

Lesson 4

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Word List

Study the definitions of the words. Then do the exercises that follow.

aloft *adv.* Up in the air, especially in flight.
ə lôft' A strong breeze kept the kites **aloft**.

attain *v.* 1. To reach; to arrive at.
ə tăn' Redwood trees **attain** heights of over 300 feet.
2. To achieve.
The library **attained** its lofty goal of raising ten thousand dollars for the repair fund.

buffet *n.* 1. A piece of furniture with drawers and shelves for the storage and display of plates, dishes, and bowls.
bə fâ' This splendid antique **buffet** contains a valuable collection of china.
2. A meal laid out for guests to help themselves.
The abundance of food at the **buffet** allowed people to go back for second or third helpings.
v. (buf' ət) To pound repeatedly; to batter.
High winds and waves **buffeted** the ship during the storm.

elude *v.* To escape by being quick or clever.
ē lōōd' The mouse **eluded** the cat by slipping through a crack in the wall.
elusive *adj.* (ē lōō' sīv) 1. Hard to find or capture.
The **elusive** outlaws were familiar with the terrain while those pursuing them were not.
2. Hard to explain or make clear.
Albert Einstein's connection between energy and the speed of light is too **elusive** for most nonscientists to grasp.

flammable *adj.* Able to catch fire easily.
flam' ə bəl Children's night clothes must be fireproofed so they are not **flammable**.

hover *v.* To remain in place over an object or location.
huv' ər Hummingbirds **hover** by beating their wings sixty times a second.

inflate *v.* To fill with air or other gas.
in flāt' **Inflate** the tires to the correct pressure.

jeopardy *jep'ər də* *n.* Danger.
 Mountaineers who climb without partners put their lives in **jeopardy**.
jeopardize *v.* To put in danger of loss or injury.
 Smokers **jeopardize** their health by smoking cigarettes.

moor *moor* *v.* To hold in place with ropes or anchors.
 After the sailors **moored** the boat to the dock, they went ashore.
mooring *n.* A place to which a boat or aircraft can be moored.
 The hurricane tore many boats from their **moorings**.

plummet *plum'ət* *v.* To fall suddenly toward the earth or to a lower level; to plunge.
 The abundant harvest caused the price of corn to **plummet**.

pollute *pə lōōt'* *v.* To make impure or dirty.
 Smoke from cars' engines **pollutes** the air of our cities.
pollution *n.* (*pə lōō' shən*) The action of polluting; the state of being polluted.
 The careless dumping of poisonous chemicals caused widespread **pollution** of the soil.

propel *prə pəl'* *v.* To push or drive forward.
 Two engines **propelled** the speedboat.

stationary *stā' shə ner ē* *adj.* 1. Not moving.
 A **stationary** bicycle is used for exercise.
 2. Not changing.
 The price of admission to the ball park has remained **stationary** for the past couple of years.

superb *sōō purb'* *adj.* Of the highest quality; grand; splendid.
 The view from the mountaintop was **superb**.

swivel *swiv'əl* *n.* A fastening that allows any part joined to it to swing freely.
 This chair has a **swivel** that enables it to turn in a full circle.
v. To turn freely around a fixed point.
 Owls can **swivel** their heads to look behind them.

Choose two phrases to form a sentence that correctly uses a word from Word List 4. Write each sentence on the line provided.

1. (a) A buffet is
(b) a sudden loss of control.

- (c) A mooring is
(d) a piece of furniture for storage and display.

2. (a) To attain something is to
(b) To jeopardize something is to

- (c) stay away from it.
(d) put it in harm's way.

3. (a) To swivel is to
(b) fall suddenly to Earth.

- (c) To plummet is to
(d) avoid getting caught.

4. (a) A superb automobile is one
(b) that is in need of repair.

- (c) that is not moving.
(d) A stationary automobile is one

5. (a) A mooring is
(b) A swivel is

- (c) a small hole that allows air to escape.
(d) a fastening that allows parts to move.

6. (a) To attain something is to
(b) let it go.

- (c) reach it.
(d) To inflate something is to

7. (a) lose sight of it.
(b) To elude something is to

- (c) To propel something is to
(d) drive it forward.

8. (a) bring it onto dry land.
(b) To moor a boat is to

- (c) To inflate a boat is to
(d) hold it in place with ropes.

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Improve each of the following sentences by crossing out the bold phrase and replacing it with a word (or a form of the word) from Word List 4.

1. I was pleased when I **finally achieved** my goal of doing twenty push-ups.
2. The telescope **swings in any direction** so that it can be pointed to any part of the sky.
3. You can **pump some air into** that air mattress with this bicycle pump.
4. It's easier to hit a target that is **fixed in one spot and doesn't move**.
5. Materials that are **quick to catch fire** should be segregated in a fireproof container.
6. One expects the food at four-star restaurants to be **of the highest quality**.
7. I attempted to **get away from** my pursuer by hiding in a doorway.
8. It was a great thrill when we went **up in the air** in a hot-air balloon.
9. I started to feel seasick as the waves **continued to pound over and over against** the boat.
10. The helicopter **stayed in the air while remaining in place** over the ship's deck while its cargo was lowered.
11. The water has been **made unfit for drinking** by the large amounts of chemicals dumped into it.

Circle the letter or letters of each correct answer. A question may have more than one correct answer.

1. Which of the following can be **inflated**?
 (a) balloons (c) tires
 (b) lungs (d) kites
2. Which of the following might cause **pollution**?
 (a) car exhaust (c) oceans
 (b) chemicals (d) people
3. Which of the following can take you **aloft**?
 (a) a plane (c) an elevator
 (b) a helicopter (d) a racing car
4. Which of the following can **hover**?
 (a) a hummingbird (c) a train
 (b) a jet airplane (d) a helicopter
5. Which of the following are **flammable**?
 (a) gasoline (c) straw
 (b) wooden crates (d) metal boxes
6. Which of the following can be **elusive**?
 (a) ideas (c) memories
 (b) an escaped prisoner (d) the title of a book
7. Which of the following might be on a **mooring**?
 (a) a ferry (c) a tree
 (b) a house (d) a trip to Europe
8. Which of the following can **propel** a boat?
 (a) the wind (c) oars
 (b) the stars (d) sharp rocks

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Some words are made up of more than one part. The part that comes before the base word is called a *prefix*. *Pre-* comes from Latin and means "before." Changing or adding a prefix can sometimes turn a word into its opposite.

Change each of the words into its opposite by adding, dropping, or changing the prefix. Use one of these four prefixes, all of which mean "opposite of" or "not": *de-*, *dis-*, *un-*, *in-*.

1. conspicuous _____
2. inflate _____
3. upgrade _____
4. veil _____
5. inhabited _____
6. distinct _____
7. incredible _____
8. integrate _____
9. appealing _____
10. clasp _____

Read the passage. Then answer the questions that follow it.

A Different Way to Fly



Billboards standing along the highway are easily ignored, but a two-hundred-foot billboard floating across the sky grabs everyone's attention. That's why blimps are so attractive to advertisers with a product to sell or a message to communicate. But advertising is only one of the uses for a blimp.

Blimps can be moved easily to different locations at varying altitudes. This makes them useful for a variety of purposes. Scientists use blimps for collecting samples used in the study of air **pollution**; the United States Navy employs them for offshore patrols; and one was even used to search for the **elusive** Loch Ness monster, supposed to inhabit a lake in Scotland.

The main body of the blimp is a large bag, called the envelope. It is **inflated** with helium gas. The blimp stays **aloft** because helium is seven times lighter than air. Once inside the envelope, the helium is left there unless the blimp needs major repairs. After the envelope has been filled, a cabin called a gondola is attached under it; this is where the crew and passengers ride. It is also where the light panels used for advertisements are attached. Computer graphics provide a dazzling display of pictures and words that can't be matched by any billboard.

Blimps are **propelled** by two engines, one on each side, and can **attain** a top speed of about forty miles an hour. Although slow in comparison to airplanes, blimps can do something most planes cannot: they can stop and **hover** in midair. This ability enables them to provide a **stationary** platform for the television cameras covering sporting events, giving viewers a bird's eye view of the action.

Blimps are not designed to take a **buffeting** from high winds, though. They usually can go up only when the air is calm. When not flying, they have to be **moored** by the front end to a tall mast on a truck specially equipped for this purpose. Plenty of space is needed because the blimp has to be free to **swivel** clear of the ground when the wind changes.

In some cities it is possible to buy a ticket and go on a sightseeing trip in a blimp; because blimps fly so slowly and at such a low altitude, those on board enjoy **superb** views of the ground below. You might wonder what would

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happen if the envelope got a small hole in it. Would the helium rush out, causing the gondola to **plummet** to the ground? Passengers need not worry about that; their lives would not be in **jeopardy** if such a thing happened. Why? The pressure of the air outside the envelope is greater than that of the helium inside. Because of that, the helium doesn't easily escape. And since helium is not **flammable**, there is no danger of the envelope's contents catching fire. Flying in a blimp is safe and enjoyable.

- Answer each of the following questions in the form of a sentence. If a question does not contain a vocabulary word from the lesson's word list, use one in your answer. Use each word only once.

1. Give two reasons why helium is used to fill a blimp's envelope.

2. For how long does the blimp's envelope remain **inflated**?

3. What is the meaning of **elusive** as it is used in the passage?

4. What would happen to the gondola if it became separated from the envelope while the blimp was in flight?

5. What is the meaning of **stationary** as it is used in the passage?

6. How can blimps be of use in scientific studies of the air?

7. What is the purpose of the **swivel** to which the blimp is attached?

8. Why does a blimp need to be **moored** when not flying?

9. Why does a blimp's movement not depend on the direction of the wind?

10. What is the meaning of **attain** as it is used in the passage?

11. How could bad weather **jeopardize** a planned trip in a blimp?

12. Are engines essential to keep a blimp in the air? Why or why not?

13. Why do some advertisers think a blimp is a **superb** way to get their message across?

14. What is the meaning of **buffet** as it is used in the passage?

15. Why is a blimp useful as a platform for cameras for sporting events?

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Review Exercise

1. Helicopters, hummingbirds, and blimps have something in common. All three can stay in place by _____ in the air.
2. Blimps and hot air balloons are very different from each other. A balloon has to go wherever the wind takes it, whereas a blimp is _____ by its two engines.
3. Blimps offer television viewers a bird's-eye view of sporting events. They can remain _____ above the stadium for as long as necessary.
4. Companies with something to advertise like blimps. They offer a _____ way of showing off the company's message to the people below.
5. Blimps are used to take air samples at different heights. The purpose of this is to see how much the air is being _____ by natural and human causes.
6. Blimps are not useful as weapons of war. They are so big and slow moving that they would be unable to _____ an enemy attack.
7. The blimp's air bag is filled with helium. Once the bag has been _____, the helium stays inside until major repairs are needed.
8. Hydrogen is an even lighter gas than helium. It is not used in blimps because it is highly _____.

9. A blimp stays on the ground except during calm weather. Because it is lighter than air, it is easily _____ by strong winds.
10. A blimp usually stays outside while on the ground. It swings from its _____ so that it always faces into the wind.
11. A blimp needs plenty of space around it while on the ground. It has to be free to _____ all the way around in a full circle.
12. The blimp's pilot keeps a close watch on weather patterns. He will not take it _____ if strong winds are expected.
13. Blimp pilots like to fly low. Although blimps can _____ much higher altitudes, pilots usually fly just a few hundred feet above the ground.
14. A blimp pilot's first concern is the well-being of the passengers. The pilot will not do anything that might _____ their safety.
15. Most people feel quite safe in the gondola of a blimp. The only way it would _____ to the ground is if it separated from the envelope above.