

Lesson Sixteen

Vocabulary Sketch

1. **pique** (pēk) *v.* to cause resentment; to provoke
The old gentleman was *piqued* because he was not given a seat at the head table.
syn: irritate *ant: assuage*

2. **linguistics** (ling gwis' tiks) *n.* the scientific study of the structure, sounds, and meaning of language
The professor of *linguistics* explained how English evolved from a number of other languages.

3. **plebeian** (pli bē' ən) *n.* a commoner; one from the lower class
adj. common or vulgar
(*n.*) Seniors treated the freshmen as though they were *plebeians*.
(*a.*) The baroness refused to do the *plebian* chores of cooking and cleaning.
(*n.*) *syn: peon; peasant* *ant: liege*
(*a.*) *syn: base; lowly* *ant: refined; aristocratic*

4. **precocious** (pri kō' shəs) *adj.* showing early development, especially mental
Anthony was such a *precocious* three-year-old that he could already play the violin well.
syn: advanced

5. **predatory** (pred' ə tōr ē) *adj.* inclined to prey on others
The buzzard is a scavenger, but the hawk is a *predatory* animal.
syn: pillaging; despoiling *ant: nurturing*

6. **prowess** (prow' is) *n.* superior skill or ability
Ty's physical *prowess* was matched by his superior mental ability.
syn: strength; dominance; power *ant: weakness*

7. **pugnacious** (pug nā' shəs) *adj.* eager and ready to fight; quarrelsome
Because he was so *pugnacious*, he had few friends.
syn: combative; belligerent *ant: placid; pacific*

8. **purloin** (pər loin') *v.* to steal
They had not planned to *purloin* the jewels, but the temptation was too great.
syn: burglarize

9. **pusillanimous** (pyōō sə lan' ə məs) *adj.* cowardly; fearful
The Wizard of Oz granted the *pusillanimous* lion his wish to have courage.
syn: fainthearted; timid *ant: brave; bold*

10. **quell** (kwel) *v.* to put an end to; to allay or quiet
The police were called in to *quell* the riot.
syn: calm *ant: foment; incite*

11. **quixotic** (kwik sot' ik) *adj.* very idealistic; impractical; caught up in romantic notions
As a young man, he had the *quixotic* notion that he could single-handedly end poverty in the country.
ant: realistic; practical
12. **rabble** (rab' əl) *n.* a disorderly crowd, a mob
The guards had to protect the president from the *rabble* in the streets.
syn: riffraff
13. **rabid** (rab' id) *adj.* raging; fanatical
After working out, Chrissy had a *rabid* thirst and drank two gallons of water.
syn: uncontrollable; fervid *ant: placid*
14. **raconteur** (rak on tyūr') *n.* a person skilled at telling stories
An exceptional *raconteur*, Lorna held the whole audience spellbound with her stories.
15. **vindictive** (vin dik' tiv) *adj.* seeking revenge; bearing a grudge
Out of some *vindictive* urge, Steve slashed his ex-girlfriend's tires.
syn: vengeful *ant: forgiving*
