

Unit 2 - Mime in a Box

2A Introduction

A mime is a street performer who entertains people on sidewalks and in parks. Unlike other performers, a mime never speaks while performing. Instead, a mime will act out a scene using only his or her hands and body. The classic mime paints his or her face white, and might wear a striped shirt. One of the most famous moves mimes do is to pretend they are stuck in a box.

2B Song Lyrics

Now I remember back in '99,
I'd **strive** and try to be the best mime alive.
For those who don't know, let me lay it down:
A mime makes moves, but doesn't make a sound.
I was talented, it's like my fingers could talk,
I'd stay out on the streets, **linger** till dark.
I would **ignite** the crowd, spark flames,
They're excited now, "Wow," they're so amazed.
I'd go on for days, other performers I'd **dominate**,
Rule over them, I'm on a holiday.
I had my own **distinct** style, there was nothing like it,
Other mimes would watch me, they couldn't stop me.
They'd try to **mimic** when I'd get on my tip-toes,
They tried to copy it like Kinko's.
I was the thing they repeat like a parakeet,
They're just a funny imitation or a **parody**.

He's just a mime in a box.

Oh-oh.

Now sometimes I feel... like I'm in a box.

Oh-oh.

His world is invisible.

x2

I started out in the country, **rural** Nebraska,
What did Delaware? Idaho, Alaska.
I moved to New Jersey, and not for the weather,
For more **diversity**, different kinds of things together.
Then I moved to Brooklyn, which was **urban**,
A city with buildings and taxis swerving.
I was better than most, but my **objective** and goal
Forever was to be the best mime ever to blow.
One day I saw another mime, and I almost died,
Her style was **superior**, better than mine!
She was going wild, she had **ample** moves,
More than enough, she could give out samples, dude.
My dream was through, but as I walked away, she said,
"Wait, you want to work together and **collaborate**?"
So to keep it short, and be **concise**:
I was cool alone, but together we were cold as ice.

Hook



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2C Words Defined

ample / collaborate / concise / distinct / diversity / dominate / ignite / linger / mimic / objective / parody / rural / strive / superior / urban

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. **ample** (adj) plenty; more than enough

Ms. Vanessa is very nice; she provided us with *ample* time to finish the test.
Synonyms: plentiful, fairly large

2. **collaborate** (verb) to work together, especially on a piece of work or art

The four scientists collaborated to write a paper on black holes.
Other forms: People who collaborate are *collaborators*; they form a *collaboration* (noun), and they show off a *collaborative* (adj.) spirit.

3. **concise** (adj) short and to the point; saying a lot in a few words

Unlike her husband, who often rambled on about random things, Lee kept stories *concise* and to the point.
Synonyms: short and sweet, brief
Other forms: You can say something *concisely* (adverb).

4. **distinct** (adj) different; not the same as others

The smell in my grandparents' house was very *distinct*. It smelled like a combination of oatmeal, shoe polish and cat hair.
Antonyms: indistinct, same
Other forms: You can *distinctly* (adverb) remember something that's fresh in your mind. Distinct is also related to *distinction* (adj.), which is what a brave firefighter might get to honor him for a special service.

5. **diversity** (noun) having different types together; variety

You can tell the *diversity* of my interests from the books I buy: I read everything from nonfiction to comic books.
Antonyms: sameness, uniformity
Other forms: You can have a *diverse* (adj.) wardrobe if you have many types of clothes.

6. **dominate** (verb) to rule over, control, or tower above

Because he is nearly seven-and-a-half feet tall, Yao Ming *dominates* most of his competitors on the court.
Other forms: Someone or something that dominates is *dominant* (adj.).

7. **ignite** (verb) to set on fire; to burn

After twenty minutes, Emilio was able to ignite a piece of paper using only a magnifying glass and the rays of the sun.
Other forms: A piece of wood that can catch fire is *ignitable* (adj.).

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8. linger (verb) to stay in place longer than expected

The party was supposed to end at midnight, but a few people *lingered* until nearly three o'clock in the morning.

Synonyms: to stay on, loiter

9. mimic (verb) to imitate or copy an action (often to make fun of someone)

Sentence: As soon as our boss left the room, Esteban began to *mimic* him by squinting his eyes and saying, "woonderful woork boooys."

Synonyms: to mock, impersonate

Other forms: Mimic can also be a noun, as in: That parrot is a talented *mimic* (noun).

10. objective (noun) a goal or purpose

The *objective* of the Army Rangers was to enter the house and find the stash of money without firing their weapons.

Other forms: Objective can also be an adjective meaning "not influenced by personal thoughts or feelings," as in: The judge was *objective* (adj.), he never let his personal feelings get in the way of the law.

11. parody (noun) a funny imitation

The show *Saturday Night Live* did a *parody* of the President's speech just three days after the real thing.

Other forms: You *parody* (verb) something if you imitate it for laughs, especially if you are trying to say something about the original.

12. rural (adj) out in the country or related to the country.

When you think about America, you might picture Times Square, but much of the country is *rural*, covered in trees, grass and farms.

Synonyms: rustic

Antonyms: urban, city-like

13. strive (verb) to try hard; to struggle to accomplish something

Danny always *strives* to be polite, which is probably why he is so well-liked.

Antonyms: give up, surrender

14. superior (adj) better than; above average

Your writing is neat, but if you look closely, it's obvious that Wanda has *superior* hand writing.

Synonyms: excellent, distinguished

Antonyms: worse, inferior

15. urban (adj) having to do with the city; city-like

With so many interesting buildings, Tokyo is a great place to study *urban* architecture.

Antonyms: rural

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2D Fix the Mistake

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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. If you **dominate** someone, you do the same things that he does.

2. John wanted to make sure his guests had enough to eat, so he had bought **concise** snacks.

3. Most **rural** areas have public transportation, like buses and subways.

4. The **parody** of the scavenger hunt was to find as many hidden toys as possible within twenty minutes.

5. Big dogs often **ignite** smaller dogs when they play together.

6. Adisa was always **urban** when he spoke, making his point in just a few words.

7. When you try very hard and really **linger** to achieve something, you will usually succeed, but not always.

8. With people from every country in the world, New York has amazing ethnic **parody**.

9. I have a very **ample** birthmark on my back; it kind of looks like the Nike swoosh.

10. Tanja has always lived in **urban** places like the middle of Kansas, where the nearest movie theatre is an hour away.

11. The two artists decided to **mimic** and work together on one huge painting of a frog playing Nintendo.

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12. Abdul is the kind of guy who **dominates** after a concert just in case he can meet one of the performers.

13. The two Cuban restaurants both tried to attract the same crowds, but one became more popular because it offered great food and **rural** service.

14. I had just written a serious book about global warming, but unfortunately the newspaper called it “an **objective** of a good book”.

15. You think you can **collaborate** ice? You’re crazy, lady.



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2E Pick the Winner

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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. There is a real (**diversity OR parody**) of characters in the newer Disney movies, from Ninja wombats to French bakers.

2. When the United States gets involved in another country's politics, it tends to (**ignite OR dominate**) the decision-making process, probably because it's so powerful.

3. The tough thing about making a movie is that you are forced to (**linger OR collaborate**) with lots of other people who may or may not share your vision.

4. Pedro "Flying Fish" Gomez was (**distinct OR superior**) to me when it came to swimming ability.

5. If you want to know about farming, you should check out this website: www.(**rural OR urban**).com.

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2F Draw the Relationship

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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

urban	city-like	country-like	copy
dominate			control
	mimic	rural	

.....

2

ample	worse	concise	long
superior			plenty
	individual	distinct	

.....

3

objective	goal	work together	collaborate
diversity			sameness
	strive	give up	

.....

4

superior	spark	funny imitation	parody
linger			better
	ignite	stick around	

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2G Understanding What You Read

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Read the passage below. Then answer the questions.

For many years, American car companies such as General Motors and Ford dominated the auto market, outselling cars made in Europe and Asia. As gas prices have gone up in recent years, however, more and more people have been buying smaller, more efficient Japanese-made cars. Japan-based Toyota, for example, has seen its sales increase in a way that mimics the big sales that General Motors and Ford saw in the 1960s.

Part of the success of Toyota is due to the three new hybrid cars they sell. Hybrid cars are powered by both gas and electricity. The objective is to save the owner of the car money on gas and to help protect the environment. Scientists now have ample evidence to show that pollution from cars is one of the major factors in overall air pollution. This information is partly responsible for igniting a debate about the threat of global warming.

Even if saving the environment isn't your cup of tea, hybrid cars have shown their superiority compared to standard cars when it comes to using less gas. The hybrid cars save gas in rural areas with wide-open roads, but perform especially well in urban areas. This is because the battery charges itself when the car slows down at stoplights. Will Toyota continue to outsell their American competition? You can bet that Chevy, Ford and others will strive to take back the top spot.

1. According to the text, using hybrid cars will save

- (A) the car owner money on gas and improve the speed of the car
- (B) the car owner money on gas and hurt the environment less than other cars
- (C) the environment and allow more people to drive in the city
- (D) electricity for both the car-maker and the car owner

2. According to the text, what is one reason why American cars became less popular?

- (A) The cars weren't made as well as their competitors.
- (B) Most Americans felt the American cars were simply too big.
- (C) They used more gas than other cars, and gas prices have increased.
- (D) The Japanese began to buy more and more cars as their country grew.

3. According to the text, scientists

- (A) are confident that exhaust from cars hurts the environment
- (B) are still collecting information about whether or not exhaust hurts the environment
- (C) now know that cars are causing global warming
- (D) believe that global warming can be prevented

4. Which of the following statements is NOT supported by facts from the passage?

- (A) American car companies are doing everything they can to sell more cars than the Japanese.
- (B) The battery in a hybrid car charges when the car comes to a stop.
- (C) Japanese cars use less gas than American cars, but American cars are built stronger.
- (D) The hybrid car has helped Toyota grow in popularity in America.

5. According to the text,

- (A) hybrid cars are superior in rural areas
- (B) hybrid cars are superior in urban areas
- (C) hybrid cars mimic superior cars in some rural areas
- (D) there are ample hybrid cars in urban areas

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2H Thinking Creatively

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

1. Why would someone like **concise** jokes?

2. How could a person with a quiet voice ever **dominate** a discussion?

3. What movie or TV show do you know that could be called a **parody**?

4. What was the last thing you **strived** to do?

5. Why do you prefer living in places that are **urban** or **rural**?

Word Breakdown

One easy way to remember the meaning of *superior* is to think about the “super” in the word. Another way is to think of Lake Superior, which is one of the Great Lakes, and is located farther north than all of the others. It was named Lake Superior because its position was “superior” to the other lakes.