

Unit 11 – They Can Never Stop Me

achievement
approximate

astound
challenge

confident
decline

detect
impressive

independent
reliable

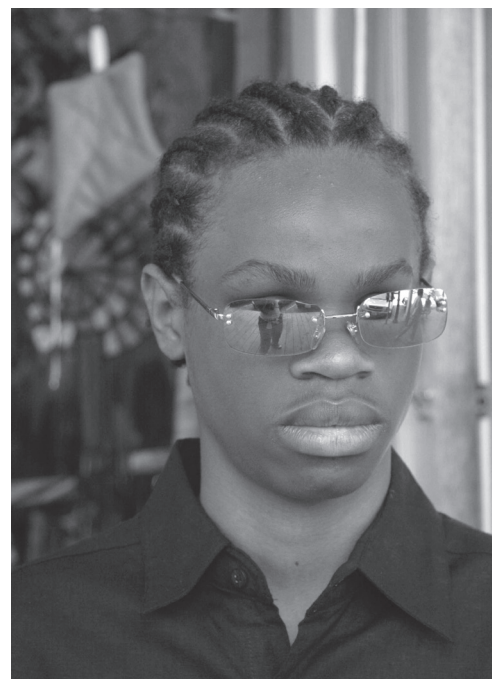
11A Introduction

This song tells the true story of an extraordinary boy named Ben Underwood. Despite being blind, Ben invented an incredible way of moving through the world.

11B Song Lyrics

Listen. This is the real life story of Ben Underwood, one of the most amazing people you'll ever know. Guaranteed.

Little Ben was born in California,
A little baby but he's looking quite normal.
So his mom was so surprised
To find he had cancer in his eyes.
The doctors said, "We can save his eyes,
But if the cancer spreads, your boy could die."
His mom thought for a while, then she **declined**,
She said, "No, I don't care if my boy's blind."
So the doctors removed his eyes,
Now he couldn't see, but they had saved his life.
So yeah, you think your life is hard?
Try growing up with no sight at all.
Life **challenged** Ben, it made him fight,
So Ben learned to see without the light.
Yes, this will shock and **astound** you,
Ben learned to see using sound, dude.
He started making clicks, and it's strange,
When he walked around, yeah the sound would change.
He could hear a "click" sound bounce around,
You know, bounce off a wall or off the ground.
So he could discover and **detect**



Cars and walls, and he wouldn't forget.
 No one told him, "You can't; just quit it,"
 So Ben just did it!

Had the chips stacked against him, but he rose up!
Had the chips stacked against him, but he rose up!
Had the chips stacked against him, but he rose up!
But he rose up, but he rose up!

Listen up, man, can you believe it?
 This kid Ben rocking this amazing **achievement**?
 Something he did and it was never easy,
 But he did it with a smile like it was breezy.
 And he didn't feel sad for himself or bad for himself,
 He learned to rap for himself.
 You won't believe it, but hold up, wait,
 He learned to play b-ball and rollerblade.
 'Cause with his clicks he could **approximate**,
 Figure out roughly where the basket lay.
 I mean, he wasn't starring in the NBA,
 But his jump shot was pretty good—ha ha.
 He invented a **reliable** way,
 Something he could depend on for like finding his way.
 He was a fighter, like Cassius Clay or Rocky,
 You say, "You can't"; he says, "Watch me!"

Hook

'Cause he was **confident**, believed in himself,
 He was **independent**, not needing your help.
 To see this kid surfing, it's so **impressive**,
 So amazing, I mean it will leave you breathless.
 Ben saw like a dolphin does,
 With his clicks bouncing off the walls and stuff.
 No one told him, "You can't; just quit it,"
 So Ben just did it!

11C Words Defined

achievement

(noun) Something done successfully; something gained by working or trying hard. *Robby's biggest **achievement** was winning the spelling bee.*

Other forms: *With enough hard work, you can **achieve** (verb) anything.*

approximate

(adj) Not exactly, but close enough to be reasonably correct. *The police asked Jonathan if he could tell them the **approximate** time that he had last seen his cat, Mr. Pickles.*

(verb) To take an educated guess about. *I couldn't be sure, but I **approximated** that it would take us four hours to drive from Boston to New York City.*

astound

(verb) To fill with surprise and wonder; to amaze. *Carla was **astounded** to learn that the tree on her street was 120 years old.*

challenge

(noun) A difficult job or task. *It was a real **challenge** for Opie to not eat all the cookies in the jar—they were so delicious!*

(verb) To invite others to take part in a contest. *“You dare to spit on my shoe?” the prince yelled. “I **challenge** you to a duel!”*

Other forms: *That last level of the video game was definitely the most **challenging** (adj).*



challenge

confident

(adj) 1. Certain; sure. *Are you **confident** that one plus one is two?* 2. Sure of oneself. *Kelly is so **confident** that people often think she is three years older than she really is.* Other forms: *Leroy has so much **confidence** (noun) when talking to people; he gets along well with both kids and adults.*

decline

(verb) To refuse to accept; to say “no” to. *Nicole was offered a spot on the basketball team, but she **declined** because she'd rather learn how to break-dance.*

detect

(verb) To find or discover something; notice. *Scientists recently **detected** a powerful earthquake underground.*

Other forms: *Smoke **detectors** (noun) figure out if there is smoke in your house and then set voff an alarm.*

impressive

(adj) Having a strong effect, commanding attention. *The young man, easily one of the most **impressive** high school basketball players, soared through the air toward the basket.*

Other forms: *My sister thought you were a great dancer, but she's easily **impressed** (verb).*



impressive

independent

(adj) 1. Not under the power or influence of something else. *Pascal doesn't just follow rules all the time; he's an **independent** thinker.* 2. Able to live or do something alone, without help. *I can't wait till I get my driver's license; I will be so much more **independent**.*

Other forms: *America won its **independence** (noun) from England in the Revolutionary War.*

reliable

 (adj) Deserving trust, dependable. *When Annuska told us that she had been born on the moon, I realized she might not be the most **reliable** storyteller.*

Other forms: *If you ever need a friend, you can **rely** (verb) on me.*

11D Synonyms

Circle the word on the right that matches the meaning of the word or phrase on the left.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. something done successfully | challenge | confidence | achievement |
| 2. to amaze | astound | detect | challenge |
| 3. trustworthy | reliable | independent | impressive |
| 4. to take an educated guess | decline | approximate | rely |
| 5. commanding attention | confident | impressive | challenging |

11E Fill in the Blank

Write the word in the blank so that the sentence makes sense.

1. I had to _____ Laura's invitation to the dance because I wanted to go with someone else.

detect**decline****astound**

2. The policeman _____ a strange odor in the room where the crime took place.

approximated**challenged****detected**

3. When it comes to music and fashion, Darci is pretty _____: She dresses in her own style and listens to music we've never heard of.

independent**reliable****impressive**

4. Dad put me in charge because he was _____ that the other kids would listen to me.

impressive**confident****independent**

5. Marvin _____ Stacy to a bean-eating contest; I'm not sure I want to be in the room when that happens!

detected**declined****challenged**

11F Connections

Each sentence has a strong connection with one of the words from the unit. Write the correct word on the line below.

1. Listening to Ivan's tone of voice, I thought I heard a little sarcasm.

2. You can always count on Billie to show up for school on time.

3. When the waitress offered me broccoli, I refused as politely as I could.

4. Marisa was certain she was going to get an A on the test.

5. Now that my brother is 18, my parents let him do whatever he wants to do.

11G Applying Meanings

Circle the letter that makes sense or answers the question.

1. Which of these might be a **challenge** to someone who is short?

- (A) a stepladder
- (B) someone who is tall
- (C) dunking a basketball
- (D) a dwarf

2. Which of these things is usually **approximate**?

- (A) weather forecasts
- (B) football scores
- (C) yardsticks
- (D) scissors

3. Who or what is an important **achievement** in American history?

- (A) Christmas
- (B) landing a man on the moon
- (C) taxes
- (D) Abraham Lincoln

4. Which would be an **astounding** thing to see?
 (A) a sunset
 (B) a great movie
 (C) a clown juggling chain saws
 (D) a puppy wagging his tail
5. If you told someone she had an **impressive** singing voice, she would most likely feel
 (A) proud
 (B) angry
 (C) confused
 (D) embarrassed

11H Reading

Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow.

The Case of the Destroyed Shoes



Kate Shamus stood in the doorway of the apartment building. The owner of the apartment, Frank Miles, was a famous shoe designer. That morning, he had been the victim of a strange crime.

“Thanks for coming so quickly, Ms. Shamus,” Frank said. “I heard about the **impressive** work

you’ve done on other cases. I could have called the police, but I thought an **independent** thinker like you might be able to **detect** something the police would miss.”

“Thank you, Mr. Miles,” said Kate. “Now tell me what happened.”

“I was recently hired to design a new line of shoes for a local department store,” Frank began. “This morning, I finished the final shoe. I was very proud of my **achievement**, so I went out to celebrate. I was gone for **approximately** one hour. When I returned, all of the shoes had been destroyed. My door was locked. No windows were broken. What do you think happened? Was it a **challenge** from another designer?”

Kate walked into the room. Pushed against one wall was a couch. The destroyed shoes were scattered in pieces all over the floor. She bent down and looked at one of the pieces. The edge was ragged. It clearly had not been cut with a knife or scissors.

“Where were the shoes when you left, Mr. Miles?” Kate asked.

“That’s the strangest part,” Frank answered. “I was afraid someone might try to break in and steal my designs, so I hid all the shoes under the couch. There’s no way anyone could have known where to look. And even if they had known, they couldn’t have crawled under the couch to get them all out.”

Kate bent down next to the couch. She looked closely at the carpet. Just as she suspected—fur.

“Mr. Miles,” Kate said. “I think I know what happened here. But first, let me ask you one question: How big is your dog?”

Frank stared at her, **astounded**.

“How did you know I have a dog?”

1. Why did Frank call Kate instead of the police?

2. How long was Frank gone in the morning?

3. How do you know no one broke into the apartment?

4. Why did Frank hide the shoes under the couch?

5. Who destroyed the shoes?

111 Thinking Creatively

Answer each question below. Don't be afraid to think creatively.

1. What do you consider your greatest **achievement**?

2. Write a two-line poem called “The **Independent** Inchworm.”

3. What can you do that might **astound** someone?

4. How do you feel when someone **challenges** you?

5. How could you **impress** someone with your **reliability**?

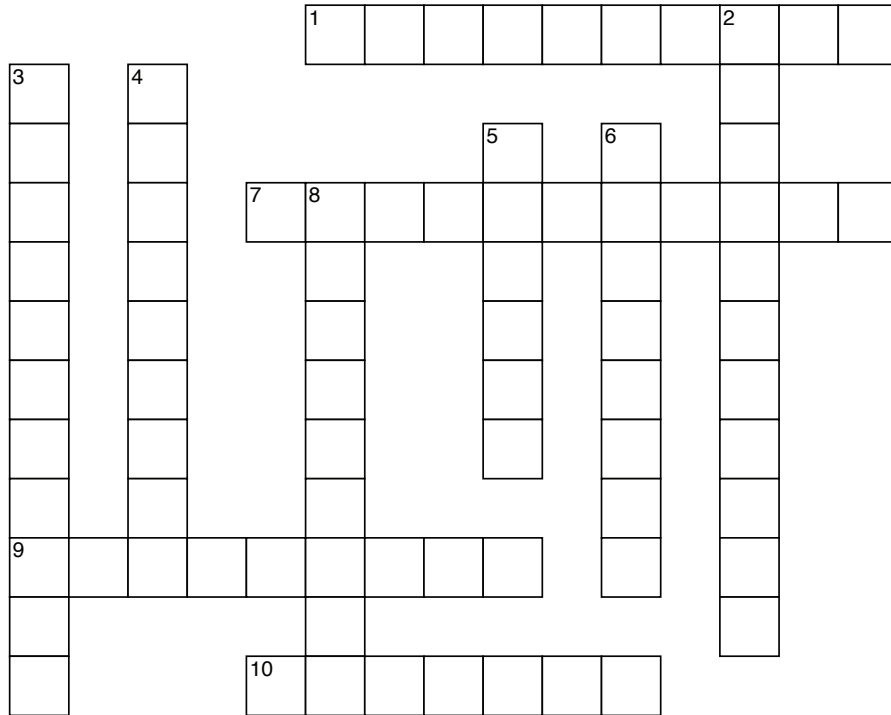
Word Breakdown

The words *independent* and *dependent* are antonyms: They have opposite meanings. If you depend on someone, you rely on them. But if you're independent, you don't have to rely on them. From this, you can probably guess that the prefix *in-* can sometimes mean "not." You can see this in *inexpensive* ("not expensive"), *inattention* ("lack of attention"), and *inescapable* ("not able to be escaped from"). But the prefix *in-* is tricky because it can also mean "in," such as in words like *inside*, *inland*, and *indent*.

In recent years, the word *independent* has gained a new meaning. An independent movie is a movie that is made for little money by a small studio. There are also independent music labels, which release albums by lesser-known artists. The word is sometimes shortened to *indie*, as in the phrases "indie movies" or "indie rock." Some people think that indie movies and music are more artistic than those that are made for a lot of money.

Bonus: Crossword Puzzle

Solve this crossword puzzle. Note: Some answers may be different forms of the vocab words from this unit.



ACROSS

- 1 Bernard's shoe-tying skills are _____; he can tie bows faster than anyone else I know.
- 7 So far, the _____ of which I'm most proud is my ability to solve a Rubik's Cube.
- 9 I was _____ when Dorothy told me she was born a monkey.
- 10 I'll have to _____ your invitation to the movies tonight; I just have too much homework to do.

DOWN

- 2 Ricardo is an _____ thinker; he always surprises me with his ideas.
- 3 I was surrounded by about 50 Martians, but that's just an _____ number.
- 4 The boxer was so _____ he would win the fight that he didn't even bother to train.
- 5 To find or discover something.
- 6 Dependable.
- 8 Nell wasn't sure if she could climb the rope, but she was willing to take the _____.