

Unit 3 - Wild Ride

3A Introduction

Dreaming is pretty amazing. Each night, we close our eyes and are taken to places where crazy things occur. Sometimes it seems that we can control our dreams and we're able to do whatever we want. Other times, it seems as though our dreams control us, and we're just along for the wild ride.

3B Song Lyrics

Dark clouds filled the afternoon sky,
Another **tedious**, boring day passing by.
I was tired of TV, my laziness was **contagious**,
Spreading, I think I heard a sigh from my neighbor.
But who could have saved us from this boredom?
A board game? I can't stand 'em, I **deplore** them.
I **loll**ed on the sofa, lounged with ease,
And like 1, 2, 3, I was counting sheep.

Next thing I knew, my mom was shaking me,
She criticized and **chastised** me for sleeping.
Then a strange thing happened as I opened my eyes, My
mother started to **hover** and float up to the sky.
"Mom! Have you been changed or **modified**?"
I could hardly see, I was borderline blind.
But up she went, through the clouds and toward the
stars, This day got crazy-weird, I mean really **bizarre**...

It's a wild ride...

I found my sister, but she was messed up,
I mean, something with the kid sis was **amiss**.
I asked her, "You okay?" It got wilder yet,
'Cause my sister spoke a real strange **dialect**,
Another language, but not Spanish or Russian,
I mean a crazy tongue from outer space or something.
It might sound ridiculous or **preposterous**,
But she was looking just like a rhinoceros.

Spontaneously, out of the blue,
My mom started to fight me, using kung fu.
Now I don't want to hit my mama so I ran around the corner,
If she hit me with the roundhouse, I would have been a goner.
Nothing could **avail** me or help me out,
So I started to cry and scream and shout.
It all **culminated**, came to an ending though,
When my sister cried, "Dinner time, bro!"

As I opened my eyelids, my dreams **subsided**,
They sunk away like a river's tide did.
But my nightmare wasn't even over yet,
'Cause when I looked at my plate, there was cream of
spinach!

Hook



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3C Words Defined

amiss / avail / bizarre / chastise / contagious / culminate / deplore / dialect / hover / loll / modify / preposterous / spontaneous / subside / tedious

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. **amiss** (adj) in a faulty way, astray, or wrong

When my parents came home from being gone all weekend, they saw how clean the house was and immediately knew something was *amiss*.

Synonyms: faulty, improper, flawed, askew, awry

Other forms: *Amiss* can also be an adverb: Something's gone *amiss*!

2. **avail** (verb) to be of use to; to help

The doctor's best efforts did not *avail* the dying patient.

Synonyms: to benefit, aid

Other forms: *Avail* can also be a noun meaning "use or advantage" as in: His strength was of little or no *avail* in digging himself out from under the avalanche.

3. **bizarre** (adj) unusual, odd or outrageous

Tracy was exhibiting *bizarre* behavior around James because she had a crush on him.

4. **chastise** (verb) to criticize or discipline

The football coach would *chastise* his players when they were losing.

Synonyms: scold, berate

Antonyms: praise, encourage

5. **contagious** (adj) easily transmittable

Even though Stella's boyfriend had strep throat and was highly *contagious*, she kissed him.

6. **culminate** (verb) to come to the end or the highest point

The flag football tournament will *culminate* with an awards banquet, where I hope to be recognized as the most valuable player.

Synonyms: conclude, finish, peak

Other forms: A huge dinner marked the *culmination* (noun) of the Broadway season.

7. **deplore** (verb) to feel or express strong disapproval of

The group told the President that they *deplored* American involvement in the war.

Synonyms: to bemoan, regret

8. **dialect** (noun) the language specific to a group of people due to geography, society, or an occupation

Those dudes speak a strange *dialect* of Spanish.

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9. **hover** (verb) to suspend in air; to wait nearby

The cats tend to *hover* by their food dish when they are hungry for breakfast and dinner.
Synonyms: hang, float, linger

10. **loll** (verb) to lounge; to recline

During summer, the kids like to *loll* about on the dock in their bathing suits beside the lake.
Synonyms: to hang, relax, chill
Antonyms: to hurry, rush, speed

11. **modify** (verb) to change; to amend

Sometimes my grandmother will *modify* her cookie recipe by adding more sugar so they are sweeter.
Other forms: If you make a *modification* (noun) to something, you make a change to it.

12. **preposterous** (adj) foolish, absurd

Barry was telling his mom a *preposterous* story about why he was an hour and a half late to school.
Antonyms: reasonable, sensible, logical

13. **spontaneous** (adj) unplanned and impulsive

There was a *spontaneous* burst of laughter at the back of the classroom when the teacher accidentally said a bad word.

14. **subside** (verb) to lessen, diminish, decline

The weatherman said the huge waves would *subside* after the hurricane.
Antonyms: to rise, increase

15. **tedious** (adj) boring, tiring or monotonous

Sharon gave her daughter some *tedious* tasks to complete to pass the time while they waited for their plane to arrive.
Antonyms: entertaining, interesting, exciting

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3D Fix the Mistake

amiss / avail / bizarre / chastise / contagious / culminate / deplore / dialect / hover / loll / modify / preposterous / spontaneous / subside / tedious

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. The EMTs did their best to resuscitate the drowning victim, but it was to no **modification**.

2. Since the director of the movie was fascinated by outer space, he included a variety of **contagious**-looking alien creatures in most of the scenes.

3. Once the flood waters **chastise**, the clean-up efforts will begin.

4. My high school class reunion weekend will **hover** with a family picnic on Sunday.

5. She hadn't planned it, but our teacher made a(n) **tedious** decision to act out the day's history lesson instead of read it aloud.

6. My brother **deplores** about so much that there is a permanent dent in the couch where he sits all day.

7. While investigating the crime scene, the detective noticed that something was **preposterous** in the bedroom where the murder occurred.

8. Avital's strong **culmination** made it difficult for us to understand her speech at graduation.

9. Some teenagers like to **subside** their clothing by cutting and ripping it.

10. Cinderella didn't mind doing **bizarre** chores around the house because she had her animal friends to cheer her up and keep her company.

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11. My grandmother claims the dog talks to her, but I know that that is **spontaneous**.

12. The helicopter **lolloped** dangerously above the water as the pilot waited for the signal to pull the survivors to safety.

13. The three-year old was **availed** for drawing on the walls with crayon.

14. Laughter spread room to room like it was **amiss**.

15. Some old people just **loll** young people helping them across the street or down steps because it strips them of their independence.

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3E Pick the Winner

amiss / avail / bizarre / chastise / contagious / culminate / deplore / dialect / hover / loll / modify / preposterous / spontaneous / subside / tedious

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. Cats are infamous for **(lolling OR hovering)** about all day while dogs are busy running and barking.

2. It is **(spontaneous OR preposterous)** to think that one day there will be flying cars and talking robots

3. Marcy wanted to drastically **(subside OR modify)** her bedroom by painting it green and brown like a rainforest and hanging monkeys from the ceiling.

4. We called the police to complain about our neighbor's dog, who was incessantly barking, but they could not **(avail OR culminate)** us.

5. The patient was so **(contagious OR bizarre)** that he had to be locked in a special wing of the hospital.

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3F Draw the Relationships

amiss / avail / bizarre / chastise / contagious / culminate / deplore / dialect / hover / loll / modify / preposterous / spontaneous / subside / tedious

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

avail

punish

chastise

easily
transmittable

bizarre

benefit

contagious

normal

2

culminate

deplore

dialect

amiss

local speech

wrong

begin

disapprove of

3

sink

loll

absurd

preposterous

hover

alter

modify

hurry

4

spontaneous

subside

tedious

weird

planned

rise

bizarre

interesting

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3G Understanding What You Read

amiss / avail / bizarre / chastise / contagious / culminate / deplore / dialect / hover / loll / modify / preposterous / spontaneous / subside / tedious

Read the passage below. Then answer the questions.

Ms. Alfonso had said she was ready to quit. During the past year, her bizarre behavior had become more and more erratic and more and more preposterous. She was starting to talk in funny dialects just for everyday things. She told us to turn in our homework with a French accent, and to pack our bags with a Southern drawl.

I had always thought she was a nice teacher, I suppose, and also very interesting. Sure, her lessons were tedious sometimes, going on and on. I wasn't crazy about the way she'd hover over our group in particular whenever she thought something was amiss. You know how they say that a watched pot never boils? Well, I do much better work when I don't feel eyes on me, too!

Still, there were times when she was really nice and funny. She'd modify assignments whenever we were having trouble. She also made spontaneous displays of joy whenever a student who wasn't doing so well turned their work in on time. I always wondered what her home life was like. Was she married? Did she act so strange all the time?

Her weird behavior culminated in an entire class in Latin. That's right, she taught the whole class in Latin. Nobody even speaks Latin. It's a dead language. Suzie begged her to stop because it was giving her a headache, but it was to no avail. Ms. Alfonso merely chastised her in the same foreign tongue. I think we knew then: Ms. Alfonso was ready to go.

1. Overall, how does the narrator seem to feel about Ms. Alfonso?

- (A) angry with her
- (B) intrigued by her
- (C) disgusted by her
- (D) proud of her

2. The teacher's "tedious" lessons mean they were

- (A) funny
- (B) difficult
- (C) monotonous
- (D) silly

3. The narrator objects to the class being taught in Latin by noting that

- (A) the class is bored
- (B) she has a headache
- (C) Latin is not spoken by anyone
- (D) something is amiss with her accent

4. Ms. Alfonso "hovered" over her students because

- (A) she thought they were doing something wrong
- (B) she wanted to help them
- (C) she wanted to teach them a lesson
- (D) she wanted to grade their papers

5. The phrase "a watched pot never boils" is used in the passage in order to

- (A) indicate how hard it is to boil water
- (B) teach the teacher a lesson about what to look at
- (C) explain how hard it is to work under the teacher's gaze
- (D) show the reader that the narrator isn't boring

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3H Thinking Creatively

amiss / avail / bizarre / chastise / contagious / culminate / deplore / dialect / hover / loll / modify / preposterous / spontaneous / subside / tedious

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

1. Why do you think certain cultures **deplore** one another?

2. If you were a rapper, would you rather be named “Tedious” or “Preposterous”? Why?

3. Describe the story of a book series called *Miss Amiss*.

4. What is the most **tedious** task you are asked to do by your teachers?

5. What's the most **bizarre modification** to a car you've ever heard about?

Word Breakdown

The word *preposterous* means “ridiculous,” but breaking it down reveals where that meaning comes from. The word is from the Latin words *pre* and *posterus*. As you probably know, *pre* means “before” (think *prefix*, *pre-game*, *preview*). *Posterus* means “rear or behind” (*posterior* is another word for your buttocks, and a *post-game* report comes after the game). So *preposterous* literally means “before behind.” Essentially, it's another way of saying you're mixed up: How could the thing that comes before also be behind? It's like having the cart in front of the horse. In one of his tracks, the rapper Deltron 3030 notes that, “In this modern metropolis, they tries to lock us up under *preposterous* laws.”