Read the following passage, taking note of the **boldface** words and their contexts. These words are among those you will be studying in Unit 5. As you complete the exercises in this Unit, it may help to refer to the way the words are used below.

**Continue Space Exploration, Now!**

<Persuasive Speech>

The United States should continue to support an active program of space exploration. Opponents of such a policy have *blustered* that space exploration is a waste of resources. Why spend money on rockets, they argue, when desperate needs here on Earth are so *acute*? Billions of the planet's *inhabitants* struggle from day to day. The *numbing* curses of war, famine, and poverty cry out for attention and relief.

For all but the most stubborn and *headstrong*, however, this argument can be convincingly *refuted*. For the entire *duration* of the space program's existence—a little more than half a century—the budget of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has averaged under one percent of total federal annual expenditures. One must keep these numbers in perspective. In a country where appetites are often *ravenous*, Americans spend nearly twenty times more money at restaurants every year than the government spends on NASA! Even a brief *synopsis* of costs and budgets shows that space exploration does not account for major outlays.

But how about astronaut safety? Opponents in the *fray* over space policy point to the risks of human spaceflight. They argue that these risks justify an end to space exploration. It is true that the space shuttle disasters of 1986 and 2003 marked major *setbacks* for NASA. In over 50 years, however, only 18 people worldwide have died in spaceflights. This one *facet* of the debate over future policy certainly elicits strong emotions. Yet the vast majority of astronauts under go rigorous training. To *pacify* the critics, some have suggested that spaceflights should depend on robotics, which are
less costly and risky than manned flights. It may well be cheaper and safer to organize unmanned missions into space. Human intelligence and flexibility, though, will still be invaluable for many purposes. Astronauts, moreover, have served as powerful role models for generations of young people.

**Fidelity** to balance and fairness demands an evaluation of the numerous benefits derived from the space program so far. These include many advances in technology. What are some of these breakthroughs? Among them are satellites, microchips, and fuel cells. Take just one example. Satellites have vastly improved global communications. Better weather forecasts from satellites save lives. More accurate data make research on climate change possible. The demands and challenges of space exploration have meant that scientists and inventors can’t risk being complacent. Ever bolder objectives in space require ever more ingenious responses.

Finally, the most important reason to press on in space is psychological, not material. The writer and inventor Arthur C. Clarke won fame for his achievements in science and science fiction. In one essay, Clarke offered this insightful **commentary** on human nature. He said that civilization cannot exist without new frontiers and that people have a physical and spiritual need for them. Clarke was right. The fascination with the Apollo 11 moon landing of July 1969 swept the world. Humanity should continue to press forward in space. This effort is not so much to explore space’s **eerie** depths but rather to explore the soul and timeless aspirations of humans themselves.
Definitions

1. acute
   (ə kyūt′)
   (adj.) with a sharp point; keen and alert; sharp and severe; rising quickly to a high point and lasting for a short time
   One who is an __________________ observer of human nature may notice subtle changes in people's behavior.
   SYNONYMS: clever, penetrating
   ANTONYMS: blunted, mild, stupid, obtuse

2. bluster
   (blas′ tar)
   (v.) to talk or act in a noisy and threatening way; to blow in stormy gusts; (n.) speech that is loud and threatening
   When we saw harsh winds __________________ around our tent, we decided to change our plans for the weekend.
   Dad's manner is all __________________, but beneath it all, he's really a kind-hearted man.
   SYNONYMS: (v.) spout, rant, brag, swagger; (n.) bravado

3. bungle
   (bün′ gal)
   (v.) to act or work clumsily and awkwardly; to ruin something through clumsiness
   If we __________________ this project, we may never get another chance to prove ourselves as a worthy team.
   SYNONYMS: blunder, mess up

4. commentary
   (käm′ an ter e)
   (n.) a series of notes clarifying or explaining something; an expression of opinion
   Our spiritual leader gave us a __________________ on the true meaning of charity.
   SYNONYMS: explanation, narration, description, account, review, analysis

5. duration
   (dű rä′ shan)
   (n.) the length of time that something continues or lasts
   Even though the story was hard to follow, my friends decided to stay for the __________________ of the opera.

6. eerie
   (ē′ rē)
   (adj.) causing fear because of strangeness; weird, mysterious
   It is a lot of fun to tell __________________ ghost stories around a campfire.
   SYNONYMS: frightening, spooky, creepy
7. facet
(fas’ at)

(n.) one aspect or side of a subject or problem; one of the cut surfaces of a gem

One important ______________ of problem solving is to recognize when a solution makes no sense.

SYNONYMS: angle, characteristic, factor, element

8. fidelity
(fi del’ a tê)

(n.) the state of being faithful; accuracy in details, exactness

The ______________ of scratchy old records can’t match the clarity of CDs.

SYNONYMS: loyalty, faithfulness; ANTONYMS: disloyalty, treachery

9. fray
(frä)

(n.) a brawl, a noisy quarrel; (v.) to wear away by rubbing; make ragged or worn; to strain, irritate

After the two loudest students began arguing, the whole class jumped into the ______________.

A faucet that drips continuously can ______________ anyone’s nerves.

SYNONYMS: (n.) scuffle; (v.) unravel

10. headstrong
(hed’ strôŋ)

(adj.) willful, stubborn

Even the most patient caregiver may feel challenged when faced with a ______________ child.

SYNONYMS: obstinate, mulish, unruly
ANTONYMS: obedient, docile, submissive

11. inhabitant
(in hab’ a tant)

(n.) one living permanently in a given place

Although she enjoys traveling to exotic places, she’s a lifelong ______________ of this small town.

SYNONYMS: resident, native, tenant
ANTONYMS: stranger, outsider, visitor

12. numb
(nam)

(adj.) having lost the power of feeling or movement; (v.) to dull the feelings of; to cause to lose feeling

Bitter cold may leave your toes ______________.

This injection will ______________ the area so that the doctor can stitch the cut painlessly.

SYNONYMS: (adj.) unfeeling, insensible; (v.) deaden
ANTONYMS: (adj.) sensitive, alert

13. pacify
(pas’ a fi)

(v.) to make peaceful or calm; to soothe

The factory owners hope to ______________ the angry protesters with promises of higher wages.

SYNONYMS: mollify, placate
ANTONYMS: anger, arouse, stir up, foment, ignite
14. ravenous (rav'ə nas) 
(adj.) greedy; very hungry; eager for satisfaction
Exercising vigorously for several hours gives me a ______________ appetite.
SYNONYMS: starved, voracious, wolfish
ANTONYMS: not hungry, well-fed, satisfied

15. refute (ri fyút')
(v.) to prove incorrect
After analyzing the situation, I now know a foolproof way to ______________ the original claim.
SYNONYMS: disprove, rebut
ANTONYMS: prove, confirm, corroborate

16. remorse (ri mors')
(n.) deep and painful regret for one's past misdeeds; pangs of conscience
When the driver realized what a terrible accident he had caused, he was overcome with ______________.
SYNONYM: guilt
ANTONYMS: clear conscience, guiltlessness

17. setback (set' bak)
(n.) something that interferes with progress; a disappointment, unexpected loss or defeat; a step-like recession in a wall
A broken toe can be a major ______________ for a skater who hopes to qualify for the Olympics.
SYNONYMS: failure, reversal
ANTONYMS: advance, gain, progress, triumph

18. smug (smąg)
(adj.) overly self-satisfied, self-righteous
Just because he got the lead in the school play doesn't justify his irritating air of ______________ superiority.
SYNONYMS: conceited, complacent
ANTONYMS: discontented, disgruntled

19. synopsis (si náp' sis)
(n.) a brief statement giving a general view of some subject, book, etc.; a summary
The teacher's guide gives a ______________ of the plot of each story in the collection.
SYNONYMS: outline, digest, abstract

20. tarry (tar' e)
(v.) to delay leaving; to linger, wait; to remain or stay for a while
He will be tempted to ______________ longer if he thinks that this might be their last visit together.
SYNONYMS: dawdle, dally
ANTONYMS: rush, hasten, leave, depart
Choosing the Right Word

Select the boldface word that better completes each sentence. You might refer to the passage on pages 60–61 to see how most of these words are used in context.

1. The character Scrooge in Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* starts out as a(n) **(acute, ravenous)** miser, but he undergoes a great change of heart.

2. The bloodhound's **(numb, acute)** sense of smell led the trackers to the bank robber's hideout in record time.

3. When I realized how deeply I had hurt my dear friend with my careless insult, I suffered a terrible pang of **(remorse, duration)**.

4. With a winter storm **(blustering, bumbling)** outside, what could be more welcome than a warm room, a good meal, and my favorite TV program?

5. Since it had seemed that winter would **(tarry, pacify)** forever, we were all heartily glad when it finally quit dragging its heels and departed.

6. His **(headstrong, acute)** analysis of the housing problem in our town gave us a clear idea of what we would have to overcome.

7. Although I don't agree with all her ideas, I must admire her unshakable **(fidelity, synopsis)** to them.

8. We cannot assume that all the people one sees on the streets of a large city are actually **(facets, inhabitants)** of the place.

9. When the plane encountered turbulence, we had to remain seated with our seat belts fastened for the **(duration, synopsis)** of the flight.

10. The idea that most people usually behave in a calm and reasonable way is **(refuted, numbed)** by all the facts of history.

11. On the camping trip out West, some of the children were frightened when they first heard the **(smug, eerie)** howls of coyotes at night.

12. The victims of the disaster were so **(numbed, tarried)** by the scope of the tragedy that they scarcely showed any emotion at all.

13. I keep telling you things for your own good, but you're just too **(eerie, headstrong)** to listen.

14. Have you ever wondered if there is life on other planets and, if so, what the **(frays, inhabitants)** might look like?

15. We know that we are going through a period of economic instability, but there is no way of telling what its **(duration, remorse)** will be.
16. Maria's illness, after she had been chosen for the leading role in the class show, was a serious (setback, commentary) to our plans.

17. The lost hikers, having endured several days in the blistering sun, became discouraged after sighting (headstrong, ravenous) vultures circling overhead.

18. If you read no more than a(n) (inhabitant, synopsis) of the plot of any one of Shakespeare's plays, you will get very little idea of what it is all about.

19. "It's your job to help (pacify, fray) the conquered area," the general said, "not to add fuel to an already explosive situation."

20. There is so much wear and tear on the ropes in this pulley system that they become (frayed, refuted) in only a few days.

21. The fact that so many people are still living in poverty is indeed a sad (fidelity, commentary) on our civilization.

22. Each time she answered a question correctly, she rewarded herself with a (smug, ravenous) little smile of self-congratulation.

23. The strength of this book lies in the author's ability to describe and explain different (setbacks, facets) of human experience.

24. After the way you (bungled, blustered) the job of arranging the class trip, I can never again trust you with anything important.

25. My lawyer prepared to (bungle, refute) the outrageous accusations against me.

Synonyms

Choose the word from this Unit that is the same or most nearly the same in meaning as the boldface word or expression in the phrase. Write that word on the line. Use a dictionary if necessary.

1. reflected off the cuts of the diamond

2. shock that left them dazed and speechless

3. lip-smacking sounds of the famished eaters

4. to expect yet another holdup

5. should not loiter in the hall

6. after they botched the paint job

7. offer a brief summation of the movie

8. flashing that haughty grin of hers

9. tried to contradict her argument

10. no sense of shame for what happened
Antonyms

Choose the word from this Unit that is most nearly opposite in meaning to the **boldface** word or expression in the phrase. Write that word on the line. Use a dictionary if necessary.

1. needs to **hurry** to get ready

2. could never **support** their opinion

3. presenting a **modest** outlook

4. hopes to **succeed** at her job

5. maintains **peace of mind** despite his actions

Completing the Sentence

From the words in this Unit, choose the one that best completes each of the following sentences. Write the correct word form in the space provided.

1. I had a(n) ___________ feeling that we were being followed and that something bad might happen.

2. Although the rain was heavy, it was of such short ___________ that it didn’t interfere with our plans.

3. Because I ___________ at the book fair, I was ten minutes late for my piano lesson.

4. Warmth and understanding are two outstanding ___________ of her memorable personality.

5. His ___________ expression showed how highly he valued his own opinions and scorned the views of others.

6. The program contained a(n) ___________ of the opera, so we were able to follow the action even though the singing was in Italian.

7. Is it true that the ___________ of Maine are often called “Mainiacs”? 

8. No one can question her complete ___________ to basic American ideas and ideals.

9. After the dentist gave me an injection of novocaine, the whole side of my jaw and face turned ___________.

10. Some children are as docile as sheep; others are as ___________ as mules.
11. By ___________ in a loud, confident voice, he tried to convince us that he had nothing to do with the accident.

12. Our team suffered a tough _______________ when our best player was hurt in the first few minutes of play.

13. Anyone who has never had a sprained ankle will find it hard to imagine how _______________ the pain is.

14. Because of our inexperience and haste, we _______________ the little repair job so badly that it became necessary to replace the entire motor.

15. We had eaten only a light breakfast before hiking for hours in the crisp mountain air, so you can imagine how _______________ we were by lunchtime.

16. The newscaster on my favorite TV program not only tells the facts of the news but also offers a(n) _______________ that helps us to understand it.

17. Do you think it is a good idea to try to _______________ the weeping child by giving her a lollipop?

18. When my two sisters began their bitter quarrel, only Mother had enough nerve to enter the _______________ and tell them to stop.

19. Since the convicted felon had shown no _______________ for his crimes, the judge sentenced him to the maximum prison term allowed.

20. The accused person must be given every chance to _______________ the charges against him or her.

**Writing: Words in Action**

1. Look back at "Continue Space Exploration, Now!" (pages 60–61). What is your position on funding space exploration? Should the United States continue to spend federal money to support NASA? Write an editorial persuading your audience either to support or oppose funding space travel. Clearly state your position and use at least two details from the passage and three Unit words to support your claim.

2. A current argument states that privately held aerospace businesses, and not government agencies like NASA, should invest in and develop the spacecraft and new technologies that will transport people into space. What are the pros and cons of leaving space program development in the hands of private entrepreneurs and non-government-affiliated aerospace companies? Consider issues such as inspecting for safety, training, sharing of knowledge, and profit. Write a brief essay in which you support your opinion with specific examples, your studies, and the reading (refer to pages 60–61). Write at least three paragraphs, and use three or more words from this Unit.
1. There were several amazing forms, with heads reduced to microscopic proportions and blobby bodies . . . And oddest of all, as it seemed to me for the moment, two or three of these weird **inhabitants** of a subterranean world, a world sheltered by innumerable miles of rock from sun or rain, **carried umbrellas** in their tentaculate hands—real terrestrial-looking umbrellas!

**Inhabitants** are best described as
a. invaders          c. exiles
b. creatures         d. dwellers

2. He reminded me of mountain sickness, and of the bleeding that often afflicts aeronauts who have ascended too swiftly, and he spent some time in the preparation of a sickly tasting drink which he insisted on my sharing. It made me feel a little **numb**, but otherwise had no effect on me.

If someone’s senses are **numb**, they are
a. deadened          c. delicate
b. heightened        d. clear

3. We ate and presently drank like tramps in a soup kitchen. Never before nor since have I been hungry to the **ravenous** pitch, and save that I have had this very experience I could never have believed that . . . it would be possible for me to eat in utter forgetfulness of all these things.

A person who is **ravenous** is definitely NOT
a. famished          c. satiated
b. eager             d. alert

4. One imagines him about the moon with the **remorse** of this fatal indiscretion growing in his mind. During a certain time I am inclined to guess the Grand Lunar was deliberating the new situation.

To have **remorse** is to feel
a. demands          c. enthusiasm
b. regrets           d. irresponsibility

5. The outline of things had gained in character; had grown **acute** and varied; save for a shadowed space of white substance here and there . . . the arctic appearance had gone altogether.

Something that appears **acute** is
a. dull              c. sharp
b. peaceful          d. unruly