

LESSON 10

from **The Standard of Living** (fiction)
by Dorothy Parker

Always the girls went to walk on Fifth Avenue on their free afternoons, for it was the **ideal** ground for their favorite game. The game could be played anywhere, and indeed, was, but the great shop windows **stimulated** the two players to their best form.

Annabel had invented the game; or rather she had evolved it from an old one. Basically, it was no more than the ancient sport of what-would-you-do-if-you-had-a-million-dollars? But Annabel had drawn a new set of rules for it, had narrowed it, pointed it, made it stricter. Like all games, it was the more **absorbing** for being more difficult.

Annabel's **version** went like this: You must suppose that somebody dies and leaves you a million dollars, cool. But there is a condition to the **bequest**. It is stated in the will that you must spend every nickel of the money on yourself.

There lay the **hazard** of the game. If, when playing it, you forgot and listed among your **expenditures** the rental of a new apartment for your family, for example, you lost your turn to the other player. It was **astonishing** how many—and some of them among the experts, too—would **forfeit** all their winnings by such slips.

It was essential, of course, that it be played in passionate seriousness. Each purchase must be carefully considered and, if necessary, supported by argument. There was no **zest** to playing wildly.

Exercise 1: Context Clues

Read the passage above, paying special attention to the words in dark type. These are the Master Words you will study in this lesson. As you read, look for context clues in the sentences and paragraphs around each Master Word. Circle any words and phrases that give clues to the meaning of the Master Words.

Master Words				
Place a check by words you feel you know; underline words you don't know.				
absorbing	bequest	forfeit	ideal	version
astonishing	expenditure	hazard	stimulate	zest