

Unit 9 - Battle for the Road

9A Introduction

I don't know how it is where you live, but in New York City, the relationship between drivers and pedestrians can get tense at times. Some pedestrians don't like to wait for the "walk" signal; some drivers get impatient waiting for pedestrians to cross. This song takes this basic idea and pushes it further: What if this little conflict turned into a full-scale battle?

9B Song Lyrics

*It's the battle for the road! People walk, people drive,
Turning friends into foes! You don't want to be outside
When the battle for the road pops off, and don't try
To just stand there and watch—no! You've got to take sides.*

Meet Connie Walker, an **upright** citizen,
Both in the sense of being honest and innocent,
And upright because she likes to walk in
The city she lives in—she's a pedestrian.
Does Connie ever drive, though? Nope, guess again.
She walks so much her shoes are padded,
She's always on the move so they call her **nomadic**,
But she couldn't stand the constant **drone** of traffic.
The steady noise in the background really tested
Her patience, the roads in the city were **congested**,
Clogged up, backed up, and she was stressing.
The noise and the smoke made her feel aggressive,
Even **vindictive**; she wanted to get some
Revenge on the cars for blocking her **momentum**.
Yeah, her forward motion was stalled, and then some.
So as Connie walks around she keeps scheming
On ways to stop the flow of cars, to **impede** it,
Or at least get it off the street that she needed.
So she put up a fake road sign to block traffic,
And mass confusion went down and **ensued**.

Hook

Meet Tommy Carson, calm and silent,
Driving to work in his brand-new **hybrid**,
With gas and electric combined inside to keep it gliding,
Stopped, couldn't believe his eyes when
He saw the road signs in his **customary** path,
Every day he went the same way, there and back.
And he saw Connie Walker blocking the pavement,
Waving a sign, and he thought, "This is **flagrant**.
She's breaking the law and rubbing it in my face and
I'm supposed to take it?" He was **infuriated**,
Mad and shaking, but he was late.



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So he found another way and the next day came back,
With eight friends driving hatchbacks and Pontiacs.
And there was Connie relaxing, still blocking the road,
With traffic slowed to a **trickle**, just a little flow.
But she had six friends with her this time, though.
But Tommy wasn't trying to stop, he just thought,
"Why not?" And drove past Connie on the sidewalk.
Now who's breaking the law? Yelling for cops,
The pedestrians all left the spot feeling **distraught**,
Really upset, and what happens next?
Another day, another battle, another angry mood.
If the battle lasts long enough, call it a **feud**.
You'll probably hear all about it on the evening news.

Hook

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9C Words Defined

congested / customary / distraught / drone / ensue / feud / flagrant / hybrid / impede / infuriate / momentum / nomadic / trickle / upright / vindictive

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. congested (adj) overcrowded; filled too full

During rush hour, the city streets were *congested*.

Synonyms: clear, unblocked

Other forms: Because of the *congestion* (noun) in his nose, Ben had to breathe through his mouth.

2. customary (adj) usual, normal, routine

In America it isn't *customary* to leave school for lunch to go home and take a long nap.

Synonyms: usual, conventional

Antonyms: unusual, rare

Other forms: One of the *customs* (noun) of Spain is the siesta: a long nap after lunch.

3. distraught (adj) troubled and disturbed emotionally

Distraught after breaking up with her first boyfriend, Jana decided to cut off all her hair.

Synonyms: upset, agitated

Antonyms: calm, happy

4. drone (noun) 1. a remote-controlled device 2. a buzzing or humming sound that lasts for a long time 3. a male bee

1. Instead of sending in jet planes with actual pilots in them, the Air Force has been using more *drones* to drop bombs on its enemies. 2. The *drone* of the refrigerator was really annoying. 3. *Drones* are interesting creatures, since they don't gather pollen, make honey, or sting.

Other forms: *Drone* can also be a verb meaning either "to make a buzzing or humming sound" or "to speak in a dull tone of voice": While the soda machine *droned* in the hall way, the teacher *droned* on and on about the meaning of certain words in the classroom.

5. ensue (verb) to follow; to come as a result of

Someone put 1,000 live frogs in the hall at school, and total chaos *ensued*.

Synonyms: result, come next

Antonyms: precede, come before

6. feud (noun) a bitter, long-term argument or hostility

To this day, there is a *feud* over who should control the land in the Middle East.

Synonyms: conflict, quarrel

Antonyms: agreement, peace

Other forms: The two families had been *feuding* (verb) for years.

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7. flagrant  (adj) shockingly noticeable or evident, usually in a disgraceful way

Annette committed a *flagrant* error on her driving test: She forgot to put on her seatbelt.


Synonyms: striking, undisguised

Antonyms: hidden, concealed

8. hybrid  (adj) made from unlike parts; combining different elements

Some new *hybrid* vehicles run on both vegetable oil and electricity.

Other forms: *Hybrid* can also be a noun meaning either “something made from unlike parts or by combining different elements” or “the offspring of two distinct plants or animals of different varieties”: So the dog, who was a pug-Rottweiler hybrid, jumped into the back of the *hybrid*.

9. impede  (verb) to get in the way of; to interfere with the movement of

In the video game, the evil mushrooms are meant to *impede* your progress and make the level challenging.

Synonyms: slow, delay, obstruct, hinder

Antonyms: advance, encourage

10. infuriate  (verb) to make extremely angry or furious

Jasper was *infuriated* that some kids had smashed watermelons against the brick wall.

Synonyms: anger, enrage

Antonyms: make happy, please

11. momentum  (noun) the force or speed with which something moves

During summer we used to roll watermelons down a hill; by the time they reached the bottom, they had built up so much *momentum* that they’d splat right into the brick wall.

Synonyms: drive, power, thrust

12. nomadic  (adj) moving about from place to place without settling down

The old cowboy lived a *nomadic* lifestyle: He rode from town to town but never stayed anywhere for long.

Other forms: A *nomad* (noun) is someone who wanders from place to place.

13. trickle  (verb) to fall by drops or to flow in a small stream

Tears *trickled* down her cheeks when she realized that her lost dog wasn’t coming home.

Synonyms: drip, dribble

Other forms: *Trickle* can also be a noun, meaning “a small irregular quantity of something”: Kato’s income from his dog-walking business had slowed to a *trickle*.

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14. upright  (adj) 1. vertical, straight 2. good, honest

1. The dead tree no longer stood *upright*. 2. Some people think all politicians lie, but I've met a few upright politicians.

Other forms: *Upright* is a very flexible word and can be used as a noun or an adverb as well:

Standing *upright* (adverb), the football player kicked the ball through the *uprights* (noun) for a field goal.

15. vindictive  (adj) bearing a grudge; eager to take revenge

Mr. Pamplamouse was such a *vindictive* guy that if you ever said anything negative about him at all, he would be sure to spread lies behind your back.

Synonyms: vengeful, unforgiving, spiteful

Antonyms: forgiving

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9D Fix the Mistake

congested / customary / distraught / drone / ensue / feud / flagrant / hybrid / impede / infuriate / momentum / nomadic / trickle / upright / vindictive

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 courtyard always gets **infuriated** during lunch; so many people hang out there, it's difficult to walk.

2. The bitter **drone** between my mom and her brother started when my grandpa died and left her all his money.

3. A panic **trickled** when the stock market crashed and millions of people lost their life savings.

4. Antoine's latest invention is a **feud** of a toaster and a cell phone that he calls the "Toasty Talker."

5. The wild chimpanzee became **impeded** when the scientists locked him in the cage; he began biting and clawing at anyone who came near.

6. Paul made a **customary** mistake on his geography quiz when he said that Honolulu was the capital of the United States.

7. During the drought, the river slowed to a mere **momentum**.

8. Stoya has a real **distraught** streak; I accidentally forgot her birthday last year and she has refused to talk to me ever since.

9. Karen thinks Mr. Ruiz is dishonest, but he seems like a **flagrant** guy to me.

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10. The soccer team, **nomadic** after losing the big game, shuffled silently back onto the bus.

11. The evil scientist created an army of **hybrids** that he could control from afar.

12. Before civilizations formed, humans were **vindictive** people who roamed from place to place, hunting and gathering their food.

13. My progress on the book report was somewhat **ensued** when I discovered that I had been reading the wrong book.

14. My mother hates it when people track dirt in the house, so it's **upright** to leave your shoes at the door right when you come in.

15. An airplane needs a lot of **congestion** to lift into the air, which is why they have to speed down a runway before takeoff.

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9E Pick the Winner

congested / customary / distraught / drone / ensue / feud / flagrant / hybrid / impede / infuriate / momentum / nomadic / trickle / upright / vindictive

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. My head was so **(congested OR customary)** when I had a cold that I felt as if it was filled with sand.

2. Rosalie is going to be **(infuriated OR impeded)** when she learns that her boyfriend skipped her party to hang out with another girl.

3. The **(nomadic OR vindictive)** herd of elk moved to a new location whenever their food supply ran out.

4. The hockey player committed a(n) **(upright OR flagrant)** foul when he hit the other player in the stomach with his stick.

5. I have no idea what Mr. Peters was **(droning OR trickling)** on about during class today; his voice is so dull it puts me to sleep.

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9F Draw the Relationships

congested / customary / distraught / drone / ensue / feud / flagrant / hybrid / impede / infuriate / momentum / nomadic / trickle / upright / vindictive

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	infuriate	customary	agreement	upright
	anger	dishonest	unusual	feud
.....				
2	come before	impede	ensue	obstruct
	vindictive	drip	vengeful	trickle
.....				
3	momentum	hidden	drone	flagrant
	staying in one place	nomadic	speed	male bee
.....				
4	agitated	encourage	impede	congested
	clear	customary	distraught	normal

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9G Understanding What You Read

congested / customary / distraught / drone / ensue / feud / flagrant / hybrid / impede / infuriate / momentum / nomadic / trickle / upright / vindictive

Read the passage below. Then answer the questions.

The Hatfields and the McCoys

In the late 1800s, a civil war, a nomadic pig and a dangerous romance all contributed to the most famous feud in American history. The feud was between two families who lived near the Tug Fork River, which runs through West Virginia and Kentucky. Randolph “Ole Ran’l” McCoy raised his family on the Kentucky side of the Tug Fork, while William Anderson “Devil Anse” Hatfield’s family lived on the West Virginia side. Before the Civil War, the families were friendly with one another. When Ole Ran’l’s brother Harmon joined the Union army, however, the Hatfields quickly turned vindictive: They murdered Harmon when he returned from the army.

Then, in 1878, a pig wandered onto Floyd Hatfield’s land in West Virginia. Floyd was the cousin of “Devil Anse” Hatfield. Floyd’s neighbor, Ole Ran’l McCoy, claimed the hog belonged to him. The case went to court, where it was settled in favor of the Hatfields based on testimony from Bill Staton, a relative of both men. Staton’s “betrayal” infuriated the McCoys, and he was soon murdered as well.

Not long after that, Ole Ran’l’s daughter Roseanna became romantically involved with Johnse Hatfield, son of Devil Anse. When the McCoys found out, they took Johnse prisoner and led him to the local jail, where they planned to kill him. Distraught, Roseanna turned to Devil Anse, who formed an army of Hatfields. The Hatfields managed to impede the McCoys’ momentum before Johnse could be killed.

After these three events, the already violent feud between the McCoys and the Hatfields truly erupted. Devil Anse’s brother Ellison was flagrantly stabbed 26 times by three of Roseanna McCoy’s younger brothers. On New Year’s Eve in 1888, the Hatfields surrounded the McCoys’ cabin and opened fire. All told, more than a dozen members of the two families were killed during their ongoing war.

The feud finally came to an end in 1891. Eighty years later, long after the wounds had healed, descendants of the two families played against each other on the game show “Family Feud.” The winning family got to take home a prize that was not customary for most of the show’s winners: a live pig.

1. One similarity between the Hatfield and McCoy families is that they both

- (A) Lived in West Virginia
- (B) Were descendants of Devil Anse Hatfield
- (C) Fought for the Confederate army
- (D) Lived near the Tug Fork River

2. Which of the following events occurred first?

- (A) Devil Anse’s brother was stabbed.
- (B) Harmon McCoy joined the Union army.
- (C) Roseanna McCoy fell in love with Johnse Hatfield.
- (D) Ole Ran’l and Floyd fought over a pig.



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3. This passage can best be described as

- (A) Autobiography
- (B) Historical nonfiction
- (C) Historical autobiography
- (D) Personal narrative

4. When did the New Year's Eve massacre occur?

- (A) 1878
- (B) 1881
- (C) 1888
- (D) 1891

5. Why did the winners of "Family Feud" receive a live pig?

- (A) A dispute over a pig played a principal role in the families' original feud.
- (B) "Family Feud" regularly gave away live animals.
- (C) The Hatfields and the McCoys became famous pig farmers.
- (D) Pigs are considered more valuable than cash in some parts of the country.

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9H Thinking Creatively

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

1. Describe the powers possessed by a superhero named Mr. **Momentum**.

2. How would you solve the problem of traffic **congestion**?

3. Describe a **flagrant** mistake you've made.

4. What's an easy way to **infuriate** your parents?

5. How would a **vindictive** clown behave?

Word Breakdown

The word *drone* is interesting because it originally described a noise. It comes from the Middle English word *droun*, which means "to roar." If you look at the modern meanings of the word, you can see how they are all connected to noise. A *droning* sound is a buzzing sound that might be made by a *drone*—a male bee. Likewise, a person who *drones* on is someone who speaks in a constant, dull tone of voice.

Usage of the word *hybrid* has exploded in recent years thanks to the automotive industry. The word has been used in science since the 1600s to describe the offspring of two unlike plants or animals. With the introduction of the Toyota Prius in the 1990s, however, the word came to describe engines that can run on a variety of different fuels. *Hybrid* engines are more fuel-efficient and environmentally friendly than engines that are powered strictly by gasoline.