

UNIT SEVEN

LITER

Latin LITTERA, "letter"

III We use obliterated when we want to say something has been completely destroyed. But it originally meant "to erase letters," as you would from a chalkboard or a sheet of paper.

LITERAL (lit' ə r ə l) *adj.* Exactly true, rather than figurative or metaphorical
Our teacher told us that the poem had much more to offer than just a *literal* message about a sunrise.

syn: actual

LITERATE (lit' ə r it) *adj.* 1. Able to read
2. Well-read

1. The library set up a tutoring program to help people who were not *literate*.
2. Susan has read over 2,000 books and is one of the most *literate* people I know.

OBLITERATE (ə blit' ə r ā t) *v.* To completely destroy
Celia's nasty note *obliterated* all the positive feelings that Marcel had for her.

syn: erase

ant: build up

LOG

Greek LOGOS, "word, speech, idea, reason"

ILLOGICAL (ə loj' ə k ə l) *adj.* Not done according to reason
G. in, "not," + logos = *not according to reason*
As the two debaters got worked up, their arguments became more *illogical*.

syn: irrational

ant: sensible

ANALOGY (ə nāl' ə j ē) *n.* Comparison
G. ana, "according to," + logos = *according to reason*
The professor tried to think of an *analogy* to explain the rotation of the sun.

APOLOGETIC (ə päl ə jet' ik) *adj.* Sorry; showing regret
G. apo, "from," + logos = *speech from*
The weatherman seemed *apologetic* about predicting clear skies the night before a nine-inch snowfall.

syn: regretful

ant: proud

GRAM, GRAPH

Greek GRAMMA, "letter, writing"
GRAPHEIN, "to write"

DIAGRAM (dī' ə gram) *v.* To draw a detailed picture of; to map out
G. dia, "across, out" + gramma = *write out*
Not even the best students were able to *diagram* the solution to the math problem.

syn: sketch

III The Greek logos has many different meanings, "word," "thought" and "reason." We can see the last meaning best in the English word logic, which describes orderly movement from one idea to another.

III Apology is a word based on the "word" meaning of logos. An apologia, to the Greeks, was a speech given to get off of a charge of wrongdoing. One of the most famous was supposed to have been given by the Greek philosopher Socrates; his pupil, Plato, published a version of this speech.

PROGRAM (prō' grām) v. To train; to teach

G. pro, "forth," + gramma = *write forth*

We were able to *program* our home security system to notify the police within ten seconds of a break-in.

BIOGRAPHICAL (bī ə grāf' ə kəl) adj. Describing one's life

G. bios, "life," + graphein = *to write about the life of*

The director's fifth movie was a *biographical* account of a famous jazz trumpeter.

SCRIPT, SCRIB

Latin SCRIBERE, SCRIPTUM, "to write"

DESCRIPTIVE (də skrip' tiv) adj. Giving details about; illustrating; explaining

L. de, "down," + scriptum = *written down*

Because the advertisement was not very *descriptive*, many people were confused about the product.

SUBSCRIBE (sub skrib') v. To believe in; to feel approval or agreement

L. sub, "under," + scribere = *to write under*

Anyone who still *subscribes* to the idea that the sun revolves around the Earth simply does not want to believe the scientific facts.

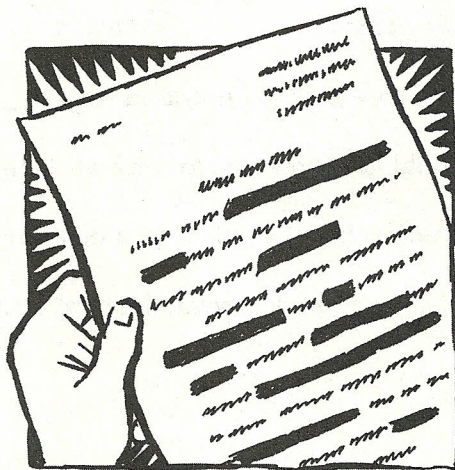
syn: support

ant: oppose

MANUSCRIPT (man' ū skript) n. A handwritten document

L. manus, "hand," + scriptum = *handwritten*

The poet decided to burn all of her original *manuscripts*.



MAN, YOU STRIPPED the MANUSCRIPT of all the important stuff.

III The word *subscribe* means "to write under" or "to sign." If you sign a document, you are saying that you personally stand by the truth of that document.

III While a manuscript is often written out or copied by hand, the word can also mean "a first copy of something." If an author types out a first version of a novel, it could be called a manuscript even though it came from a computer.

EXERCISES - UNIT SEVEN

Exercise I. Complete the sentence in a way that shows you understand the meaning of the italicized vocabulary word.

1. Walter was *apologetic* about crashing the car because...
2. Joseph does not *subscribe* to the President's ideas because...
3. Because the asteroid may *obliterate* our entire town, we are feeling...
4. It is important to remember that the *literal* meaning of a word can be different from...
5. Tamara has written a *biographical* novel about the composer that will help readers understand...
6. Researchers are studying the ancient *manuscript* in order to learn...
7. Paul prepared a *diagram* of the car's engine for his students so they could...
8. The robot's creator has *programmed* it to...
9. In an effort to make the citizens of the country more *literate*, the government...
10. I believe that buying a new car would be *illogical* because my old car...
11. The professor used an *analogy* when discussing the Civil War to help his students...
12. While on vacation in Alaska, Samantha wrote a *descriptive* letter to her sister so that...

Exercise II. Fill in the blank with the best word from the choices below. One word will not be used.

literal subscribed programmed apologetic obliterated

1. Although Kim said that she was sorry for the mess, she did not seem very _____.
2. Steve _____ to a religion that would not allow him to celebrate certain holidays.
3. Because my car was _____ in the accident, I had to get a new one.
4. The on-board computer could be _____ to do several things at once.

Fill in the blank with the best word from the choices below. One word will not be used.

diagram literate literal manuscript analogy

5. Verne hoped to become more _____ by reading lots of books.
6. The _____ of my novel has been sent to a publishing house for consideration.
7. We gained a better understanding of the way the tiger moved by looking at a(n) _____ of its skeleton.
8. The song's _____ meaning is very different from its poetic one.

Fill in the blank with the best word from the choices below. One word will not be used.

illogical analogy diagram descriptive biographical

9. Although some people mistakenly think the movie is _____, it is not based on any person's life.
10. Some of the choices Cam has made seem totally _____, but they actually make sense when you ask about them.
11. Try as he might, Tim could not come up with a(n) _____ to describe the situation he had been in.
12. The policeman, looking for details that would lead to an arrest, asked the witness for a more _____ account of the crime.

Exercise III. Choose the set of words that best completes the sentence.

1. If Serge's speech about the mechanical parrot is not _____ enough, he can draw you a(n) _____.
A. biographical; manuscript
B. literal; analogy
C. descriptive; diagram
D. illogical; program
2. Even if you try to _____ your son Vincent to believe what you believe, he may not _____ to all of your ideas.
A. subscribe; obliterate
B. obliterate; program
C. program; subscribe
D. obliterate; subscribe

3. Because few people in the ancient country were _____, the _____ had been read by only a handful of citizens.
- diagram; analogy
 - literate; manuscript
 - illogical; diagram
 - biographical; manuscript
4. Because the _____ meaning of the passage is hard to understand, our teacher used a(n) _____ to explain it.
- descriptive; manuscript
 - illogical; manuscript
 - literal; analogy
 - apologetic; analogy
5. Although Barney admitted that his actions had been strange and _____, he was not _____ about the situation.
- illogical; apologetic
 - descriptive; biographical
 - apologetic; literate
 - descriptive; biographical

Exercise IV. Complete the sentence by inferring information about the italicized word from its context.

- When the news claims the town was *obliterated* in only a few seconds, you might suspect...
- If three-year-old Sharon believes everything in too *literal* a way, you probably shouldn't...
- One *analogy* that might help explain photosynthesis is...

Exercise V. Fill in the blank with the word from the Unit that best completes the sentence, using the root we supply as a clue. Then, answer the questions that follow the paragraphs.

Global warming. Dwindling water supplies. Overpopulation. Starvation. These are just a few of the problems facing our planet and its residents. Even if people change the way they use and share resources, and even if the growth of the population is slowed, there will continue to be conflicts between how people would like to use the Earth and what the planet has to offer.

A highly creative solution to this problem would be to find ways to let humans live in other places throughout the solar system. The moon may be a poor choice, since changing its mass through civilization will affect its gravitational relationship with Earth, but Mars is definitely a possibility. Colonization of Mars would have three primary benefits for the Earth: reduced demands on this planet's resources, increased interest in alternative forms of energy and agriculture, and a continued existence for the human species in the event of a catastrophe on Earth.

If there is water on Mars, it would not be _____ (LOG) to colonize Mars fairly soon. Right now, it takes six to nine months to reach the planet from Earth—not much more time than it took to go from Europe to North America in the 16th-century era of exploration. Every person who could exist on Mars, independent of the resources of Earth, would give our planet a chance to renew itself.

Another reason to colonize Mars would be to speed up the discovery of new sources of energy. As long as the world economy depends on oil as an energy source, there will be problems like pollution and shrinking resources. Moving to a planet without oil would immediately make new sources of energy necessary. If these sources work well on Mars, they would be easy to use on Earth as well.

An asteroid or comet that strikes the Earth could _____ (LITER) our planet's population of 6.5

billion. While the odds are astronomical that an object from outer space could harm Earth, over time, such a collision is unavoidable; in fact, many scientists think that this is what killed all of the dinosaurs. In addition, humans possess weapons that could destroy the planet itself; in the event of a nuclear war, the Earth would be destroyed or made impossible to live on. Establishing a colony on Mars would ensure that the human species could exist even after the destruction of its planet.

Clearly, colonization of another planet would bring many advantages to humanity. The earth could only benefit from having fewer people to support, and having alternate energy sources would certainly not be a bad thing. Also, colonization would give the human race a place of escape if the Earth were in danger. The costs would be high, but the benefits could be priceless.

1. Which of the following would be the BEST title for this essay?
 - A. "The Importance of New Energy Sources"
 - B. "Mission to Mars: The Search for Water"
 - C. "Recreating the New World in Space"
 - D. "Three Reasons to Stay on Earth"

2. According to the passage, colonization of Mars would
 - A. be disastrous for Earth.
 - B. be beneficial for Mars.
 - C. make the chance of an asteroid strike more likely.
 - D. reduce demands on Earth.

3. Which of the following BEST summarizes the author's main idea?
 - A. Oil companies would lose money if alternate sources of energy were discovered.
 - B. Human colonization of Mars would allow the human species to survive longer.
 - C. Human colonization of Mars would allow the resources of the earth to last forever.
 - D. The costs of colonizing Mars would be unbelievably high.

4. Which sentence best states the point of this essay?
 - A. the last sentence of the third paragraph
 - B. the last sentence of the second paragraph
 - C. the first sentence of the last paragraph
 - D. the last sentence of the first paragraph

Exercise VI. Drawing on your knowledge of roots and words in context, read the following selection and define the *italicized* words. If you cannot figure out the meaning of the words on your own, look them up in a dictionary. Note that *post* means "after," and *al*, from *ad*, means "to."

In a *postscript* to her poem about people dancing and listening to music, the author explains why she feels it is so important for words in every line to begin with the same sound. She says that this *alliteration* helps the reader hear and feel the same things as the people in the poem. Once you have read the poem, read her explanation and see if you agree with it.