

# Lesson 5

## Word List

Study the definitions of the words below; then do the exercises for the lesson.

### avalanche

av' ə lanch

- n.* 1. A great mass of ice, earth, or snow mixed with rocks sliding down a mountain. The mountain climbers had a narrow escape when the **avalanche** swept over them.  
2. A great amount of something. Our company had an **avalanche** of orders after we used a television ad for our new game.

### blizzard

bliz' ərd

- n.* A heavy snowstorm with strong winds. The Chicago airport had to close for two days because of the **blizzard**.

### challenge

chal' ənj

- v.* 1. To invite others to take part in a contest. I **challenged** my friend to a game of chess.  
2. To cause a person to use a lot of skill or effort. This trail **challenges** even the best skiers.  
3. To question or to argue against, especially when something is unfair or unjust. Very few scientists **challenge** the idea that a large meteorite killed off the last of the dinosaurs sixty-five million years ago.  
*n.* 1. An interesting task or problem; something that takes skill or effort. Living out of our backpacks for a week on the mountain was a real **challenge**.  
2. A call to take part in a contest. I accepted the **challenge** to run in the marathon.

### conquer

kən' kər

- v.* 1. To get the better of. Swimming lessons at the YMCA helped me to **conquer** my fear of the water.  
2. To defeat. Hannibal's army **conquered** part of Spain in 219 B.C.  
**conquest** *n.* The act of defeating. The Norman **conquest** of England took place in 1066.

### crevice

krev' is

- n.* A deep, narrow opening in rock caused by a split or crack. The **crevice** had filled with soil in which a cluster of small red flowers was growing.

### foolhardy

fūōl' hār dē

- adj.* Unwisely bold or daring. It would be **foolhardy** to go sailing during a gale.

### lure

lūr

- v.* To tempt or attract with the promise of something good. In the early nineteenth century, the hope of owning land of their own **lured** many people to travel west to Ohio and Indiana.  
*n.* 1. Something that attracts. The **lure** of the sea led us to take up sailing.  
2. Artificial bait used for fishing. A large striped bass took the **lure**, and I hooked it.

### makeshift

māk' shift

- n.* A temporary and usually less strong replacement. They used the trailer as a **makeshift** while their house was being rebuilt.  
*adj.* Used as a temporary replacement. We use the sofa as a **makeshift** bed when we have overnight guests.

**optimist**  
 ăp' tō mist

*n.* One who looks at things in the most positive way; a cheerful, hopeful person.  
 Pat and Jean are **optimists** and so, of course, they believed the plane would not leave without us.  
**optimistic** *adj.* Cheerful; hopeful.

In spite of the injuries to our best players, I am **optimistic** about our chances of winning the big game.

**optimism** *n.* A feeling of hope or cheerfulness.

The patients' **optimism** helped them recover more quickly from their illnesses.

**previous**  
 prē' vē əs

*adj.* Earlier; happening before.

Although I missed the last meeting, I attended the two **previous** ones.

**route**  
 rūōt

*n.* 1. The path that must be followed to get to a place.

Our **route** to Seattle takes us through Denver.

2. A fixed course or area assigned to a sales or delivery person.

Magali has over a hundred customers on her newspaper **route**.

**summit**  
 sum' it

*n.* 1. The highest part; the top.

It took us three hours to climb to the **summit** of Mount Washington.

2. A conference or meeting of the top leaders of governments.

The **summit** of African heads of state will take place in Nairobi in late June.

**terse**  
 tērs

*adj.* Short and to the point.

When I said I was sure we would be rescued soon, my friend's **terse** reply was, "How?"

**thwart**  
 thwōrt

*v.* To block or defeat the plans or efforts of.

Heavy fighting **thwarted** the UN's attempts to deliver food.

**vertical**  
 vart' i kəl

*adj.* Running straight up and down; upright.

The black **vertical** lines in this painting are what one notices first.

## 5A Finding Meanings

Choose two phrases to form a sentence that correctly uses a word from Word List 5. Write each sentence in the space provided.

1. (a) the way to reach the top. (c) A lure is  
 (b) a meeting of heads of state. (d) A summit is

2. (a) An optimistic statement is one (c) A previous statement is one  
 (b) that is released to the public. (d) that was made earlier.

3. (a) To lure someone is (c) to offer help or advice to that person.  
 (b) To thwart someone is (d) to tempt that person with promises.

4. (a) an area assigned to a salesperson. (c) a payment for something done.  
(b) A crevice is (d) A route is
- 
5. (a) To be thwarted is to be (c) prevented from carrying out one's plans.  
(b) To be challenged is to be (d) attracted by promises.
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6. (a) An optimistic report is one (c) that is written out.  
(b) that is hopeful. (d) A terse report is one
- 
7. (a) a call to take part in a contest. (c) A challenge is  
(b) a severe snowstorm with high winds. (d) An avalanche is
- 
8. (a) A makeshift file is one that (c) stores things upright.  
(b) A vertical file is one that (d) gets narrower toward the top.
- 
9. (a) A foolhardy remark is one (c) that sounds threatening.  
(b) that is short and to the point. (d) A terse remark is one
- 
10. (a) a split or crack in rock. (c) A blizzard is  
(b) a mass of falling rocks and snow. (d) An avalanche is

avalanche  
blizzard  
challenge  
conquer  
crevice  
foolhardy  
lure  
makeshift  
optimist  
previous  
route  
summit  
terse  
thwart  
vertical

## 5B Just the Right Word

Improve each of the following sentences by crossing out the bold phrase and replacing it with a word (or a form of the word) from Word List 5.

- Your **daring but unwise** leap off the boat almost cost you your life.
- What kind of **artificial bait** is best for catching bluefish?
- Being appointed chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was the **highest point** of General Colin Powell's military career.
- According to the radio, we can expect a **severe snowstorm with very strong winds** tonight.



5. I'm driving to Yellowstone this summer and wonder which would be the best **way to get there**.
6. The German army's **defeat of the armed forces** of France in 1940 took less than four weeks.
7. A **deep, narrow opening made by a split in the rock** provided a toehold for the climbers making their way up the cliff face.
8. Swimming across the lake will be quite a **difficult task requiring great skill and effort**.
9. What is the reason for Gail's **feeling that all will go well**?
10. Bruno didn't have a pillow, so he used a rolled-up coat as a **temporary replacement for one** and slept quite soundly.

## 5C Applying Meanings

Circle the letter of each correct answer to the questions below. A question may have more than one correct answer.

1. Which of the following might an optimist say?  
(a) "Things could be a lot worse!"      (c) "What's the use?"  
(b) "Don't count your chickens."      (d) "I know we can do it."
2. Which of the following might be a lure to a person?  
(a) the Broadway stage      (c) an ocean voyage  
(b) the presidency      (d) a tropical island
3. Which of the following might challenge a person?  
(a) competing in the Olympics      (c) driving a racing car  
(b) watching a TV show      (d) reading a comic book
4. Of which of the following could there be an avalanche?  
(a) letters      (c) gales  
(b) orders      (d) requests
5. Which of the following would you expect to be vertical?  
(a) a sleeping person      (c) the horizon  
(b) a front door      (d) a stairway
6. Which of the following might thwart someone?  
(a) support from a friend      (c) a flat tire  
(b) a sudden change in the weather      (d) lack of money

7. Which of the following is foolhardy?

- (a) skating on thin ice  
(b) riding a horse  
(c) losing your wallet  
(d) eating salad

8. Which of the following can be terse?

- (a) a comment  
(b) muscles  
(c) a phone conversation  
(d) an aroma

## 5D Word Study

A *prefix* is the part of a word that comes at the beginning. The part that comes at the end is called a *suffix*. One of the things a suffix does is change a word from one part of speech to another. The *-ive* ending changes the verb *create* into the adjective *creative*. The *-or* ending changes it into the noun *creator*.

Turn the following verbs into nouns by adding the suffix *-ment*, *-(t)ion*, *-ing*, or *-or*.

1. assign \_\_\_\_\_  
2. distract \_\_\_\_\_  
3. combine \_\_\_\_\_  
4. crave \_\_\_\_\_  
5. survive \_\_\_\_\_

Turn the following nouns into adjectives by adding the suffix *-ic*, *-al*, or *-ous*.

6. optimist \_\_\_\_\_  
7. horizon \_\_\_\_\_  
8. nostalgia \_\_\_\_\_  
9. ferocity \_\_\_\_\_  
10. carnivore \_\_\_\_\_

Turn the following adjectives into nouns by adding the suffix *-cy*, *-(t)ion*, or *-ence*.

11. accurate \_\_\_\_\_  
12. jubilant \_\_\_\_\_  
13. navigate \_\_\_\_\_  
14. obedient \_\_\_\_\_  
15. patient \_\_\_\_\_

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## 5E Passage

Read the passage below; then complete the exercise that follows.

## On Top of the World

The world's greatest climbers have always been drawn to Mount Everest, but in trying to climb it, many have been **lured** to their deaths. Located on the border of two Asian countries, Nepal and Tibet, Everest is part of the Himalayan mountain chain north of India. It is just over twenty-nine thousand feet high. Other mountains are more difficult to climb and offer a greater **challenge**, but because it is the world's highest mountain, Everest has a special place in our imaginations.

Every attempt to reach the top requires careful planning and can cost over a quarter of a million dollars. Often climbers hire Nepalese guides called Sherpas, who are skilled and experienced mountaineers. Together they work out the **route** to take and set up camps along the way.

Because the air is so thin near the top, climbers need to bring oxygen with them, adding greatly to the weight that must be carried. In recent years, small groups of climbers have made attempts on Everest without oxygen and without relying on Sherpas. Their daring method has been to travel fast and light and to stay in temporary shelters as they make their way up and down.

Where the mountain rises **vertically**, climbers drive spikes into **crevices** in the rock and pull each other up with ropes. They must be very careful because a loose stone or even a loud noise can start an **avalanche**, burying those who are caught in its path or sweeping them to their deaths. In addition, climbers must be alert to the weather because it can change suddenly for the worse. **Blizzards** often strike with little warning, forcing climbers to scramble for **makeshift** shelter until the danger has passed.

The first people to reach the top of Mount Everest were Edmund Hillary of New Zealand and Tenzing Norgay, his Sherpa guide, in 1953. Teams of mountaineers had made at least eight **previous** tries; but all of them had been **thwarted** in their attempts to stand on the highest spot on earth, some by bad planning, some by bad weather, some by bad luck. The first woman to **conquer** Mount Everest was Junko Tabei, of Japan, in 1975; the first American woman to do so was Stacy Allison, in 1988.

Mountaineers are by nature **optimists**. They want to believe they will be able to reach the top. At times, however, if either their physical condition or the weather is deteriorating, they are forced to ask themselves if it would be **foolhardy** to continue. Their state of mind plays a big part in this decision, which must sometimes be made when they are only a few hundred feet from the **summit**. Many have chosen to continue, a decision that cost them their lives.

By 2001, just under fifteen hundred people had succeeded in climbing to the top of Mount Everest, but almost a hundred and fifty had died in the attempt. Why do it if it is so difficult and so dangerous? Someone once put this question to the English climber George Mallory, who made several unsuccessful tries to climb Mount Everest and died there with less than six hundred feet to go, in 1924, on what became his last attempt. He gave the **terse** reply, "Because it's there."



Answer each of the following questions in the form of a sentence. If a question does not contain a vocabulary word from this lesson's word list, use one in your answer. Use each word only once. Questions and answers will then contain all fifteen words (or forms of the words).

1. What would you think of someone who planned to climb Mount Everest alone?

2. What is the meaning of **challenge** as it is used in the passage?

3. Why would it be unwise to blow an airhorn while high up on Mount Everest?

4. Why would you expect conversations between climbers to be **terse**?

5. Why do climbers watch the weather carefully?

6. What weather conditions would make a mountain climber **optimistic**?

7. How are **crevices** useful to climbers?

8. What is the meaning of **route** as it is used in the passage?

9. What should people do if caught in bad weather while climbing a mountain?

10. When do climbers need to use ropes?

- ary  
s
11. What would happen to a team of climbers who couldn't raise enough money for an attempt on Mount Everest?
  12. How did George Mallory explain the **lure** of Mount Everest?
  13. Why would Mallory have been familiar with Everest on his last climb?
  14. How do you suppose climbers know when they have reached the **summit**?
  15. Why would climbers feel **jubilant** while standing on the top of Everest?

### FUN & FASCINATING FACTS

Until 1881, a **blizzard** was a loud noise or blast. In that year the *New York Nation* said: "The hard weather has called into use a word which promises to become a national Americanism, namely *blizzard*. It [is the word for] a storm of snow and wind which we cannot resist away from shelter." That is how the word came to have its present meaning. To be called a blizzard, a storm must have winds above thirty-five miles an hour, a temperature close to zero, blowing snow that reduces visibility, and lasts at least three hours.

The antonym of **optimist** is *pessimist*. Imagine two people looking at a glass of water. The *optimist*

thinks the glass is half full; the *pessimist* thinks it is half empty.

**Route** is sometimes pronounced ROOT and sometimes ROWT; both are correct. Don't confuse this word with *roul*, also pronounced ROWT, which means "a total and complete defeat." *Route* and *root* can be homophones (when both are pronounced ROOT), and so can *route* and *roul* (when both are pronounced ROWT).

**Vertical** and *horizontal* (Word List 4) are antonyms. In a crossword puzzle the *horizontal* answers must fit perfectly with the *vertical* answers.