

Words from Around the Globe



Avocabo WordList 23

AMBROSIA, BASILICA, BLOKE, BUCKAROO, CONGOLESE, CREOLE, EDELWEISS, FANDANGO, GEISHA, GERMANIC, GOULASH, HAGGIS, HENNA, HINDUSTANI, JANISSARY, PEREGRINATE, PLENIPOTENTIARY, SIROCCO, TISANE, ZIONISM

List words defined:

Ambrosia: *Greek & Roman Mythology:* The food of the gods, thought to confer immortality.

Basilica: A public building of ancient Rome having a central nave with an apse at one or both ends and two side aisles formed by rows of columns, which was used as a courtroom or assembly hall.

Bloke: *Chiefly British Slang* A fellow; a man.

Buckaroo: A cowboy.

Congolese: Of or relating to either the Republic of the Congo or the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire) or to their peoples, languages, or cultures.

Creole: A person of European descent born in the West Indies or Spanish America.

Edelweiss: An alpine plant, native to Europe and having leaves covered with whitish down and small flower heads surrounded by conspicuous whitish bracts.

Fandango: An animated Spanish or Spanish-American dance in triple time.

Geisha: One of a class of professional women in Japan trained from girlhood in conversation, dancing, and singing in order to entertain professional or social gatherings of men.

Germanic: Of, relating to, or characteristic of Germany or its people, language, or culture.

Goulash: A stew of beef or veal and vegetables, seasoned mainly with paprika. (Hungarian)

Haggis: A Scottish dish consisting of a mixture of the minced heart, lungs, and liver of a sheep or calf mixed with suet, onions, oatmeal, and seasonings and boiled in the stomach of the slaughtered animal.

Henna: A tree or shrub of the Middle East, having fragrant white or reddish flowers. A reddish-orange dyestuff prepared from the dried and ground leaves of this plant, used as a cosmetic dye and for colouring leather and fabrics.

Hindustani: A group of Indic dialects including the spoken form of Hindi-Urdu that function as a lingua franca throughout much of northern and central India.

Janissary: A soldier in an elite Turkish guard organized in the 14th century and abolished in 1826.

Peregrinate: To journey or travel from place to place, especially on foot.

Plenipotentiary: A diplomatic agent, such as an ambassador, fully authorized to represent his or her government.

Sirocco: A hot humid south or southeast wind of southern Italy, Sicily, and the Mediterranean islands, originating in the Sahara Desert as a dry dusty wind but becoming moist as it passes over the Mediterranean.

Tisane: An herbal infusion or similar preparation drunk as a beverage or for its mildly medicinal effect.

Zionism: A Jewish movement that arose in the late 19th century in response to growing anti-Semitism and sought to re-establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine.



Exercise 23-1: Fill-in-the-blanks

Complete each sentence with the most appropriate word from those in the word list. Write your choice in the space provided. (10 marks)

1. The poet's body even is not fed like other men's, but he sometimes tastes the genuine nectar and _____ of the gods, and lives a divine life. By the healthful and invigorating thrills of inspiration his life is preserved to a serene old age.

Henry David Thoreau

- a) geisha b) ambrosia c) sirocco d) janissary

2. If we were to promise people nothing better than only revolution, they would scratch their heads and say: "Is it not better to have good _____?"

Nikita Khrushchev

- a) Hindustani b) Zionism c) goulash d) basilica

3. A Jew without Jews, without Judaism, without _____, without Jewishness, without a temple or an army or even a pistol, a Jew clearly without a home, just the object itself, like a glass or an apple.

Philip Roth

- a) edelweiss b) Zionism c) bloke d) haggis

4. Whenas the Chill _____ blowes,
And Winter tells a heavy tale;
When Pyes and Dawes and Rookes and Crows,
Sit cursing of the frosts and snowes;
Then give me Ale.

Thomas Bonham

- a) goulash b) tisane c) peregrinate d) sirocco

5. There's nothing the British like better than a _____ who comes from nowhere, makes it, and then gets clobbered.

Melvyn Bragg

- a) henna b) basilica c) Congolese d) bloke

6. Anybody who minds his belly at all is nervously aware that the land is rich with regional delicacies: the jellied eels and mushy peas of the East End; the tripe and onions of the Northwest; the ... _____ and bashed neeps of Scotland; the traditional English breakfast of fatty bacon and well-greased eggs.

London Times

- a) tisane b) haggis c) goulash d) Janissary

7. He is too picked, too spruce, too affected, too odd as it were, too _____ as I may call it.

Sir Nathaniel. A most singular and choice epithet.

William Shakespeare

- a) buckaroo b) Creole c) Fandango d) peregrinate

8. Rwanda and Uganda withdrew from the _____ capital city of Kisangani as demanded by the UN. At least 150 dead and 1,100 injured were left in their wake.

- a) fandango b) Germanic c) Congolese d) plenipotentiary

9. He was all his many roles, although he put the first above all others, as he wrote in his testament: "I, Benjamin Franklin, of Philadelphia, printer, late Minister _____ of the United States of America to the court of France, now President of Pennsylvania."

Judith K. Shklar

- a) henna b) plenipotentiary c) Hindustani d) ambrosia

10. I've never beheld such a paradise. The people are enchanting and—a mercy on this earth of ours—this is the only place where there isn't any race question. Negroes and whites and Indians, three-quarters, oneeighth, the wonderful Mulatto and _____ women, Jews and Christians, all dwell together in a peace that passes describing. The Jewish immigrants are in seventh heaven; all of them have jobs and feel at home.

Stefan Zweig

- a) Janissary b) edelweiss c) bloke d) Creole

Exercise 23-2: Making Connections

In a few sentences, describe the relationship between each pair of words. Use a good dictionary to clarify unclear words. (5 x 2 marks)

1. zephyr sirocco

2. ecclesiastical basilica

3. fandango

Virginia reel

4. Janissary

Zouave

5. lasso

buckaroo

Exercise 23-3: Name the Nation

Identify the country of origin of each of the following words. A good dictionary will include etymological (word history) information. (7 marks)

_____ 1. Congolese

_____ 2. Haggis

_____ 3. Geisha

_____ 4. Goulash

_____ 5. Germanic

_____ 6. Fandango

_____ 7. Janissary:

_____ ***BONUS*** Zionism

Exercise 23-4: Discriminating Appropriate / Inappropriate Usage

Indicate whether the sentences below use the list word correctly or incorrectly by circling or highlighting the appropriate icon. (10 marks)

1. My mother's spicy pasta sauce was the talk of the party. I was the only one who knew her secret ingredient- **basilica**.

2. The young boy rushed to the teacher with a worried face, "Please make the bully stop! He shouldn't **tisane!**"

3. There's a new family moving in down the street. Tom mentioned that they were **Hindustani**.

4. The intricate **henna** design looked beautiful on her fragile hands.

5. He was the youngest recruit yet. At seventeen he made an astonishingly brace **janissary**.

6. The show was great! This one performer told **bloke** after **bloke**. The audience ate it up!

7. I made sure to take plenty of pictures of the beautiful **edelweiss** during my trip to Switzerland.

8. Walking by his dishevelled home on a daily basis, the smiles he did not return indicated his **haggis** ways.

9. *Snow Country*, probably his best-known work in the West, depicts the affair of an aging **geisha** and an insensitive Tokyo businessman.

10. When the English still lived in their continental homes they shared with the neighbouring kindred tribes an alphabet which may well be described as the national **Germanic** alphabet, since there is evidence that it was used throughout the **Germanic** territory, both in the outposts of Scandinavia and in the countries watered by the Rhine and the Danube.