

Read the following selection, taking note of the **boldface** words and their contexts. These words are among those you will be studying in Unit 5. As you complete the exercises in this unit, it may help to refer to the way the words are used below.

**The Leopard: Unlikely Survivor** **Units**

**A** leopard cannot change its spots." So runs a well-known proverb. But this statement is easily rebutted. It turns out that leopards are remarkably adaptable animals whose **latent** ability to adapt to new situations has made them one of the few big cats not facing extinction in the wild. Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Russia all have leopard populations. Half a million leopards roam in areas as different as the plains of South Africa to the snows of the Russian Far East. That's as many leopards as there are cheetahs, lions, and tigers combined. The leopard ranks first among cats in its ability to survive.

An **paramount** factor in the leopard's success is its diet—this cat is a generalist. The leopard does not discriminate when it comes to food and the list of its many prey

isn't almost arbitrary: Baboons, lizards, insects, and antelope are all possible meals. Cats whose diets are limited to a few species are in danger when populations of their favored prey dwindle.

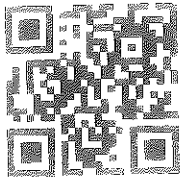
Their wide-ranging diet also means that leopards can live in different types of ecosystems. Species that can only survive in a specific landscape have one of two choices when their habitats shrink or become overpopulated: **exodus** or death. Polar bears, for example, can only exist in very cold climates, and they are in danger of losing that habitat. However, leopards can live in jungles, where they eat fish; monkeys, islands, where they eat fish; and mountains, where they eat rodents. This wide-ranging habitat ensures that while one population may be struggling, another is surviving.

Leopards are excellent hunters. When hunting, leopards seldom rely on an accomplice from their own species to bring down their prey, since the animal is an inextinguishable hermit that prefers a solitary existence. The leopard's jaw muscles are so powerful that it can catch and kill animals larger than itself. After a stealthy stalk, a leopard will charge at speeds of up to 35 miles per hour to catch its prey; its remarkable strength facilitates its ability to carry quarry three times its size into trees. This practice protects the food from scavengers. Leopards prefer to stalk their prey when the opaque shadows of the night allow them to remain hidden hunters, but the animals also brazenly hunt during the day. This flexibility allows for a wider-ranging diet and increased hunting opportunities—another example of the species' unique ability to survive.

Humans also have had a hand in the rise and fall of leopard populations though. Leopards faced a serious threat from the fashion industry in the mid-20th century. Jacqueline Kennedy's appearance in a leopard-skin coat in 1964 served as a catalyst, leading to the rising popularity of the fur. Demand for leopard skins almost annihilated wild populations. A militant

and ultimately successful campaign in the 1960s and 1970s opposing the use of leopard skins as fashion items is another reason that this animal's populations are now thriving.

While some subspecies of leopards have stagnant population growth or are even close to extinction, such as the Amur Leopard of Russia, the species population worldwide is impressive. According to current estimates by international conservation groups, it is highly unlikely that wild leopards will succumb to extinction any time soon.



QR CODE

Snap the code, or go to <http://www.nature.com/leopard>



Black panther, a melanistic form of leopard



Left: African leopard; Above: Indian snow leopard



## Definitions

Note the spelling, pronunciation, part(s) of speech, and definition(s) of each of the following words. Then write the word in the blank spaces in the illustrative sentence(s) following. Finally, study the lists of synonyms and antonyms.

1. accomplice  
(ə kəm' plis)

(n.) a person who takes part in a crime

The driver of the getaway car was arrested and tried as an \_\_\_\_\_ in the daring bank robbery.

SYNONYM: partner in crime

2. annihilate  
(ə nī' ə lāt)

(v.) to destroy completely

Throughout history, nations that are bitter enemies have sought to \_\_\_\_\_ each other.

SYNONYMS: obliterate, decimate

ANTONYMS: foster, promote, encourage, nurture

3. arbitrary  
(ā' rē trē ə)

(adj.) unreasonable; based on one's wishes or whims without regard for reason or fairness

A judge may be criticized for rulings that appear to be \_\_\_\_\_ and without legal precedent.

SYNONYMS: capricious, high-handed, autocratic

ANTONYMS: reasoned, rational, objective, equitable

4. brazen  
(brā' zən)

(adj.) shameless, impudent; made of brass

Behavior considered \_\_\_\_\_ in one era may be deemed perfectly acceptable in another.

SYNONYMS: saucy, bold

ANTONYMS: deferential, respectful, self-effacing

5. catalyst  
(kāt' ə līst)

(n.) a substance that causes or hastens a chemical reaction; any agent that causes change

Enzymes are \_\_\_\_\_ that aid in the digestion of food.

SYNONYMS: stimulus, spur, instigator

6. exodus  
(ek' sə des)

(n.) a large-scale departure or flight

The \_\_\_\_\_ of African Americans to the industrialized northern states is known as the Great Migration.

SYNONYMS: escape, hegira

ANTONYMS: immigration, influx, arrival, entrance

7. facilitate  
(fə sīl' ə tāt)

(v.) to make easier; to assist

The Federal Reserve Board may lower interest rates in order to \_\_\_\_\_ economic growth.

SYNONYMS: ease, smooth the way, simplify

ANTONYMS: hamper, hinder, obstruct, impede

(adj.) not able to be corrected; beyond control

Criminals deemed \_\_\_\_\_ can expect to receive maximum sentences for their offenses against society.

SYNONYMS: unruly, intractable, incurable, inveterate

ANTONYMS: tractable, docile, curable, reparable

(adj.) hidden, present but not realized

Don't you think it's sad that many people use only a small fraction of their \_\_\_\_\_ abilities?

SYNONYMS: dormant, inactive, undeveloped

ANTONYMS: exposed, manifest, evident

(adj.) given to fighting; active and aggressive in support of a cause; (n.) an activist

In the struggle for civil rights, Martin Luther King, Jr., advocated peaceful rather than \_\_\_\_\_ protest.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was a \_\_\_\_\_ in the fight for woman suffrage.

SYNONYM: (adj.) truculent

ANTONYMS: (adj.) unassertive, peaceable, passive

(adj.) having a gloomy or sullen manner; not friendly or sociable

Heathcliff is the \_\_\_\_\_ and vengeful protagonist in Emily Brontë's novel *Wuthering Heights*.

SYNONYM: morbid

ANTONYMS: blithe, jaunty, buoyant

(adj.) not letting light through; not clear or lucid; dense, stupid

I have read that book twice, but I still find the author's meaning completely \_\_\_\_\_.

SYNONYMS: hazy, cloudy, foggy, murky, dull, obtuse

ANTONYMS: transparent, clear, bright, perceptive

(adj.) chief in importance, above all others

Voters should insist that candidates for high office address the \_\_\_\_\_ issues facing our society.

SYNONYMS: supreme, primary, dominant

ANTONYMS: secondary, subordinate, ancillary

14. **prattle**  
(pratr' əl)

(v) to talk in an aimless, foolish, or simple way; to babble;  
(n.) baby talk; babble

Some people can \_\_\_\_\_ away on the phone for hours on end.

Over time, recognizable words become part of a toddler's cheerful \_\_\_\_\_.

SYNONYMS: (n.) twaddle, gibberish, piffle

15. **refute**  
(ri' bət')

(v) to offer arguments or evidence that contradict an assertion; to refute

It is a defense lawyer's job to \_\_\_\_\_ the charges made by the prosecutor.

SYNONYMS: disprove, confute, shoot holes in  
ANTONYMS: confirm, corroborate, substantiate

16. **reprimand**  
(rep' rɪ mɑnd)

(v) to scold; find fault with; (n.) a rebuke  
A judge may need to \_\_\_\_\_ a lawyer for repeatedly harassing a witness.

An employee who frequently violates a company's rules may receive a written \_\_\_\_\_.

SYNONYMS: (v) reproach; (n.) reproof  
ANTONYM: (v) pat on the back

17. **servitude**  
(sɜr' vɪ tʊd)

(n.) slavery, forced labor

In *Les Misérables*, Jean Valjean is sentenced to many years of \_\_\_\_\_ for stealing a loaf of bread.

SYNONYMS: bondage, thralldom; ANTONYM: liberty

18. **slapdash**  
(slap' dʌʃ)

(adj.) careless and hasty  
Landlords who routinely make \_\_\_\_\_ repairs should be considered negligent.

SYNONYMS: cursory, perfunctory, slipshod  
ANTONYMS: painstaking, thorough, in-depth

19. **stagnant**  
(stag' nənt)

(adj.) not running or flowing; foul from standing still; inactive

It is dangerous for hikers to drink water from any source that appears to be \_\_\_\_\_.

SYNONYMS: still, motionless, inert, sluggish, dull  
ANTONYMS: flowing, running, fresh, sweet

20. **succumb**  
(sək' ŋəm')

(v) to give way to superior force, yield  
Most dieters occasionally \_\_\_\_\_ to the lure of a high-calorie dessert.

SYNONYMS: submit, die, expire  
ANTONYMS: overcome, master, conquer

## Choosing the Right Word

Select the boldface word that better completes each sentence. You might refer to the selection on pages 60–61 to see how most of these words are used in context.



The Bolsheviks, a party of workers led by Vladimir Lenin, seized power during the Russian Revolution of 1917 and formed the Soviet Union.

1. Most historians agree that military disasters during World War I were the (**exodus**, **catalyst**) that sparked the Russian Revolution of 1917.

2. During the summer, urban "sun worshippers" begin their weekly (**excuses**, **servitude**) from the city at around 3:00 P.M. on Friday.

3. Since they are firmly based on the logic of a sentence, the rules of punctuation should not be considered purely (**arbitrary**, **slapdash**).

4. (**Accomplices**, **militants**), disgusted with the government's policies, took to the streets to register a vote of no confidence.

5. It is up to us to get rid of any (**latent**, **arbitrary**) prejudices that we may still unwittingly hold against members of other races and nationalities.

6. He has deceived me so many times that I am forced to conclude that he is simply a(n) (**discovertible**, **incovert**) liar.

7. The brook (**prattling**, **amplifying**) along its rocky course seemed to be conversing wordlessly with the wind murmuring in the trees.

8. For the world's starving millions, finding enough food to keep body and soul together has become the (**paramount**, **latent**) concern in life.

9. With their bigger, faster, more experienced players, South High simply (**strengthened**, **amplified**) our team, 56 to 7.

10. The best way to (**facilitate**, **react**) the contention that something is not possible to do is to go out and do it.

11. I refuse to believe that our society will (**reprimand**, **succumb**) to the weaknesses which have destroyed other nations.

12. While his (**accomplices**, **militants**) acted as decoys, one of the youngsters attempted to fish a couple of apples from the unguarded bin.

13. Her excellent command of both French and Spanish should (**rebut**, **facilitate**) her efforts to get a position in the foreign service.

14. Even people who appear to be free may be in (**catalyst**, **servitude**) to their own passions and prejudices.

15. The leader's silence of the afternoon was shattered by the (**opaque**, **brazen**) voices of trumpets braying fanfares for the returning hero.

16. People who never give any assignment more than a "lick and a promise" may be said to belong to the (**stagnant, slacker**) school of working.
17. On rare occasions, the U.S. Senate will (**repitment, prattle**) one of its members who has violated the rules.
18. Unemployment will stay at a high level so long as a nation's economy remains (**stagnant, paramount**).
19. I don't think it is fair to call him a(n) (**incurrigible, raproose**) person just because he was in a dejected mood when you met him.
20. You may think that his explanation is perfectly clear, but I find it confused and (**brazen, opaque**).
21. The boss (**servitude, repitment**) stung his employee especially hard, as it was delivered in front of the entire staff.
22. His (**stagnant, brazen**) demeanor might help him to be a successful salesperson, but it could also alienate potential customers.
23. The family's (**servitude, catalyst**) to the local lords had begun generations earlier, when an ancestor's misfortunes had resulted in a loss of wealth and status.
24. After the police secured the evidence, it became (**paramount, arbitrary**) to track down the witnesses before they left the scene.
25. I worried that the toddler's (**repitment, prattle**) would continue throughout the film.

### Synonyms

Choose the word from this unit that is the same or most nearly the same in meaning as the **boldface** word or expression in the phrase. Write that word on the line. Use a dictionary if necessary.

1. a **deleful** stare \_\_\_\_\_
2. **demolished** our rivals in the playoffs \_\_\_\_\_
3. the **emigration** of refugees from the war zone \_\_\_\_\_
4. **chastised** them for their discourteous behavior \_\_\_\_\_
5. a **festid** pond clogged with debris \_\_\_\_\_
6. a moving account of life in **captivity** \_\_\_\_\_
7. refused to accept such **sloppy** work \_\_\_\_\_
8. searched for the forger's **confederates** \_\_\_\_\_
9. **chattered** about nothing in particular \_\_\_\_\_
10. the **foremost** authority on the subject \_\_\_\_\_

Choose the word from this unit that is most nearly opposite in meaning to the **boldface** word or expression in the phrase. Write that word on the line. Use a dictionary if necessary.

### Antonyms

1. a consistently **cheerful** personality \_\_\_\_\_
2. will **speak concisely** for a few minutes \_\_\_\_\_
3. the native people's **freedom** \_\_\_\_\_
4. **meticulous** cleaning \_\_\_\_\_
5. **praise** the students for their work \_\_\_\_\_

### Completing the Sentence

From the words in this unit, choose the one that best completes each of the following sentences. Write the word in the space provided.

1. Mom and Dad said nothing when I failed the examination, but the disappointed looks on their faces hurt more than the most severe \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Though she had always loved art, Grandma Moses did not discover her own \_\_\_\_\_ artistic talents until well into her seventies.
3. The helpful librarian did much to \_\_\_\_\_ the research for my term paper.
4. In large areas of the huge swamp, there were \_\_\_\_\_ pools of water covered with unmoving masses of green slime.
5. When he was suddenly deprived of everything he valued in life, the poor man became extremely gloomy and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. After both of the opposing speakers had presented their cases, they were allowed time to \_\_\_\_\_ each other's arguments.
7. The fact that you cannot control those small children does not mean that they are \_\_\_\_\_.
8. The doctor warned relatives that if the patient's condition deteriorated any further, he would \_\_\_\_\_ to pneumonia.
9. It is an unfortunate fact that the \_\_\_\_\_ attitudes of Germany's kaiser and his saber-rattling cronies helped make World War I inevitable.
10. If we are going to use this space as a darkroom for photography, we must have a completely \_\_\_\_\_ covering over the window.

- In certain industrial processes, \_\_\_\_\_ speed up the desired reaction by lessening the amount of energy needed to produce it.
- It is a frightening fact of modern life that we now possess the weaponry to \_\_\_\_\_ not only our enemies but all humankind.
- No matter what make of automobile you have, it is of \_\_\_\_\_ importance that you learn to drive safely before you use it.
- The second book of the Old Testament is named for the story it recounts of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Israelites from the land of Egypt.
- The youth did not actually steal the car, but he was an \_\_\_\_\_.
- Many people came to the Americas after they had been sentenced to terms of penal \_\_\_\_\_ for crimes they had committed.
- In guaranteeing the right to "due process of law," the Constitution protects Americans against \_\_\_\_\_ arrest and imprisonment.
- "If you spent more time and effort on your essays, they would cease to be such \_\_\_\_\_ affairs," my older sister priggishly observed.
- Fighting is considered such a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ violation of the rules of a game that the offending players are usually severely penalized.
- His friends call him "Motormouth" because he has a remarkable capacity to \_\_\_\_\_ endlessly about the most trivial matters.

### Writing: Words in Action

- Look back at "The Leopard: Unlikely Survivor" (pages 60–61). Which of the leopard's traits make it best suited to survival in today's world? Write a short persuasive essay in which you try to convince an audience that one of the leopard's survival techniques most accounts for the animal's continued survival in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Use at least two details from the passage and three unit words to support your argument.
- "The leopard cannot change its spots" is a common proverb that means people cannot change their essential natures. Do you agree with the idea behind the proverb? Is it true that people cannot really change who they are? In a brief essay, present your opinion about the truth of this proverb. Support your opinion with specific examples from your observations, studies, or your own experience. Write at least three paragraphs, and use three or more words from this unit.

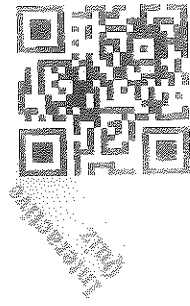
### Vocabulary in Context

The following excerpts are from Henry James's novels *Washington Square* and *The Portrait of a Lady*. Some of the words you have studied in this unit appear in **boldface** type. Complete each statement below the excerpt by circling the letter of the correct answer:

- ... she averted herself rigidly from the idea of marrying other people. Her opportunities for doing so were not numerous, but they occurred often enough to test her disposition. ...Mr. Macalister, the widower, had desired to make a marriage of reason, and had chosen Catherine for what he supposed to be her **latent** matronly qualities.... (*Washington Square*)
  - hidden
  - excellent
  - visible
  - developed
- "If you **succumb** to the dread of your father's wrath," she said, "I don't know what will become of us." (*Washington Square*)
  - fight it
  - call attention to it
  - yield to it
  - anticipate it
- They came back into the first of the rooms... but as the two other ladies were still on the terrace, and as Isabel had not yet been made acquainted with the view, the **paramount** distinction of the place, Mr. Osmond directed her steps into the garden without more delay. (*The Portrait of a Lady*)
  - noticeable
  - central
  - insignificant
  - predominant
- "Well, I don't know that it's right to make everything so easy for a person." "It surely depends upon the person. When the person's good, your making things easy is all to the credit of virtue. To **facilitate** the execution of good impulses, what can be a nobler act?" (*The Portrait of a Lady*)
  - report on it
  - relate to it
  - force it
  - make it easier
- "Oh dear, no," said Lord Warburton **brazenly**, "our talk had no such solemn character as that." (*The Portrait of a Lady*)
  - shyly
  - boldly
  - beautifully
  - falsely



Jennifer Jason Leigh plays Catherine Sloper in the 1987 film *Washington Square*.



Snap the code, or go to  
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