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Word List

Study the definitions of the words. Then do the exercises that follow.

arduous *adj.* Requiring much effort; very difficult.
 ăr' jōō əs Frequent sandstorms made the **arduous** trek across the Sahara Desert even more difficult.

canny *adj.* Shrewd and careful; watchful of one's own interests.
 kan' ē A **canny** businessperson can make a profit even in the worst of times.

climax *n.* The highest point; the greatest moment or event.
 klī' maks Slugger Norris's winning home run in the World Series was a terrific **climax** to the season.

endorse *v.* 1. To sign the back of a check before cashing or depositing it.
 en dōrs' The bank teller wouldn't cash my check until I had **endorsed** it.
 2. To approve of; to support.
 Newspapers often **endorse** candidates for public office.
 3. To be favorably associated with a product in return for payment.
 Some well-known athletes are paid millions of dollars to **endorse** products on television.

exuberant *adj.* Happy and excited; bubbling over with enthusiasm.
 eg zōō' bər ənt Our friends gave us an **exuberant** welcome at the airport.
exuberance *n.* The quality of being exuberant.
 The steady rain could not dampen the **exuberance** of fans gathered for the rock festival.

intrepid *adj.* Feeling or showing no fear; brave; courageous.
 in trep' id The **intrepid** astronauts brought their crippled *Apollo 13* spacecraft safely back to Earth.

kindle *v.* 1. To start burning.
 kin' dəl A spark from the wood stove **kindled** some oily rags and started the fire.
 2. To cause to become excited or stirred up.
 The museum's exhibition of Navaho pottery **kindled** my interest in the Southwest.
kindling *n.* (kind' līŋ) Sticks used to start a fire.
 There were plenty of dry twigs to provide **kindling** for the campfire.

lucrative
loo' krə tiv

adj. Producing wealth or profit.
I invested some of the money I had inherited in what sounded like a **lucrative** deal.

mentor
men' tər

n. A wise and loyal friend and adviser.
As president of the college she founded, Mary McLeod Bethune was a **mentor** to many young black women.

obsession
əb sesh' ən

n. An interest, idea, or feeling that fills one's mind and leaves little room for anything else.
Finishing her second novel has become an **obsession** with her and leaves her little time for other activities.

personable
pər' sən ə bəl

adj. Pleasing in manner and appearance.
The hotel's **personable** staff made our stay a pleasant one.

proficient
prō fish' ənt

adj. Able to do something very well; skillful.
All the mechanics in this garage are **proficient** in car repairing.
proficiency *n.* The quality of being proficient.
My cousin's **proficiency** in Japanese enabled her to make many friends in Tokyo.

scanty
skan' tē

adj. Not enough or just barely enough; small in size or amount.
After a **scanty** meal of a bread roll and an apple, we continued our journey.

strait
strāt

n. A narrow body of water connecting two larger ones.
The **Strait** of Gibraltar connects the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean.
straits *n.* Trouble or need.
When both parents lost their jobs, the family was in desperate **straits**.

zest
zest

n. Great enjoyment; excitement.
Learning to scuba dive added **zest** to our Caribbean vacation.
zestful *adj.* Full of zest.
During the second week of my new exercise program, I awoke each day feeling **zestful** and ready for a five-mile run.