

Name: _____ Date: _____

Go to Scope
Online to listen
to the words
and definitions
read aloud!

Vocabulary:

Sherlock Holmes and the Midnight Killer

1. **autopsy (AW-top-see)** *noun*; When someone dies and it's not clear why, a medical examiner might perform an autopsy: a surgical examination of the person's body to discover the cause of death.

2. **contorted (kuhn-TAWRT-id)** *adjective*; To contort is to twist, bend out of shape, or strain in an unnatural way. A contorted tree has curves and kinks in its limbs. A bad storm might make the image on your TV screen contorted. If a basketball player gets injured during a game, he might fall to the floor, his face contorted in pain.

3. **coroner (KAWR-uh-ner)** *noun*; A coroner is a public official who investigates sudden, suspicious, or violent deaths. He or she is responsible for identifying the body and issuing the death certificate. If a coroner is also a medical examiner, he or she might perform an autopsy.

4. **distraught (dih-STRAWT)** *adjective*; Someone who is distraught is so deeply upset or worried that he or she can't think clearly or behave normally.

5. **illuminating (ih-LOO-muh-ney-ting)** *adjective*; The verb *illuminate* (ih-LOO-muh-neyt) means "to brighten with light" or "to make something clear or easier to understand."

If you say that something is illuminating, you mean that it is highly informative or has made you aware of something you weren't aware of before. An illuminating TV show about sharks might teach you all kinds of new information and make you see sharks in a new light, so to speak.

6. **schemer (SKEEM-er)** *noun*; To scheme (skeem) is to make a plan to do or get something, especially in a secret or dishonest way. Schemers are people who scheme; they form sneaky plans.

- 7. ventilator (VEN-til-ey-ter)** *noun*; The verb *ventilate* (VEN-til-eyt) means “to allow fresh air to enter and move through.” A ventilator is a device that lets fresh air from outside into a room or building and lets the old air out.

“How to Think Like Sherlock”

- 8. assume (uh-SOOM)** *verb*; As it is used in the article, *assume* means “to think that something is true or probably true without any verification or proof.” If you’ve always assumed that guacamole is disgusting because of the way it looks, you should give it a try. You might find it yummy, but you won’t know until you taste it.

- 9. bias (BAHY-us)** *noun*; If you have a bias, you support or oppose one person or thing over another person or thing. Biases can sometimes cause you to be close-minded or treat people unfairly.

If your neighbor has lived in your town for 60 years and doesn’t like how much the town has grown, she might have a bias *against* change. If you have a bias *toward* vampire novels, you prefer to read vampire stories over other kinds of books.

- 10. instinct (IN-stinkt)** *noun*; An instinct is a natural response—a way of behaving that is not learned but just happens without having to thinking about it. Cats are born with hunting instincts (you don’t have to teach a cat how to catch a mouse) just like you are born with the instinct to be cautious around a fire.

Directions: On the back of this page, list any other words from the play or article whose definitions you are not sure about. For each word, use context clues to try to figure out the meaning. Then look up the word in a few different dictionaries. Discuss the meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence.

Vocabulary Practice

Sherlock Holmes and the Midnight Killer

Directions: Rewrite each sentence using a form of one of the words in the box. There are two words you will not use.

instinct ventilator assume coroner bias

1. My big sister says that I shouldn't accept everything I read on Facebook as true.

2. A feeling in the park ranger's gut told her to back away from the snake slowly.

3. The school newspaper made sure not to favor one student council president candidate over another.

Directions: Underline the boldfaced word in each pair that best completes the sentence.

4. During the **coroner/autopsy**, scientists determined that the whale died of natural causes.

5. Jeremy's body looked **contorted/distraught** as he squeezed through the narrow opening in the gate.

6. The police called the **coroner/ventilator** when they realized there had been a death at the scene.

7. After the hurricane, volunteers helped the **distraught/illuminating** homeowners make repairs.

8. "What an **illuminating/contorted** read that was!" Sara said, closing her book.

9. When my family plays Chinese checkers, my dad is a **schemer/coroner**, always plotting to block my moves.