

Unit 4 - The Ballad of Ron and John

4A Introduction

This song tells a kind of fairy tale about two princes who hate each other. The princes fight a war for many years. In fact, they fight for so many years that eventually they can't remember why they are fighting. What happens in the end? Unfortunately, this fairy tale might not end *happily ever after*.

4B Song Lyrics

Once upon a time, far away some place,
Two princes got up in each other's face.
Sir John hated Sir Ron and so he **vowed**,
And promised to fight him 'till he was in the ground.
Sir Ron, in turn, **loathed** Sir John,
Hated him like Eminem hates his mom.
They were **treacherous**, neither one could be trusted,
Ron would give you hot dogs and steal the mustard.

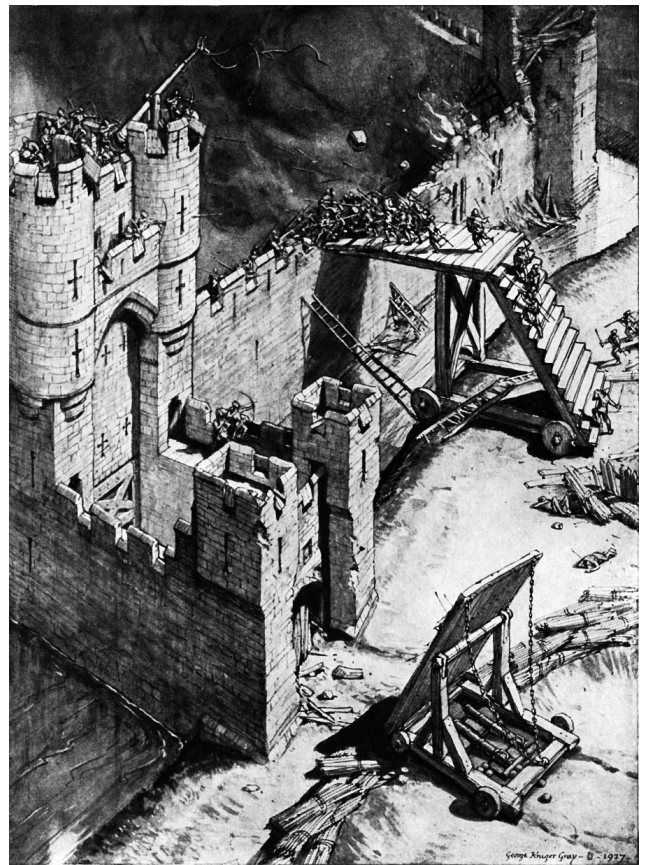
That **provoked**, brought about a response from John,
Who hit Ron's arm hard like a ping-pong ball.
Ron **retaliated**, got back at him fast,
Broke his arm, now Sir John's wearing a cast.
But this wasn't the last; there were **subsequent** fights,
More that came after, so for hundreds of nights,
There was a **siege** on Ron's castle,
John surrounded it, and attacked it from every angle.

*I've seen fire, and I've seen rain,
I've seen joy and I've seen pain,
But it seems to me, there just might be a way..*

Now this is fishy like halibut, a trick that was **elaborate**,
Worked out with great care and detail.
John rolled a rock to **collide** with Ron's car,
Hit the side and hoped he died.
But Ron found **sanctuary** in a **sanctuary**,
Found safety in a holy room, you know me? Good.
Then Ron decided to do the same thing,
He launched a series of operations, a **campaign**.

Then he did something severe and **drastic**,
Launched bombs to attack, John launched bombs back.
They didn't think about the effect or **consequence**
Of their actions, so guess what happened?
The end seems **inevitable**, sure to occur,
Ron and John both died, but why?
Before you find yourself in this kind of **predicament**,
This bad situation, you better think on it..

Hook



4C Words Defined

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. **campaign** (noun) a series of operations to accomplish a goal

Some of the boys at our school began a *campaign* for the right to wear shorts all year long.
Synonyms: movement, crusade, operation

2. **collide** (verb) to crash into

Sometimes two cars *collide* in the student parking lot after school when everyone is in a hurry to leave.

Antonyms: to avoid, dodge

Other forms: There was a fatal head-on *collision* (noun) on the two-lane country road.

3. **consequence** (noun) the outcome, result, or effect

One *consequence* of dieting is having to buy new clothes.

4. **drastic** (adj) extreme, severe

Amber's *drastic* mood change signaled to her parents that she and her boyfriend were fighting again.
Antonyms: mild, modest, slight

5. **elaborate** (adj) worked out with great care and attention to detail

Simone's sixteenth birthday party was so *elaborate* that her mom hired an event planner.

Synonyms: complicated, intricate

Other Forms: *Elaborate* is also a verb meaning "to expand or add to," as in: Timothy tried to *elaborate* on his description of the suspect so that the police could draw an accurate sketch of him.

6. **inevitable** (adj) unavoidable and necessary

Once the pilot knew that he couldn't gain control of the spiraling plane, it was *inevitable* that it would crash into the mountainside.

Synonyms: certain, destined

7. **loathe** (verb) to feel intense hate for

I *loathe* people who are cruel to animals.

Synonyms: to hate, despise, detest

Other forms: The pile of dead bodies was a *loathsome* (adj) sight for the detectives.

8. **predicament** (noun) a difficult situation

Brandi found herself in quite a *predicament* when she said yes to two different boys to be their date to the prom.

9. provoke (verb) to enrage or stir up

Callie tried to *provoke* her little brother by taking all of his toy cars and putting them on a shelf high up, where he couldn't reach them.

Synonyms: to anger, aggravate

10. retaliate (verb) to get even; to do something to get revenge

When that kid hit me in the arm, I had to use all my self-control not to *retaliate*.

Other forms: Spitting on my feet was his form of *retaliation* (noun).

11. sanctuary (noun) 1. a sacred or holy place 2. a safe place

1. The minister told me to light candles in the *sanctuary*. 2. To Terry, her garden was her *sanctuary*.

12. siege (noun) a long fight, especially the surrounding of a city

The *siege* on the city of Fallujah lasted nearly 40 days.

Other forms: *Besiege* is a verb meaning "to attack". We *besieged* city hall at the start of the revolution.

13. subsequent (adj) following in order; next

Subsequent to their arrival at the airport, they rented a car and started to sightsee.

Antonyms: former, previous, prior

Other forms: *Subsequent* is often used as an adverb, *subsequently*. The bear found food and *subsequently* found a place to nap.

14. treacherous (adj) 1. not to be trusted; dishonest 2. dangerous and hazardous

Barney's *treacherous* friend often lied to him about why he couldn't hang out with him. The explorers had a *treacherous* climb to the peak of the mountain.

15. vow (verb) to promise or pledge

The groom *vowed* to help his wife clean the house throughout their marriage.

Synonyms: to promise, assure, swear

Other forms: *Vow* is also a noun meaning "a promise," as in: Her *vow* to her husband was to never turn off the television when he was watching sports.

4D Fix the Mistake

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. Jenny **provoked** that she would not tell anyone her best friend's secret.

2. Benedict Arnold, a traitor, is well known for his **subsequent** behavior in the American Revolutionary War.

3. When Diego ran for student body president, his mom served as his **sanctuary** manager.
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4. The **consequence** at Yorktown resulted in Britain surrendering to the Continental Army.
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5. The two Yankee outfielders failed to communicate with one another, so instead of catching the fly ball, they **retaliated**.
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6. It was **drastic** that LeBron James would be selected first in the NBA draft, since he was the best high school basketball player in the country.
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7. Stephanie did not invite the students that she **provoked** to her Sweet Sixteen birthday bash.
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8. Rosa made a **subsequent** dress for her friend out of seashells carefully stitched together.
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9. The **siege** for failing Ms. Watson's reading class is having to attend summer school.
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10. After Lexington and Concord, there were **predicament** shots fired between the Red Coats and Americans.
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11. The identical twins dressed **treacherously** different every day so that everyone could easily tell them apart.
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12. The inexperienced boxer found himself in a **campaign** when Oscar de la Hoya pinned him up against the ropes in the corner of the boxing ring.
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13. The U.S. embassy in Fiji served as a **predicament** for American tourists when Fiji's government was overthrown by its own military.
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14. Throughout our country's history there are examples of Americans **colliding** wars with various Native American tribes.

15. The theme of Carrie Underwood's song is **elaboration**; it's all about getting even.

4E Pick the Winner

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. I put myself in a difficult (**siege OR predicament**) when I waited until the night before my project was due to start working on it.

2. _____

3. (**Drastic OR Subsequent**) weather conditions kept us from getting to enjoy the rides at Disneyland.

4. _____

5. Bradley (**retaliated OR vowed**) that he would pay me back the five dollars I loaned him.

6. _____

7. The mayor's political (**sanctuary OR campaign**) was more expensive than he anticipated.

8. _____

9. It was (**inevitable OR elaborate**) that Jenna would get a new puppy for her birthday; her parents gave her everything she asked for.

10. _____

4F Draw the Relationship

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

drastic	loyal	treacherous	severe
predicament	attack	tough situation	siege

2	campaign	like	loathe	operation
	get back at			later
.....				
3	collide	outcome	sanctuary	smash together
	cause	place of safety	consequence	provoke
.....				
4	treacherous	simple	disloyal	vow
	pledge	elaborate	inevitable	bound to happen

4G Understanding What You Read

Read the passage below. Then answer the questions.

After the colonists signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776, they found themselves in a bit of a predicament. The individuals who signed the Declaration were breaking their vow of loyalty to King George III of England. Consequently, in the eyes of King George, they were traitors to the English crown. Colonists, however, argued that the Declaration was inevitable. King George hadn't been giving the colonists what they needed for a long time, and they had complained to him again and again.

Some of the actions of King George had caused a group of colonists to loathe the King and his government's policies. They also argued that people have the right to overthrow a government if they feel that the government is not protecting the natural rights of its people. The Declaration itself proved that the colonists were willing to take drastic measures to get their freedom. If this meant forming a whole new country, then so be it.

When word of the Declaration reached England, it provoked King George's anger. As an act of retaliation, The King decided to launch an elaborate military campaign in the colonies. The purpose of the campaign was to squash the revolution. The King wouldn't just let his colonial empire go without putting up a strong fight. It wasn't long before the two armies collided, and a full-fledged war had begun. Siege after siege occurred and the fighting continued for five long years.

England almost won the war at many different points during the first few years, but the Americans were able to win in the end, mostly thanks to three things. First was the great military leadership of George Washington. Second was the hit-and-run fighting tactics that the Americans used against the huge British army. And third was a vow from France to help the Americans. By winning the war, Americans officially gained their independence and the United States of America was born. The soldiers who fought in the battles were thought of as traitors by the British, but were called brave patriots in America. What do you think? Were they treacherous and disloyal to Britain, or did they have good reason to fight?

1. According to the text, the colonists wanted

- (A) the colonies to remain under the rule of the King, but with some new laws
- (B) to end of the tea tax
- (C) retaliation after the Boston Massacre
- (D) to start a new country separate from England

2. According to the text, what was inevitable?

- (A) forming an army
- (B) electing George Washington as President
- (C) declaring independence
- (D) giving in to the King

3. According to the text

- (A) Britain nearly won the war
- (B) the Colonists lost the war
- (C) the Americans lost the war
- (D) King George came to the colonies with his army

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

- (A) The Declaration of Independence was signed in the year 1776.
- (B) England was a sanctuary for colonists.
- (C) King George was upset to hear that the colonies were splitting from England.
- (D) George Washington was a good military leader.

5. The passage ends with a question to the reader. The goal of this question is most likely to

- (A) get more information for the author
- (B) get readers to form their own opinions
- (C) show that the British were treacherous
- (D) ask whether or not the British were treacherous

4H Thinking Creatively

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

1. Describe a time when you witnessed **treacherous** behavior.

2. If a computer game was called *Siege of the Stars* what do you think it would be about?

3. If you were in charge of a U.S. Presidential **campaign** what sort of things would you include in your campaign to get people to listen to and vote for your candidate?

4. What food item(s) do you **loathe** the most? (Don't be afraid to creatively combine some of your least favorites into your own new and unique food group)

5. Why do you think the words “retaliate” and “revenge” both start with the prefix “re?”
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Word Breakdown

We can break down the word *elaborate* to see where it comes from. There are three parts: e – labor – ate. The “e” makes the rest of the word more intense; it’s known as an intensifier. Usually it does this with an “x,” as in: extreme, extraordinary, excellent. The middle part, “labor,” means “work.” That’s what it means in both Latin and English. And the “ate” means “to do,” as in: medicate or educate. So according to our breakdown, the word *elaborate* means doing intense work. This is very close to its definition today. If you do something elaborately, with a lot of care, you’re doing intense work.

The rapper Q-Tip from A Tribe Called Quest uses this word in his own way. On a love song called “Bonita Appelbuam,” Q-Tip tells a girl, “If only I could see through your *elaborate* eyes.” He’s probably playing on that old saying: The eyes are the windows to the soul.