West End School Has Comestible Curriculum

Interviewer: Have you encountered any stumbling blocks so far?
Rosa: We develop tools and strategies for overcoming adverse conditions. Our climate isn’t extremely arid, but sometimes it’s pretty dry, so we practice water conservation by using rain barrels. Also, the first time we tried to make compost, it was unbelievably smelly. You have to get the ingredients and layers right. The second time, it turned out great. One of our teachers calls compost “black gold.”

Interviewer: Do you have a secret for attracting butterflies and bees to the garden?
Rosa: We grow flowers that draw beneficial insects. Honeybees pollinate our plants, but the bees are in trouble because of Colony Collapse Disorder, so we try to do our part. Since our gardens are organic, we would be hypocrites if we used pesticides, so we’re studying all-natural pest control. One raised bed has a koinobori, a Japanese fish kite that billows in the breeze and scares off scavengers.

Interviewer: What would you say to other schools or kids interested in the program?
Rosa: Confront obstacles and go for it! You may think one kid can’t do much to help the environment or change how people eat, but working in the Scrumptious Schoolyard has made me believe we can make a big difference.

Interviewer: Finally, I have to ask—do you really eat all the vegetables you’re growing? I thought kids were supposed to hate vegetables.
Rosa: There’s no way I’m going to eat turnips. But it’s good to try new things, according to my science teacher. We’re still waiting to see him try turnips!

The Scrumptious Schoolyard is a grassroots program that transforms concrete playgrounds into functional farmland. Part of the Scrumptious Schoolyard Project, it is the brainchild of contemporary food-education pioneer Clarissa Z. Ochoa. Students explore the connection between what they eat and where it comes from through hands-on organic gardening and cooking classes. The “comestible curriculum” encompasses math, science, history, geography, social studies, and more.

Interviewer: Rosa, you’re a sixth grade student gardener in the Scrumptious Schoolyard at T.D. Middle School in West End. Have you tried growing anything before?
Rosa: No, this is my first time, and now I have a green thumb. I might become a farmer or a chef, or both!

Interviewer: I heard that the Scrumptious Schoolyard concept was somewhat controversial in the beginning.
Rosa: It ruffled a few feathers. Some people were disinterested, while others were suspicious, depicting it as playing instead of learning. I think their complaints are groundless, and they really don’t know what they’re missing. It’s amazing to watch something grow from a tiny seed. It takes a lot of stamina and enthusiasm to keep the gardens growing, but everyone works together.

Interviewer: What are some favorite experiences and things you’ve learned?
Rosa: I was excited when the blossoms on the squash and pumpkins appeared. We made pumpkin pancakes and sautéed zucchini blossoms, so I actually cooked and ate a flower! Rule number one for gardeners is smart planning, and we need to get maximum use from our plot. Have you heard of companion planting? Plants are like people—some exist together better than others, so we manipulate the plants, materials, and space to get the best harvest. We also extend the natural growing seasons by mimicking Mother Nature with grow lights and mini-greenhouses.

One of the best parts of the Scrumptious Schoolyard program is eating what you’ve grown.
1. adverse (ad'vers'"

(adj.) unfavorable, negative; working against, hostile

Some people suffer an __________ reaction if they eat peanut butter or anything with peanuts.

SYNONYMS: difficult, trying
ANTONYMS: favorable, positive, helpful, beneficial

2. arid (a'rid)

(adj.) extremely dry; uninteresting, dull

Although California leads the nation in farming, crops won't grow in its most __________ regions.

SYNONYMS: waterless, parched, boring, unimaginative
ANTONYMS: waterlogged, soggy, fertile, lush

3. assailant (ə'sa'larnt)

(n.) a person who attacks violently (with blows or words)

The jogger was injured by an unknown __________ who left him immobile at the side of the road.

SYNONYMS: assaulter, mugger
ANTONYMS: victim, prey

4. billow (bil'ə)

(n.) a large wave; (v.) to rise or swell like a wave

The ocean __________ rose and fell, attracting the most daring surfers.

Fans cheered enthusiastically when they saw their team's flag __________ over the stadium.

SYNONYMS: (n.) breaker; (v.) surge, bulge, balloon
ANTONYMS: (n.) trough; (v.) deflate, collapse

5. confront (kan frant'"

(v.) to meet face-to-face, especially as a challenge; come to grips with

In court, defendants can __________ their accusers in a controlled setting.

SYNONYMS: face, encounter
ANTONYMS: avoid, evade, sidestep

6. constrain (kan stran'"

(v.) to force, compel; to restrain, hold back

You can't __________ me against my will.

SYNONYMS: pressure, confine, limit
ANTONYMS: loosen, liberate, unfetter, relax

7. contemporary (kan tem' pə rer'"

(adj.) belonging to the same period of time as oneself; (n.) a person of the same time

His novel used a __________ style but had a historical setting.

Rather than ask parents for help, teens often turn to a __________ for advice.

SYNONYMS: (adj.) present-day, modern, current; (n.) peer
ANTONYMS: (adj.) ancient, prehistoric, antique, antiquated

8. depict (di pikl'

(v.) to portray; to represent or show in the form of a picture

The painter chose to __________ a plain prairie landscape using bold colors and shadows.

SYNONYMS: sketch, draw, picture, illustrate

9. disinterested (dis in'trast id)

(adj.) fair-minded, free from selfish motives; indifferent

A judge must remain __________ in order to render an evenhanded and logical decision.

SYNONYMS: impartial, unbiased, apathetic
ANTONYMS: partial, biased, prejudiced

10. encompass (en kam' pas)

(v.) to encircle, go or reach around; to enclose; to include with a certain group or class

Oceans __________ about three-fourths of the surface of our planet.

SYNONYMS: surround, envelop, comprise
ANTONYMS: leave out, omit, exclude

11. groundless (graund' ləs)

(adj.) without any good reason or cause, unjustified

Kate's __________ fear of hurting herself during exercise has left her weak and out of shape.

SYNONYMS: baseless, unsupported
ANTONYMS: well-founded, reasonable, justified

12. hypocrite (hip'ə krit)

(n.) a person who pretends to be what he or she is not or better than he or she really is; a two-faced person

The speaker who said one thing but did something else entirely was regarded as a __________.

SYNONYMS: phony, charlatan, fraud

13. incomprehensible (in kəm prə hen' sa bal)

(adj.) impossible to understand

Our school's intercom system is so old that this morning's announcements were almost __________.

SYNONYMS: baffling, confusing, bewildering
ANTONYMS: understandable, plain, intelligible
14. manipulate
(me nip' yat)

15. maximum
(mak' sa man)

16. mimic
(mim' ik)

17. ruffle
(ref' al)

18. serene
(sa ren' )

19. sheepish
(shép' ish)

0. stamina
(stam' a na)

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Select the **boldface** word that better completes each sentence. You might refer to the passage on pages 22-23 to see how most of these words are used in context.

1. After many stormy years in the service of his country, George Washington retired to the (serene, adverse) life of his beloved Mount Vernon.

2. His decision not to accept our sincere offer of assistance is completely (disinterested, incomprehensible) to me.

3. We expected the lecture on the energy crisis to be exciting, but it turned out to be a(n) (ruffled, arid) rundown of well-known facts and figures.

4. After giving a few (sheepish, serene) excuses, the swimmers packed up and left the private beach.

5. Anyone who has ever sailed a small boat knows how thrilling it is to feel the spray in your face while the sails (bellow, encompass) overhead.

6. After the storm, residents were (constrained, depicted) to stay in their homes, as all roads were impassable.

7. The big-league shortstop (manipulates, constrains) his glove like a magician, shoring every ball hit with reach.

8. After living for many years in that roomy old farmhouse, I felt awfully (arid, constrained) in that small apartment.

9. While some find her smile comical, I have always found the Mona Lisa's smile to be (serene, sheepish) and mysterious.

10. If you (bellow, confront) your problems honestly and openly, instead of trying to hide them, you will have a better chance of solving them.

11. Do you think it would be a good idea to set a (maximum, contemporary) figure for the amount of homework any teacher is allowed to assign?

12. A good scientist must have a keen mind, an unquenchable curiosity, and a (groundless, disinterested) desire to discover the truth.

13. She has gained success as a writer who knows how to (confront, depict) in a lifelike way the hopes, fears, and problems of young people today.

14. She has many interesting ideas, but she seems to lack the physical and mental (stamina, assailant) to make good use of them.

15. The man was trying to (depict, manipulate) the young woman as a troublemaker.
16. My idea of a(n) (assailant, hypocrite) is a person who gives advice that he or she is not willing to follow.

17. The (adverse, sheepish) publicity that he received during the investigation was probably the cause of his defeat in the next election.

18. Instead of working so hard to (mimic, ruffle) popular TV stars, why don't you try to develop an acting style of your own?

19. It was (groundless, incomprehensible) to think that our grandparents had to spend sweltering summers without air-conditioning.

20. The science program in our school (depicts, encompasses) biology, chemistry, physics, earth science, and other related courses.

21. I didn't want to (ruffle, manipulate) the feelings of the hotel manager, but I felt that I had to complain about the miserable service.

22. Despite the fact that she was in shock, the victim gave a clear description of her (hypocrite, assailant).

23. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy were (contemporaries, mimics), born within a few years of each other.

24. What a relief to learn that my parents had been delayed by a storm, and that all my fears about an accident were (groundless, maximum)!

25. Report any (sheepish, adverse) side effects to your doctor immediately.

**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. possesses determination for the walkathon
2. the largest quantity available
3. always remembered the attacker's voice
4. able to replicate a bird's call
5. ran away with a humiliated look
6. confused by the child's puzzling behavior
7. mistreating of that impostor
8. a tranquil expanse of clear blue sky
9. tried to restrict the patient
10. to serve as a neutral witness

**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. exhibits a **confident** attitude
2. hopes to **release** the prisoner soon
3. trying to control his **stormy** emotions
4. protecting the **injured** party
5. rules that are quite **clear**

**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. As you become a more skillful driver, you will be able to ____________ all the controls of the car while keeping your eyes on the road.

2. This basic textbook ____________ all the information you will have to master for the entrance examination.

3. The jury found the defendant "not guilty" because they were convinced that the charges against her were ____________

4. You and Lucy will never settle your quarrel unless you ____________ each other directly and listen to what the other person has to say.

5. The brisk breeze caused the sheets on the line to ____________, like the sails on a yacht that is running with the wind.

6. Under the law, the ____________ number of people who may ride in this bus is seventy-five.

7. For a long time, I thought that he was a good and sincere person, but I finally saw that he was no more than a(n) ____________

8. I was so embarrassed by my blunder that I could do nothing but grin in a(n) ____________ and self-conscious way.

9. The hot, ____________ climate of Arizona is favorable for many people suffering from various diseases, such as arthritis.

10. Since Tom is both smart and ____________, I think he is just the person to decide which of us is right in this long and bitter quarrel.
11. The skyscraper is one of the best-known and widely admired forms of ______ architecture.

12. A breeze sprang up and began to ______ the smooth and tranquil surface of the water.

13. You talk so fast and in such a low tone of voice that you are going to be completely ______ to most people.

14. Although I may hurt your feelings, my conscience ______ me to tell you exactly what is on my mind.

15. Held back by ______ winds, the plane arrived at the airport two hours late.

16. Fortunately, I was able to fight off my ______, even though his attack took me by complete surprise.

17. Parrots and a few other kinds of birds can ______ sounds, particularly human speech.

18. The ______ expression on her face showed that she was totally undisturbed by the confusion and turmoil around her.

19. Using the entire east wall of the new post office building, the painter tried to ______ the founding of our city.

20. Very few starting pitchers have the ______ to pitch consistently well for nine innings.

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**Vocabulary In Context**

The following excerpts are from Leaves of Grass, a collection of poems by Walt Whitman. Some of the words you have studied in this Unit appear in **boldface** type. Complete each statement below the excerpt by circling the letter of the correct answer.

1. Thou ever-daring Globel through Space and Air!
Thou waters that ______ us!
Thou that in all the life and death of us, in action or in sleep!
Thou laws invisible that permeate them all,
Thou that in all, and over all, and through and under all, incessant!

   Waters that ______ the Globe
   a. cover it
   b. expose it
   c. widen it
   d. seep into it

2. Those that look carelessly in the faces of Presidents and governors, as to say Who are you?
Those of earth-born passion, simple, never ______,
Never obedient,
Those of inland America.

   Someone who is NOT ______ is
   a. controlled
   b. restricted
   c. free
   d. loyal

3. The mocking-bird, the American ______, singing all the forenoon,
   singing through the moon-lit night...
   A bird that is a ______ is a(n)
   a. originator
   b. traitor
   c. creator
   d. imitator

4. Far, far at sea,
   After the night's fierce drifte have strown the shore with wrecks,
   With re-appearing day as now so happy and ______.
   The rosy and elastic dawn, the flashing sun....

   A ______ day is one that is
   a. blistering
   b. soothing
   c. humid
   d. noisy

5. ....O to be self-balanced for contingencies,
   To ______ night, storms, hunger, ridicule, accidents, rebuffs, as the trees and animals do.
   To ______ something is to
   a. ignore it
   b. alert it
   c. tackle it
   d. support it

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**Writing: Words in Action**

1. Look back at "West End School Has Comestible Curriculum" (pages 22–23). Suppose you have been asked to speak to your classmates about starting a similar program at your school. You have to persuade them that a Scrumptious Schoolyard is a great idea. Write a speech using at least two details from the passage and three Unit words to support your position.

2. There is much discussion these days about eating healthy, organic foods. Some people associate healthy and organic diets with bland-tasting, expensive food and preparation that is too complicated and time-consuming. Can healthy foods be tasty? Do you think a healthy diet requires too much effort? Write a brief essay in which you support your opinion with specific examples, personal experience, and, if relevant, the reading (refer to pages 22–23). Write at least three paragraphs, and use three or more words from this Unit.

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Whitman, an American poet, wrote in a free-verse style that has influenced modern poetry.