

MAKING NEW WORDS YOUR OWN

Lesson 6 **CONTEXT: Literary Traditions and Beyond**

Borrowing from Tradition: The Star Wars Trilogy

One of the most popular film series of all times is George Lucas's space trilogy, commonly known as the Star Wars adventures. Each of these three films—*Star Wars* (1977), *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), and *Return of the Jedi* (1983)—attracted millions of viewers when first released in the theaters. Today, the films find new audiences through videotape, and millions more fall under the spell of Princess Leia, Luke Skywalker, Han Solo, and Chewbacca. One of the reasons the Star Wars saga is so popular is that it borrows the best elements from our storytelling heritage. In other words, it has the characteristics of our best epics, myths, legends, and romances.

In the following exercises, you will have the opportunity to expand your vocabulary by reading about the Star Wars series. Below are ten vocabulary words that will be used in these exercises.

- | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|----------|-------|--------------|
| arrogance | frivolous | seethe | smug | unscrupulous |
| docile | kindle | sinister | spurn | yearn |

EXERCISE 1 *Mapping*

Directions. In the item below, a vocabulary word is provided and used in a sentence. Take a guess at the word's meaning and write it in the box labeled **Your Guess**. Then look the word up in your dictionary and write the definition in the box labeled **Definition**. In the **Other Forms** box, write as many other forms of the word, such as adjective and noun forms, as you can think of or find in your dictionary.

Then, following the same procedure, draw your own map for each of the nine remaining vocabulary words. Use a separate sheet of paper.

1.

arrogance

→

Arrogance often leads to disaster for characters in the Star Wars trilogy. Even in fantasy and fiction, it seems that pride goes before a fall.

↓

Your Guess:

↓

Other Forms:

←

Definition:

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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.

COLUMN A

- _____ 11. word: _____
adj. gentle; easy to manage; obedient
- _____ 12. word: _____
adj. threatening trouble or bad luck; evil; disastrous
- _____ 13. word: _____
adj. dishonest; having no principles of right and wrong
- _____ 14. word: _____
v. to boil; to bubble and foam; to be excited or disturbed
- _____ 15. word: _____
n. overbearing pride; a lack of regard for others
- _____ 16. word: _____
v. to long for or desire
- _____ 17. word: _____
v. to ignite; to arouse or excite; to set on fire
- _____ 18. word: _____
v. to turn down; to reject with scorn and contempt
- _____ 19. word: _____
adj. overly satisfied with one's own goodness or achievements; self-satisfied
- _____ 20. word: _____
adj. silly; unimportant

COLUMN B

- (A) When Luke Skywalker finds a robot that belongs to Ben Kenobi, it **kindles** his uncle's anger because his uncle hates to be reminded of Kenobi.
- (B) At first, Han Solo tends to treat Princess Leia as if she were a **frivolous** young girl. He does not realize the serious role she plays in galactic affairs.
- (C) Darth Vader shows his **arrogance** when he decides to battle Ben Kenobi; in his pride, he believes that he can master the Force as well as Kenobi can.
- (D) A **smug** C3PO makes fun of R2D2 for being foolish. C3PO is so sure of his own superiority that he can't believe that the little robot has been chosen over him for an important mission.
- (E) After her rescue, Princess Leia **spurns** Luke, who is surprised by her rejection.
- (F) The governor **seethes** with fury when he realizes that Leia has lied, and he argues that she should be executed.
- (G) To rescue the princess, Luke devises a scheme that involves putting handcuffs on Chewbacca. At first the furry creature roars his displeasure. But after Han explains that it's part of the plan, Chewbacca becomes **docile**.
- (H) Clad entirely in black, Darth Vader is a **sinister** figure. Part human and part machine, Vader's headgear produces strange and frightening noises.
- (I) Tarkin promises not to destroy Princess Leia's home planet, but this **unscrupulous** man goes back on his word.
- (J) Han Solo can't seem to escape the trouble caused by his past deeds; he **yearns** to be free of his association with the criminal element.

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. Darth Vader _____ to crush the rebels. He longs to help the emperor gain control.
 (A) seethes
 (B) spurns
 (C) kindles
 (D) yearns
 (E) hesitates
22. Because of his _____, Han Solo can seem _____ and self-satisfied.
 (A) arrogance . . . smug
 (B) arrogance . . . docile
 (C) arrogance . . . sinister
 (D) seethe . . . frivolous
 (E) spurn . . . unscrupulous
23. Being together in close quarters helps to _____ a romance between Han and Leia, and their attraction to one another soon becomes clear.
 (A) seethe
 (B) spurn
 (C) yearn
 (D) kindle
 (E) discourage
24. C-3PO can seem _____ because he is concerned with _____ matters, such as appearances, even in the face of danger.
 (A) destructive . . . docile
 (B) sinister . . . smug
 (C) docile . . . unscrupulous
 (D) smug . . . frivolous
 (E) frivolous . . . unimportant
25. Because of their _____, the Storm Troopers assume that any female will be _____, but Princess Leia protects herself with a laser.
 (A) arrogance . . . unscrupulous
 (B) docility . . . sinister
 (C) arrogance . . . docile
 (D) yearning . . . frivolous
 (E) docility . . . smug
26. Although Han Solo sometimes seems _____ in his dealings, he never seems _____. And in the end, he shows that he is actually a person with high standards and values.
 (A) unscrupulous . . . sinister
 (B) smug . . . frivolous
 (C) frivolous . . . docile
 (D) unscrupulous . . . docile
 (E) sinister . . . frivolous
27. Han Solo _____ with anger when Princess Leia orders him around after her rescue.
 (A) rejoices
 (B) seethes
 (C) spurns
 (D) yearns
 (E) rejects
28. On the Death Star, Ben Kenobi _____ Luke's request to accompany him on his quest. He knows Luke's destiny is to follow a different path.
 (A) seethes
 (B) spurns
 (C) yearns
 (D) kindles
 (E) embraces
29. Darth Vader is _____ as he chases Luke down the Death Star trenches, for he is completely sure that he will be able to destroy Luke and crush the rebels' chances for victory.
 (A) docile
 (B) sinister
 (C) unscrupulous
 (D) smug
 (E) sinister
30. The Force, which plays an important role in the Star Wars saga, has two sides; it may be used for good causes but it may also be used for _____ purposes.
 (A) docile
 (B) frivolous
 (C) sinister
 (D) smug
 (E) kindle

