



Let's read and reflect :

The story 'War' reveals how war shatters the hearts of the affected families. Now, think about how it would feel to be misunderstood or wrongly judged. How would you react if your honesty is questioned? Let's read 'A Piece of String' by Guy de Maupassant, a story that depicts the pain of being falsely accused.

A Piece of String

– Guy de Maupassant

Along all the roads around Goderville, the peasants and their wives were coming to the town because it was market day. Some led a cow or a calf by a cord, and their wives, walking behind the animal, whipped it with a leafy branch to hasten its progress. In the public square of Goderville, there was a crowd, a throng of human beings and animals.



Hauchecome had just arrived at Goderville, and he was walking towards the public square. Then he saw a little piece of string on the ground. He

thought that everything useful ought to be picked up. He took the bit of thin cord from the ground and began to roll it carefully. Then he noticed Malandain, on the **threshold** of his door, looking at him. They were on bad terms with each other. Hauchecome was seized with shame to be seen thus by his enemy. He concealed his find quickly in his trousers pocket. He pretended to be looking on the ground for something else. Then, he went towards the market.

He was soon lost in the noisy crowd. Soon, the square was deserted. At the **tavern**, the great hall was full of people eating. An appetising odour of roast meat rose from the

While we read

- Why were the peasants and their wives coming to the town?
- How does Hauchecome behave when he notices Malandain watching him?
- 'He concealed his find quickly in his trousers pocket.' What does the word 'find' refer to in this sentence?

My words

My questions

hearth which made everybody's mouth water. The dishes were passed and emptied, as were the jugs of cider. The peasants discussed the crops, and their purchases and sales. The weather was favourable for the green things but not for the wheat.

Suddenly the drum beat in the courtyard outside the tavern. Everybody rose, except a few, and ran to the door or to the windows, their mouths still full. After the public crier had ceased his drumbeating, he called out in a jerky voice:

"This is hereby made known to the inhabitants of Goderville, and to all persons present at the market: There was lost this morning on the road, between nine and ten o'clock, a black leather **pocketbook** containing five hundred francs and some business papers. The finder is requested to return the same with all haste to the Mayor's office. There will be twenty francs reward."

Then the man went away and the peasants began to talk of this event. They discussed the chances of finding or not finding the pocketbook. They were finishing their coffee when a chief of the **gendarmes** appeared.

He enquired, "Is Mr Hauchecome here?" Hauchecome, seated at the other end of the table, replied, "Here I am."

And the officer resumed: "Mr Hauchecome, will you please accompany me to the Mayor's office? The Mayor would like to talk to you." The peasant, surprised and

disturbed, set out, repeating, "Here I am, here I am."

The Mayor was awaiting him, seated on an armchair. He was, a stout, serious man who spoke in **pompous** phrases. "Mr Hauchecome," said he, "you were seen this morning to pick up, on the road, the lost pocketbook."

While we read

- d. What did the peasants discuss at the tavern?
- e. What did the public crier announce?
- f. Why did the Mayor summon Hauchecome to his office?

My words

My questions





The countryman was astounded. He looked at the Mayor. He was terrified by this suspicion resting on him.

"Me? Me? Me pick up the pocketbook?"

"Yes, you, yourself."

"Word of honour, I

never heard of it."

"But you were seen."

"I was seen, me? Who says he saw me?"

"Mr Malandain, the harness-maker."

The old man remembered, understood and flushed with anger.

"Ah, he saw me, he saw me pick up this string here, Your Honour." And **rummaging** in his pocket, he drew out the little piece of string.

But the Mayor, **incredulous**, shook his head.

"You will not make me believe, Mr Hauchecome, that Mr Malandain, who is a man worthy of **credence**, mistook this cord for a pocketbook. After picking up the object, you stood there, looking a long while in the mud to see if any piece of money had fallen out."

The good old man choked with **indignation** and fear.

"How can anyone tell such lies to take away an honest man's reputation!"

There was no use in his protesting; nobody believed him. He was confronted with Malandain, who repeated and maintained his affirmation. At his own request Hauchecome was searched; nothing was found on him. Finally, the Mayor, very much perplexed, discharged him.

As he left the Mayor's office, the old man was surrounded

While we read

- g. Why did Hauchecome feel terrified?
- h. What did the Mayor say when Hauchecome showed him the piece of string?
- i. How did the people react when Hauchecome told his story about the piece of string?

My words

My questions

and questioned by the villagers. He began to tell the story of the string. No one believed him. They laughed at him.

He went along, stopping his friends, showing his pockets turned inside out to prove that he had nothing. They said: "Old rascal, get out!"

The next day about one o'clock in the afternoon, an employee in a shop returned the pocketbook. The man claimed to have found the object in the road. Not knowing how to read, he had given it to his employer.

The news spread through the neighbourhood. Hauchecome was informed of it. He immediately began to recount his story with its happy climax. He was in triumph. He talked of his adventure all day long. He told it on the highway to people who were passing by, in the wine shop to people who were drinking there and to persons coming out of church the following Sunday. He stopped strangers to tell them about it.

He was calm now, and yet something disturbed him. People had the air of joking while they listened. They did not seem convinced. He seemed to feel that remarks were being made behind his back.

The next Tuesday, he went to the market at Goderville, just to discuss the case. Malandain, standing at his door, began to laugh on seeing him pass. When he was seated at the table in the tavern, he began to explain the affair.

A horse dealer called out to him, "Come, come, old fellow, that's an old trick; I know all about your piece of string!"

Hauchecome stammered: "But since the pocketbook was found..."

The other man replied: "Shut up, there is one that finds and there is one that reports. At any rate you are mixed up with it."



While we read

- j. Why did the person who found the pocketbook take it to his employer?
- k. Did the people believe Hauchecome's story after the pocketbook was found? Give reasons.
- l. 'At any rate you are mixed up with it.' What did the horse dealer mean by the statement?

My words

My questions

The peasant stood choking. He understood. They accused him of having the pocketbook returned by an **accomplice**. He tried to protest. All the table began to laugh. He could not finish his dinner and went away in the midst of jeers.

He went home ashamed and indignant, choking with anger and confusion. His innocence was impossible to prove. And he was stricken to the heart by the injustice of the suspicion.

Then he began to recount the adventure again, prolonging his history every day. Each time he added new reasons, more energetic protestations, more solemn oaths.

"Those are lying excuses," they said behind his back.

The people now made him talk about the string to amuse them. His mind, touched to the depth, began to weaken.

Towards the end of December, he took to his bed. He died in the first days of January, and in the **delirium** of his death struggles he kept claiming his innocence, **reiterating**: "A piece of string, a piece of string, look—here it is, Your Honour, the Mayor."

While we read

m. What was the impact of the injustice of the suspicion on Hauchecome?

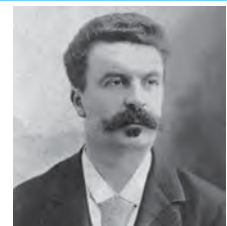
n. What were Hauchecome's last words? Explain their significance.

My words

My questions

About the author

Guy de Maupassant (1850–1893) was a French author, celebrated as a master of the short story. He has written over 300 short stories, six novels, three travel books, and a volume of verse. Maupassant was the subject of one of Leo Tolstoy's essays on art: *The Works of Guy de Maupassant*. 'The Diamond Necklace' is one of Maupassant's best-known stories.



Let's rewind:

1. Hauchecome picks up a piece of string, but his innocent action is misunderstood. Have you had a similar experience of being misunderstood by others? Describe your personal experience or that of someone you know.
2. Does Malandain actually believe that Hauchecome took the pocketbook? Give reasons.
3. Hauchecome keeps on claiming his innocence until his death. Write a short paragraph on his sense of honour and dignity.



Let's recall and recreate:



1. Hauchecome has a strong and determined nature. His sense of justice impels him to defend himself tirelessly. He tries to justify himself even when everyone mistrusts him. Prepare a **character sketch** of Hauchecome.



2. In 'A Piece of String' Hauchecome dies in shame and humiliation because of the attitude of society. Prepare a **write-up** on how society can make or break an individual, drawing on the story and your personal knowledge and experience.



3. Hauchecome is devastated when he is falsely accused of stealing the pocketbook. No one believes him. He couldn't control his emotions. He pours out his feelings in his diary. Prepare the likely **diary entry**.



4. The news of the missing pocketbook spreads like wildfire and Hauchecome is seen as the likely thief. You are an inhabitant of Goderville and you come across Hauchecome on your way to the market. Prepare the likely **conversation** between you and Hauchecome.



5. After Hauchecome dies, the Mayor appears deeply remorseful and troubled. He writes a letter of condolence to Hauchcome's wife. Write the likely **letter**.



Let's play with words:

Activity 1

Read the sentences given below.

1. Hauchecome couldn't **put up with** the ridicule of the villagers.
2. The stout passenger **put on** his fawn coat.

Did you notice the words highlighted in these sentences?

These are called

Can you guess the meaning of the phrasal verbs from the context?

- put up with:
- put on:

As part of a campaign to create awareness on the consequences of war, your school conducted a speech competition. Let's read the script of one of the speeches.

Good morning, everyone.

I am here to put across my views on the consequences of war. It's high time that the war-mongering nations put aside their aggression and united for a better tomorrow. For centuries, common people, including children, have had to put up with the atrocities of war, but enough is enough. Many suggestions to end war once and for all have been put forward by great thinkers and leaders. There may be differences of opinion, but these should all be put aside to achieve a common goal, the goal of peace. A peaceful life is the birthright of every citizen. So, dear friends, put off all your other commitments for the day. Let's put in our best efforts to organise a flash mob to spread awareness about the consequences of war. Dear friends... put up a strong resistance to war... it's your right!

Let me wind up my speech. Thank you.



- a. Now, identify the phrasal verbs in the speech and write them in the table, along with their meanings. One has been done for you.

Phrasal verbs	Meaning
put across	to communicate

- b. The following passage is incomplete. Complete the passage choosing from the phrases given in the brackets.**

For children who have violence, exploitation, or abuse, the trauma may not subside even after years. Child victims have limited knowledge of their rights, and at times, they find it difficult to their inner trauma to others. They may also struggle to their fear of judgment and isolation. Without proper guidance, they might not know how to their need for help and support. It is important not to the concerns of child victims, as acknowledging their trauma is the first step to healing. Healthcare professionals should clear guidelines on how to support children who have experienced violence, ensuring that they know help is available.



(put forward, put across, put up with, put aside, put out, put down)

Activity 2

- a. Read the following passage and fill in the blanks using appropriate words from those given in the brackets.**

The Sahayata Foundation is a prominent organisation dedicated to promoting social justice through education. It works to provide quality schooling for children from underprivileged backgrounds, ensuring every child's(a)..... to good education. Providing such children with education is the(b)..... way to protect them from exploitation. By fostering an inclusive environment, the Foundation aims to(c)..... the issues which hinder the development of the children. Exploitation of all(d)..... has to be prevented. The foundation organises campaigns in which professionals(e)..... the people. This should

make society(f)..... and considerate to the marginalised. As children grow in confidence, they become advocates for the community, inspiring others to join the fight for equality and social justice.









(address, right, kind/kinds)

Each of the words in brackets has been used twice to fill in the blanks. Have these words been used in exactly the same sense both times? Explain.

b. Now, match the words in column B with their meanings in column A and C.

A	B	C
a group of things with similar characteristics	right	a formal speech delivered to an audience
a legal or moral entitlement	address	showing generosity and consideration to others
throw light on/ begin to deal with	kind	true or correct as a fact

As you can see, these words have been used in two different contexts in two different senses. What do we call such words?

	plant			letter	
	bark			bat	

Homonyms are words that have the same spelling or pronunciation, but an entirely different meaning.

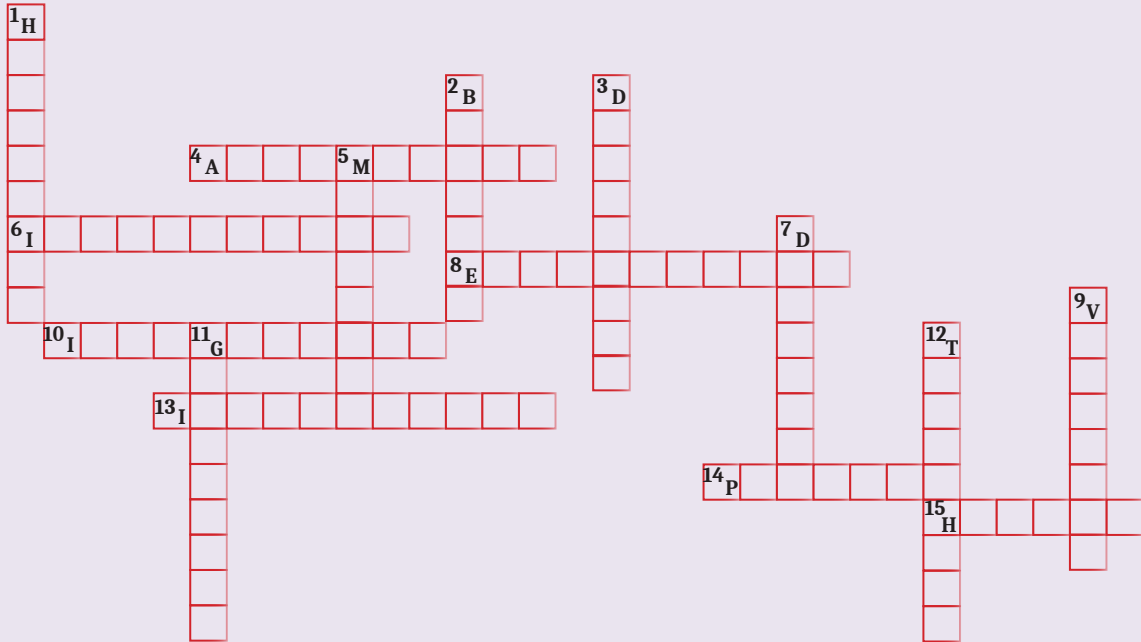
c. Fill in the blanks using appropriate homonyms. The letters of the words have been jumbled in brackets.

- The was a lot of fun, and the weather was also outside. (i/f/a/r)
- The security personnel will soon the door which is to the reception. (l/c/e/o/s)
- The secretary took thirty to prepare the of the meeting. (n/t/i/m/e/s/u)
- The information about the missing person is that he was swept away by the strong of water.
(r/c/u/r/t/n/e)
- It was a small....., but it had always been maintained by the people of the locality.
(l/e/w/l)

Activity 3

Complete the Crossword Puzzle.

Spaces



Across

4. one who helps another in a crime (10)
6. unable to believe (11)
8. ashamed or shy (11)
10. anger (11)
13. strange (11)
14. too solemn or grand (7)
15. fireplace (6)

Down

1. causing distress (9)
2. a bubble on the skin caused by friction, burns or infection (7)
3. twisted out of shape (9)
5. black dress worn when a close relative or friend dies (8)
7. a disturbed state of mind (8)
9. strength (8)
11. the armed French police (9)
12. the entrance to a building or room (9)



Let's analyse:

Activity 1

Read the following sentence.

- The woman, bundled in a corner, *had been listening* till he finished speaking.

What is the main action in the sentence?

The woman had been

When did the action begin ?

The action was in progress till

Thus, this sentence tells us about an action that began in the past and continued till a certain point of time in the past.



The **past perfect continuous tense** is used to indicate an action that began before a certain point in the past and continued up to that point of time. We use the '**had + been + -ing**' form of the verb to denote an action in the past perfect continuous tense.

Now, let's read what Hauchecome says.

What is the main action in the statement?

.....

When did Hauchecome begin to speak about his innocence?

.....

How long has the action been going on?

.....

Is he trying to prove his innocence at the time of his statement?

.....

This sentence tells us about an action that began in the past and is in progress at the time of speaking.



The **present perfect continuous tense** denotes an action which began at a certain point in the past and continues at the time of speaking. We use the '**has/have + been + -ing**' form of the verb to denote an action in the present perfect continuous tense.

I have been trying
to prove my
innocence for
over a week
now.



a. Read the conversation given below.

Dad : Arjun, you have been avoiding us and your friends for weeks now. What's happening?

Arjun : I have been trying to handle things on my own, Dad, but it's difficult.

Mom : Until last week, we had been living with the impression that you were fine.

Arjun : What happened then, Mom?

Mom : We got a call from your college informing us about your bad company and your use of drugs. They said they were shocked by the change in your behaviour. We've been waiting to talk to you since then.

Dad : You have been hiding a lot of things from us, Arjun. Why on earth did you start taking drugs?

Arjun : I'm sorry. I'd been trying to stay away from drugs till my new friends persuaded me to try it out. Now, I understand it was wrong.

Mom : You had been working so hard towards your dream of becoming a pilot until you joined the hostel. What happened to you, my dear?

Arjun : Please help me. I don't think I can deal with this by myself. Addiction has been tightening its grip on me ever since I started using drugs.

Dad : Don't worry son. We'll get through this together.



Pick out the verbs in the present perfect continuous tense and in the past perfect continuous tense in the above conversation and complete the table.

Present Perfect Continuous tense	Past Perfect Continuous tense

b. Fill in the blanks with appropriate tense forms given in brackets.

1. My mother (had been teaching/has been teaching) in a college for 20 years before her retirement.
2. I (have been reading/had been reading) this book for almost two hours now.

3. We (had been living/have been living) in Rome before we shifted to our hometown in Kerala.
4. It (has been raining/had been raining) since morning and so the cricket match is cancelled.

Activity 2

Read the sentences given below.

- *The finder is requested to return the pocketbook **either** to the Mayor's office **or** to the police.*
- ***Neither** the Mayor **nor** the villagers believed Hauchecome.*

Can you split the first sentence into two? Let's try.

- a. The finder is requested to return the pocketbook to the Mayor's office.
- b.

Which are the connecting words used to combine the above sentences?

.....

Now, shall we split the second sentence into two? Let's try.

- a. The Mayor did not believe Hauchecome.
- b.

What are the connecting words that combine the above sentences?

.....

What do we call these connecting words?

Connecting words like **either...or** and **neither...nor** are conjunctions.



Either... or and **neither...nor** are pairs of conjunctions. They correlate words, phrases or clauses of equal importance. Such pairs of conjunctions are called correlative conjunctions. 'Either...or' is used to indicate two possibilities or choices. 'Neither... nor' connects two negative alternatives.

Now, take a look at the sentences given below. Can you identify the subject and the verb in each sentence?

- a. Neither the woman's husband nor her friends understand the depth of her sorrow.

Subject – the woman's husband, her friends

Verb -

b. Neither the villagers nor the Mayor trusts Hauchecome.

Subject -

Verb -

In the first sentence, the subjects of the sentence are 'the woman's husband' and 'her friends.'

Which subject is closer in position to the verb?

.....

Is the subject closer to the verb in its singular or plural form?

.....

Here, the subject (her friends) which is closer in position to the verb is plural. Hence the verb in the sentence takes the plural form.

Now, consider the second sentence. Can you identify the subject and the verb?

.....

Identify the subject closer in position to the verb.

.....

Here, the subject closer in position to the verb is in the singular form.

What should be the form of the verb?

What do you infer from the above sentences?

1. **Either...or** and **neither...nor** function as conjunctions. They connect two grammatically equal elements.
2. The verb agrees with the noun closer to it.
 - a. If both nouns are singular, the verb takes the singular form. It may be remembered that unlike nouns, verbs with 's' or 'es' suffix are considered singular.
 - b. If both nouns are plural, the verb takes the plural form.
 - c. If one noun is singular and the other plural, the verb agrees with the noun closer to it.



a. **Fill in the blanks using appropriate words chosen from those given in the brackets.**

1. The woman was (either/neither) twisting and wriggling or growling like a wild animal.
2. His innocence was neither easy to prove (or/nor) recognised by others.
3. The pocketbook was (either/neither) taken by Hauchecome (or/nor) seen by Malandain.

4. You may (either/neither) win (or/nor) lose the game. Participation is the spirit of the game.
5. Neither New York nor London(is/are) a city in India.
6. Neither the teacher nor the children (was/were) in the school bus.

Activity 3

Look at the following sentence from the story 'War'.

The one who **had had** his son at the front since the first day of the war sighed.

Which is the expression given in bold?.....

Now, look at the sentences given below and analyse the expressions given in bold type.

1. Rani is late for the evening session. She **has had** a headache all day.
2. Shanu and Rahul are preparing the script now. They **have had** a discussion with the author.

What does the second statement in each set indicate?

.....

Such statements are used to indicate something that happened in the immediate past. In the above sentences, the initial verbs (has/have) serve as auxiliary verbs and the latter (had) is the main verb.

Now, read the following statements and analyse the expressions given in bold type.

1. Last weekend Prabith just wanted to relax because he **had had** a busy week.
2. The director told me that he **had had** a meeting with the producer.

What is the significance of the expressions given in bold in each sentence?

.....

Such expressions are used to indicate an action that happened at an earlier point in the past before another action.



Let's converse:



Activity 1

Read the passage given below.

The peasants of Goderville did not believe Hauchecome. They accused him of stealing the pocketbook. This false accusation deeply saddened Hauchecome and sparked a heated argument between him and another villager. How would they argue? Let's see. Let's read the transcript of the argument, shall we?

- Hauchecome** : Why should I take someone's pocketbook?
- Villager** : That we don't know, but it's clear as day that you took it.
- Hauchecome** : Do you have any evidence to support your accusation? You can't just accuse me without proof.
- Villager** : Of course we do. Malandain saw you with his own eyes.
- Hauchecome** : You're too quick to judge! Could he see what I picked up from where he stood?

a. Pick out the expressions used by Hauchecome and the villager to present their arguments.

.....

.....

What are some other expressions that we may use in an argument? A few are given below. You may add more to the list.

- I'd beg to differ...
- It's not necessarily that way...
- My point of view is diametrically opposite...
- That's not a valid argument...
- Clearly, we have different perspectives on this...
- I'm not yet convinced...
-
-

b. Hauchecome and the villager engage in a heated argument. Hauchecome defends himself against the accusation. But the villager insists that Hauchecome is guilty of stealing the pocketbook. Using the expressions given above, prepare the draft of the argument between the two.



Activity 2

Read the passage given below.

The stout man who had lost his son in the war, is deeply affected by the woman's question to him. Unable to control his grief, he begins to weep. When he regains his composure, he apologises to the other passengers for his emotional outburst. How would he have apologised to them? He might have used expressions like the following:-

- I am sorry for this sudden outburst...
- I apologise for behaving like this...
- I regret my outburst...

Some other ways of extending and accepting apologies are given below. You may add to the list.

Extending an apology

- I didn't mean to hurt your feelings...
- Please accept my apologies for...
- I take full responsibility for the error...
- I'm really sorry about what I said...
- I deeply regret what I said...
- I owe you an apology ...
- I'm sincerely sorry for the misunderstanding...
-

Accepting an apology

- It's okay. You didn't mean any harm...
- That's all right. It doesn't matter...
- Never mind. I quite understand...
- It's okay. You couldn't help it...
-



- The woman who asked the stout man about the death of his son now feels sorry for bringing up such a sensitive topic. She extends her sincere apologies and the stout man graciously accepts her apology. Using the expressions provided above, draft a conversation between the two.



Let's team up:

Group project

The problems caused by inequality and injustice seem to be present everywhere in the world today. It is crucial to create awareness about such issues and to foster the values of compassion and empathy to make our world a better place. Let's organise a seminar on 'Compassion in Action: Exploring the Effects of Kindness and Empathy.'

What are the steps involved in conducting a seminar? Let's discuss.

The following steps are suggested.

1. Planning the Seminar

A. Define the objectives and the outcome.

B. List the range of sub topics.

The following sub topics may be selected:

Group 1 : Compassion in times of crisis (examples of ordinary people helping others in difficult times)

Group 2 : Compassion in the lives and works of famous people who have fought injustice

Group 3 : Compassion in Art and Literature, with reference to popular stories that highlight the need for empathy and kindness

Group 4 : Compassion in the global arena, highlighting issues such as refugee aid, disaster relief and the need to offer voluntary service

C. Fix the date, time and venue of the seminar, and inform the target audience.

2. Content preparation

A. Collect data from a variety of sources.

B. Prepare multimedia presentation materials.

C. Review and finalise the content.

3. Day of the Seminar

A. Each group presents their seminar paper.

B. Post-presentation: the paper stands open for discussion.

4. Follow-up activity

Publish the Seminar Report: Create a digital record of the presentation and upload it on the school blog.





accomplice (n)	:	one who helps another in a crime/offence
blister (n)	:	a bubble on the skin caused by friction, burns or infection
credence (n)	:	trust
cross (adj)	:	annoyed
delirium (n)	:	a disturbed state of mind
distorted (adj)	:	twisted out of shape
embarrassed (adj)	:	ashamed or shy
fawn (adj)	:	yellowish-brown
gendarmes (n)	:	the armed police (French)
harrowing (adj)	:	causing distress
hearth (n)	:	fireplace
incongruous (adj)	:	strange
incredulous (adj)	:	unable to believe
indignation (n)	:	anger
mourning (n)	:	formal black dress worn when a close friend or relative dies
mutter (v)	:	to say something in a low voice
pocketbook (n)	:	a purse/wallet
pompous (adj)	:	too solemn or grand
reiterate (v)	:	to repeat
retort (v)	:	to reply in a sharp or angry manner
rummage (v)	:	to search hastily
stoically (adv)	:	to suffer without complaining or showing emotions
tavern (n)	:	an inn or pub
threshold (n)	:	the entrance to a building or room
venture (v)	:	to undertake something risky
vitality (n)	:	strength
wriggle (v)	:	to twist and turn