Lesson 1 | CONTEXT: Expression

The First Artists

Long before Picasso, before Michelangelo, even before ancient Egyptian stone carvers, there were artists. We do not know their names, but we know some of their works and the time period in which these works were created. The first artists lived in the Paleolithic or Old Stone Age, which began in Africa around 2,000,000 B.C. Prehistoric art includes paintings on the walls of caves, sculpture, pottery, baskets, and textiles.

In the following exercises, you will have the opportunity to expand your vocabulary by reading about prehistoric art. Below are ten Vocabulary Words that will be used in these exercises.

- acquittal
- assert
- condescend
- contemptuous
- elite
- fortitude
- inarticulate
- mentor
- notoriety

EXERCISE 1 | Wordbusting

Directions. Follow these instructions for this word and the nine words on the next page.

1. Figure out the word’s meaning by looking at its context, its structure, and its sound. Fill in at least one of the three CSS boxes. Alternate which boxes you complete.
2. Then, look up the word in a dictionary, read all of its meanings, and write the meaning of the word as it is used in the sentence.
3. Follow this same process for each of the Vocabulary Words on the next page. You will need to draw your own map for each word. Use a separate sheet of paper.

acquittal

The museum accused the art dealer of stealing a prehistoric sculpture of a woman’s head. At the trial the jury found the dealer not guilty, and the judge announced an acquittal.

Context:

Structure:

Sound:

Dictionary:
2. **assert**  
The museum did not have any evidence that the art dealer took the sculpture, which was carved in France around 22,000 B.C. The art dealer asserted his right to a trial, and the museum could not deny his claim.

3. **condescend**  
The art dealer said that he was an honorable man who would not condescend to any form of dishonesty. Theft, he explained, was far beneath him.

4. **contemptuous**  
During the trial, museum officials were openly contemptuous of the art dealer's qualifications. The defense, however, produced witnesses who proved that the museum officials were quite wrong to show scorn for the dealer's expert knowledge.

5. **elite**  
"He is among the elite in the world of prehistoric art," one defense witness said. "Only a few select people know as much as this dealer knows about Paleolithic art and tools."

6. **evolve**  
The art dealer told how his interest in Paleolithic art had evolved over the last fifty years and also how his interest in the pottery of the Neolithic or New Stone Age (c. 8000-3000 B.C.) had gradually developed.

7. **fortitude**  
The newspaper article praised the art dealer's courage and moral strength during the trial. The article said he showed much fortitude in facing the charges from the museum.

8. **inarticulate**  
At one point in the trial, however, the art dealer became inarticulate. He was so filled with emotion that he was unable to speak clearly.

9. **mentor**  
The art dealer was emotional when telling about his mentor, whom he had accompanied on an archaeological dig in Turkey. "He was indeed a wise and trusted advisor," the dealer said, "and taught me many things."

10. **notoriety**  
Although the art dealer achieved an unwanted notoriety as a result of the trial, the museum's reputation suffered even more when it was discovered that the missing sculpture had been misplaced by an employee.
**EXERCISE 2  Context Clues**

**Directions.** Scan the definitions in Column A. Then, think about how the boldface words are used in the sentences in Column B. To complete the exercise, match each definition in Column A with the correct Vocabulary Word from Column B. Write the letter of your choice on the line provided; then write the Vocabulary Word on the line preceding the definition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COLUMN A</th>
<th>COLUMN B</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. word:</td>
<td>(A) One speaker asserted that the best Paleolithic cave paintings are at Lascaux, France; another firmly declared that the best are at Altamira, Spain.</td>
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<td>n. patient courage in facing pain or danger; moral strength; endurance</td>
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<td>12. word:</td>
<td>(B) I accept the opinion of my mentor, who prefers the drawings of bison at Altamira. As an advisor, she has wise opinions and can be trusted.</td>
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<td>v. to stoop to do something you think is unworthy of you</td>
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<td>13. word:</td>
<td>(C) I was glad that the main speaker was not inarticulate and could clearly discuss why prehistoric artists painted images of animals on cave walls.</td>
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<td>v. to develop gradually by process of growth and change</td>
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<td>14. word:</td>
<td>(D) He explained that the skills of prehistoric artists evolved, just as their concepts of pictures as symbols gradually developed.</td>
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<td>n. fame, usually in an unfavorable sense</td>
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<td>15. word:</td>
<td>(E) “Perhaps,” he said, “the artist thought that painting a hunted animal’s image would give the hunters the fortitude that they would need to courageously endure the hunt.”</td>
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<td>v. to express or state positively; to defend or claim (one’s rights, for example)</td>
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<td>16. word:</td>
<td>(F) Someone in the audience was contemptuous of the talents of prehistoric artists. Her disdain was directed at the cave paintings.</td>
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<td>n. a setting free by judgment of a court; a release from a duty, obligation, etc.</td>
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<td>17. word:</td>
<td>(G) The speaker felt that it was beneath him to respond to such criticisms. Nevertheless, he condescended to explain the primitive societies in which prehistoric artists lived and worked.</td>
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<td>adj. of or suitable for a select group; n. a group or part of a group regarded as the best, most skilled, most powerful, etc.</td>
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<td>18. word:</td>
<td>(H) “Were the people who did the cave paintings a small, elite group, or could just anybody paint in the caves?” I asked.</td>
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<td>n. a wise and trusted teacher; a counselor</td>
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<td>19. word:</td>
<td>(I) The speaker said that to be an artist in a prehistoric society may have been an honor and that anyone with a bad reputation—any kind of notoriety—may not have been allowed to paint.</td>
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<td>adj. unable to speak understandably or effectively or to use words; unable to say what one thinks</td>
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<td>20. word:</td>
<td>(J) The members of the audience listened intently to the speaker’s arguments. In the end, they agreed with him and refrained from asking any more questions. You might say they gave him an acquittal from any further discussion.</td>
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<td>adj. showing or feeling scorn</td>
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EXERCISE 3  Sentence Completion

Directions. For each of the following items, circle the letter of the choice that best completes the meaning of the sentence or sentences.

21. Don’t be ____ of prehistoric art; its beauty is worthy of respect, not scorn.
   (A) elite
   (B) inarticulate
   (C) assertive
   (D) fortitudinous
   (E) contemptuous

22. Techniques for firing pottery ____ or developed gradually, in Near East farming villages during the Neolithic Age.
   (A) asserted
   (B) articulated
   (C) acquitted
   (D) evolved
   (E) condescended

23. One author ____ that pottery is an important, visible record of a society’s artistic skills. Other archaeologists have expressed that opinion, too.
   (A) evolves
   (B) condescends
   (C) asserts
   (D) represses
   (E) succumbs

24. Only the ____ of the Friends of the Art Museum collect Neolithic pottery because only the most wealthy and influential people can afford it.
   (A) acquittal
   (B) elite
   (C) mentor
   (D) notoriety
   (E) fortitude

25. Neolithic pottery figurines are especially valuable, according to my son’s art professor, who is his trustworthy advisor, or ____ at college.
   (A) mentor
   (B) notoriety
   (C) assertion
   (D) acquittal
   (E) elite

26. Perhaps only the ____ of Neolithic metal-workers could afford to use gold and silver. At times, however, they may have ____ to use tin or other metals that they may have considered beneath them.
   (A) mentor ... evolved
   (B) acquittal ... asserted
   (C) elite ... condescended
   (D) mentor ... acquitted
   (E) notoriety ... evolved

27. The speaker was so nervous that he was almost ____, but he finally was able to defend his ____ about the origins of Stonehenge.
   (A) contemptuous ... acquittal
   (B) fortitudinous ... notoriety
   (C) repressive ... fortitude
   (D) contemptuous ... elite
   (E) inarticulate ... assertion

28. Maura’s ____ at art school advised her not to make copies of Neolithic pottery.
   Copiers gain a bad reputation, or ____
   (A) fortitude ... elite
   (B) notoriety ... mentor
   (C) elite ... acquittal
   (D) mentor ... notoriety
   (E) acquittal ... fortitude

29. No one should be ____ or disdainful, of early prehistoric Chinese art: It is very sophisticated.
   (A) contemptuous
   (B) inarticulate
   (C) elite
   (D) whimsical
   (E) prophetic

30. The courageous woman wrongly accused of smuggling precious artifacts exhibited ____ during the trial. She was found innocent, and the trial ended with ____
   (A) mentor ... a notoriety
   (B) fortitude ... an acquittal
   (C) elite ... an assertion
   (D) acquittal ... an evolution
   (E) notoriety ... an acquittal