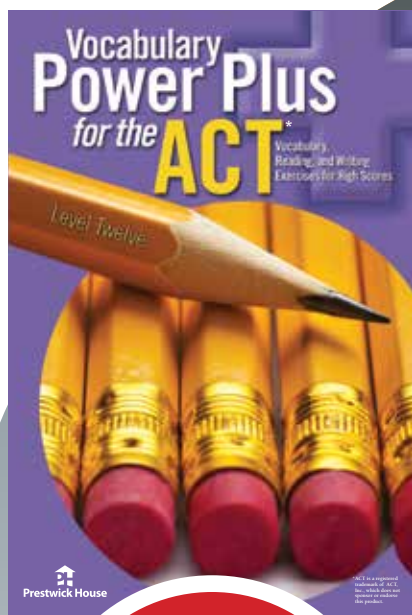




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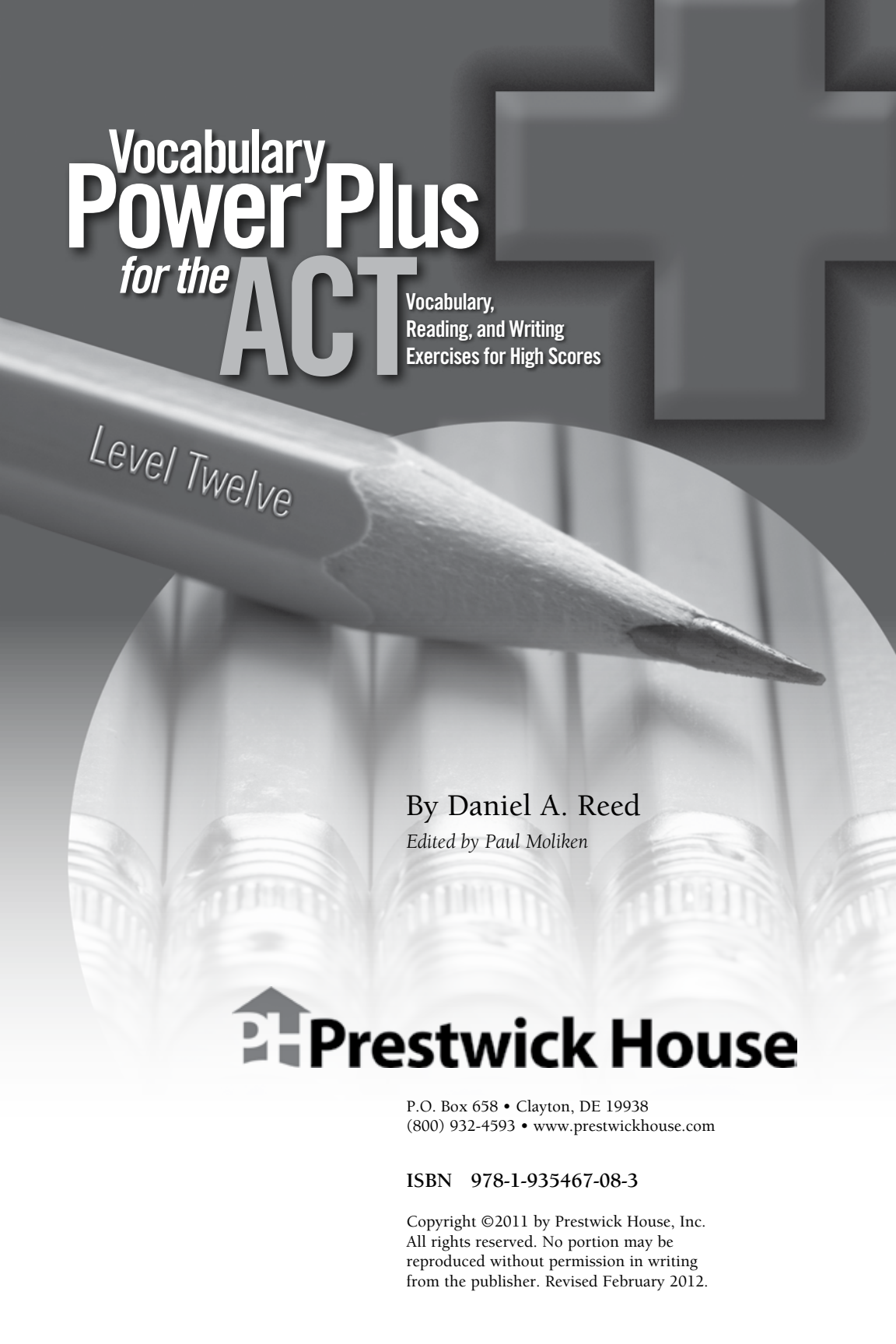
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# Vocabulary Power Plus *for the* ACT

Vocabulary,  
Reading, and Writing  
Exercises for High Scores

Level Twelve

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*Edited by Paul Moliken*

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## •Introduction•

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**V**OCABULARY *POWER PLUS FOR THE ACT* combines classroom tested vocabulary drills with reading and writing exercises designed to prepare students for the American College Testing assessment; however, *Vocabulary Power Plus for the ACT* is a resource for all students—not just those who are college bound or preparing for the ACT. This series is intended to increase vocabulary, improve grammar, enhance writing, and boost critical reading skills for students at all levels of learning.

Vocabulary lessons combine words-in-context exercises with inferences to ensure that definitions are understood, instead of merely memorized.

Lengthy critical reading exercises and detailed questions emulate the reading passages of the ACT Reading test. Each passage involves a topic in social studies, natural science, prose fiction, or humanities, and is accompanied by multiple levels of questions.

ACT-style grammar passages and questions provide practice in punctuation, usage, structure, and word choice.

The process-oriented writing exercises in *Vocabulary Power Plus for the ACT* develop speed and thrift in essay writing, qualifiable with the objective writing fundamentals in the simulated ACT essay scoring guide.

We hope that you find the *Vocabulary Power Plus for the ACT* series to be an effective tool for teaching new words and an exceptional tool for preparing for the ACT.

## Strategies for Completing Activities

### Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes

A knowledge of roots, prefixes, and suffixes can give readers the ability to view unfamiliar words as puzzles that require only a few simple steps to solve. For the person interested in the history of words, this knowledge provides the ability to track word origin and evolution. For those who seek to improve vocabulary, this knowledge creates a sure and lifelong method; however, there are two points to remember:

1. Some words have evolved through usage, so present definitions might differ from what you infer through an examination of the roots and prefixes. The word *abstruse*, for example, contains the prefix *ab* (away) and the root *trudere* (to thrust), and literally means *to thrust away*. Today, *abstruse* is used to describe something that is hard to understand.
2. Certain roots do not apply to all words that use the same form. If you know that the root *vin* means “to conquer,” then you would be correct in concluding that the word *invincible* means “incapable of being conquered”; however, if you tried to apply the same root meaning to *vindicate* or *vindictive*, you would be incorrect. When analyzing unfamiliar words, check for other possible roots if your inferred meaning does not fit the context.

Despite these considerations, a knowledge of roots and prefixes is one of the best ways to build a powerful vocabulary.

### Critical Reading

Reading questions generally fall into several categories.

1. *Identifying the main idea or the author’s purpose.* Generally, the question will ask, “What is this selection about?”

In some passages, the author’s purpose will be easy to identify because one or two ideas leap from the text; however, other passages might not be so easily analyzed, especially if they include convoluted sentences. Inverted sentences (subject at the end of the sentence) and elliptical sentences (words missing) will also increase the difficulty of the passages, but all of these obstacles can be overcome if readers take one sentence at a time and recast it in their own words. Consider the following sentence:

These writers either jot down their thoughts bit by bit, in short, ambiguous, and paradoxical sentences, which apparently mean much more than they say—of this kind of writing Schelling's treatises on natural philosophy are a splendid instance; or else they hold forth with a deluge of words and the most intolerable diffusiveness, as though no end of fuss were necessary to make the reader understand the deep meaning of their sentences, whereas it is some quite simple if not actually trivial idea, examples of which may be found in plenty in the popular works of Fichte, and the philosophical manuals of a hundred other miserable dunces.

If we edit out some of the words, the main point of this sentence is obvious.

These writers either jot down their thoughts bit by bit, in short,  
sentences, which apparently mean  
much more than they say  
or  
they hold a deluge of words  
as though necessary to make the  
reader understand the deep meaning of their sentences

Some sentences need only a few deletions for clarification, but others require major recasting and additions; they must be read carefully and put into the reader's own words.

Some in their discourse desire rather commendation of wit, in being able to hold all arguments, than of judgment, in discerning what is true; as if it were a praise to know what might be said, and not what should be thought.

After studying it, a reader might recast the sentence as follows:

In conversation, some people desire praise for their abilities to maintain the conversation rather than for their abilities to identify what is true or false, as though it were better to sound good than to know what is truth or fiction.

2. Identifying the stated or implied meaning. *What is the author stating or suggesting?*

The literal meaning of a text does not always correspond with the intended meaning. To understand a passage fully, readers must determine which meaning—if there is more than one—is the intended meaning of the passage.

Consider the following sentence:

If his notice was sought, an expression of courtesy and interest gleamed out upon his features; proving that there was light within him and that it was only the outward medium of the intellectual lamp that obstructed the rays in their passage.

Interpreted literally, this Nathaniel Hawthorne metaphor suggests that a light-generating lamp exists inside of the human body. Since this is impossible, the reader must look to the metaphoric meaning of the passage to properly understand it. In the metaphor, Hawthorne refers to the human mind—consciousness—as a lamp that emits light, and other people cannot always see the lamp because the outside “medium”—the human body—sometimes blocks it.

3. Identifying the tone or mood of the selection. *What feeling does the text evoke?*

To answer these types of questions, readers must look closely at individual words and their connotations; for example, the words *stubborn* and *firm* have almost the same definition, but a writer who describes a character as *stubborn* rather than *firm* is probably suggesting something negative about the character.

## Writing

The ACT writing exam allocates only thirty minutes to the composition of a well-organized, fully developed essay. Writing a satisfactory essay in this limited time requires the ability to quickly determine a thesis, organize ideas, and produce adequate examples to support the ideas.

An essay written in thirty minutes might not represent the best process writing—an ACT essay might lack the perfection and depth that weeks of proofreading and editing give to research papers. Process is undoubtedly important, but students must consider the time constraints of the ACT. Completion of the essay is just as important as organization, development, and language use.

The thesis, the organization of ideas, and the support make the framework of a good essay. Before the actual writing begins, a writer must create a mental outline by establishing a thesis, or main idea, and one or more specific supporting ideas (the number of ideas will depend on the length and content of the essay). Supporting ideas should not be overcomplicated; they are simply ideas that justify or explain the thesis. The writer must introduce and explain each supporting idea, and the resultant supporting paragraph should answer the *why?* or *who cares?* questions that the thesis may evoke.

Once the thesis and supporting ideas are identified, writers must determine the order in which the ideas will appear in the essay. A good introduction usually explains the thesis and briefly introduces the supporting ideas. Explanation of the supporting ideas should follow, with each idea in its own paragraph. The final paragraph, the conclusion, usually restates the thesis or summarizes the main ideas of the essay.

Adhering to this mental outline when the writing begins will help the writer organize and develop the essay. Using the Organization and Development scoring guides to evaluate practice essays will help to reinforce the process skills. The Word Choice and Sentence Formation scoring guides will help to strengthen language skills—the vital counterpart to essay organization and development.

## Pronunciation Guide

a	— track
ā	— mate
ä	— father
â	— care
e	— pet
ē	— be
i	— bit
ī	— bite
o	— job
ō	— wrote
ô	— port, horse, fought
ōō	— proof
ö	— book
u	— pun
ū	— you
û	— purr
ə	— about, system, supper, circus
îr	— steer
ë	— Fr. coeur
oi	— toy

## Word List

### Lesson 1

arable  
camaraderie  
desiccate  
equanimity  
frangible  
interminable  
litany  
lugubrious  
moratorium  
replete  
truncate  
ubiquitous  
vernacular  
wrenching  
zealous

### Lesson 2

brigand  
carte blanche  
contemptuous  
cosmopolitan  
donnybrook  
incantation  
interlocutor  
metamorphosis  
nomenclature  
nonchalant  
procrustean  
rife  
sophistry  
stygian  
vestige

### Lesson 3

abstemious  
archaic  
atelier  
axiom  
dulcet  
expurgate  
iniquity  
patronizing  
pellucid  
peremptory  
perspicacious  
scapegoat  
talisman  
usurp  
vacillate

### Lesson 4

apocryphal  
catharsis  
crepuscular  
efficacious  
estrangle  
internecine  
intrinsic  
inundate  
kudos  
maxim  
putrid  
revere  
risible  
servile  
sybaritic

### Lesson 5

anomaly  
compendium  
comprise  
consternation  
coterie  
disconcert  
eidetic  
expiate  
flippancy  
foist  
incongruous  
innocuous  
plethora  
preamble  
vitriolic

### Lesson 6

accoutrement  
antediluvian  
contrive  
haughty  
hubris  
imbroglio  
peregrination  
platitude  
prognosticate  
quotidian  
sanctimonious  
scullion  
sectarian  
stringent  
venerate

Lesson 7

anecdote  
churlish  
coeval  
cogent  
convoluted  
dilatory  
entreat  
gibberish  
incumbent  
inimical  
livid  
lurid  
nexus  
promulgate  
staid

Lesson 8

aleatory  
allay  
ameliorate  
asperity  
exegesis  
inveigh  
lionize  
otiose  
pander  
profligate  
puerile  
recalcitrant  
renunciation  
unimpeachable  
vitiate

Lesson 9

benign  
blithe  
bumpkin  
corroborate  
culpable  
frenetic  
hortatory  
indecorous  
orotund  
penultimate  
pervasive  
provocative  
recrimination  
soporific  
toady

Lesson 10

circuitous  
circumlocution  
depredate  
indolent  
largesse  
luminous  
majordomo  
perambulate  
perquisite  
polemical  
probity  
tacit  
timorous  
untenable  
veneer

Lesson 11

bulwark  
canard  
cortege  
crescendo  
demotic  
disingenuous  
dogged  
etymology  
impresario  
intransigent  
malaise  
requisite  
simian  
solecism  
wont

Lesson 12

assiduous  
bellicose  
compunction  
condescending  
epiphany  
panacea  
physiognomy  
propensity  
pulchritude  
revel  
rhapsodize  
sepulcher  
umbrage  
volute  
wizened

Lesson 13

analgesic  
conflagration  
discretionary  
draconian  
florid  
flummox  
fractious  
histrionics  
implicate  
moribund  
noisome  
punctilious  
turpitude  
unpalatable  
veritable

Lesson 14

artisan  
boondoggle  
curmudgeon  
fiduciary  
inculcate  
indiscernible  
moiety  
opprobrium  
phlegmatic  
potentate  
protégé  
reciprocate  
repugnant  
tenable  
virulent

Lesson 15

appellation  
autonomy  
chthonian  
coagulate  
extirpate  
gustatory  
jurisprudence  
malevolent  
misanthrope  
peripatetic  
prominent  
puissance  
scion  
supercilious  
tutelary

Lesson 16

arcane  
bourgeois  
exculpate  
indefeasible  
matriculate  
mercurial  
nascent  
paladin  
salubrious  
sine qua non  
squelch  
tangential  
trenchant  
tyro  
vicissitude

Lesson 17

alimentary  
ascetic  
attenuate  
attribute  
celerity  
congenital  
depravity  
discourse  
encomium  
ethereal  
megalomania  
mutable  
primordial  
remuneration  
tactile

Lesson 18

cumulative  
exhilaration  
extricate  
goad  
impunity  
lithe  
poignant  
propriety  
pundit  
satiare  
superfluous  
surfeit  
trite  
venial  
vituperative

Lesson 19

abjure  
dissipate  
extant  
fulsome  
inchoate  
inveterate  
propitious  
rescind  
schism  
spurious  
stentorian  
transient  
tremulous  
unwieldy  
utilitarian

Lesson 20

acme  
cerebral  
conundrum  
deleterious  
discerning  
echelon  
hypocrisy  
idyllic  
malinger  
nondescript  
punitive  
relegate  
serendipity  
soluble  
waive

Lesson 21

abrogate  
analects  
anomie  
apostasy  
cognizant  
extrinsic  
factotum  
febrile  
magniloquent  
outré  
parity  
propinquity  
prosaic  
supine  
surreptitious

## Lesson One

1. **camaraderie** (kā mə rā' də rē) *n.* rapport and goodwill  
 The coach attributed the team's success to the *camaraderie* among the players.  
*syn: friendship; amity* *ant: enmity; hostility*
  
2. **frangible** (fran' jə bəl) *adj.* fragile; easy to break  
 Mom seldom removed the *frangible*, antique dishes from the cabinet.  
*syn: delicate; breakable* *ant: sturdy; strong*
  
3. **litany** (li' tə nē) *n.* a long, repetitive, or dull account  
 The dissatisfied customer read a *litany* of complaints to the company representative.
  
4. **moratorium** (mōr ə tōr' ē əm) *n.* a suspension of activity; an authorized delay  
 The warring factions declared a *moratorium* on combat during the peace talks.  
*syn: cessation; postponement* *ant: rush; continuation*
  
5. **zealous** (zel' əs) *adj.* fervent; fanatical  
 The *zealous* gardener planted so many flowers that a number of them did not have the necessary space in which to grow.  
*syn: passionate; enthusiastic* *ant: uninterested; indifferent*
  
6. **desiccate** (des' i kāt) *v.* to dry out; to remove moisture  
 Janet *desiccates* flowers and then uses them to make wreaths.  
*syn: dehydrate* *ant: moisten; dampen*
  
7. **wrenching** (rench' ing) *adj.* causing mental or physical pain  
 The *wrenching* photographs of the starving children prompted Mike to send a donation.  
*syn: distressing; agonizing* *ant: pleasant; comforting*
  
8. **replete** (ri plēt') *adj.* full; abundant  
 The anglers were happy to find their stream *replete* with trout.  
*syn: abounding; rife* *ant: lacking; empty*

9. **interminable** (in tūr' mə nə bəl) *adj.* tiresome and long; seemingly endless  
The last few hours of school before the holiday vacation seemed *interminable*.  
*syn: tedious* *ant: fleeting; limited*
10. **arable** (ar' ə bəl) *adj.* suitable for cultivation of land  
Death Valley and the Badlands are both characterized by their lack of *arable* soil.  
*syn: fertile; fecund* *ant: barren; infertile*
11. **lugubrious** (lə gōō' brē əs) *adj.* mournful; gloomy  
The *lugubrious* funeral scene temporarily interrupted the comic tone of the play.  
*syn: somber; depressing* *ant: joyful*
12. **truncate** (trung' kāt) *v.* to shorten  
The candidate *truncated* his campaign because of a family illness.  
*syn: abridge; abbreviate* *ant: lengthen; increase*
13. **ubiquitous** (yōō bik' wi təs) *adj.* occurring or seeming to occur everywhere; omnipresent  
The camping trip was horrible; the mosquitoes were *ubiquitous* and hungry.  
*syn: universal* *ant: nonexistent*
14. **vernacular** (vər nak' yə lər) *n.* everyday language  
Using slang or *vernacular* in a formal term paper is usually inappropriate.
15. **equanimity** (ēk wə nim' i tē) *n.* composure; calmness  
Oddly enough, the plaintiff recounted the story of her attack with perfect *equanimity*.  
*syn: poise; sangfroid* *ant: anxiety; agitation*

**Exercise I**

**Words in Context**

*From the list below, supply the words needed to complete the paragraph. Some words will not be used.*

litany	truncate	lugubrious	camaraderie
equanimity	interminable	zealous	

1. Tony brushed the rain off his jacket as he walked through the glass doors to the school. It was a[n] \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday morning, so Tony was happy that the assessment test was not scheduled for a beautiful spring day. He sat down with his answer booklet, and the test proctor began the standard, twenty-minute \_\_\_\_\_ of instructions, as though the \_\_\_\_\_, four-hour test were not long enough without the elaborate instructions. Tony, not at all nervous after having taken the test three times already, listened to the proctor with \_\_\_\_\_; however, some of the more \_\_\_\_\_ test-takers anxiously tapped their #2 pencils, eager to begin filling in the hundreds of tiny circles on their answer sheets.

*From the list below, supply the words needed to complete the paragraph. Some words will not be used.*

frangible	desiccated	arable	ubiquitous
replete	vernacular	zealous	

2. Abby had taken Spanish in high school, but she had trouble understanding the shopkeeper's \_\_\_\_\_. The little shop was \_\_\_\_\_ with the things that tourists often needed, such as film, medicine, and long-distance phone cards; a shelf in front of the counter contained the hundreds of keychains, coffee mugs, old, \_\_\_\_\_ hard candies, and tee shirts \_\_\_\_\_ in every souvenir shop. A row of \_\_\_\_\_ vases and pottery on a shelf behind the counter caught Abby's eye, but she had actually come in to ask about the exotic plants growing in the \_\_\_\_\_ plot outside, behind the store.

From the list below, supply the words needed to complete the paragraph. Some words will not be used.

litany	truncate	camaraderie	wrenching
moratorium	arable	desiccate	

3. After the \_\_\_\_\_ on racing during a storm had been lifted and the track dried, spectators watched the \_\_\_\_\_ and ease among members of the pit crews as they made adjustments to cars in the minutes before drivers could return to the track. Despite the excitement in the air, the whole scene was depressing for Miles, a former driver who had to watch the race from the stands. The eight titanium pins holding his leg bones together never let him forget the \_\_\_\_\_ injury that had \_\_\_\_\_ his once-promising racing career.

## Exercise II

### Sentence Completion

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

1. When Angie complained about having to do chores for her allowance, her dad began his usual *litany* about...
2. It's difficult to maintain one's *equanimity* when...
3. The cooler at the picnic was *replete* with...
4. Dirk began to question the *camaraderie* of his teammates when one of them...
5. The actor became frustrated when the *ubiquitous* tabloid reporters...
6. Anita wanted a home with an *arable* yard where she could...
7. The *interminable* wait at the checkout line made Raymond decide...
8. When you pack the boxes for the move, put the *frangible* items...
9. Between innings, one of the *zealous* fans at the game...
10. Bill likes comic poems, but Sylvia prefers *lugubrious* ones that...

11. The NCAA imposed a brief *moratorium* on Central University's football games when several athletes...
12. Shelly used common *vernacular* to identify the animals, but the zoology professor wanted her to...
13. You will need to *truncate* your award speech if you find out...
14. Giles tried to suppress his *wrenching* memories of...
15. The pioneers *desiccated* some of the beef so that they...

### Exercise III

## Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes

Study the entries and answer the questions that follow.

The prefix *ortho* means "straight" or "correct."

The prefix *hetero* means "different."

The prefix *homo* means "same."

The roots *dogm* and *dox* mean "belief."

The root *gen* means "type."

The suffix *logy* means "word."

1. Using literal translations as guidance, define the following words without using a dictionary.

A. dogmatic	D. orthodox
B. heterodox	E. doxology
C. homogenous	F. heterogeneous
2. If *para* means "beyond," then a *paradox* is something that is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. List as many words as you can think of that begin with the prefix *ortho*.
4. What is *homogenized* milk?
5. Give an example of a *dogma*.
6. List as many words as you can think of that contain the root *gen*.

### Exercise IV

#### *Inference*

Complete the sentences by inferring information about the italicized word from its context.

1. That is a *ubiquitous* species of tree, so don't be surprised if, during your vacation abroad, you...
2. If you have *arable* ground on your property, then you might consider...
3. If you are bored, and the weather is *lugubrious*, you might...

### Exercise V

#### *Writing*

Here is a writing prompt similar to the one you will find on the essay writing portion of the ACT.

Entertainment today, both in film and literature, is rife with misdirected judgments. When we read books or watch films set in historical contexts of the mid-1800s or earlier, we tend to weigh the behavior of characters against our expectations for people of the present. The featured heroes, or even the sympathetic characters, tend to be those who stand out among their contemporaries by espousing beliefs or attitudes of the present. This causes the other characters, representing the status quo, to seem primitive, or even barbaric, by comparison.

This often unconscious "judgment" that we render upon fiction is best described as *presentism*, an act of applying the values and beliefs of the present to the people—real or fictional—of past generations, cultures, and civilizations. There is a perpetual debate over the virtue of the founders of America, some of whom blazed frontiers, engaged in fierce battles, and established a successful republic, but were simultaneously practitioners of slavery or participants in campaigns against native Americans.

By present-day mores and beliefs, of course, slavery and genocide are regarded as abject evils, but does this make the successful figures of the past, and the fruits of their labor—the nation—evil? Should

our predecessors be regarded as evil because they espoused corporal punishment, and profitted from child labor?

Take a position and explain whether or not the heroes of the past, or the people regarded as notable figures in history, should be celebrated for their achievements or forgotten due to their participation in societal norms that offend modern sensibilities. Imagine that your argument will become the preface to a collection of biographies of people known for their historical achievements in science, exploration, literature, or any other field.

**Thesis:** Write a *one-sentence* response to the above assignment. Make certain this single sentence offers a clear statement of your position.

*Example: Because society's expectations, choices, and more were different in earlier times, people who lived then should not be judged by today's mores.*

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**Organizational Plan:** List at least three subtopics you will use to support your main idea. This list is your outline.

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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**Draft:** Following your outline, write a good first draft of your essay. Remember to support all your points with examples, facts, references to reading, etc.

**Review and revise:** Exchange essays with a classmate. Using the scoring guide for Organization on page 240, score your partner's essay (while he or she scores yours). Focus on the organizational plan and use of language conventions. If necessary, rewrite your essay to improve the organizational plan and your use of language.