

Name _____

Date _____

Vocabulary: Lesson 8

from "Letter Regarding Thomas Jefferson" by John Adams

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1. **convenient** (*adj.*)- appropriate for the circumstances; suitable
 2. **deceive** (*v.*)- to mislead; to misguide
 3. **decisive** (*adj.*)- strong-minded; firm; strong-willed
 4. **explicit** (*adj.*)- easily understandable; clear
 5. **felicity** (*n.*)- eloquence; fluency
 6. **frank** (*adj.*)- blunt; open; honest
 7. **inquire** (*v.*)- to ask; to query; to question
 8. **obnoxious** (*adj.*)- highly offensive; unpleasant
 9. **reputation** (*n.*)- the widespread belief about a person; status; renown
 10. **tone** (*n.*)- mood or attitude, particularly of a piece of writing; manner

Exercise 2: Using Vocabulary in Context

Select **five** weekly vocabulary words to use in your own sentences. You must utilize each sentence pattern at least once (simple, complex, compound, compound-complex).

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

LESSON 8

from **Letter Regarding Thomas Jefferson** (letter)
by John Adams

You **inquire** why so young a man as Mr. Jefferson was placed at the head of the Committee for preparing a Declaration of Independence, I answer; It was the Frankfort advice, to place a Virginian at the head of every thing. Mr. Richard Henry Lee, might be gone to Virginia, to his sick family, for aught I know, but that was not the reason of Mr. Jefferson's appointment. There were three committees appointed at the same time. One for the Declaration of Independence, another for preparing articles of Confederation, and another for preparing a treaty to be proposed to France. Mr. Lee was chosen for the Committee Confederation, and it was not thought **convenient** that the same person should be upon both. Mr. Jefferson came into Congress, in June, 1775, and brought with him a **reputation** for literature, science, and a happy talent of composition. Writings of his were handed about, remarkable for the peculiar **felicity** of expression. Though a silent member in Congress, he was so prompt, **frank**, **explicit**, and **decisive** upon committees and in conversation, not even Samuel Adams was more so, that he soon seized upon my heart; and upon this occasion I gave him my vote, and did all in my power to procure the votes of others. I think he had one more vote than any other, and that placed him at the head of the committee. I had the next highest number, and that placed me the second. The committee met, discussed the subject, and then appointed Mr. Jefferson and me to make the [draft], I suppose because we were the two first on the list.

The sub-committee met. Jefferson proposed to me to make the [draft] I said, "I will not." "You should do it." "Oh! no." "Why will you not? You ought do it." "I will not." "Why?" "Reasons enough." "What can be your reasons?" "Reason first—You are a Virginian, and a Virginian ought to appear at the head of this business. Reason second—I am **obnoxious**, suspected, and unpopular. You are much otherwise. Reason third—You can write ten times better than I can." "Well," said Jefferson, "if you are decided, I will do as well as I can." "Very well. When you have drawn it up, we will have a meeting."

A meeting we accordingly had, and [I looked] the paper over. I was delighted with its high **tone** and the flights of oratory with which it abounded, especially that concerning negro slavery, which, though I knew his Southern brethren would never suffer to pass in Congress, I certainly never would oppose. There were other expressions which I would not have inserted, if I had drawn it, particularly that which called the King a tyrant. I thought this too personal. I never believed George to be a tyrant in disposition and in nature; I always believed him to be **deceived** by his courtiers on both sides of the Atlantic, and in his official capacity only, cruel.

Your friend and humble servant,

John Adams

Exercise 1: Context Clues

Read the passage above, paying special attention to the words in dark type. These are the Master Words you will study in this lesson. As you read, look for context clues in the sentences and paragraphs around each Master Word. Circle any words and phrases that give clues to the meaning of the Master Words.

| Master Words | | | | |
|---|----------|----------|-----------|------------|
| Place a check by words you feel you know; underline words you don't know. | | | | |
| convenient | decisive | felicity | inquire | reputation |
| deceive | explicit | frank | obnoxious | tone |

Exercise 3: Synonyms and Antonyms

Use the synonyms and antonyms in the word list to fill in the blanks except where you see an X.

| | Synonyms | Antonyms |
|----------------------|----------|----------|
| 1. inquire | _____ | X |
| 2. convenient | _____ | _____ |
| 3. reputation | _____ | X |
| 4. felicity | _____ | _____ |
| 5. frank | _____ | _____ |
| 6. explicit | _____ | _____ |
| 7. decisive | _____ | _____ |
| 8. obnoxious | _____ | _____ |
| 9. tone | _____ | X |
| 10. deceive | _____ | X |

| Word List | |
|---------------|------------------|
| ambiguous | inarticulateness |
| ask | mislead |
| attitude | offensive |
| clear | open |
| firm | pleasant |
| fluency | reserved |
| hesitant | suitable |
| inappropriate | status |

Exercise 4: Sentence Completion

From the Master Words, choose the appropriate word for the blank in each of the following sentences. Write the word in the space provided at the right.

- I called the hospital to ...?... about Jan's condition after her surgery. _____
- My best friend and I had a ...?... discussion to resolve our disagreement. _____
- The library is (a, an) ...?... location to hold a book club meeting. _____
- Lauren was ...?... in her belief that eating lots of junk food was harmless. _____
- Bill reads stories with a humorous ...?... when he wants to relax. _____
- Our debate team has (a, an) ...?... for presenting strong arguments. _____
- After her research, Tami was ...?... about the college she wanted to attend. _____
- I think people who keep their cell phones on during a movie are ...?... . _____
- José has a way with words; he is known for the ...?... of the writing on his blog. _____
- Mia made her vacation request very ...?... so there would be no misunderstanding with her boss. _____

• • Exercise 5: Using Words with Multiple Meanings

The word **tone** has different meanings depending on how it is used in a sentence. Choose the number of the correct definition for *tone* for each of the following sentences.

| tone |
|-------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>n.</i> vocal or musical sound |
| 2. <i>n.</i> a shade of color |
| 3. <i>n.</i> manner of expression |
| 4. <i>n.</i> author's attitude |
| 5. <i>v.</i> to strengthen |

1. Alexis was redoing her room in various **tones** of blue. _____
2. Chloe regularly worked out with weights to **tone** the muscles in her arm. _____
3. People spoke in hushed **tones** at the funeral. _____
4. The historic violin had a rich, full **tone**. _____
5. The regretful **tone** used throughout the memoir made it rather sad to read. _____

• • Exercise 6: Related Words and Meanings

The italic words in the sentences are related to the Master Words. Write the matching synonym from the list on the line following the sentence.

decisive frank obnoxious deceived inquire

1. Many voters were *misled* by the questions in the political debate. _____
2. The negative ads in the campaign were *highly offensive* to many people. _____
3. The politician gave surprisingly *blunt* answers to the tough questions. _____
4. The reporter wanted to *ask* about the campaign's finances. _____
5. The voters appreciated the mayor's *strong-minded* actions on difficult financial matters. _____