

Unit 13 - In the Jungle

13A Introduction

There are no jungles in the United States. We have giant forests, but none have enough rainfall and humidity to be called jungles. To get to a jungle, you'll need to head to South America or Asia. Just don't forget your insect repellent.

13B Song Lyrics

Here's a trip that I took on a **whim**,
 Without thinking about it first; let's begin.
 It's me just chilling and I'm feeling **capricious**,
 Impulsive and unpredictable are my features.
 But shall I **resume**, return back to the trip,
 A one-way ticket, one bag packed quick.
 Heading for a rainforest near the coast of Honduras,
 I'm hoping that it isn't **blatant** that I'm a tourist.
 Or extremely obvious, I'll keep it on the low,
 Even left my Hawaiian shirt collection at home.
 Now I'm fresh off the plane, and isn't this **hilarious**?
 Apparently the jungle that I've picked is the scariest.
 Hahaha—now you know that I'm laughing,
 To me it's all funny 'cause I'm ready for action.
 Studying the land and terrain,
 I feel as though I have the whole **geography** up there in my brain.



*You don't know how deep it gets,
 In the jungle like (ooh-ooh)
 The birds calling like (ooh-ooh)
 The trees so tall, it's like (ooh-ooh)*

I plunge into the jungle **headlong**,
 Hastily I mean, is how I have it going on.
 Without any delay, I take a path through the entrance,
 Think for a second, realize I am defenseless.
 People may be thinking it's **bleak**,
 My situation lacks hope and it even is depressing, so to speak.
 But observe, normally I'd have to **concur**,
 Or agree, but I have a couple tricks up my sleeve.
 Then I'm hit by the bees, in a pinch,
 I run into a pit by the trees, slip, trip and "Weee!"
 20 feet deep and I land in a river,
 Lucky to be alive as I stand there and shiver.
 Still scared to move, the water was so **murky**,
 I couldn't see through it, if there were things there to hurt me,
 It was dark, dim, but it's time to roll out,
 I hear something coming and I'm running from it,
 No doubt.

Hook

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That was **grueling**, I'm talking incredibly difficult,
It took it all out of me to climb, but I did it though.
Outside now I am amazed,
'Cause I don't even have a scratch on me, homey,
I am **unscathed**.
Untouched, that's when I hear the loud rush
Of a **predatory** animal coming to have lunch.
It's something that is running to eat me,
Surprised, 'cause I don't recognize the **species**.
I mean, I've never seen this type of animal before,
It looks like my dad, well, a little bit.
It walks on two legs and it even speaks English.
So now I'm running as I wonder what this thing is.
I'm actually afraid of a **catastrophe**,
A terrible end, I'm talking 'bout a disaster, B!
Now the last part, my dad laughs hard,
I awake from a dream sleeping in my backyard.

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13C Words Defined

blatant / bleak / capricious / catastrophe / concur / geography / grueling / headlong / hilarious / murky / predatory / resume / species / unscathed / whim

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. blatant  (adj) very obvious in an offensive or obnoxious way

Melissa was embarrassed that she had made such a *blatant* mistake on her paper: She'd misspelled "Obama."

Synonyms: flagrant, outright

Other forms: You can't just *blatantly* (adverb) ignore me all the time.

2. bleak  (adj) without much hope; cold and dreary

To some people who don't have many choices, the future can seem *bleak*.

Antonyms: bright, sunny

3. capricious  (adj) likely to change quickly for no reason

My teacher is so *capricious*, I never know how she will act.

Antonyms: constant, steadfast

4. catastrophe  (noun) a large-scale disaster, misfortune, or failure


We thought the show would be great but it was a *catastrophe*: One of the actors got sick while onstage!

Synonyms: calamity, fiasco

Other forms: An earthquake can do *catastrophic* (adj) damage if it is really powerful.

5. concur  (verb) to agree

Do you *concur* with Jesse's statement that dolphins are the most awesome animals in the world?

6. geography  (noun) the science that deals with the surface of the Earth, including countries, climate and land formations

Flying in a plane over a country gives you a great sense of its *geography*.

7. grueling  (adj) very tiring; exhausting

The trip to the top of the mountain was *grueling* in the snow.

Synonyms: backbreaking, arduous

8. headlong  (adverb) without delay or time for careful thought; hasty

The knight rushed *headlong* into the battle.

Other forms: *Headlong* can also be used as an adjective: He took a *headlong* dive into the bushes.

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9. hilarious (adj) extremely funny; causing loud amusement

Tito couldn't stop laughing at the *hilarious* YouTube video.

Antonyms: serious, unfunny

Other forms: The noun forms of *hilarious* can be either *hilarity* or *hilariousness*.

10. murky (adj) dark, gloomy; hard to see through

Cliff wandered through the *murky* dungeon looking for his enemy.

11. predatory (adj) living by killing and eating other animals, or by stealing from others

The pirates were a powerful *predatory* presence in the Indian Ocean.

Synonyms: thieving, vulturous

Other forms: An animal that hunts and eats another animal is a *predator* (noun).

12. resume (verb) to go on or continue after an interruption

Following a speech by the principal, the students *resumed* dancing.

Synonym: restart

Antonym: finish, stop

13. species (noun) a specific group of plants or animals that have some things in common

I thought the animal was a cat, but it was a whole different *species*.

14. unscathed (adj) totally unharmed

Despite slamming into a parked car, Ignes walked away from the bike accident *unscathed*.

Antonyms: harmed, injured

15. whim (noun) a sudden desire to do something without a particular reason; a fanciful idea

On a *whim*, Devin decided to jump into the river.

Other forms: A movie with a lot of playful humor has *whimsy* (noun), and it would be described as *whimsical* (adj).

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13D Fix the Mistake

blatant / bleak / capricious / catastrophe / concur / geography / grueling / headlong / hilarious / murky / predatory / resume / species / unscathed / whim

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 monster lived far beneath the Earth's surface in a cold, **predatory** cave.

2. Amanda is so **grueling**; it seems like she always cancels our plans at the last minute.

3. Although no one was hurt in the car crash, it certainly felt like a **whim** at the time.

4. Officer Blarney was **blatant** in the shootout because he was wearing a bulletproof vest.

5. The **catastrophe** of California is very interesting—where else in the country can you drive from the ocean to the mountains to the desert within half an hour?

6. I'd like to **concur** our conversation later; right now I have a little bit of work to do.

7. Tina rushed **hilariously** out the door, too late to even eat breakfast.

8. I think puppies are the cutest of all baby animals; do you **resume**, or are you more of a kitty fan?

9. I hope you have some better shoes; this hike is going to be **unscathed** if you wear your flip-flops the whole time.

10. The chaperones were annoyed when Mike showed up to the dance in a gorilla suit, but I thought it was **bleak**.

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11. Jamal was **headlong** offended when Erika asked him if he'd put on weight.

12. The shark is one of the fiercest **murky** animals in the world.

13. The being inside the spaceship did not appear to be human; in fact, it seemed to be a whole different **geography** of creature altogether.

14. I wouldn't call this poem laugh-out-loud funny, but parts of it have a nice sense of **species**.

15. When the sailors discovered that their boat was leaking, the situation seemed extremely **capricious**.

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13E Pick the Winner

blatant / bleak / capricious / catastrophe / concur / geography / grueling / headlong / hilarious / murky / predatory / resume / species / unscathed / whim

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. I think the most **(capricious OR hilarious)** thing I ever saw was a monkey in a clown outfit riding a tiny pony—now that's comedy!

2. Although many people could have been injured in the plane crash, the passengers all walked away **(unscathed OR bleak)**.

3. It was difficult to see the fish swimming beneath the surface of the **(grueling OR murky)** waters.

4. The mobster was a **(predatory OR blatant)** figure, forcing local businesses to pay him for protection.

5. On a **(catastrophe OR whim)**, the billionaire decided to fly to Paris for dinner.

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13F Draw the Relationships

blatant / bleak / capricious / catastrophe / concur / geography / grueling / headlong / hilarious / murky / predatory / resume / species / unscathed / whim

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

thieving	easy	continue	predatory
resume			headlong
	grueling	hasty	

.....

2

unfunny	hilarious	obvious	light
concur			blatant
	murky	disagree	

.....

3

whim	catastrophe	unscathed	impulse
injured			capricious
	fiasco	steady	

.....

4

capricious	landscape	geography	hopeless
agree			concur
	bleak	changing	

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13G Understanding What You Read

blatant / bleak / capricious / catastrophe / concur / geography / grueling / headlong / hilarious / murky / predatory / resume / species / unscathed / whim

Read the passage below. Then answer the questions.

The Last Great Race on Earth

Every year, dozens of people pack up their dogsleds and take off across Alaska for a grueling race. The annual race, called the Iditarod, stretches 1,150 miles between the cities of Anchorage and Nome. Racers, known as mushers, cross over many different kinds of geography, from open, sunny plains to bleak forests. The Iditarod can take anywhere from nine days to more than a month to complete, depending on a musher's experience and the speed of his or her dogs. The race, which is sometimes called "The Last Great Race on Earth," draws the attention of journalists and sports fans from around the world.

Racing in the Iditarod is not something people do on a whim. Preparing for the race takes a lot of time and concentration. Mushers must be ready to face capricious weather, with temperatures that often drop well below zero. For parts of the course, swirling snowdrifts create murky conditions in which the entire world resembles a blank canvas. A racer who has not prepared for such extreme conditions is likely to meet with catastrophe.

Each team consists of one musher and up to 16 dogs. The mushers wear thick parkas and sleep in heavy sleeping bags that are made to withstand the punishing temperatures. Although the race passes through several towns, there are long stretches of the route in which the mushers are all alone in the Alaskan wilderness. Despite the danger and difficulty involved, everyone who has raced in the Iditarod concurs that it is an experience he or she will never forget.

1. Why does the author describe the Iditarod as grueling?

- (A) The race presents many difficulties.
- (B) There are many competitors in the race.
- (C) Dogs are not very good at pulling sleds.
- (D) The race can last for several months.

2. Based on information in the passage, you can guess that

- (A) The mushers ride the dogs.
- (B) The mushers run beside their dogs.
- (C) The mushers ride on the dogsled.
- (D) The mushers help the dogs pull the sled.



3. Read this sentence from the passage:

"The race, which is sometimes called 'The Last Great Race on Earth,' draws the attention of journalists and sports fans from around the world." Based on this sentence, you can tell that

- (A) The Iditarod course spans the entire globe.
- (B) There are no other races like the Iditarod.
- (C) Journalists often race in the Iditarod.
- (D) Most non-journalists do not pay attention to the Iditarod.

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4. Read this sentence from the passage:

“For parts of the course, swirling snowdrifts create murky conditions in which the entire world resembles a blank canvas.” The author means that

- (A) Visibility is poor in parts of the course.
- (B) Sections of the race involve painting pictures.
- (C) Much of the world has trouble seeing the Iditarod.
- (D) Mushers sometimes lose their minds during the race.

5. How long does the Iditarod last?

- (A) One year
- (B) Nine days
- (C) More than a month
- (D) It varies from racer to racer.

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13H Thinking Creatively

blatant / bleak / capricious / catastrophe / concur / geography / grueling / headlong / hilarious / murky / predatory / resume / species / unscathed / whim

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

1. Describe a **bleak** situation you've found yourself in, and how you got out of it.

2. What's the most **hilarious** (and classroom-appropriate) joke you know?

3. Write the opening sentence to a book called *Annie*, **Unscathed**.

4. If you could do anything right now on a **whim**, what would you choose to do?

5. On your way home from school, you encounter a **predatory** animal that has escaped from the zoo. What do you do?

Word Breakdown

Grueling is an unusual word, because only the *-ing* form of the word exists in regular usage. It comes from the word *gruel*, meaning "to exhaust or punish." A more common meaning of the word *gruel*, however, is "a thin, watery porridge or oatmeal." It's what the orphans eat in Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist*. The words may not be related by meaning, but being an orphan and eating gruel every day would certainly be grueling.

The word *species* is a Latin word, meaning "appearance." In the 1700s, a Swedish scientist named Carl Linnaeus created a system for naming species of plants and animals called "binomial nomenclature." Scientists still use Linnaeus's system today. The Roots frontman Black Thought once cautioned against violence in hip-hop, warning that "emcee species are endangered like dolphins / Rappers are spitting nails into their own coffins."