

Just as things may be built, born, or grown, they can also be spoiled or destroyed. Some destruction actually has a positive effect. For example, certain medicines kill germs that cause disease. Destruction also can have a negative effect. Heavy rains or flooding may wash away the soil needed for planting crops.

Each word in this lesson deals with a slightly different sense of destruction. By learning the definitions, you will increase your ability to understand many aspects of this topic.

WORD LIST

annihilate
contaminate
corrode
deplete
deteriorate
dismantle
extinct
negate
rancid
squander

DEFINITIONS

After you have studied the definitions and example for each word, write the vocabulary word on the line to the right.

1. **annihilate** (ə-nī'ə-lāt') *verb* To destroy completely; to abolish. (From the Latin *ad-*, meaning "to," and *nihil*, meaning "nothing")

Related Word **annihilation** *noun*

Example A volcanic eruption *annihilated* the population of ancient Pompeii.

1. _____

2. **contaminate** (kən-tām'ə-nāt') *verb* To make impure by contact or mixture; to taint or pollute.

Related Word **contamination** *noun*

Example Bacteria *contaminated* the medicine, making it dangerous to use.

2. _____

3. **corrode** (kə-rōd') *verb* a. To wear away or dissolve through chemical action. b. To be eaten away or worn away: *Iron corrodes and produces rust.* (From the Latin word *corrodere*, meaning "to gnaw away")

Related Words **corrosion** *noun*; **corrosive** *adjective*

Example Acid will *corrode* brass.

3. _____

4. **deplete** (dī-plēt') *verb* To use up or reduce in quantity or amount. (From the Latin word *deplere*, meaning "to empty")

Related Word **depletion** *noun*

Example Too many expensive activities have *depleted* our club's treasury.

4. _____

USAGE NOTE: A related adjective is *replete*, which means "abundantly supplied"—filled to overflowing, in other words. See also *deteriorate*.

5. **deteriorate** (dĭ-tĭr'ē-ə-rāt') *verb* To become worse; to decrease in quality or value. (From the Latin word *deterior*, meaning "worse")

Related Word *deterioration noun*

Example Dancers' flexibility and agility may *deteriorate* unless they exercise regularly.

5. **MEMORY CUE:** Note that *deteriorate* involves decreasing quality but *deplete* involves reducing quantity.

6. **dismantle** (dĭs-măn'tl) *verb* To take apart or tear down; to reduce to pieces.

Example Alex purchased a special bicycle that he could *dismantle* and store easily.

6. **USAGE NOTE:** *Mantle* is not an antonym for *dismantle*; *mantle* means "cover or conceal."

7. **extinct** (ĭk-stĭngkt') *adjective* No longer existing or living; *an extinct plant species*. (From the Latin word *extinctus*, meaning "extinguished")

Related Word *extinction noun*

Example Short-eared owls may soon become *extinct* unless steps are taken to protect them.

7. _____

8. **negate** (nĭ-gāt') *verb* a. To make ineffective or worthless. b. To rule out or deny. (From the Latin word *negare*, meaning "to deny")

Related Word *negation noun*

Example His smile *negated* the effect of the scolding he gave his son.

8. _____

9. **rancid** (răn'sĭd) *adjective* Smelling or tasting like spoiled oils or fats. (From the Latin word *rancere*, meaning "to stink")

Related Word *rancidness noun*

Example Before refrigeration, people used salt to prevent meat from becoming *rancid*.

9. _____

10. **squander** (skwŏn'dər) *verb* To waste; to spend uselessly.

Related Word *squanderer noun*

Example Jed *squandered* his money on comic books.

10. _____

NAME _____

DATE _____

EXERCISE 1 COMPLETING DEFINITIONS

On the answer line, write the word from the vocabulary list that best completes each definition.

1. To waste or spend uselessly is to _____.
2. To destroy completely is to _____.
3. Something that smells or tastes like spoiled oils or fats is probably _____.
4. To make impure by contact or mixture is to _____.
5. To make ineffective or to deny is to _____.
6. To wear away or dissolve through chemical action is to _____.
7. To be no longer existing or living is to be _____.
8. To use up or reduce in quantity is to _____.
9. To take apart or tear down is to _____.
10. To become worse or to decline in quality is to _____.

EXERCISE 2 USING WORDS CORRECTLY

Each of the following statements contains an italicized vocabulary word. Decide the answer to the question, and write *Yes* or *No* on the answer line.

1. Would *contaminated* milk be good to drink?
2. If you *dismantled* a piece of furniture to move it, would you completely destroy it?
3. Would most parents want their children to *squander* money?
4. Would a restaurant whose service has *deteriorated* probably lose customers?
5. If a refrigerator has a *rancid* odor, should someone clean it out quickly?
6. Has a disaster ever *annihilated* a whole town?
7. If animals and plants are in danger of *extinction*, might they cease to exist?
8. Will careful watering and weeding *negate* a person's attempts to grow vegetables?
9. If the stock in a supermarket has been *depleted*, are the shelves filled to capacity?
10. If the fender of a car has *corroded*, has it begun to show signs of rust?

CHOOSING THE BEST WORD

Decide which vocabulary word best completes the sentence, and write the letter of that word on the answer line.

1. If you leave an iron object out in the rain, it will _____.
a. corrode b. deplete c. negate d. dismantle
2. In *Poor Richard's Almanac*, Benjamin Franklin advised his readers not to _____ time, "for that's the stuff life is made of."
a. dismantle b. corrode c. squander d. negate
3. Even though their supplies were quickly _____, the Texans holding the Alamo refused to surrender.
a. depleted b. dismantled c. extinct d. deteriorated
4. Such materials as cloth and leather can _____ so much over time that they fall apart.
a. contaminate b. negate c. deteriorate d. extinct
5. Thousands of species of plants have become _____ through the ages.
a. corroded b. rancid c. negated d. extinct
6. Meat should be refrigerated so that it will not become _____.
a. extinct b. rancid c. corroded d. negated
7. Chemical sprays may help to _____ mosquitoes in swampy areas.
a. corrode b. dismantle c. squander d. annihilate
8. Laws have been passed to prevent the chemical dumping that has _____ our water.
a. corroded b. contaminated c. negated d. dismantled
9. An antidote is something that can _____ the effects of a poison and thus save the victim.
a. contaminate b. deplete c. negate d. corrode
10. London Bridge once crossed the Thames River, but in 1968 it was _____ and moved to Lake Havasu City in Arizona.
a. corroded b. depleted c. dismantled d. deteriorated

EXERCISE USING DIFFERENT FORMS OF WORDS

Decide which form of the vocabulary word in parentheses best completes the sentence. The form given may be correct. Write your answer on the answer line.

1. Air pollution has a _____ effect on buildings and statues. (*corrode*)
2. "My opponent, if elected, will be a _____ of city funds," declared the mayoral candidate. (*squander*)
3. _____ may result if foods are not properly refrigerated. (*rancid*)
4. Rob was reading a science-fiction book about a space colony that escaped _____ by a band of warriors. (*annihilate*)
5. A decrease in the number of American bald eagles has increased the concern about their _____. (*extinct*)

NAME _____

DATE _____

6. The _____ of natural resources like coal and gas may cause an increase in some home-fuel costs. (*deplete*)
7. Last year's budget cuts resulted in the _____ of our school's athletic program. (*dismantle*)
8. The discovery that some students unknowingly had voted twice caused the _____ of the school election results. (*negate*)
9. Red tide, which is an overabundance of tiny plantlike animals in the ocean, caused the _____ of shellfish. (*contaminate*)
10. Many museums have climate-controlled rooms to prevent _____ of their art treasures. (*deteriorate*)

READING COMPREHENSION