Words from The Scarlet Letter

CANKER, DELETERIOUS, DESPONDENCY, DEXTERITY, EDIFICE, EGOTISM, ENDEAVOUR, EXTENUATING, FARTHINGALE, GESTICULATION, IRREVERENT, MISANTHROPY, PEREMPTORY, PHYSIOGNOMY, POTENTATE, PROPINQUITY, RANKLE, SOJOURN, TRANSGRESS, TRANSITORY, UNSCRUPULOUS, VEHEMENT.

Avocabo Word List 64

The Scarlet Letter is the story of three New England settlers at odds with the Puritan society in which they live. Roger Chillingworth, an ageing scholar, arrives in New England after two years separation from his wife Hester to find her on trial for adultery. For refusing to reveal her lover's identity, she is condemned to wear a letter 'A' sewn on to her clothes. Roger resolves to discover and destroy the man who has stolen his honour. For the next seven years the participants in this bizarre love triangle privately suffer the consequences of betrayal, cowardice and humiliation. Slowly but surely, the need for redemption grows in each as the story hastens towards its dramatic close. *The Scarlet Letter* is Hawthorne's masterpiece.

Exercise 64-1: Fill-in-the-blanks *Complete each sentence with the most appropriate word from the list. (22 marks)*

1. A throng of bearded men, in sad-coloured garments, and grey, steeple-crowned hats, intermixed with women, some wearing hoods, and others bareheaded, was assembled in front of a wooden _____, the door of which was heavily timbered with oak, and studded with iron spikes.

2. The age had not so much refinement, that any sense of impropriety restrained the wearers of petticoat and _____ from stepping forth into the public ways, and wedging their not unsubstantial persons, if occasion were, into the throng nearest to the scaffold at an execution.

3. 'Truly, friend: and methinks it must gladden your heart, after your troubles and _____ in the wilderness,' said the townsman, 'to find yourself, at length, in a land where iniquity is searched out, and punished in the sight of rulers and people; as here in our godly New England.'

4. His first care was given to the child; whose cries, indeed, as she lay writhing on the trundle-bed, made it of _____ necessity to postpone all other business to the task of soothing her.

5. Then, gasping for breath, did Hester Prynne clutch the fatal token, instinctively _____ to tear it away; so infinite was the torture inflicted by the intelligent touch of Pearl's baby hand.

6. But, while she said it, Pearl laughed, and began to dance up and down, with the humoursome _____ of a little imp, whose next freak might be to fly up the chimney.

7. Pearl pointed upward, also, at a similar picture in the headpiece; smiling at her mother, with the elfish intelligence that was so familiar an expression on her small _____.

8. The young minister, on ceasing to speak, had withdrawn a few steps from the group, and stood with his face partially concealed in the heavy folds of the window-curtain; while the shadow of his figure, which the sunlight cast upon the floor, was tremulous with the _____ of his appeal.

9. She now skipped _____ from one grave to another; until, coming to the broad, flat, armorial tombstone of a departed worthy – perhaps of Isaac Johnson himself – she began to dance upon it.

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10. The earliest riser, coming forth in the dim twilight, would perceive a vaguely defined figure aloft on the place of shame; and half crazed betwixt alarm and curiosity, would go, knocking from door to door, summoning all the people to behold the ghost – as he needs must think it – of some defunct _____.

11. In such a case, it could only be the symptom of a highly disordered mental state, when a man, rendered morbidly self-contemplative by long, intense, and secret pain, had extended his _____ over the whole expanse of nature, until the firmament itself should appear no more than a fitting page for his soul's history and fate!

12. With a chill _____, like one awaking, all nerveless, from an ugly dream, he yielded himself to the physician, and was led away.

13. You search his thoughts. You burrow and _____ in his heart!

14. But it was the constant shadow of my presence! – the closest _____ of the man whom he had most vilely wronged! – and who had grown to exist only by this perpetual poison of the direst revenge!

15. Or might it suffice him, that every wholesome growth should be converted into something _____ and malignant at his touch?

16. Perceiving a flock of beach-birds, that fed and fluttered along the shore, the naughty child picked up her apron full of pebbles, and, creeping from rock to rock after there small sea-fowl, displayed remarkable _____ in pelting them.

17. There had been a period when Hester was less alive to this consideration; or, perhaps, in the _____ of her own trouble, she left the minister to bear what she might picture to herself as a more tolerable doom.

18. Were such a man once more to fall, what plea could be urged in _____ of him crime?

19. 'Save it were the _____ wrath of an old witch, like Mistress Hibbins,' added he, attempting to smile, 'I know nothing that I would not sooner encounter than this passion in a child'.

20. To barter the _____ pleasures of the world for the heavenly hope, that was to assume brighter substance as life grew dark around her, and which would gild the utter gloom with the final glory.

21. Without taking overmuch upon myself, my good word will go far towards gaining any strange gentleman a fair reception from yonder _____ you wot of!

22. These, after exhausting other modes of amusement, now thronged about Hester Prynne with rude and boorish intrusiveness. _____ as it was, however, it could not bring them nearer than a circuit of several yards.

Exercise 64-2: Synonyms *Select the word or phrase closest in meaning to the list word in bold italics. (21 marks)*

1. ***edifice***
a. structure b. appearance c. tent

2. ***farthingale***
a. shilling b. camisole c. hoop

3. ***sojourn***
a. stay b. travel c. hike

4. ***peremptory***
a. arbitrary b. tyrannical c. frightened

5. ***endeavour***
a. success b. attempt c. neglect

6. ***physiognomy***
a. body features b. feet c. facial features

7. ***vehement***
a. apathetic b. intense c. dull

8. ***irreverent***
a. lugubrious b. acceptable c. disrespectful

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9. ***transgress***
a. endorse b. obey c. overstep

10. ***egotism***
a. boastfulness b. modesty c. altruism

11. ***despondency***
a. dejection b. courage c. confidence

12. ***rankle***
a. dulcify b. fester c. mollify

13. ***propinquity***
a. hatred b. nature c. proximity

14. ***deleterious***
a. nocuous b. healthy c. poisonous

15. ***dexterity***
a. challenged b. adroitness c. unhandy

16. ***extenuating***
a. excusing b. aggravating c. exacerbating

17. ***misanthropy***
hatred of a. mankind b. women c. flowers

18. ***canker***
a. ulceration b. cancer c. thrush

19. ***transitory***
a. long b. langsyne c. transient

20. ***potentate***
a. endeavour b. monarch c. democrat

21. ***unscrupulous***
a. moral b. virtuous c. deceitful

Exercise 64-3: Antonyms
Provide an antonym for the given word. (15 marks)

1. sojourn _____
2. peremptory _____
3. endeavour _____
4. vehement _____
5. irreverent _____
6. transgress _____
7. egotism _____
8. despondency _____
9. rankle _____
10. propinquity _____
11. deleterious _____
12. dexterity _____
13. canker _____
14. transitory _____
15. unscrupulous _____

Exercise 64-4: Parts of Speech
Provide the given form of the list word. If there is no word for that part of speech, draw in an 'X'. (10 marks)

1. The noun form of sojourn: _____
2. The adjectival form of farthingale: _____
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8. The noun form of unscrupulous: _____
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Exercise 64-5: Etymologies *(6 marks)*

1. Which word comes from the Latin meaning *to build*?

_____

2. Which word comes from the Latin meaning *to step across*?

_____

3. Which word comes from the Old French meaning *festering sore*? _____

4. Which word comes from the Greek meaning *destroyer*?

_____

5. Which word comes from the Latin meaning *crab*?

_____

6. Which word comes from the Latin meaning *to be able*?

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In a few sentences, establish the relationship between the two words. (10 marks)

1. sojourn tarriance

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_____

_____

_____

_____

2. peremptory imperative

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. transitory smoke

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. deleterious blight

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. dexterity sleight

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Avocabo Unit 64 by Kelly Wasylciw, May 2005

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Avocabo Unit 64 by Kelly Wasylciw, May 2005

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3. transitory smoke

_____

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4. deleterious blight

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5. dexterity sleight

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Avocabo Unit 64 by Kelly Wasylciw, May 2005

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