

UNIT SEVEN

FORT

Latin FORTUITUS “happening by chance”

FORTUITOUS (fôr tōō’ ə tās) *adj.* Happening by a lucky accident or chance; fortunate

Although Kathleen was sorry that the lead clarinetist had fallen ill, she also saw the event as *fortuitous* because it gave her a chance to exhibit her skills.

syn: providential *ant:* unlucky

FORTUITY (fôr tōō’ ə tē) *n.* Chance or accident

By what *fortuity* did you come across the long-lost series of paintings?

syn: adversity *ant:* purpose

III One important part of ancient Roman religion involved the prediction of the future according to the flight patterns of birds. The person appointed to interpret these patterns was called the *auspex* (avis, “bird,” + *spex*, “watcher, seer”).

AUSP

Latin AUSPEX “bird-watcher, fortune-teller”

AUSPICES (aw’ spi səs) *n.* Protection or support; patronage

The art director operated under the *auspices* of the Executive Vice President for Creative Affairs.

syn: guidance

AUSPICIOUS (aw spi’ shəs) *adj.* Followed by favorable circumstances

With the company boasting third-quarter gains of 15%, now is surely an *auspicious* time to ask for a raise in your salary.

syn: propitious, promising

DEST

Latin DESTINARE, DESTINATUM “to determine”

PREDESTINATION (prē des’ tīn ā’ shən) *n.* The belief that one’s fate has been determined in advance by a higher power

L. *pre*, “in advance,” + *destinare* = *decided in advance*

Believers in *predestination* insisted that the bridge collapse was no accident.

DESTINE (des’ tīn) *v.* Intend for a specific end or purpose

The latest Disney film is *destined* to become one of the year’s highest-grossing pictures.

SORT

Latin SORS, SORTIS “chance, lot, fate”

CONSORTIUM (con sôr' shum) *n.* A group of companies or institutions

L. con, “together,” + sortis = *having a common fate*

The University recently joined the Boston *consortium*, allowing students to enroll in classes at any of its 14 member schools.

CONSORT (cən sôrt') 1. *v.* To keep company; associate

(con sôrt') 2. *n.* A companion, especially a romantic one.

L. con, “together,” + sortis = *common fate*

1. Sources report that the Mayor *consorts* with the local crime boss, as well as other crooked politicians.
2. Rumors began to spread about the actor and his new *consort*.

PROFIT

Latin PROPITIUS “favorable”

PROFITIOUS (prō pish' əs) *adj.* Lucky; favorable.

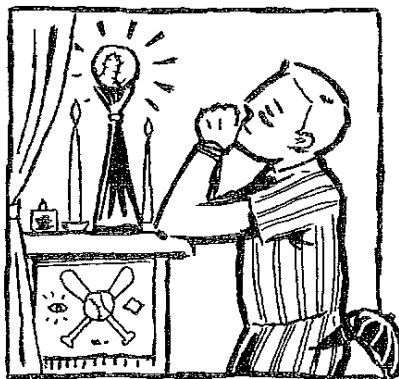
The discovery of the new drug was *propitious*, coming, as it did, at the onset of a deadly new virus.

ant: unlucky

PROPITIATE (prō pish' ē āt) *v.* To soothe or satisfy; to appease

Renee tried to *propitiate* her angry employers by sending in a letter of apology.

syn: reconcile



The **PRO PITCHER** attempts to **PROPITIATE** the baseball gods before the big game.

Another name for fortune-telling is *sortilege*, meaning “the reading of fate” (from *sors* + *legere*, “to read”).

EXERCISES - UNIT SEVEN

Exercise I. Complete the sentence in a way that shows you understand the meaning of the *italicized* vocabulary word.

1. Deedee urged her brother not to *consort* with members of the rival team because...
2. The *fortuity* of Douglas' being in the lightning's path often made him wonder...
3. In order to *propitiate* the board of directors at Moransten Oil, Stanley...
4. The rangers viewed the return of endangered species to the park as an *auspicious* sign because...
5. Jin refused to acknowledge the possibility of *predestination* because...
6. The captain and his first mate determined that the most *propitious* date to embark on their voyage would be...
7. A *consortium* of oil-company executives was organized in order to...
8. Eric said that running into Adam had been *fortuitous* because...
10. Bert feared that his lack of math skills *destined* him to a career in...
11. The artist was believed to be under the *auspices* of the wealthy Lopez family because...

Exercise II. Fill in the blank with the best word from the choices below. One word will not be used.

destine fortuitous propitiate auspicious consortium

1. The dean of students remarked upon how _____ it was that such a distinguished professor should be in need of a job just at the time the college had a vacancy.
2. It seemed that no amount of flattery could _____ the demanding lord of the manor.
3. Henry wrongly believes that his past failures _____ him to a life of financial disaster.
4. We felt that the forest fire we encountered on the first day was not a(n) _____ indication of what we had in store.

Fill in the blank with the best word from the choices below. One word will not be used.

predestination consortium auspices propitious

5. Keisha's financial success is the result of her own hard work, not _____.
6. As long as the clinic operates under the _____ of its parent hospital, it will continue to receive funding.
7. Wendell wondered when the informal gathering of small businessmen had become a powerful global _____ capable of making significant economic decisions.

Fill in the blank with the best word from the choices below. One word will not be used.

fortuity propitious predestination consort

8. The woman who had been the king's _____ would now become his queen.
9. I felt it _____ that I had spotted the first robin of spring before anyone else.
10. Although the explorer insisted that he had triumphed through his own determination and intelligence, critics noted the _____ of his survival.

Exercise III. Choose the set of words that best completes the sentence.

1. Richard was struck by the _____ of the company's success; many early economic indicators, he remembered, had not been _____.
 A. consortium; fortuitous
 B. fortuity; auspicious
 C. auspices; fortuitous
 D. auspicious; consorting
2. Ancient priests believed that unless human beings _____ the gods, no divine being would _____ with mere mortals.
 A. consorted; propitiate
 B. resorted; destine
 C. propitiated; consort
 D. consorted; destine
3. A(n) _____ of music-business executives gathered under the _____ of the National Music Executives Association.
 A. consortium; auspices
 B. fortuity; consortium
 C. auspices; fortuity
 D. consortium; fortuity

4. Early American settlers believed that their fate was decided through _____, not random disasters or _____ blessings.
- consort; auspicious
 - predestination; fortuitous
 - consortium; propitious
 - auspices; fortuitous
5. New Year's is supposed to be an especially _____ time for starting a new job, but Chuck's new career was _____ to end in disaster.
- propitious; destined
 - auspicious; consorted
 - propitious; auspicious
 - fortuitous; consorted

Exercise IV. Complete the sentence by inferring information about the *italicized* word from its context.

- If the skier says it was *fortuitous* that he left the ski area when he did, we can infer that...
- In order to *propitiate* their clients, attorneys at the firm of Jansen, Jansen, and Le Deux may...
- If Andrea declares that she will not *consort* with the Michelsons, it is probably because she feels...

Exercise V. Fill in the blank with the word from the Unit that best completes the sentence, using the root we supply as a clue. Then, answer the questions that follow the paragraphs.

Have you looked at the dishwashing bubbles in your sink lately? Do you look at them as ways to tell how greasy your water is or as elements that could foretell your future? Tea leaves, cereal remnants, and ordinary playing cards might also have data for you if you take the time to look.

For those who practice divination (attempting to gain hidden knowledge magically or supernaturally), a variety of naturally occurring things can be employed to provide information about the present, past, and future. Forms of divination include palmistry, astrology, face reading, and phrenology. Many of these forms have significant historical backgrounds.

Palmistry, for example, may actually date to ancient times. In the fourth century BC, Aristotle mentioned palmistry in his writings; the early Romans, Hebrews, and Egyptians are all purported to have engaged in the study of lines in the hand and/or of the shape of the hand.

Similarly, astrology has a long history in many parts of the world. The ancient Greeks developed astrological methods; in Arabia and Europe, astrology was widely known and practiced for thousands of years. The many divisions within astrology appear to provide something for anyone who takes the time to investigate. Horary astrology, which deals

with time, can provide information as to a person's chances of landing a particular summer job. Those who read the daily horoscopes in the newspaper are drawing on information from sun sign astrology. If an individual is scheduled for elective surgery, medical astrology claims to have information regarding the most _____ (AUSP) day to have the surgery performed to avoid post-operative problems. Some Wall Street traders consult financial astrologists to make advantageous trading decisions and avoid financial misfortune.

Chaucer, Aristotle, and Hippocrates studied face reading; in China, skilled medical practitioners often used face reading to diagnose illnesses. Various facial features are said to be associated with personality characteristics and/or to hold information about the future. A shiny nose, for example, is said to reveal luck where money is concerned.

So, should we believe what astrology, palmistry, face reading, and other forms of fortune telling have to offer? Supporters of the use of divination procedures would argue affirmatively, pointing out the excellent track record and the long history associated with divination. They would tell us of their ability to predict wars and famines; they would remind us that influential individuals like Carl Jung

saw value in astrology and other divinatory systems as ways of understanding how the mind works. They would advance the practice as a way to collect information regarding the future and not as a last resort to be tried when all else fails. They would also suggest that those who are lucky enough

to realize its advantages also understand that there is no trickery involved; rather, divination allows information from the unconscious and often ignored portion of the human mind to be used in everyday situations.

1. Based on the information in the essay, how might the author feel about Tarot cards or Ouija boards?
 - A. Both Tarot cards and Ouija boards should only be used by skilled professionals who are familiar with how they can be used to tell about the future.
 - B. Neither Tarot cards nor Ouija boards have an adequate historical base to support use in everyday situations.
 - C. The use of both Tarot cards and Ouija boards may be surrounded by skepticism regarding their capabilities to reveal the future.
 - D. Neither Tarot cards nor Ouija boards are significant forms of divination.
2. The best title for the selection would be
 - A. Divination in Modern Times.
 - B. Fortune Telling and its Proponents.
 - C. Astrology.
 - D. The History of the Supernatural.
3. According to the passage, which of the following statements is not true?
 - A. The unconscious mind is a repository for a great deal of knowledge and wisdom.
 - B. Divination is primarily associated with Western civilization.
 - C. Analysis of the shape of the hand can provide information on personality strengths and weaknesses.
 - D. In many parts of the world, astrology has a long and very respected history.
4. The main idea of the selection is that
 - A. one should rely on one or more forms of divination as one makes day-to-day decisions.
 - B. one should use horoscopes, astrological signs, etc., to explain everyday happenings.
 - C. divination is only relevant for those who are pessimistic about life and need to find ways to make life a more positive experience.
 - D. divination must be evaluated to determine what part it should play in our lives.

Exercise VI. Drawing on your knowledge of roots and words in context, read the following selection and define the *italicized* words. Note that *as*, from “ad” means “toward.” If you cannot figure out the meaning of the words on your own, look them up in a dictionary.

Gretchen expressed her belief in a kind of *fortuitism* when it came to evolutionary studies. In her examination of the gypsy moth, she found no clear link between any environmental factors and the adaptations that scientists had recorded. Rather, she likened the changes displayed by the moths to complicated *assortative* mating partners. When the moths chose their mates, she believed, they did so based on the traits shared by each partner.