

The Emperor's New Vestments

Words You Will Meet:

despotic
narcissistic
exigencies

autocratic
garb
mundane

Paragraph 1:

Once upon a time, there lived a *despotic* and *autocratic* Emperor who had a *narcissistic* streak a mile wide. So taken was he with symbolic *garb* that he scarcely had time to tend to the *exigencies* of the *mundane* tasks of running a kingdom.

Learn and Remember:

***Vestments* is a formal, literary and archaic word meaning *clothing*.** We say *vestments* instead of *clothing* when referring to ceremonial robes, headdresses, and other symbolic *garb*. What are some occasions when vestments are worn?

***Despotic* and *autocratic* both mean *ruling like a monarch; domineering; bossy; tyrannical*.** In history class, you will learn about the *benevolent despots* of the Age of Enlightenment, who ruled less autocratically. Who was one of the benevolent despots?

***Narcissistic* means *self-infatuated, loving oneself (especially one's appearance) excessively, extremely egotistical*.** A narcissistic person is a narcissist. This word comes from Greek mythology: Narcissus was an egotistical young man who liked to admire himself in the water's reflection. He was turned into a flower (called the narcissus) which grows by the waterside. What is the story of Narcissus and Echo?

***Exigencies* are *pressing needs, chores, demands*.** Another word for *exigencies* is *vicissitudes*. What are the vicissitudes of running a kingdom?

***Mundane* means *ordinary, everyday, unexciting*.** In French, the word *la monde* means world. Thus, *mundane* means *of the world, or ordinary*. What is the word for *world* in Spanish? Italian?

Practice

1. Would a candidate for the Presidency of the United States boast that she intended to be autocratic?
2. Would a narcissistic person carry a mirror in her purse?
3. Would you want to hire a person who paid attention to daily exigencies?
- 4: What kind of garb would you wear to your graduation from college?
5. Would travel agencies feature brochures of mundane places?
6. When your mother picks up your socks from the bathroom floor, is she doing something that is *autocratic*, *narcissistic*, or *mundane*?
7. Would you consider doing homework one of the *exigencies* of your life?
8. Sylvia is searching for Mr. Wonderful in the personal ads. Would any of the words in this section attract her?
9. Father Joseph is donning his vestments for Saturday evening mass. What do you picture him doing?

Picture the Words:

Draw a picture of:

Audrey the Autocrat	Dave the Despot
Norman the Narcissist	Vincent the Vestment Vendor

Paragraph 2:

Words You Will Meet:

duplicitous
exploit
dupe
asserted
imperceptible
obtuse

haberdashers
astute
scam
fabricate
knavish

One day, two *duplicitous haberdashers* sought to *exploit* the Emperor's vanity. They were *astute* enough to *dupe* the Emperor with the following *scam*: They *asserted* that they could *fabricate* a cloth which would be *imperceptible* to the *knavish* and the *obtuse*.

Learn and Remember:

***Duplicitous* means *tricky; deceitful*.** This word is related to *double*. What are expressions that use the word *double* (or *two*) to refer to deceitful behavior?

A *haberdasher* is an archaic word referring to a person who sells men's clothing. What former President of the United States was a haberdasher? Some other archaic words for makers/sellers of clothing are milliner, cobbler, and hosier. What articles of clothing are these people associated with?

To *exploit* is to *take unfair advantage of*. What aspect(s) of the Emperor's personality make him vulnerable to exploitation? What aspects of his subjects make them vulnerable to exploitation? What is the relationship between *duplicitous* and *exploitation*?

***Astute* means *shrewd*.** What do the haberdashers do that makes them *astute*? What are some synonyms and antonyms for *astute*?

To *dupe* is to *trick*. This is the verb form of *duplicitous*. The noun form is *duplicity*. Make a sentence that contains *dupe*, *duplicitous*, and *duplicity*.

A *scam* is a *con game*. Think of a movie, Greek myth, or other story that is based on a scam.

***Asserted* means *claimed*.** What are other words that have the Latin root *sert*? Considering these words, what is your educated guess as to the meaning of this root?

To *fabricate* is to *make*, but this word is often used to mean *to lie*, as in, *to make up a story*. Another word for this is *prevaricate*. *Prevaricate* could not be used in place of *fabricate* in this context. What is at least one synonym for *fabricate* in this context?

Imperceptible means incapable of being perceived. What would be the corresponding form of the words *believe* and *conceive*?

Knave is an archaic word meaning disreputable, unworthy, low class. The noun form is *knave*. What words do we use today to express this concept?

Obtuse means stupid. What word on this list is its opposite?

Denounced means publicly accused. Its Latin root is *noun*. What other words have this root? Considering these words, what is your educated guess as to the meaning of this root? The noun form is *denunciation*. What are the noun forms of the other words having the same root? Notice what happens to the spelling of these nouns.

Practice

10. What are the stores in your local mall which employ haberdashers?
11. Give an example of something which is almost imperceptible?
12. Would a duplicitous person exploit your gullibility?
13. Would you be likely to fall for a scam if you were astute?
14. Would a knave try to exploit your misfortunes by scamming you?
15. A knavish trickster has been discovered perpetrating a scam on unsuspecting investors. Should she be denounced?

Picture the Words:

Draw a picture of:

What a haberdasher sells	What a milliner sells	What a hosier sells:

Paragraph 3:

Words You Will Meet:

charlatans
lucrative
entourage
sycophants

ruse
affectations
fawning
extolled

Not wishing to appear knavish or obtuse, the Emperor subcontracted these two *charlatans* and they began “spinning” their bogus cloth. Their *ruse* proved *lucrative* because of the *affectations* of the Emperor and his *entourage* of *fawning sycophants* who, not wishing to appear knavish or obtuse, *extolled* the invisible thread.

Learn and Remember:

Charlatans are frauds; impostors; quacks; mountebanks. What would you ask a person to show you to prove that she was not a charlatan?

A *ruse* is a *scam*. (see above)

Lucrative means profitable. In Biblical times, money was referred to as *lucre*. What are some *lucrative*, and not-so-lucrative, ways to make money?

Affectations are insincere posturings; grand and obvious gestures of one’s high opinion of oneself. What do you picture the Emperor doing as he dons his “new vestments”?

An entourage is a train of admirers and/or protectors. What kinds of people travel with an entourage?

Fawning means acting overly fond and attentive. What would the fawning behavior of the Emperor’s entourage be doing?

Sycophants are fawning admirers. Sycophants are also called *yes-men*. What kinds of people have sycophants around them?

Extolled means praised. A synonym for *extolled* is *lauded*. How are the words *fawning*, *sycophants*, and *extolled* related?

Practice

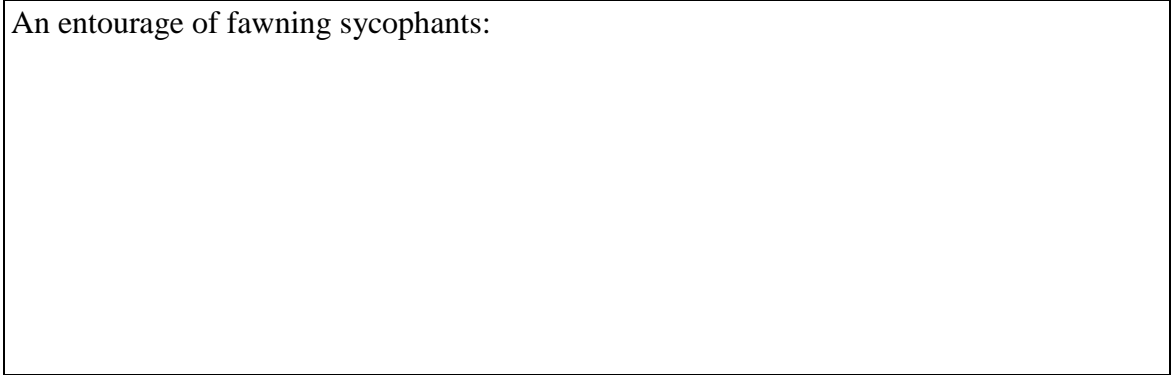
16. Would an entourage travel in a motorcade?

17. Would you extol the qualities of a person whom you denounce?
18. Would an autocrat have an *entourage*?
19. Would you call a person *obtuse* if you intended to *fawn* over him?
20. Does a *charlatan* deserve to be extolled?
21. Is a *ruse* ruined if it is recognized by its intended victims?
22. Is a *scam* successful if it turns out to be *lucrative*?

Picture The Words

Draw a picture of:

An entourage of fawning sycophants:



Paragraph 4:

Words You Will Meet:

pretentious
mantle
arrayed
lauding
disingenuous

don
resplendently
entourage
vestments

At last came the day when the *pretentious* Emperor was to *don* the *mantle*. There he was, *resplendently arrayed* in his underwear, the *entourage* of fawning sycophants *lauding* his new *vestments* with *disingenuous* praise.

Learn and Remember:

***Pretentious* means *showy; pretending to be intellectual or excessively classy*.** What are some situations where you've seen someone be pretentious?

To *don* is to put on an article of clothing. The opposite of *don* (put on) is *doff* (take off). The word *don* is usually used to refer to ritualistic or formal clothing. What are the items that an Emperor would don?

A *mantle* is a ceremonial coat, robe, or jacket that bespeaks a particular title. What kinds of people are said to *don the mantle*?

***Resplendently* means *magnificently; splendidly*.** What characteristics would a mansion have in order to be *resplendent*?

***Arrayed* means *decorated; ornamented; costumed; trimmed; bedecked; embellished; adorned*.** When we refer to the White House as *resplendently arrayed* for the Christmas ball, what are some of the details that we picture?

***Lauding*: see *extolled*.** (Note: this word is related to *applaud*. Other related words are *laudatory*, *laudable*, *laud*)

***Disingenuous* means *insincere*.** *Ingenuous* means *sincere; genuine*. What other words on our list so far have to do with insincerity?

Practice

23. Are disingenuous practices laudable?
24. Does a charlatan engage in disingenuous practices?
25. When someone dons the mantle of the champion, are they likely to be in public?
26. Would you describe yourself as being resplendently arrayed today?
27. Is a pretentious person being ingenuous?
28. Is the description of the Emperor as being resplendently arrayed in his underwear ironic?
29. If praise is disingenuous, does the praiser mean it?

Picture the Words:

Draw a picture of:

The Emperor donning the mantle (as if it were a real mantle).



Paragraph 5:

Words You Will Meet:

mountebanks

grandiosity

bedecked

pomp and circumstance

vanguard

ludicrousness

temerity

revelations

gelatinous

imperiously

oblivious

It was then that the *mountebanks* had the *temerity* to suggest that the Emperor parade before his subjects to ceremoniously present his new robes. So taken was he with his own *grandiosity* that he arranged for the public *revelation* of himself. Well, there he was, *bedecked* only by his own layers of *gelatinous*, dimpled, sagging, hairy flesh, with *pomp and circumstance*. He strutted *imperiously* in the *vanguard* of the parade in his own honor, *oblivious* to the *ludicrousness* of his appearance.

Learn and Remember

Mountebanks: see *charlatans*

Temerity is *excessiveness boldness, effrontery, rudeness*. People show temerity by barging in on rooms and conversations, by making undue demands, and by calling attention to themselves in inappropriate ways. How does the Emperor's parade indicate temerity?

Grandiosity is an **exaggerated sense of importance**. The nursery school graduation had pretensions to grandiosity. What details do you picture?

A revelation is an **important display of something new**. Revelation is related to reveal. A divine revelation is the presentation of the word or law of God. What is an example of a revelation, according to pre-Christian religions?

Bedecked: see *arrayed*.

Gelatinous means **having a gelled consistency**. What foods are gelatinous?.

Pomp and circumstance means **grand, formal, and ritualized**. This expression is an allusion taken from Shakespeare's *Othello*. What occasions of your life will be marked by pomp and circumstance. (Incidentally, the traditional graduation march is known by this title.)

Imperiously means in a kingly manner; regal(ly); royal(ly). Describe what someone would say and wear in the workplace if they behaved imperiously.

The **vanguard** is the leading line of a parade or brigade. What qualities do we ascribe to the people in the vanguard?

Oblivious means *unaware*. The noun form is *oblivion*. When you are driving what factors must you not be oblivious to?

Ludicrous(ness) is *absurdity, ridiculousness*. What is ludicrous about this story?

Practice

30. Would a person with temerity ask permission?
31. Do people work out at the gym in order to make their bodies more gelatinous?
32. Would you behave imperiously if you wanted people to think you were humble?
33. Would you tell anyone if you were a mountebank?
34. Do you instruct your hairdresser to give you a ludicrous haircut?
35. Is a person who is resplendently arrayed bedecked in finery?
36. Is a narcissist likely to be oblivious to the needs of others?

Picture the Words:

Draw a picture of:

A ludicrous haircut	People in the vanguard
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Paragraph 6

Words You Will Meet:

inevitable

iconoclastic

bespoke
sham
ingenuousness
raucous
cowed

inanity
unabashed
chagrined
allegory

Finally, the *inevitable* occurred when an *iconoclastic* little boy *bespoke* the *inanity* of the *sham*. With *unabashed ingenuousness*, he declared: “The Emperor has no clothes!” With that revelation, everyone (except the *chagrined* Emperor) broke into *raucous*, mocking laughter. This *allegory* represents situations in which everyone is too *cowed* by authority or public opinion to voice the obvious truth.

Learn and Remember

***Inevitable* means bound to happen.** Here, the word is used as a noun. Why was the boy’s declaration inevitable?

***Iconoclastic* means challenging established and cherished beliefs.** How was the boy’s declaration iconoclastic?

***Bespeak* means declare.** (The past tense is *bespoke*.) What does the boy bespeak?

***Inanity* means stupidity, vapidity, emptiness.** The adjective form is inane. Many popular comedies are funny because they are based on inane premises. Give several examples.

A *sham* is a fraudulent situation. “The Emperor’s New Clothes” is the story of a sham. What are some other fairy tales and stories based on a sham?

***Chagrined* means embarrassed, uncomfortable, unpleasantly surprised.** Why was the Emperor chagrined?

***Raucous* means loud and rowdy, boisterous, blaring, disorderly.** What are some other stories that have raucous scenes?

***Unabashed* means unembarrassed. *Abashed* means embarrassed. *Bashful* means shy.** Which people in the story are unabashed in the end, and which are abashed?

Ingenuousness*: see *disingenuous

An *allegory* is a symbolic tale. What are some other allegories?

***Cowed* means intimidated.** What related word can you think of? (Hint: It's a synonym for *scaredy-cat*.)

Practice

37. Would you say that an iconoclastic person has temerity?
38. Will your parents let you go to a party if you tell them it will be raucous?
39. Can an allegory be described as a false story with a true meaning?
40. Would you be chagrined to don the mantle?
41. Would you be abashed if someone called you inane?
42. Do you find inanity amusing?
43. Is a person with temerity easily cowed?

Review

Fill in the story:

exigencies
narcissistic
autocratic
garb

mundane
despotic
mundane

Once upon a time, there lived a _____ and
_____ Emperor who had a _____ streak a m
mile wide. So taken was he with symbolic _____ that he scarcely had
time to tend to the _____ of the _____ tasks of running a
kingdom.

exploit
obtuse
imperceptible
dupe
astute

fabricate
haberdashers
knavish
duplicitous

One day, two _____ sought to
_____ the Emperor's vanity. They were _____ enough to
_____ the Emperor with the following _____. They _____
that they could _____ a cloth which would be _____ to the
_____ and the _____.

fawning
ruse
entourage
lucrative

charlatans
affections
sycophants
extolled

Not wishing to appear knavish or obtuse, the Emperor subcontracted these two _____ and they began “spinning” their bogus cloth. Their _____ proved _____ because of the _____ of the Emperor and his _____ of _____ who, not wishing to appear knavish or obtuse, _____ the invisible thread.

resplendently
disingenuous
arrayed
pretentious

mantle
don
lauding

At last came the day when the _____ Emperor was to _____ the _____. There he was, _____ in his underwear, the *entourage* of *fawning sycophants* _____ his new *vestments* with _____ praise.

bedecked
imperiously
revelation
oblivious
ludicrousness
vanguard

pomp and circumstances
gelatinous
grandiosity
mountebanks
temerity

It was then that the _____ had the _____ to suggest that the Emperor parade before his subjects to ceremoniously present his new robes. So taken was he with his own _____ that he arranged for the public _____ of himself. Well, there he was, _____ only by his own layers of _____, dimpled, sagging, hairy flesh, with _____. He strutted _____ in the _____ of the parade in his own honor, _____ to the _____ of his appearance

bespoke
inevitable
inanity
chagrined
sham
allegory

iconoclastic
ingenuous
raucous
unabashed
chagrined
cowed

Finally, the _____ occurred when an _____ little boy
_____ the _____ of the _____. With
_____ truthfulness, he declared: “The Emperor has no
clothes!” With that announcement, everyone (except the
_____ Emperor) broke into _____, mocking laughter.
This _____ represents situations in which everyone is
too _____ by authority or public opinion to voice the obvious truth.

Review: Clustering

Clustering is a technique in which you consider how words are alike and different. From the word list, form several categories, each consisting of at least five words. Use your imagination to form the categories: connotation (positive, negative, neutral), parts of speech, structure, visuals/ non-visuals, etc. Not all of the words in the group have to fit into your categories. Feel free to change the form of the words. You may have a few leftovers. Refer to the Appendix for examples.

Word List:

despotic
narcissistic
exigencies
duplicitous
exploit
dupe
asserted
imperceptible
obtuse
ruse
affectations
fawning
extolled
don
resplendently
lauding
disingenuous
temerity
revelation
gelatinous
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allegory

autocratic
garb
mundane
haberdasher
astute
scam
fabricate
knavish
charlatans
lucrative
entourage
sycophants
pretentious
mantle
arrayed
vestments
mountebanks
grandiosity
bedecked
pomp and circumstance
vanguard
ludicrousness
iconoclastic
inanity
unabashed
revelation
raucous
cowed

Categories:

_____:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

_____:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

_____:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____



Write Your Memoirs:

Think of several titles that could be used as chapters of your memoirs. Remember that a title has to use pithy (concise and catchy) language. Feel free to change the form of the words.

Examples:

I Looked Ludicrous!

Cowed by Cowardice

The Inevitable Happened

The Revelation

Memoir Titles and First Sentences of the Memoir:

1. _____ : _____

2. _____ : _____

3. _____ : _____

4. _____ : _____

5. _____ : _____