

Introducing the Words

Read the following Russian folktale about some clever forest animals. Notice how the highlighted words are used. These are the words you will be learning in this unit.



Why Bear Sleeps So Much

(Russian Folktale)

Long ago, when the world was as fresh and new as a daffodil in springtime, the animals faced a serious problem. Troublesome Bear was ruining everything in their forest.

The songbirds were all terrified whenever Bear passed through the woods in his usual clumsy way. He would blunder into branches, smashing the birds' fragile nests and eggs. Bear also crushed the hives of the bees and stole

their honey, so the bees had a continuous argument with him. Bear squashed the tunnel-like homes of the gophers and the rabbits with his big feet, and in general caused so many disturbances that the animals couldn't relax. As angry as they were, however, the animals didn't really want to get into a scuffle with Bear. He was much too big and strong!





Desperate, the animals called a meeting to decide on a course of action. "Why don't we just ask Bear to be more considerate?" suggested Deer timidly.

Squirrel was quick to reject Deer's idea. "That won't work," Squirrel insisted, "because Bear never listens to anyone. I think he just enjoys walking all over us!"

"Throw Bear in jail," Rat shouted. "Force him to live a solitary life in a jail cell and he won't be able to injure and torment us ever again."

The animals nodded in approval at this idea until Mouse pointed out an obvious problem. "We don't have a jail," Mouse squeaked, "and if we did, someone would have to feed Bear in his cell." The very thought of feeding Bear made all the animals shake in fear.

Other animals offered more ideas. Skunk suggested that Porcupine distribute some of his extra sharp quills in Bear's bed. Porcupine suggested that Skunk send some smelly spray into Bear's den. Neither animal was brave enough to try the other's plan, however, and the ideas probably wouldn't have worked anyway. Indeed, it looked as if there were no solution to the problem, and the animals were about to cancel the rest of their meeting.

Fortunately, at that moment, Eagle flew in like a bolt of lightning. The animals cheered because Eagle was a veteran problem solver. Whenever there was trouble in the forest, Eagle found a way to put an end to it. This time, Eagle clutched a document in his sharp claws. "As we all know," Eagle thundered, "Bear can't hurt anyone or destroy anything when he's asleep. This statement," he said, waving the

document, "requires Bear to sleep from October to April every year. I hope you will all sign it!"

What a great idea! The animals read the document and added their names to it. True, it didn't get rid of Bear permanently, but it gave them temporary relief. At the very least, the animals could look forward to peace and quiet for six months of every year.

The myth doesn't say how the animals gave their signed document to Bear or what his reaction was to it. Who knows? Maybe he liked the animals' suggestion, for one thing is certain: Bear has been sleeping away half the year ever since!



Definitions

You were introduced to the words below in the passage on pages 6–7. Study the pronunciation, spelling, part of speech, and definition of each word. Write the word in the blank space in the sentence that follows. Then read the synonyms and antonyms.

Remember

A **noun** (n.) is a word that names a person, place, or thing.

A **verb** (v.) is a word or words that express action or a state of being.

An **adjective** (adj.) is a word that describes a noun or pronoun.

1. blunder
(blun' dər)

(v.) to make a foolish or careless mistake; to move clumsily and carelessly

I saw the hiker _____ through the woods.

(n.) a serious or thoughtless mistake

I was terribly embarrassed by my _____.

SYNONYMS: (v.) to err, foul up, bungle, goof; (n.) an error, blooper
ANTONYMS: (v.) to triumph, succeed; (n.) a success, hit

2. cancel
(kan' səl)

(v.) to call off or do away with; to cross out with lines or other marks to show that something cannot be used again

Maybe the principal will _____ classes if it continues to snow.

SYNONYMS: to stop, discontinue, drop, repeal, revoke
ANTONYMS: to renew, continue, extend, maintain



3. continuous
(kən tin' yū əs)

(adj.) going on without a stop or break

_____ TV coverage began shortly after news of the disaster broke.

SYNONYMS: ongoing, endless, ceaseless, unbroken, constant, perpetual
ANTONYMS: broken, discontinuous, interrupted

4. distribute
(di stri' byüt)

(v.) to give out in shares; to scatter or spread

Our class will _____ leaflets announcing the school's fund-raising drive.

SYNONYMS: to divide, share, deal, issue
ANTONYMS: to gather, collect, hold



5. document
(dä' kyə mənt)

(n.) a written or printed record that gives information or proof

The librarian found the old _____ inside a book.

(v.) to give written or printed proof; to support with evidence

Writers often _____ their sources.

SYNONYMS: (n.) a certificate, deed; (v.) to prove, establish

**6. fragile**

(fra' jəl)

(adj.) easily broken or damaged, requiring special handling or care

The _____ antique was damaged during transit.

SYNONYMS: weak, frail, breakable, delicate, brittle, flimsy

ANTONYMS: sturdy, hardy, strong, rugged, tough

7. myth

(mith)

(n.) an old story that explains why something is or how it came to be; something imaginary

The play is based on an ancient Greek _____.

SYNONYMS: a legend, fable, tale, fantasy, fairy tale

ANTONYM: a fact

8. reject

(ri jekt')

(v.) to refuse to accept, agree to, believe, or use

Why did you _____ the offer?

SYNONYMS: to deny, discard, junk, scrap, decline, dismiss

ANTONYMS: to take, accept, receive, welcome

9. scuffle

(sku' fəl)

(v.) to fight or struggle closely with

A witness saw the two men _____ in an alley.

(n.) fight or struggle

Police officers were called in to break up the _____.

SYNONYMS: (v.) to tussle, roughhouse, battle, brawl; (n.) a fistfight, clash

10. solitary

(sä' lə ter ē)

(adj.) living or being alone; being the only one

The old man led a _____ life.

SYNONYMS: single, sole, lone

ANTONYMS: sociable; several, many, numerous

11. temporary

(tem' pə rer ē)

(adj.) lasting or used for a limited time

A blow to the head can cause a _____ loss of memory.

SYNONYMS: short-term, passing, brief, momentary

ANTONYMS: lasting, long-lived, permanent

12. veteran

(ve' tər ən)

(n.) a former member of the armed forces; an experienced person

The army _____ listened attentively.

(adj.) having much experience in some job or field

The actress will play a _____ reporter.

SYNONYMS: (adj.) expert, professional, experienced, skilled, accomplished

ANTONYMS: (n.) a beginner, newcomer, novice, rookie



Match the Meaning

For each item below, choose the word whose meaning is suggested by the clue given. Then write the word in the space provided.

1. A roommate you have for only a month is a _____ one.
a. continuous b. temporary c. fragile d. solitary
2. A black eye might be the result of a _____.
a. scuffle b. myth c. veteran d. blunder
3. To _____ your age you might show a birth certificate or a driver's license.
a. distribute b. document c. cancel d. reject
4. A person who lives alone in the woods might be described as _____.
a. continuous b. solitary c. temporary d. fragile
5. The idea that you will get warts from touching a frog is a _____.
a. blunder b. document c. scuffle d. myth
6. If I make a serious mistake, I commit a _____.
a. scuffle b. document c. myth d. blunder
7. A box containing an item that can be broken easily might be stamped "_____."
a. solitary b. temporary c. fragile d. continuous
8. A charity might _____ food to the homeless.
a. reject b. cancel c. scuffle d. distribute
9. Something that goes on without stopping is _____.
a. continuous b. temporary c. solitary d. fragile
10. To refuse a gift is to _____ it.
a. cancel b. scuffle c. distribute d. reject
11. A person who has a lot of experience at something is a _____.
a. blunder b. myth c. document d. veteran
12. If I call off a party, I _____ it.
a. scuffle b. blunder c. cancel d. reject



The dog and cat got into a **scuffle**.

Synonyms

For each item below, choose the word that is most nearly the **same** in meaning as the word or phrase in **boldface**. Then write your choice on the line provided.

1. a **constant** flow of traffic
a. fragile b. temporary c. continuous d. veteran _____
2. tried to hide the **blooper**
a. document b. myth c. blunder d. scuffle _____
3. not a **single** cent
a. temporary b. fragile c. solitary d. veteran _____
4. witnessed the **fight**
a. myth b. blunder c. document d. scuffle _____
5. very important **records**
a. veterans b. documents c. myths d. blunders _____
6. a collection of ancient **stories**
a. documents b. myths c. veterans d. blunders _____

Antonyms

For each item below, choose the word that is most nearly **opposite** in meaning to the word or phrase in **boldface**. Then write your choice on the line provided.

1. **renew** my subscription
a. cancel b. blunder c. scuffle d. distribute _____
2. **accept** the marriage proposal
a. scuffle b. reject c. blunder d. distribute _____
3. a **novice** mountain climber
a. temporary b. fragile c. continuous d. veteran _____
4. **collect** the homework sheets
a. reject b. document c. distribute d. cancel _____
5. a **sturdy** device
a. temporary b. solitary c. veteran d. fragile _____
6. a **permanent** filling
a. veteran b. continuous c. temporary d. solitary _____



Completing the Sentence

Choose the word from the box that best completes each item below. Then write the word in the space provided. (You may have to change the word's ending.)

blunder	cancel	continuous
distribute	document	fragile
myth	reject	scuffle
solitary	temporary	veteran

A Visit to a Museum

- Our class visited the museum on the last day of a(n) _____ exhibit of ancient Greek vases.
- Some of the vases were more than 2,000 years old. Because they were so old and _____, we weren't allowed to touch them.
- Security guards kept visitors a few feet from the display cases, so there was no chance that someone could _____ into them.
- The guide told us that the pictures painted on some of the vases were not of real people but characters from legends and _____.
- One picture showed a(n) _____ warrior fighting off a band of attackers.

A Famous Declaration

- In refusing to accept English rule, the writers of the Declaration of Independence _____ the claim that Parliament had sovereignty, or lawful power, over the American colonies.
- Those who supported the cause of American independence quickly printed and _____ copies of the Declaration throughout the thirteen colonies.
- The original _____, one of America's historic treasures, is now on view at the National Archives building in Washington, D.C.

On the Soccer Field

- Two days of _____ rain had turned the soccer field into a sea of mud and threatened to spoil the opening game of the season.
- Before the game began, a _____ broke out in the stands when a few home-team fans came to blows with those rooting for the visiting team.
- The referee threatened to _____ the game and send all of the fans home if order was not restored.
- Only when a handful of popular _____ from both teams asked the fans to behave themselves did they finally settle down and let the game get under way.



Word Associations

Circle the letter next to the word or expression that best completes the sentence or answers the question. Pay special attention to the word in **boldface**.

1. A person might emerge from a **scuffle**
 - a. with spaghetti and meatballs.
 - b. with scrapes and bruises.
 - c. with dollars and cents.
 - d. with hugs and kisses.
2. Someone who has **blundered** would
 - a. feel embarrassed.
 - b. be confident.
 - c. feel proud.
 - d. be rewarded.
3. A **solitary** tree would probably
 - a. have needles.
 - b. be chopped down.
 - c. change color in the fall.
 - d. stand alone.
4. A **continuous** loud noise might
 - a. be hard to hear.
 - b. stop and start.
 - c. be soothing.
 - d. be annoying.
5. Which of the following is a **document**?
 - a. an old friend
 - b. a telephone call
 - c. a marriage license
 - d. a good meal
6. If I **cancel** my piano lesson,
 - a. I don't go.
 - b. I play very well.
 - c. I repair the piano.
 - d. I arrive late.
7. A **temporary** problem is one that
 - a. lasts a long time.
 - b. goes away.
 - c. no one can solve.
 - d. anyone can solve.
8. In a **veteran's** closet you might find
 - a. a skateboard.
 - b. a party dress.
 - c. a box of marbles.
 - d. an old uniform.
9. When a teacher **distributes** a test
 - a. he or she grades it.
 - b. he or she loses it.
 - c. he or she passes it out.
 - d. he or she collects it.
10. Which of the following is usually **fragile**?
 - a. a hammer
 - b. a pair of scissors
 - c. a lightbulb
 - d. a padlock
11. Someone who has been **rejected**
 - a. might feel hurt,
 - b. might feel happy.
 - c. might get lost.
 - d. might get a cold.
12. Which is a creature of **myth**?
 - a. a rabbit
 - b. a giraffe
 - c. a duck
 - d. a dragon