundate** most of the downtown area.  
*The waters from a breached levee or dam would create a sudden flood that would overwhelm the nearby areas. "Inundate" means to flood or overwhelm with something.*

Are you feeling inundated by all of these new words? Don't worry! Keep practicing, and soon you'll be confidently using these vocabulary words in their correct context:

- alloy
- symbiosis
- reconcile
- collusion
- inundate

## D. Words Containing "X"

Small efforts do add up over time to make a large impact. Keep working on using these Ultimate Vocabulary words in context, and you'll soon see a definite change in your conversational abilities. Here are five sentences to help you practice using your new vocabulary words:

## Test Sentences:

1. My brother said that after he had worked at the recycling center for a few months, he stopped noticing the \_\_\_\_\_ smells coming from the compost pit.
2. When I started learning algebra, I was confused even by the simple \_\_\_\_\_ that  $A + B = B + A$ .
3. Her \_\_\_\_\_ desire to save all of the feral cats in town has drained her bank account and left her with a houseful of sick pets that no one else wants to care for.
4. We were disappointed to see that Bishop Green had been chosen to give the opening speech, because we don't enjoy his \_\_\_\_\_ sermons that go into detail on the history of Hebrew tradition and teachings.
5. "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it" is a \_\_\_\_\_ that our world leaders should keep in mind.

## Answers:

1. My brother said that after he had worked at the recycling center for a few months, he stopped noticing the **noxious** smells coming from the compost pit.  
*It's true that people can get used to anything, and if you are exposed to a strong odor for a long period of time, you'll find it much less noticeable than you did at the beginning. A "noxious" odor is one that is strong and unpleasant; "noxious" can apply to anything that is unpleasant and possibly dangerous.*
2. When I started learning algebra, I was confused even by the simple **axiom** that  $A + B = B + A$ .  
*An axiom is a statement, often of a logical nature, that is so fundamental that it does not need to be proven before being used in further theory or speculation.*
3. Her **quixotic** desire to save all of the feral cats in town has drained her bank account and left her with a houseful of sick pets that no one else wants to care for.  
*One person, even with a huge amount of money and time, would find it hard to save all of the abandoned animals in a town, but the wish to do so is admirable, if impractical. "Quixotic" means having an urge to do heroic deeds, often romantically inspired, that are impractical or far beyond one's capabilities.*
4. We were disappointed to see that Bishop Green had been chosen to give the opening speech, because we don't enjoy his **prolix** sermons that go into detail on the history of Hebrew tradition and teachings.  
*Speeches that go on and on, using overly-complicated vocabulary or arcane references to ancient texts that few people are familiar with, are usually very boring. "Prolix" refers to something that is wordy and much too long.*



5. “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it” is a **maxim** that our world leaders should keep in mind.

*The old sayings are often true. A saying that is a general statement of a basic truth of the way things are is called a maxim. A synonym for maxim is “proverb”.*

When you started this course, you might have felt that it was project beyond your capabilities, a quixotic quest to improve your vocabulary to unimagined heights. But we disagree – by working hard and practicing daily, you’ll achieve your goal sooner than you think. Remember this maxim: “Nothing ventured, nothing gained!” Venture out and start using these five new Ultimate Vocabulary words:

- quixotic
- prolix
- maxim
- noxious
- axiom

## E. Words Starting With “V” For You To Conquer

Happy memories, current activities, and future plans – you need powerful vocabulary words to be able to describe them in rich and compelling detail, so that you don’t bore your listeners with vapid stories they’ll soon forget. Keep building your verbal strength by practicing with your five new words:

### **Test Sentences:**

1. My friend Dana knew from an early age that she wanted to be an architect, and she now has a successful career in her chosen \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The School Board wanted to bring in money by allowing advertisements on school property, but the parents were \_\_\_\_\_ in their opposition to that plan, and protested loudly.
3. Unless he learns to speak Spanish fluently, moving to Madrid to find work as a lawyer is not really a \_\_\_\_\_ plan.
4. No, I won’t go to the monthly Luncheon with you; last time I went, they didn’t have a vegetarian option on the menu, and besides I was bored to tears by the \_\_\_\_\_ conversation.
5. Because of its central location, the city park is a popular \_\_\_\_\_ for outdoor performances and weekend markets.

## Answers:

1. My friend Dana knew from an early age that she wanted to be an architect, and she now has a successful career in her chosen **vocation**.

*A career that you are attracted to, that you enjoy, and that you are good at, is your vocation. This word is often used to refer to a religious calling, for those who become priests or nuns, but can apply to any chosen career, whether paid or unpaid.*

2. The school board wanted to bring in money by allowing advertisements on school property, but the parents were **vehement** in their opposition to that plan, and protested loudly.

*Many parents feel that their children are already exposed to too much commercial advertisement on television, and see the school buildings as places where the children should focus on learning. In this example, the parents spoke out loudly and strongly against the possibility of advertisements in the school. "Vehement" means forceful and impassioned, as in a speech, where the speaker is expressing his or her strong feelings on an issue.*

3. Unless he learns to speak Spanish fluently, moving to Madrid to find work as a lawyer is not really a **viable** plan.

*While it's possible to get a job in country where you don't speak the language, those jobs are usually in the service sector. Only fluency in the local language will make getting a professional job possible. When something is possible, or able to come about, it is viable.*

4. No, I won't go to the monthly luncheon with you; last time I went, they didn't have a vegetarian option on the menu, and besides I was bored to tears by the **vapid** conversation.

*"Vapid" means dull, or without interest to the Listener.*

5. Because of its central location, the city park is a popular **venue** for outdoor performances and weekend markets.

*A venue is a place where events happen, usually referring to a specific location, but sometimes defined by the event itself. In other words, a concert hall is a venue for musical productions, but you might also refer to the street in front of a parliament building as a venue for protestors – it's not that the street was designed for protests, just that it's where many protests are held.*

Learning how to use these Ultimate Vocabulary words in context will make viable your plans for future success in your personal and professional life. You may even discover that you have a vocation to be a writer or lecturer! We hope you've enjoyed learning these five words:

6. venue
7. viable
8. vehement
9. vocation
10. vapid

## F. Words Describing Dreams and Visions

Let these powerful new vocabulary words bring new life to your conversations. Get started now, and practice using these five new words in context in each of the following sentences:

### Test Sentences:

1. The author Isaac Asimov is widely regarded as a \_\_\_\_\_, writing about social and scientific issues decades before they became reality.
2. Even as the price of fuel rises, some people feel such \_\_\_\_\_ for the cars of their teenage years that they keep driving them, inefficient as they are.
3. She knows exactly how to phrase things to explain the systems she works on; her report is a \_\_\_\_\_ of clarity and simplicity.
4. Jack says he'd find living on a remote island \_\_\_\_\_, but I'd go mad if I didn't have an internet connection!
5. There's a \_\_\_\_\_ in handcrafted items lately, and shops selling knitting needles and yarn are popping up everywhere.

### Answers:

1. The author Isaac Asimov is widely regarded as a **visionary**, writing about social and scientific issues decades before they became reality.

*A hundred years before we landed on the moon, rocket trips into space were already part of the science fiction landscape. It's amazing sometimes to see how many of the things those writers dreamed are now reality. A visionary is someone who dreams about the way things could be in the future.*

2. Even as the price of fuel rises, some people feel such **nostalgia** for the cars of their teenage years that they keep driving them, inefficient as they are.

*Looking back at one's childhood with longing, and wanting to have the things you had then, is called "nostalgia". In general, it means thinking with fondness about the past, even if the past wasn't really as nice as you'd like to remember it.*

3. She knows exactly how to phrase things to explain the systems she works on; her report is a **paragon** of clarity and simplicity.

*A "paragon" is an ideal, or a perfect example of something.*

4. Jack says he'd find living on a remote island **idyllic**, but I'd go mad if I didn't have an internet connection.

*Every person has their own idea of their perfect world. “Idyllic” means peaceful, happy, and perfect, and is often used to describe how and where someone would like to live.*

5. There's a **renaissance** in handcrafted items lately, and shops selling knitting needles and yarn are popping up everywhere.

*The word “renaissance” comes from the French word for “rebirth” and means a new growth or popularity in something that had faded in the past.*

Once you know how to use your Ultimate Vocabulary words in context, you'll be a paragon of oratory – your presentations, speeches, and even everyday conversations will be clear and compelling. Keep working on using your five new words.

- Visionary
- Renaissance
- Idyllic
- Nostalgia
- Paragon