
Unit 1 - The Great Escape

1A Introduction

We've all wanted to get away at one time or another. The narrator in this song faces a pretty tough life on his block, but he finds ways to escape.

1B Song Lyrics

*Hey yo, Trajik.
What's up, B?
I've got to make the great escape.
Word?*

It's 7 o'clock and it's time to **embark**,
And set off on my travels though it's still dark.
It's just me in the house 'cause my dad's not around,
And my mom's got to work at the hospital now.
But that's OK I **fend** for myself,
Protect myself, my health, and my friends.
And **vice versa**, they've got my back too,
Stay close like skin stays to a tattoo.

I move fast on the map like a cat, dodging trouble,
Through broken buildings and all that **rubble**.
With more rats than that movie *Ratatouille*,
The streets **teem** with rats, you hearing that?
And while they **vie** and fight for some forgotten cheese,
The biggest rat of all was eyeing me.
I ran off to school, it's a great escape,
And cut through the gangs like a razor-blade.

At home I can't even get the time of day,
But my friends are excited, they're never **blasé**.
They smile and greet me, it's quite a **reception**,
Call me creamy ranch, 'cause I'm fresh with the dressing.

Hook

Sometimes late at night, I can't even sleep,
'Cause people argue and **wrangle** in the streets.
Usually, my street is **desolate**,
There's no people around, they won't mess with it.
Most families have moved away for better schools
To increase and **augment** their safety too.
But it's not all disorder and **anarchy**,
There's a man selling gum in a stand for me.

And there is one **tract** of land, that's so attractive man,
Every time I see it I want to rap again.



And from my roof you get a wide view, a **panorama**,
 It's true; we can't afford a camera.
 But that's cool, because I've got the image in my mind,
 I wouldn't forget the image even if I went blind.
 I've made an intense, **ardent** promise
 To always stay bright in the face of darkness.

*So I'm on this, like lazy kids on couches.
 I'm on this, like roofs on houses.
 I'm on this, and I'll always stay true.
 Make waves, so make way dude, I break through.*

1C Words Defined

Below you'll find each vocabulary word that was used in the song. Each word is followed by the part of speech, a simple definition and a meaningful sentence. Some words will also have synonyms, antonyms and other forms of the word listed.

1. anarchy (noun) a state of lawlessness, confusion or disorder

The crowd erupted into a state of *anarchy* during the concert.

Synonyms: chaos, disorder, turmoil

Other forms: The *anarchist* (noun) lit the garbage heap on fire and soon the whole street was ablaze.

2. ardent (adj) passionate, enthusiastic and fiery

Quincy was an *ardent* fan of any sports related books or authors.

Synonyms: impassioned, fervent, zealous

3. augment (verb) to add to

Larry's dad agreed to *augment* his allowance by two dollars a week.

Synonyms: to boost, increase, enhance

Antonyms: to decrease, reduce

4. blasé (adj) unimpressed and indifferent

We all thought Ken would be really excited about the prestigious award he received, but instead he was very *blasé* about the whole thing.

Synonyms: bored, disenchanted

Antonyms: eager, enthusiastic

5. desolate (adj) without any people; dismal and devastated

We were shipwrecked and washed up on the most *desolate* island.

Other forms: *Desolate* is also a verb meaning "to devastate," as in: Several mean boys tried to *desolate* my sand castle on the beach by running through it. Something that is destroyed is an example of *desolation* (noun).

6. embark (verb) to start or begin

Trina is going to *embark* on a trip and sail around the world by herself.

Synonyms: to commence, launch, undertake

7. fend (verb) to ward off or defend

The rock stars had to *fend* off the screaming and swarming girls as they exited the building.

Synonyms: to repel, resist, shield

8. panorama (noun) an unobstructed or complete view

The celebrity's home had a *panorama* of the entire valley and beyond.

Other forms: The *panoramic* (adj) view from the top of the building was breathtaking.

9. reception (noun) the act or instance of receiving or meeting

The boys gave the girls a chilly *reception* at the Super Bowl party.

Other forms: A person is usually very *receptive* (adj) when someone offers to clean their bathroom and kitchen for them.

10. rubble (noun) broken bits and pieces

After the huge earthquake, the buildings were nothing but *rubble*.

Synonyms: debris, fragments, wreckage

11. teem (verb) to swarm, brim or overflow

Ponds often *teem* with fish, insects and frogs.

Synonyms: to abound, overrun, be prolific

Antonyms: to lack, need

12. tract (noun) an area, expanse or region

While trying to buy a *tract* of land, Chris had to be taken to the hospital due to his inflamed digestive *tract*.

13. vice versa (noun) conversely, in reverse

Kristina hates the homecoming queen, and *vice versa*: The queen hates her back.

14. vie (verb) to compete for

Charlie and Big "T" are both *vying* for starting-point guard spot on the ball team.

Synonyms: to compete, contend, strive

15. wrangle (verb) to argue or dispute

Eleanor likes to *wrangle* with her father about the dangers of smoking.

Synonyms: to dispute, fight, brawl

Antonyms: to agree, give in

Other forms: *Wrangle* is also a noun meaning “a noisy dispute or altercation,” as in: During the *wrangle*, Everett threw plates and cups at Stephanie.

1D Fix the Mistake

Each of the sentences below has a mistake. The wrong vocabulary words have been used, so the sentences don't make sense. Rewrite each sentence using the correct vocabulary word from this unit.

1. My grandpa is going to **wrangle** on a trip to Italy, Greece and Spain after he renews his passport and completes his foreign language classes.

2. Randy was such a(n) **blasé** baseball fan that he had numerous signed baseballs, jerseys, bats and pennants in a special glass cabinet in his living room.

3. Most celebrities have to **augment** off the paparazzi even as they do the most basic routines of their lives like going grocery shopping or to the gym.

4. The rescue workers had to dig through the **reception** after the earthquake to look for survivors.

5. The largest **panorama** of land was slated to have a housing development built on it by summer.

6. Our section of the stadium shouted at the opposing team's section of the stadium and **anarchy**.

7. There were four athletes **teeming** for the gold medal in the final race.

8. Maggie was so **desolate** about winning the largest lottery winnings in history that we all thought she must be in shock.

9. Sarah likes to **fend** with others in her debate class because she knows she will always win.

10. Maybe there was a hive under the slide, because the playground was **embarking** with bees.

11. Some wedding **rubbles** are extremely fancy with jazz bands, fancy decorations, and expensive food.

12. The **vice versa** from the top of the tallest building in the world was so amazing that I took over one hundred pictures.

13. The military training exercise required the new recruits to be dropped off in one of the most **ardent** places in the country, and then survive for three days with only what was in their packs.

14. Sandy got a job; she wanted some money to **vie** her allowance.

15. **Tract** erupted in the streets when the police officers started to fire rubber bullets at the gathering crowd.

1E Pick the Winner

Circle the word that best fits into the sentence. Then write a sentence below that uses the word you didn't pick in a meaningful way.

1. Her bookshelf revealed that she was a(n) **(ardent OR desolate)** fan of mystery books.

2. _____

3. The rescue dogs were trained to sniff through the **(reception OR rubble)** and signal their handlers when they located a possible survivor.

4. _____

5. The paparazzi were **(vying OR teeming)** around Britney Spears to get a photo of her and her children playing at the park.

6. _____

7. Fishermen like to **(embark OR fend)** early in the morning for the best chance at catching the most salmon.

8. _____

9. Two of the most popular cheerleaders (**wrangled OR augmented**) over which one of them would take the handsome quarterback to the prom.

10.

1F Draw the Relationships

In each grouping of eight words below, draw straight lines between the synonyms (words that mean similar things) and squiggly lines between any antonyms (words that mean nearly opposite things). Every word should have at least one line connected to it. Some may have more.

1

blasé	embark	fend off	unimpressed
social gathering	give in	reception	set off

2

wrangle	desolate	decrease	swarm
populated	augment	teem	argue

3

unenthusiastic	tract	anarchy	region
scenic view	panorama	ardent	chaos

4

rubble	debris	destroyed	cooperate
vice versa	vie	desolate	in reverse

1G Understanding What You Read

Read the passage below. Then answer the questions.

Dad was excited about the decision to embark on our journey to the coast by noon, because he thought we'd be there by midnight at the latest. I was a bit more blasé about it, thinking that, knowing how the man drives, it would take us two days no matter what time we left.

My sister, Alex, was being the typical sullen teenager. As she was letting us know, she wasn't excited at all about the prospect of a car trip with the family. In her mind, these car trips were when the family descended into anarchy. She would constantly wrangle for back seat space and I would have to fend her off. By the middle of the trip, I had usually decided it was just best to stare out the window at the desolate landscape.

There were upsides to these trips, I suppose. Mom usually would sing in the car when things got really boring. And, of course, it was always fun watching my sister argue with dad as she made some ardent point about her curfew being too early, or mine being too late. Regardless, it was our arrival at the coast that was the most fun. Depending on what time we did end up getting there, the reception we got from the friends we hadn't seen since last summer was usually the best part of all.

1. How did the narrator feel about taking the trip?

- (A) excited
- (B) unhappy
- (C) indifferent
- (D) bored

2. What does the narrator mean by “anarchy” in the second paragraph?

- (A) lack of government control
- (B) general chaos
- (C) peaceful times
- (D) violence

3. The story suggests that the family is going

- (A) on a family trip
- (B) to a funeral
- (C) to accept an award
- (D) to a sporting event

4. The “desolate landscape” in the second paragraph suggests they were traveling through

- (A) a forest
- (B) a beach
- (C) a desert
- (D) a city

5. The narrator of this story is most likely a

- (A) toddler
- (B) grandfather
- (C) lawyer
- (D) teenager

1H Thinking Creatively

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

1. Briefly describe the plot of a made-up movie named *The Blasé Butcher*.

2. If you could pick any **tract** of land in the world to build on, what would you choose?

3. What do you think a **panoramic** camera is?

4. Why might a government fear **anarchy**?

5. Explain how a hunter could defend himself from a grizzly bear and **vice versa**.

Word Breakdown

Panorama comes from the Greek *pan* (“all”) and *oramic* (“to see”). A panorama allows you to see all. The prefix “pan” is used in big words like *panacea* (a medicine that cures everything), and also to indicate that all things are included. The airline Pan Am is short for Pan America (they fly all over the Americas). The *Pantheon*, in Rome, is the temple for all the gods. The word *pancake*, however, has nothing to do with “all.” Pancake comes from the German word *panne* and the Old Norse word *kaka*.

Blasé has a connotation of: *I’ve seen the whole world, and now I’m bored*. It is not the boredom of the working man, but the boredom of someone with so much money or time that they don’t know what to do. *Blasé* is actually just a French word, and in French slang it means “constantly hung over.” An Ella Fitzgerald song, “You’re Blasé,” contains the lyrics: “You sleep, the sun is shining...There’s nothing new for you to do. You’re blasé.”