

LESSON 15

from **The People, Yes** (poem)
by Carl Sandburg

Lincoln?
He was a mystery in smoke and flags
Saying yes to the smoke, yes to the flags,
Yes to the **paradoxes** of democracy,
Yes to the hopes of government
Of the people by the people for the people,
No to **debauchery** of the public mind,
No to personal **malice nursed** and fed,
Yes to the Constitution when a help,
No to the Constitution when a **hindrance**
Yes to man as a struggler amid **illusions**,
Each man **fated** to answer for himself:
Which of the faiths and illusions of mankind
Must I choose for my own **sustaining** light
To bring me beyond the present wilderness?

Lincoln? Was he a poet?
And did he write verses?
"I have not willingly planted a thorn
in any man's **bosom**."
I shall do nothing through malice: what
I deal with is too **vast** for malice."

Death was in the air.
So was birth.

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.

bosom	fated	illusion	nursed	sustaining
debauchery	hindrance	malice	paradox	vast

Exercise 2: Using Context Clues

Fill in the form for each of the Master Words listed below with context clues (if any), your definition, and the dictionary definition. If you have difficulty writing a definition, try using the word in a sentence instead.

1. **bosom** Part of Speech: *n.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

2. **debauchery** Part of Speech: *n.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

3. **fated** Part of Speech: *adj.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

4. **hindrance** Part of Speech: *n.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

5. **illusion** Part of Speech: *n.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

6. **malice** Part of Speech: *n.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

7. **nursed** Part of Speech: *adj.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

8. **paradox** Part of Speech: *n.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

9. **sustaining** Part of Speech: *adj.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

10. **vast** Part of Speech: *adj.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

• • Exercise 3: Using Words in Context

True or False: Write **T** on the line if the statement using the Master Word is true; write **F** if it is false.

- _____ 1. A **fated** romance is one that will never happen.
- _____ 2. The universe is **vast**.
- _____ 3. A man with a great weight on his **bosom** is probably wearing a heavy hat.
- _____ 4. **Nursed** by jealousy of an enemy's happiness, the desire for revenge will probably grow stronger.
- _____ 5. If **debauchery** affects values, those values have been lowered or lessened in some way.
- _____ 6. Something you can see, hear, feel, taste, or smell is usually an **illusion**.
- _____ 7. A sweet-natured person often feels **malice** toward others.
- _____ 8. Air and sunlight are **sustaining** forces for life on Earth.
- _____ 9. An assistant who helps in any way she can is always a **hindrance**.
- _____ 10. The phrase "jumbo shrimp" might be considered a **paradox**.

• • Exercise 4: Sentence Completion

From the Master Words, choose the appropriate word for the blank in each of the following sentences. Write the word in the space provided at the right.

1. Stretching over a thousand miles is (a, an) ...?... plain. _____
2. He carried in his ...?..., near his heart, the memory of a happy childhood. _____
3. Some people walking dogs are (a, an) ...?... for cyclists on the bike trail. _____
4. ...?... for years, with disappointments to feed it, her anger finally exploded. _____
5. The tragedy could not be prevented; it was ...?... in the stars. _____
6. The arrests shattered her ...?... that there was no crime in Smallville. _____
7. Her support has been (a, an) ...?... force in keeping this center open. _____
8. The injury that the child caused was an accident with no ...?... behind it. _____
9. It is (a, an) ...?... that we must first go north to reach a city south of us. _____
10. In my view, failure to punish bad behavior is a form of ...?... that will lead to a lowering of moral standards. _____

Exercise 5: Shades of Meaning

The bold words in the chart below are Master Words. Beneath each is a synonym. Although their denotations (dictionary definitions) are nearly the same, the Master Word and its synonym have different shades of meaning, or connotations. Based on the context, decide whether a Master Word or its synonym would better complete each sentence. Use a dictionary if necessary.

debauchery	fated	hindrance	malice
overindulgence	certain	barrier	spite

- The cruel tyrant treated his enemies with ...?...
- The ...?... of some elected officials provides great material for late-night comics, but the scandals also lower public opinion of leaders.
- The team is ...?... to have a victory if we work a little harder.
- Heavy traffic can be a dangerous ...?... to ambulance drivers.
- ...?... drove Mark to get his sister in trouble after she teased him.
- The mother's ...?... has led to a spoiled child.
- According to the astrologer, the triumph of the king is ...?... in the stars.
- When the ...?... comes down, only a fool would drive onto the railroad track.

Exercise 6: Analogies

Determine the relationship between the first pair of words below. Then write the Master Word on the blank that would create a similar relationship with the second pair of words. The types of analogies used are synonyms, antonyms, degree, noun/related adjective, and part/whole. (See page 158 for a guide to analogy types.)

- loss : gain :: _____ : reality
- core : apple :: _____ : body
- helper : assistant :: ill-will : _____
- small : tiny :: large : _____
- accident : unplanned :: destiny : _____

Write About It: Poetic Portrait

Write a poem or a poetic prose paragraph about someone you admire. It could be a famous person or someone you know. Use at least three Master Words or words related to the Master Words. Choose all your words carefully, paying attention to their connotations, or shades of meaning, as well as their dictionary definitions.