

UNIT SEVEN

VAL, VAIL

Latin VALERE, VALITURUS, “to be strong”

VALIANT (val' yənt) *adj.* Brave; courageous

Although the King of Scotland was a *valiant* warrior, he was no match for the Princess of Portugal.

syn: fearless

ant: cowardly

VALOR (val' ər) *n.* Noble courage

The *valor* with which Arthur faced his difficult illness was just one more example of his strong personality.

syn: heroism

ant: cowardice

AVAIL (ə vā' l) *v.* To help; to be of use

L. ad, “towards,” + valere = *towards strength*

Niles' great wealth did not *avail* him when it came to avoiding a lengthy prison sentence.

syn: benefit

FORT

Latin FORTIS, “strong”

FORTITUDE (fōrt' ə tōōd) *n.* Strength of mind; bravery

Valerie strongly objected to Lee's claim that women had less natural *fortitude* than men.

FORTE (fōr' tā; fōrt) *n.* Strong point; skill

Although Fred had been a math teacher at the school for many years, his real *forte* lay in counseling.

syn: strength

ant: weakness

DUR

Latin DURUS, “tough, hard”

DURARE, DURATUM, “to last”

ENDURING (en dōōr' ing) *adj.* Not diminishing; lasting

The family reunion in July has been an *enduring* tradition for us since my great-grandfather first organized it in 1924.

ant: fleeting

DURABLE (dōōr' ə bəl) *adj.* Able to last; strong

Kinsey and Nadia's friendship was so *durable* that it survived major arguments, long-distance moves, and many other major changes.

ant: obsolete

III One way to say goodbye to someone in Latin was to say “Vale!” This literally means, “Be strong!”

III The forte pronounced “for-tay” is a musical term meaning “loud.” Forte meaning “strong point, skill” may be pronounced this way too, but is usually pronounced “fort.”

DURATION (dōōr ā' shən) *n.* The period of time taken by something
Because his seat had been taken, Rodney was forced to stand for the *duration* of the concert.

ROB

Latin ROBUR, ROBUSTUS, "oak, strength"

CORROBORATE (kə rob' ə rāt) *v.* To back up; support

L. con, "together," + robur = *to strengthen together*

Jan's own experience with raccoons *corroborated* the story that the ranger was now telling.

syn: confirm

ant: contradict

ROBUST (rō bust') *adj.* Strong and hearty

A minor adjustment in diet helped change the weak, lifeless goldfish into *robust*, thriving creatures.

syn: thriving

ant: weak

SOLID

Latin SOLIDARE, SOLIDATUM "to make solid"

CONSOLIDATE (kən sol' ə dāt) *v.* To gather and combine

L. con, "together," + solidatum = *to bring together firmly*

In an effort to *consolidate* information gathered from several different sources, the sheriff's office developed a new, statewide database.

syn: unite

ant: separate

SOLIDARITY (sol ə dar' ə tē) *n.* Support or sympathy; unity

The human rights organization expressed *solidarity* with those people still in the government prison.

syn: togetherness

ant: division



Sometimes, SOLIDARITY is a RARITY.

EXERCISES - UNIT SEVEN

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

1. When Chief Pete saw the *valiant* effort the firefighters were making, he told them...
2. This year's corn crop is far more *robust* than last year's, which looked...
3. Early railroad workers had to possess great *fortitude*, or they would...
4. Mandy's call for help in getting down from the tree did not *avail* her because...
5. Because languages were not Wendy's *forte*, she...
6. The tale of the giant was an *enduring* myth because...
7. When Jordan learned that the yearly pay increase would be effective for the *duration* of his career, he decided to...
8. Lance began to doubt the *valor* of his famous ancestor when he learned that...
9. The 101st and 104th divisions decided to *consolidate* their military strength in order to...
10. The travelers were forced to seek more *durable* wheels for their wagon when...
11. When Louise learned that Steve had *corroborated* her story, she felt...
12. Those people who had managed to escape the cruel dictator held a parade to show *solidarity* with...

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

consolidate durable corroborate avail valor

1. Because Blake was rather clumsy and the dishes were not very _____, we often heard sounds of crashing and breaking from the kitchen.
2. The low-ranking soldier showed such _____ in saving his comrade that he was promoted to sergeant.
3. We could not _____ ourselves of the use of the library since it was closed that afternoon.
4. Rather than _____ my father's explanation of the magician's trick, my mother told me an entirely different story.

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

duration forte robust solidarity consolidate

5. William was fond of saying that while running was his _____, swimming was his passion.
6. The _____ Liz expressed for her brother when he was accused of shoplifting showed their close relationship.
7. The radio show host's angry guest swore that for the _____ of the program, he would not say another word.
8. Teresa decided to _____ her different banking accounts in order to have an easier time paying her bills.

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

enduring forte fortitude robust valiant

9. The professor's record of achievements for the college is so _____ that we still honor him today.
10. The linebackers on the football team were chosen not only for their physical _____, but also for their ability to think fast on the field.
11. The baby who had seemed so weak and fragile at birth was now a _____, healthy two-year-old.
12. Despite the vet's _____ attempt to save the horse's life, it died of the disease.

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

1. The belief that chocolate causes acne has been a(n) _____ idea, despite the fact that scientific evidence does not _____ the claim.
 - A. durable; consolidate
 - B. enduring; corroborate
 - C. robust; avail
 - D. valiant; consolidate
2. The _____ with which Abe protected his family from the bear was not surprising, since he had always had a great deal of mental _____.
 - A. valor; duration
 - B. fortitude; solidarity
 - C. solidarity; duration
 - D. valor; fortitude

3. The prisoners had a great deal of _____ with each other, but they could not _____ themselves of the power their numbers gave them.
- duration; avail
 - fortitude; corroborate
 - valor; consolidate
 - solidarity; avail
4. The _____, healthy young man was often mistaken for a star athlete, but his real _____ was in jazz piano.
- durable; solidarity
 - valiant; duration
 - robust; forte
 - robust; solidarity
5. To build a more _____ and lasting source of economic growth, the company will have to _____ its various overseas accounts.
- durable; consolidate
 - valiant; corroborate
 - robust; avail
 - durable; corroborate

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

- When one witness can *corroborate* another person's story of the accident, the police will most likely...
- If the team members show great *solidarity*, their fans will probably...
- Because José made a *valiant* effort to win the race despite his injury, the fans...

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.

Did you know that there is a women's professional football league? Did you know that Tiger Woods won fewer than half as many golf tournaments as Annika Sorenstam did in 2002? Did you know that the women's basketball team at the University of Connecticut won 55 consecutive games and set an NCAA record?

If you knew more than one of these facts, you are in a very small minority, because women's sports, for the most part, do not appear on television. When they do, they receive poor ratings and complaints from (mostly male) sports fans who cannot see the same _____ (VAL) in the efforts of female athletes that they celebrate in men's sports. This lack of understanding comes more from childhood experiences on the playground than from the differences between men's and women's sports. It is on the elementary school playground that children are first impressed with individual demonstrations of skill. Since

young boys are, as a group, stronger and faster than girls, boys usually win these contests. This difference somehow carries on to adulthood and, to many men, makes women athletes inferior in both _____ (FORT) and skill.

Let's consider the case of basketball. Both women and men shoot at a rim that is ten feet off the floor, although the average woman is six inches shorter than the average man. People who say that men's basketball is more entertaining use the fact that the men's game is faster and that slam-dunks are very rare in the women's game. However, women's basketball has superior passing and teamwork. The American fascination with individual performances, created on childhood playgrounds, forms adults who would rather watch scoring than passing. Marketing only reinforces this trend, because it focuses on individuals rather than on a group.

This seems to be a mostly American condition, though.

Most Americans see soccer as a long, boring game, but it is the most popular sport in the world, played equally well by both men and women. In other cultures, fans appreciate the complex passing and group coordination that lead to each hard-won goal. This one realization may eventually make the popularity of women athletes as _____ (DUR) as the traditional male stars.

1. Which of the following best summarizes the author's main idea?
 - A. Soccer is more popular outside the United States.
 - B. Women's success in sports is impressive.
 - C. More people should watch women's professional football on television.
 - D. Women's sports are not as popular as men's sports, even though they deserve to be.

2. With which of the following would the author most likely agree?
 - A. Basketball is not a very popular sport in the United States.
 - B. Men's focus on individuality makes the United States a superior country.
 - C. Women's basketball involves more teamwork than men's.
 - D. Women can dunk a basketball as easily as men.

3. What would make the best title for this essay?
 - A. Achievements in Women's Basketball
 - B. Tiger Woods vs. Annika Sorenstam: Who is Better?
 - C. Comparing College and Professional Sports
 - D. America's Obsession with Male Athletes

4. According to the author, when are most values based on competition taught?
 - A. During adulthood
 - B. Never
 - C. During early childhood
 - D. During sports practices

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 *pre* means "before, first."

The *prevalent* emotion at the trial of G.R. Copes was outrage. This young man had been accused of involvement in a crime he clearly had very little or no part in; he had been waiting for a ride from his brother when a man fleeing police in a high-speed chase came around a corner at upwards of eighty miles an hour. Believing himself to be in danger, G.R. ducked into the door of a nearby building. There, afraid for his life, he watched as the fleeing man's car came to a crashing stop in a ditch. Waving what appeared to be a broken bottle, the man, who (it turned out) had a broken leg, called for medical assistance. G.R, still in shock, found himself unable to move. Later, he was arrested, charged with failing to aid an injured person, and threatened with harsh *durance*. Prison would certainly be the wrong place for someone who did what any of us would have done.